

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE 1913

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WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE, 1913.

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

QUESTION.

INSPECTION OF PASSENGER TRAINS.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Are all trains carrying passengers on the railways of the State regularly inspected as to their fitness for such service?”

“2. Are such trains supplied with the Westinghouse brake; and when and how often is same inspected?”

“3. What are the qualifications of the men charged with the duty of such inspection?”

“4. Do all, or any of them, possess certificates of competency?”

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

“1. Yes.

“2. Yes—every six months. Every locomotive depôt is a place of inspection.

“3. The mechanics engaged on inspection work at the various centres are specially trained under the Westinghouse brake foreman in the Ipswich workshops before being sent out.

“4. Formal certificates of competency are not issued. The Westinghouse brake foreman reports as to the efficiency before the men are allowed to take up the work of inspection.”

SUGAR GROWERS BILL.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bullimba*), this Bill, which had been initiated in Committee, was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SUGAR CULTIVATION BILL.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*), this Bill, which had been initiated in Committee, was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*) said: I do not intend to speak at any length on the Address in Reply, as it is a thing without substance. I notice that on the first page of the Speech the Governor refers to the fact that there is ample scope for further pastoral development. Every hon. member will agree that the way to make that development successful is by throwing open to grazing selection the large areas that are resumable. I am speaking now, of course, of the Western parts of the State, to which the Governor was referring. A great deal more could be done in this connection near towns, for instance, where there is a number of young men who are willing to take up country if

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that country were made available for them. That should be done by the Lands Department. I know of an instance where I guaranteed there would be more applicants for certain land than there would be portions for them, and that land has not been thrown open yet. It is a pity that that has not been done. In looking over the Speech from the Throne I notice, as other hon. members have done who have spoken before me, that there is a reference in it to the manner in which the Federal elections were conducted. I do not think that we ever had a State election in Queensland where corrupt practices have not been indulged in; and I venture to say that in ninety-nine out of every hundred cases the offenders have belonged to the supporters of the opposite party. But when we tell the Commonwealth Parliament that they must do something—in fact, we command them to do certain things—it is certainly a piece of gross impertinence on the part of this House. The other day the Commonwealth asked the Treasurer for certain data in connection with the Government Savings Bank, and the hon. gentleman got into high dudgeon over it, and probably he was quite justified. But look at the other side of the picture! Is not the Commonwealth justified in casting aside with scorn any command that may issue from this Parliament to the Parliament of the Commonwealth? Before dealing with the Address in Reply, I would like to refer to a matter that I have referred to on many occasions in this House, and which is now becoming a public scandal, and which I hope will be remedied at the earliest possible moment. I refer to the fact that some of the oldest and most worn-out passenger carriages in Queensland are used on the Western Railway as far as Cunnamulla. It is nothing short of a scandal that women and children should be huddled up in these obsolete carriages and compelled to stay in them right through the whole journey of 600 miles. It is a shame. It may not be quite so bad—and very often it is not quite so bad—between Charleville and Cunnamulla, because there they can change carriages; but from here to Charleville it is nothing short of a disgrace. I understood that when the present Commissioner took over his office he undertook to have an alteration made, but nothing has so far been done. There should not be a single carriage on that long journey without lavatory accommodation, and it is to the discredit of the Government that they allow carriages to run on the Western Railway without lavatory accommodation. I also referred last year to the fact that it would prevent a great deal of inconvenience to passengers, and also save a great deal of expense to the Railway Department, if railway workshops were established at Charleville. I do not expect them to be started on a very big scale, but it is not desirable that all repairs to trucks, carriages, or engines in the far West should have to be made at Roma, Toowoomba, or even at Ipswich. There is a very long stretch of line south from Charleville and also to the west, and it would be to the advantage of the department to establish workshops at Charleville where repairs could be effected quickly, instead of having to go to the expense of hauling the rolling-stock to Roma or Toowoomba. Another matter in connection with the Railway Department to

which I would like to refer is that on the line between Goondiwindi and Thallon there is a number of lengthsmen who are entitled to the extra allowance, but it has not yet been given to them. In view of the fact that the extra allowance only amounts to 6d. a day, and in view of the way in which the cost of living has been going up, I hope the Secretary for Railways will take note of this and see that this little measure of justice is meted out to those men. The other day, when the hon. member for Fassifern was speaking, he told us that the railway policy of the present Government is a legacy inherited from the Kidston Government. When the hon. member has been a little longer in this House he will learn that the present Government take credit for all the good Acts that have been placed on the statute-book at the instance and support of the party sitting on this side of the House. For all the measures that are so beneficial to the people of Queensland which we were instrumental in placing on the statute-book the Government claim the credit, and they disclaim any responsibility for anything that may be considered as opposed to the interests of the people. If the hon. member will cast his mind back, he will find that the Government claim credit for such legislation as the amendment of the Elections Act, which gave universal suffrage to Queensland, and which gave women the vote. He will see that they claim credit for the Wages Boards Act, for the Machinery and Scaffolding Act, for the Old-age Pensions Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, the Workers' Lien Act, and the Constitution Act Amendment Act, by which this House is freed, to some extent, from the operations of another place. The party on the Government side to-day were in opposition when these measures were passed. When the Premier was speaking the other day he said that if the Labour platform would help the primary producer he would place it on the statute-book; but he never said one word by way of argument against what the leader of the Opposition said with regard to those planks in the platform which do apply to the primary producer. As he did not use any argument against them, we may reasonably assume that he is in favour of them, and, if he can adhere to his promise, then we may expect that he will bring in some measure during this session that will improve the position of the primary producer on the lines laid down in the platform of this party. With regard to the mineral oil that is going to be prospected for in the Roma district, there was a hint given that that would be a Government monopoly, or, at least, that the Government are going to work it in the first place. Personally, I hope it will be made a Government monopoly, because we do not want that industry to get out of the hands of the people in the same manner as other public utilities have got out of the hands of the people. When referring to rabbits, the Premier, in reply to a question, said rabbits were not a commercial commodity. I venture to say that if the Government altered the law with regard to the constitution and functions of rabbit boards, and provided that if a man caught a rabbit and killed it in order to sell its skin he should not be guilty of a criminal offence, we should soon have an industry producing valuable commercial commodities and bringing thousands of pounds into

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Queensland annually, as the rabbit industry does in Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand, where no such preposterous law exists as that which we have on our statute-book.

The PREMIER: There is a regulation somewhat on those lines, for the preservation of the rabbit skin trade.

Mr. COYNE: We should remove that regulation as soon as we can.

The PREMIER: You mean amplify it.

Mr. COYNE: No, abolish it. In New South Wales and Victoria they have cold stores and freezing-rooms for the storage of rabbits. In New South Wales they have cold stores far away in the interior of the country, and we could establish similar places in Queensland. There are many times in the year when farmers in places where rabbits are pretty thick could earn a few pounds to help them along if storage accommodation were provided in the way suggested.

The PREMIER: The regulation I refer to was made to enable skins to be sold under certain conditions. Formerly their sale was prohibited.

Mr. COYNE: I have never heard of that regulation.

Mr. RYAN: When was the regulation made?

The PREMIER: About three years ago. The skins were going over the border from Queensland, and they are now coming this way.

Mr. COYNE: The Premier also stated that farmers were not allowed to employ their children. What did he mean by that? Did he wish to mislead the people again? Was that what he desired to do? What law have we on the statute-book which prevents a farmer employing his own children? What utterance has been made by any member on this side of the House which would lead the Premier to say that a farmer cannot employ his own children? Not one member on this side of the House has given utterance to an opinion, either inside the House or on the hustings or anywhere else, which would justify such a statement. No responsible member on this side of the House has given utterance to those words either inside or outside the House. With regard to railway construction, it is going on at a slow pace, especially the construction of railways authorised three years ago under that big boom loan of £10,000,000. I think I heard the hon. member for Herbert say that sixty-nine men were employed on one line, and that at the rate they were going it would take sixty-nine years to finish the construction of the railway. I venture to say that at the rate the Great Western Railway is being built it will take 250 years to finish it. The hon. member for Drayton made some very wild statements the other day. One was that the meat trust was chased out of New South Wales. A thing must be in a place before it can be chased out, and, as a matter of fact, the meat trust was never in New South Wales. The impression the hon. member wished to convey was that Labour rule in New South Wales was so severe that the meat trust could not carry on, and that thereby the country lost a good deal of money. But, as I have said, the meat trust was never established in New South Wales. The heads of the trust went to the Minister

for Agriculture of that State, and sought means to establish the trust there, but he point blank refused their application. Members of the Legislative Council in Victoria, knowing what the operations of the meat trust were in other parts of the world, spoke strongly against the company being established in that State. Then the company came along to the only State in Australia where trusts and combines and enemies of the public are welcomed—that is Queensland. The Hon. the Premier told the people in South Australia that he was delighted to know that this meat trust, which ruined the industry in America, was established in Queensland. We have been told by members opposite, and, I think, by the Premier himself, that the establishment of the meat trust here will increase the price of stock. As a matter of fact, they do no such thing where they are established; we have proof of that fact from Americans living in the United States, and we have the testimony of Mr. John Cooke, a gentleman who is supposed to be one of the best buyers in Queensland, a fair man to cattle producers and to sheep growers and to his workers. Mr. Cooke had some connection with the meat trust in Argentina, and he has told us how the trust operated there. The Premier must have been aware of what I am referring to, and yet he told the people of the Commonwealth that he was delighted to know that the meat trust was established on the banks of the Brisbane River. I am very sorry for the sake of the producer that it is there. What are meat trusts doing in America to-day? We are told by Mr. Chauncey Depew, a senator of the United States, that they can do anything they like in the States, that they control legislation, the judges, and almost everything, because they have established themselves so strongly in America.

The TREASURER: Don't you think it would be as well to tell us where the Premier used the words "meat trust"?

Mr. COYNE: The hon. gentleman spoke of Swift and Co., and Swift and Co. are the American meat trust. It does not matter whether you call them Swift and Co. or the American meat trust, because it is one and the same thing. In the Senate of America they are now pulling the strings so strongly that it will be impossible for Australian meat to get into the American market. Why? Because Australian meat would be sold cheaper in America than they sell their meat. We did not want to see the same thing happen in Queensland as has happened in America through the operations of the meat trust, and that is what I fear will happen after this trust gets a footing in Queensland. With regard to the prickly-pear problem, it is a bigger question than even the conversion or renewal of the £15,000,000 loan which will shortly fall due.

The TREASURER: Would it not be wise to state the exact amount of the loan falling due? It is not £15,000,000.

Mr. COYNE: No?

The TREASURER: No; it is about £11,750,000.

Mr. COYNE: I read only yesterday morning a statement made by the hon. gentleman to the Press, and I understood that statement to put the amount at £15,000,000. But I am not particular

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whether it is £11,000,000 or £13,000,000 or £15,000,000. I say it is a large sum of money, but it is not as important a matter as the prickly-pear problem. It does not alter the argument in the slightest degree. The essential point is that a large sum of money is falling due in about

[4 p.m.] eighteen months or two years' time, but I say that that is a very small matter compared with the prickly-pear problem. I think it should be the object and endeavour of the Government to throw lands open in small areas, because that is the only way that they have any hope of coping with this pest. Every year it is spreading further and further into the clean country, and by and by we shall have the whole of Queensland covered with this prickly-pear pest, and we may have a happy-go-lucky Government in power, like the present one, who will not be able to offer a solution to get rid of the pest. The hon. member for Drayton made reference to Mr. Roberts, and said he hoped he would be dealt with generously. Mr. Roberts has received a concession of 100,000 acres. What does the hon. member for Drayton mean by dealing generously with Mr. Roberts? If Mr. Roberts does not keep to the contract which he made when he received the concession of 100,000 acres—and he must have made a contract or else he would not have got the concession—then he is in the same category as any pastoral lessee who does not fulfil the contract he makes with the Crown. He is in just the same position as anyone else who enters into a contract with the Government. What is the use of talking about generous treatment? Where does the generosity come into the matter at all? There is no generosity about it. We are the trustees of the State, and we are here to do the best for the State, and if anybody comes along and enters into a bargain with the State on the plea that he can do a certain thing with regard to this grave problem, and then we find that he cannot accomplish what he said he could, it is only a fair thing that we should dispossess him of what he has got and give someone else a chance. If Mr. Roberts's scheme proves to be a practical one, and it is proved to be a solution of the difficulty, I say it would be a fine thing for the Government to buy his invention from him. Let the Government pay him £20,000 or £30,000, and buy his scheme right out and use it for the benefit of the whole State. That would be a good proposition, a business proposition, and it would be something for the benefit of the people of Queensland. The hon. member for Drayton challenged the House the other night to show where any Labour Government had sold farmers' produce. It was mentioned here last night by way of interjection, when the Home Secretary was speaking, that the Government of South Australia a short time ago had dealt with the farmers' produce in that State and sold it for them. I will tell this House what that Government did with regard to the farmers' produce. The Home Secretary said that Mr. Peake was the dominant figure in the Price Government of South Australia at that time, but it was Mr. Price himself who was the dominant figure, and he would not allow anyone to interfere with his functions as Premier. Anyone who knew Mr. Price knows that. Mr. Price told the farmers who lived between the railway stations to just throw their wheat over the fence. The farmers did this, and

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Mr. Price sent men to gather up the wheat and load it and bring it to the railway stations, and it was then taken to the capital and stored and afterwards sent to any market the farmer chose to name for sale.

Mr. GRAYSON: That was only for export.

Mr. COYNE: Yes, it was for export trade, but that makes no difference. The farmer could sell in any market he liked. If he wanted to send it oversea, he could do so. The South Australian Government also established cold stores in Adelaide where the small farmers who reared a few lambs could send them, and those farmers received not 50 per cent. but 75 per cent. of the value of those lambs according to current market rates, if they required the money, and then when the products were sold the balance due to the farmers would be forwarded to them. The whole cost to the farmer out of that transaction was about 2 per cent. When will we expect to get anything like that from the Government we have got in Queensland? Never. Then with regard to the egg-preserving business which was established in Adelaide, Mr. Price started that. The Home Secretary in referring to that business said that there was a big loss on it. What wonder that there was a big loss seeing that we have had the Tories running the business in South Australia for the last eighteen months, and during that time they did what the Queensland Tory Government did in connection with the village settlement scheme, and that was to kill it by administration. The business was well started in South Australia by Mr. Price, but what could we expect in connection with an egg-preserving business from a Government like they have in power now?

The TREASURER: Would it not be wise to tell us of some of the profits they made in Western Australia?

Mr. COYNE: The meat trust which we have got in Queensland got a little footing in Western Australia at one time, and they charged prices for their meat that were prohibitive, and in order to save the people from the trust the Government of Western Australia launched out and bought steamers of their own and ran them for the purpose of conveying cattle from other parts of that State to the capital so that the people could have cheap meat. There were one or two mishaps at sea which caused the venture to show a loss, but the people of Western Australia will be the gainers in the long run. (Hear, hear!) I was referring to the challenge made by the hon. member for Drayton to show where a Labour Government had sold the produce of the farmers. The Labour Government in South Australia sold all the farmers' produce. They sold fowls, eggs, wheat, lambs, and all the produce raised by farmers in that State. They also made advances to the farmer if he was short of cash, and all it cost the farmer in the long run was a bare 2 per cent. In South Australia they sell the farmers' produce; in Queensland they sell the farmer. The hon. member for Port Curtis has been very fond of referring to the rural workers' log, but, as a matter of fact, there is no Rural Workers' Union nearer to Queensland than Victoria. The statements made by the hon. gentleman and others of his party have caused the employees on the farms to prick up their ears, and they are beginning to wish for some of the things

mentioned by the hon. gentleman in connection with that log, so that if a Rural Workers' Union is brought about in Queensland then no one but the hon. gentleman himself will be responsible for it. Even if there is a rural workers' log in existence, what does it amount to? There is a demand made by the rural workers of Victoria. The demand will be heard when the case comes before the Arbitration Court. When that court hears the evidence given by both sides, it will give its decision, just in the same way that it gives its decision in the case of any other industry where men are employed, and if it is found that the industry cannot bear the cost of the wages fixed by the court, then we ought to do as hon. members on the opposite side have frequently advocated, and that is wipe it out altogether.

Mr. GRAYSON: The farmer cannot pass it on.

Mr. COYNE: I will refer the hon. member for Cunningham to something else besides the rural workers' demands which cripple the farmer and which have been strictly hidden by the Tories in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Brisbane referred the other night to the fact that we have a wheat ring in Australia, and the Royal Commission in South Australia some time ago found that the farmers of South Australia were robbed in one year of £167,000 by that wheat ring. The market price of wheat was well known to everybody, but the wheat ring of South Australia, by the simple process of giving 2d. per bushel less for wheat than the market price, robbed the farmers of £167,000 in that one year.

Mr. KIRWAN: And not one word about it.

Mr. COYNE: Not one solitary word about it by the Tories in Queensland. Then, again, the Tories of Queensland must have known that that same commission made inquiries into the reason why the farmers of South Australia, notwithstanding they were getting all this assistance from the Price Government—all the assistance that the Government could possibly give them—were making no headway, that they were just as much behind at the end of the year as when they started. That Royal Commission was appointed, comprising members of every shade of politics in South Australia, and they found that the cost of the stripper harvesters to the manufacturers, after making all allowances for manufacture, depreciation, etc., and allowing a 10 per cent. profit on the outlay, was such that the manufacturer could sell them at £50 to the farmers. What happened? He sold them at from £75 to £80 each to the farmers. Of course I am not speaking of the farmers of South Australia only, but of the farmers of the whole of Australia. In that one year, 1911, there were 8,700 of these harvesters sold. That meant, according to the findings of the Royal Commission, that the farmers of Australia were robbed of £217,000 in the one year on that one item of stripper-harvesters. Then, in the matter of seed drills. There were 17,000 seed drills sold in that same year. The Royal Commission also found, after making all the allowances I spoke of in connection with the stripper-harvesters, that they could be sold at £22 to the farmers, after allowing for a profit of 10 per cent.; still they were sold at £36 to the farmer. That meant that the farmers of Australia were plundered in that one year of £426,000—a sum of money, in the case of

the stripper-harvesters and seed drills, that would have enabled the farmers of Australia to establish works of their own to manufacture all the seed drills and stripper-harvesters that they require; and here we have the so-called friends of the farmer sitting on the other side of the House and not one word against the robbery by these trusts. As a matter of fact, they have the effrontery to stand up and say they do not know of any trust in Australia.

Mr. THEODORE: They are the agents of the trusts.

Mr. COYNE: That is how the farmer is being robbed by the trusts in Australia. No doubt, Mr. Speaker, you have noticed by the Press that some two years ago there was a parliamentary farmers' party established in Queensland, and only quite recently they got an official Press organ of their own, the Brisbane "Daily Mail," and on the day of the opening of this present session of Parliament, the "Daily Mail" urged this party to do something. Amongst other things it said, in its leading article—

"This is not a time for promises or for hedging, but a period demanding firmness and decision."

Then again—

"What are the Assembly representatives of the primary producers going to do?"

Echo answers what? Then further on it says—

"The opinion that the public will form of the country party will depend largely upon the distinctness with which it reveals itself in the Assembly and the firmness with which it defines its position."

Has the position been defined? I do not think so. If it has, I have not seen it. But now let us come right down to bedrock. This party on the other side of the House always claims to be the friends of the farmers. Is it a fact that they are the friends of the farmers?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No!

Mr. COYNE: If it is a fact, why was it necessary to create a farmers' party within that party?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAY: That is good logic.

Mr. COYNE: If they were the friends of the farmers, surely the farmers' representatives in this House would not sever themselves from the party in the slightest degree in order to form another party to defend their interests in this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: At any rate, it is a fact that we have now, according to the official organ of that party, a farmers' party in the House.

Mr. HUNTER: Certainly one outside.

Mr. COYNE: That party has been in this House since the opening of the session, and even its own official organ expected to hear a declaration from that party as to what they intended to do, and if they do not intend to do anything they might as well throw off the guise they are working under at the present time, and not hoodwink the farmers, because the farmers are going to demand something. I know from my travels amongst the farming districts of

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Queensland during the recent Federal campaign that the farmers are going to demand something, and they are opening their eyes to the fact that their friends are on this side. I might tell you also that the very thing this party has been asking for the farmers for the last twenty years has now been accomplished. It is about twenty years ago that this party asked the farmers to combine for their own protection and in their own interests, but owing to the influence of the lying Tory Press at that day the farmers were told not to believe a word that came from this side of the House. At any rate, it is a consolation to members of this party to know that their efforts, after twenty years, are now bearing fruit, and that the farmers are now opening their eyes as to who their true friends are. What do hon. members on the other side of the House propose to do for the farmers this session? They are simply redeeming the promise made last year in connection with the sugar industry, and with regard to pure seeds. The farmers have been asking for that for years. That is the sum total of what they are going to do, and evidently that satisfies the members who represent the farmers' party in this House. If it does, all I can say is that they are very easily satisfied indeed. My opinion is that the silence and inactivity of the farmers' party in this House will be the finest thing that ever happened the farmers outside the House, because the farmers outside the House will now recognise—they recognise that they have already been hoodwinked long enough, and they thought they had a chance of emancipation when they established their own party, but now they will see that they are being hoodwinked again, and I challenge any member on the other side of the House to show anything half as good as what we had read out by our leader a few days ago—what this party would do for the farmers if they got the opportunity, and I believe they will get that opportunity very shortly.

Mr. GRAYSON: He did not read out the land tax.

Mr. COYNE: The land tax has been explained to the farmers on every platform in the country, and not one word of protest has been raised in the country. The hon. member for Gregory and myself, at a meeting in a big farming district, explained the land tax, and the farmers told us that they had never had it explained before—it was wrongly explained, as the "Courier" explained socialism. Last year, owing to the fact that the daily Press at that time had still control of the opinions of the farmers of Queensland, this party did not come back after that election as strong as they otherwise would have, but now the farmers in Queensland realise that they have been hoodwinked; that they have been misled by the party opposite—by the Tories and by their Press—and if you want any proof of the truth of my statement I would refer you to the result of the recent Federal election. Look at the farming districts that doubled their vote on the Darling Downs, and I might say, a part of the present Darling Downs Federal electorate is far more conservative than the portion taken away. It is a great advancement—100 per cent. advancement on the Darling Downs. The same can be said of the Lilley. Then look at the Oxley, look at Wide Bay, look at Moreton, look at the Herbert—all over the place. All round Queensland, and especially

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in the farming districts, you will find that the Labour party have increased their position by from 60 to 100 per cent. Well, that is very gratifying to those who have been doing their best for the farmers, and in spite of all the sneers of the farmers who have been misled by the Tories and their Press, it is gratifying to know that they have some friends in this House and that they are not on the opposite benches, so that whilst you may have gulled them at election time in the past you are not going to do it again.

Mr. HODGE: We would not attempt it.

Mr. COYNE: I hope you will not.

Mr. GILLIES: You are in the last ditch now.

Mr. RYAN: The party has sold them.

Mr. COYNE: No; I think the members have sold themselves. At any rate, I think that the reason why the farmers were misled so much at the last State election was because of the lies that were circulated in connection with the late Brisbane strike, and the Treasurer, the other evening, could not refrain from referring to it. The Treasurer is, no doubt, like his chief, the Premier, a friend of the lawbreakers. That is no doubt one of the reasons why he took up the attitude he did in connection with the late Brisbane strike, and his well-known abiding hatred of genuine unionism was another cause. When the strike was on, the farmers were told that the men who were out on strike were to blame for the whole of it; but since then the courts of our country have said that the men were not to blame, that they were innocent, and that the Brisbane Tramways Company were the guilty party. But, in spite of that verdict—the only verdict that we have had up to the present time—we find the Treasurer getting up on Thursday evening last and stating the same untruth that was stated during the last State elections, and no doubt will be repeated again to those who are not likely to read and study the matter and would not know any better. Now, the alleged upholders of law and order surely should say that the men are innocent and the Brisbane Tramways Company are guilty; that they have been proved so up to the hilt in the courts, and we shall not bolster them up any longer. Instead of that, we find the hon. member for Port Curtis getting up in his place the other night and saying, "Be kind, be generous, be benevolent to the Brisbane Tramways Company." They have been so generous to them already that if they did anything more their cup of generosity would run over. They could not do any more.

Mr. HUXHAM: Eighteen per cent. dividend per annum.

Mr. HARDACRE: Wait until we see the Tramways Bill.

Mr. COYNE: The courts have proved who was wrong in that case; they have said that the Tramways Company were to blame; and yet we have the Treasurer getting up in this House the other night and saying that the workers said on one occasion, "We will tie up your butter; we will not let it be exported." Who said that? Why, the guilty person, the Tramways Company. Why does not the Treasurer be honest? Why will not these people be honest in their statements to this House? Do they

think they can fool the people any longer? If you want to know what the people think of the slandering statements that were circulated about that matter, look at the vote at the last Federal election in the Brisbane and Oxley seats. I believe that when the curtain was pulled aside and the people saw the true facts as a result of speeches by members of this party and others who spoke on the question—I believe that that was the cause of the vote they got in the Darling Downs, in Lillie, and Moreton.

The TREASURER: When you engineer another strike, will you tell the farmers to get permits to handle their goods?

Mr. COYNE: That is the tripe; that is the trash that we get in connection with a serious subject; that is the trash that we get ladled out to the unthinking persons in the country. But no, they will not be sold any longer. These old platitudes will not be any good any longer. The Treasurer also said that they were told to go home and let their produce perish. Who told them that? The guilty person again—the Brisbane Tramways Company—the person the court proved to be the offender in this case. Will the hon. member for Enoggera deny that? No, he cannot.

Mr. TROUT: I reckon you were the guiltiest of the lot.

Mr. COYNE: I throw back that untruth in the hon. member's teeth.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Instead of going out on strike, why did you not wait for the verdict of the court?

Mr. COYNE: The logic of that argument amounts to this: that if a man comes up to me with a razor or a knife or some sharp instrument, and tries to cut my throat, and starts hacking away, I am not to do anything till he has finished me, then enter my protest, and he will be hanged for it. (Laughter.) See the logic of the argument! Here we have large numbers of men thrown out of work for no reason at all, with the object of showing what a Yankee—a non-British person—can do in the matter of breaking up genuine unions that were formed and carried on under the laws of our country—the gentleman who would not allow the Union Jack to fly at the completion of the chimney at the power-house unless the Stars and Stripes flew over it. That is the sort of person these bogus, or so-called, loyalists on the other side bolster up so much. He was going to show what he could do in the way of bursting up genuine unions, formed under the laws of the country, and the men thought they might just as well die fighting as die by degrees, as they were doing. Men, for no reason at all, were being thrown out from their jobs—ousted from them—and had to do the best they could for themselves outside; but what did this Tramways Company care for them? I do not bear any animus towards Mr. Badger; not one tittle.

Mr. HUXHAM: No personal animus.

Mr. COYNE: None at all; I would shake hands with him, if he were so inclined, just as much as I would shake hands with anyone else. There are narrow-minded persons on that side of the House who will not be able to understand that, but I tell them for their own education. It is but justice to the

claims of the men, proved to be correct afterwards, that anybody who gets up in this House should try to justify the actions of the guilty person in this matter before he condemns the men who are proven to be innocent. No, they never make any attempt to do so. All you get is "permit"—something about a permit. That is their logic of the whole thing. We heard a great deal lately, and especially during the late Federal campaign, about the Labour party being inclined to give spoils to the victors. The cry was "Spoils to the victors," but the only thing I could think of it was that they had been too modest altogether—out of all proportion too modest. I do not suppose that out of the nominees, the persons who were put into positions by the Federal Government, there were $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. who were of known Labour tendencies. The only one we know of, at any rate, that had pronounced Labour views was Mr. Ryland. It was a very small percentage indeed, and still there was this cry of "Spoils to the victor." When did anybody hear of the Denham Government appointing a Labourite to any responsible position?

Mr. RYAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: Never! And I venture to say that, from the dignity of their actions, and the honourable, manly, upright, and able way in which the Fisher Government have conducted the affairs of this country for the three years of their reign, they have shown that at least Labourites can do as well as the other fellow. But you never hear of the appointment of a Labour man to any responsible position.

Mr. HODGE: When did ever Fisher appoint a Denhamite to a position?

Mr. COYNE: What about George Reid? What about Dr. Gilruth, of the Northern Territory.

Mr. HODGE: Denham had nothing to do with that—you are speaking about the Denham Government.

Mr. COYNE: No, I never could accuse Mr. Denham of doing a big thing like that.

Mr. HODGE: You are speaking about the Denham Government.

Mr. COYNE: No; I am speaking about the Fisher Government also. I want to know if the hon. member for Nango would be kind enough to tell me of one well-known Labourite who was ever put into a responsible or high position, independent of party, although he might have had the very best ability in the world, by the Government of Queensland? Do we ever hear of any of our candidates who are defeated at the polls being appointed to the Upper House? Not one; never, under any circumstances.

Mr. HODGE: What about Mr. Hinchcliffe?

Mr. COYNE: Mr. Hinchcliffe was appointed at a time when the Tory party did not hold sway in Queensland—when some of the best measures that were ever put upon the statute-book were passed—that was the time when Hinchcliffe was sent to the Upper House.

Mr. VOWLES: Was not Mr. Reinhold reinstated?

Mr. HUXHAM: That is a single case.

Mr. COYNE: Reinhold reinstated! Why, his ability as a teacher would have got Mr. Reinhold a position in any part of Australia; and any Government which, on the

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strength of political bias, refused to reinstate Mr. Reinhold would be guilty of a national crime.

Mr. VOWLES: You asked for a case in point—that is one.

Mr. COYNE: I am very glad to know from the papers, although we do not see or hear anything of it here, that there is going to be an amendment of the Liquor Act. I trust that that Bill will be brought along, because with other hon. members who have spoken on this side, I regard it as one of the most ridiculous things that has ever been placed on the statute-book of any country; and if I can assist in improving that Act when the amending Bill is brought down I shall be very pleased to do it.

Mr. HODGE: There was an opportunity of doing it when it was brought down before.

Mr. COYNE: I was not given an opportunity, but if the Bill is brought forward I will do the best I can to make the Act a better measure. I am not going to take up any more time, and as I think my time has nearly expired, I will give somebody else a chance.

Mr. CAINE (*Bowen*): In supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I would first like to congratulate the mover and seconder on the excellent way in which they have performed their task, particularly for the practical common-sense matters which they brought forward in their respective speeches. The Government are to be commended on their programme and proposals as contained in His Excellency's Speech. The country is to be congratulated, as the Speech informs us, on the excellent seasons we are now being favoured with, and in particular on the good fortune which has recently come to the Darling Downs, which for so long a time previously was threatened with a series of drought when the rest of the country had been so highly favoured. I notice a reference in the Speech to the commission appointed to inquire into the meat industry, and I trust that at no distant date public abattoirs will be established, so that we may get into line with the other leading centres of Australia. We have in this and in some other matters been distinctly behind the times, and I trust that we shall in that direction make up for what I regard as lost time. A good deal has been said with regard to the tramways, and there is a reference in the Speech to the matter of extensions of the lines. These are important in the interests of the community. I trust that legislative enactments will be introduced which will, while these extensions are made, safeguard the public interests when ultimately taking over the lines, should it at any time appear desirable. I noticed one matter on which the members of the Opposition have commented strongly—and that I take to be a serious omission from the Speech—a reference to the fact that Mr. Badger, or the Tramways Company, are not prepared to carry the "Standard" newspaper. I hear there is some trouble of that sort, and we have a suggestion practically from the other side that a matter of this nature should have found its way into this all-important Speech.

Mr. COYNE: Who said that?

Mr. CAINE: I take it that that is practically the substance of the remarks of hon. members opposite. (Opposition laughter.) I have listened with some interest to the remarks of the hon. member who has just

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sat down, and it appears to me that he is endeavouring to rake up the matter of the great strike last year, which I thought had gone to rest at last, and I think it is time that it should. If the hon. member wants to know what is the result of that strike so far as its influence on the elections is concerned, I would refer him to the remarks of Mr. Bamford, who has been lately returned for the Herbert in the Federal Parliament. That gentleman has publicly stated that the result of the tramways strike was that the Liberal party gained ground considerably.

Mr. COYNE: Of course, it did; that is what I say.

Mr. CAINE: We are told to-day that the effect of that strike is that we have suffered in the recent elections, but it is nothing of the kind. In referring to that strike I notice that the hon. member for Warrego, in supporting his contention, took an instance that was not in any way parallel—of someone holding a knife to his throat. The trouble which existed in that case was not one that required immediate correction. There was no urgency in the matter, and therefore there was no justification whatever for a step being taken by a party which was absolutely at variance with the programme of that party, which programme supported the reference to arbitration courts of matters in dispute.

Mr. COYNE: Why, the thing is not settled yet.

Mr. CAINE: That, I take it, is clearly the position, and therefore there cannot in any way be any justification for the action that was taken, and I hope that the matter will be laid to rest. I am not anxious as far as this party is concerned; but the party opposite took such misplaced and wrong action in connection with that strike, that, out of respect for them, I should like to see their attitude in that case laid to rest with the whole subject. I notice a reference to the subject of education, and we must indeed be very glad to find that the work of educating our children in the high schools is proceeding satisfactorily. An excellent move has been made in that direction; and I should very much like to see, at no distant date, a training school established. From the remarks in the Speech, it would appear that even if we are not going to have that brought about, we are, at any rate, going to have steps taken which will enable us to have teachers better trained for their work than they are at present. I noticed a remark which fell from an hon. member on the other side with regard to education, and I thought there was a good deal in it—that in schools in the country, particularly the unsettled portions of the country—I am not casting any slur on the department—we often find that teachers have charge of these schools without any opportunity of being themselves trained, and are quite incapable of imparting the knowledge they have. It seems to me that it would be better if more of these teachers were located in the bigger centres, where they would have an opportunity of being taught by competent teachers, and that there should be in the country a greater proportion of teachers who have some knowledge themselves of the art of teaching others. I see also a reference in the Speech to the important matter of mineral oil, and I hope that the result of the investigations by experts which are to take place in this direction will be satisfactory. Nobody can deny that it is

important that we should discover mineral oil. Its uses are so apparent that one does not need to refer to them. This subject reminds me of the railway to Mount Mulligan. I trust that plenty of coal will be obtained from the mine at Mount Mulligan of excellent quality, and that the construction of the railway will prove highly beneficial to the Railway Department and to the country generally.

Mr. GILLIES: Make it a State mine.

Mr. CAINE: I do not think so. We want moderation in everything, and I do not want to see everything taken up as a nationalised industry. I do not want every private concern to be handed over to the control of the State. I feel it is necessary—just as other members do—to refer to matters of local interest. We often hear references to “the parish pump,” but I submit we have every right to refer to matters affecting our own constituencies, so long as what we ask is not at variance with the public interests. I take it, it is a duty we owe to our constituents and to the State to do so. If we do not take an interest in the progress of our own constituencies, undoubtedly the State will not be likely to progress. We also have a coalfield in the Bowen electorate. At the present time that field is being prospected with a view to development, and so far as the quality of the coal and the apparent extent of the seam is concerned, the prospecting has proved highly satisfactory. We have been assisted by the Government by a subsidy, and I look forward to further assistance being provided on this year's Estimates. If we can prove the existence of really good coal, we are sufficiently close to railway communication to make the coal of distinct use to North Queensland. I firmly believe that the results will be satisfactory, and, if they are, we shall be justified in looking to the Government for assistance in the way of providing us with railway communication. Reference is made in the Speech to the prickly pear, which is undoubtedly a national calamity. There is no need for me to refer to it, as other hon. members know so much more of it, to their sorrow, than I do. We cannot possibly do too much in attempting to cope with the pest, and I was very pleased to hear the high compliments which have been paid to the hon. member for Toowong for the excellent work he did in introducing a Bill to deal with the pest. I am pleased to know that that measure is bearing fruit, and I trust that we shall find others coming along and working on the same lines.

Mr. COYNE: I hope you are not referring to prickly-pear fruit.

Mr. CAINE: We so often find, when a good honest attempt is made by the Government to safeguard the country from a calamity, that their efforts are received with sneers from the other side; but I do not suppose that will lead the Government to hesitate in taking any step which they believe is for the country's benefit. With regard to the Lands Department, I quite realise that the heads of the department are working excellently, and they are to be commended; but it seems to me that we do not do as much as we should, and as much as other countries, like Canada, are doing to encourage people to come here and settle on our lands. It may be that we are handicapped in some way; but I would certainly

like to see more done than we are doing. I would like to see more free homesteads and more land opened as homesteads. It seems to me that too great a proportion of our agricultural lands are opened to selection as agricultural farms with the object of collecting revenue; and it would be better to collect less revenue and encourage desirable men to settle on the land. By offering land as homesteads, men would have less to pay, but we would be far more likely to promote settlement, and there would also be the advantage of insisting on their going on the land for a fixed period. As an hon. member on the other side said, there appears to be a great deal too much delay in opening land for selection. I cannot put my finger on the exact cause of the trouble, but the trouble exists. I cannot see exactly how it is to be remedied; but I would like to see it remedied. I feel that more can be done in the way of seeing that selections are opened more readily for the public, and in larger numbers. If the difficulty is that there are not enough surveyors, that is a difficulty that time will mend, as I understand a number of surveyors are now being trained.

Mr. RYAN: A lot of surveyors are now idle.

Mr. CAINE: There are one or two things not referred to in the Speech which strike me forcibly. One is the matter of water conservation. I have heard hon. members on the other side commenting adversely on the working of the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act. If there is anything in what they say, I am sorry to hear it. I must say that it is an excellent measure in one respect, in that it provides in Part III. for the constitution of water areas. In my own electorate, at Inkerman, on the south side of the Burdekin River, we have a district which is eminently suitable for carrying out an irrigation scheme, and there is a large area of excellent land there which has been selected from the Crown at a high price—to my mind at too high a price. That is a very suitable place for the constitution of a water area, so far as levels and grades are concerned, provided the Government are prepared to render assistance in the shape of funds. An application in that direction has been made to the Government, and it has not been turned down. On the contrary, the Government are assisting very materially. A sum of £150 is being spent in obtaining a full report. A preliminary report was highly satisfactory, and I feel satisfied that the fuller report will also be satisfactory, and I hope the Government will assist us. Mr. Drysdale is erecting a large mill on the south side of the Burdekin at very considerable expense. The mill is well situated so far as regards the lands which are suitable for irrigation are concerned, but it is not to be expected that private enterprise will provide the funds that are required to enable the men on the land there to get irrigation plants. Without an irrigation plant they cannot get out of the land what is in the land, and, as poor men are not in a position to find the money required for that purpose, it is absolutely necessary that they should have assistance in that direction. I hope that when a definite application is made to the Government in this matter, they will make a good step forward in the way of providing the necessary funds and taking what will be

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perhaps the first step of any magnitude in establishing a water area and providing the necessary funds to secure irrigation plant under the provisions of the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act. With regard to railways, it is quite evident that good progress is being made with their construction. I should like to see the same rate of progress continued. I am not one of those who would like to see the Government go ahead this year and then slow down next year. Their policy is to continue railway construction at an average rate, and I think that is a good policy. It will be a good thing for the State to continue the present rate of construction. I was rather surprised to hear the hon. member for Townsville make a remark to the effect that we should slow down this work. We do not want to slow it down; we want to keep it up. While on this subject, I wish to refer to the railway from the Proserpine to Mackay, which is part of the North Coast Railway. I understand that before long steps will be taken to have the bridge over the Pioneer River on the way from Mackay to Proserpine constructed, and I hope that steps will be taken at no distant date to start the railway at the Proserpine end, so that when the bridge is completed the line will be completed. I would suggest that work should be commenced at the Proserpine end when the bridge across the Burdekin River is completed—that is to say, when the railway from Bowen to Ayr is completed, which will probably be in August next. Of course, there are a number of other lines which have been dealt with recently, and which require to be constructed, and I hope those lines will be proceeded with in due course. The hon. member for Drayton, when speaking the other day, made reference in rather a derogatory fashion to the construction of a railway bridge over the Brisbane River, as in his opinion it was not in the interest of the man on the land. I should say that the construction of that bridge would be in the interest of many men on the land, and I firmly believe that it is a work which should be undertaken at no distant date. It is not a matter simply of local interest; it is a matter of interest to the State, and our railway system will be incomplete until we have that bridge built. At the same time, I realise that many other matters must be attended to before that work can be carried out, so that it cannot be commenced immediately. I have heard several members refer to the long-talked-of via recta railway, a matter which is entirely outside local interest. The construction of that line will bring a certain amount of increased traffic to the State, as it will enable us to reach New South Wales by a shorter distance. I was pleased to hear from the Premier that the construction of this line will be considered by the Government at an early date.

Mr. KIRWAN: He has been considering it for years.

Mr. CAINE: The Premier led us to believe that action will be taken in the matter, and I firmly believe that prompt action will be taken by the Government. Another matter I should like to refer to in this connection is that of extending our railway system along the coast to connect with the New South Wales railway at Murwillumbah, or whatever other point may be decided upon. I hope that as soon as the New South Wales Government are

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prepared to do their share in this work, our Government will be ready to do their share also, as the work is one of the utmost importance. Referring again to the proposed railway bridge over the Brisbane River, I would remind hon. members that twenty years ago this year we had very serious floods in the Brisbane River. We know perfectly well that we are going to have similar floods, or one nearly as bad again; that must come, and no proper attempt has been made during the past twenty years to minimise sufficiently the effects of floods caused by heavy rains. What has been done in the way of cutting off points in some reaches of the river may minimise the effects of floods to some extent, but that is not sufficient to guard against the great losses which floods entail. The direct losses from floods—the depreciation of the value of property and loss of business—are so great that they would be sufficient to carry out any work in the way of constructing a canal or other expedient to carry off the flood waters. Expert opinion was obtained soon after the last flood, but, unfortunately, that opinion was not acted upon.

Mr. RYAN: Would you go on with that work immediately?

Mr. CAINE: No, I am not suggesting that it should be gone on with immediately. I am referring to work which should be done in the future. There is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that one of these days the same trouble will come along, and will entail immense loss on the community, if we do not carry out works which will properly minimise the devastating effect of such visitations. I notice that among the Bills promised are a Stock and Produce Agents Bill and a Pure Seeds Bill. I am sure that those are measures in the interest of the man on the land, and I hope they will be in every way satisfactory as far as the purposes for which they are introduced is concerned.

Mr. GILLIES: You are a socialist.

Mr. CAINE: I am not a socialist, except in this sense—that I believe in the State controlling things in moderation. I always believe in taking a dose of medicine when it is good for me to do so, but I do not believe in living on medicine, as members on the other side of the House do. We should get very thin if we lived on medicine. The present Government of Queensland are quite able to provide a change of diet, and I think they are doing that in the very wholesome measures they bring forward from time to time. The Industrial Peace Bill is a very wholesome measure, and one that has done a great deal of good. When members opposite tell us that the Governor's Speech is devoid of matters of great concern, they pay a very high compliment to that important measure, which in last year's programme of the Government stood head and shoulders above everything else. So far as we can see, it is doing the good work we hoped and believed it would accomplish. Now, coming to the sugar question, a good deal has been said about this matter, and the Government are accused of being responsible for the serious delay that took place last year for not proceeding with certain measures

[5 p.m.] just at the time that the session had practically closed. I am satisfied that the Hon. the Premier's explanation was perfectly clear and satisfac-

tory—that it was too late to do anything at that time. But what is the position? We were offered one thing, and one thing only, and that was that for 1913 the excise and bounty would be abolished. If, as we might reasonably expect—seeing that the Federal Labour Government had plenty of money in hand—that Government had been prepared to treat us with liberality in respect to the years 1912 and 1911, then there might have been something in the matter of taking action quickly at the close of last year. I consider that the Government is going to do all that need be done in the matter by passing these Bills, now that they are assured that there is to be an equalisation of the excise and bounty this year.

Mr. GILLES: It is abolished.

Mr. CAINE: I believe I referred to the fact that it was abolished in my opening remarks on this subject, and when I said it was equalised it was merely a slip of the tongue, for which I hope I may be pardoned. The hon. gentleman who interjected often makes a slip of the tongue when he is speaking—at any rate, we will give him credit for the fact that it is only a slip of the tongue. (Laughter.) Coming to the question of sugar cultivation, this matter is being dealt with, and I will not refer to it further. I am very pleased to see that the Government are, at very considerable inconvenience and cost to the country, carrying out their part of the contract which they made with the Federal Government, and they are doing all that they can to see that the sugar-growers will get a fair chance to make a living. Touching on the matter of the Sugar Growers Bill, I quite agree with some hon. members that the time has come when we will have to provide cane price boards; but I realise the difficulty. I think the time has arrived for the establishment of such boards, and although I do not think the trouble exists in many centres, there are cases where it is necessary to deal with the prices of cane. There is one thing absolutely certain if this is brought about, and that is that such a board cannot deal with the prices for a particular district, but only with the prices for a particular mill. If it were proposed to have a board to fix the price of cane for a whole district, I should be against it at once. That would bring about the levelling up and levelling down process, which would not be satisfactory at all. It would mean that certain mills which could not afford it would have to pay a bigger price for their cane, and the result would be that the small—perhaps ill-equipped—mill would have to close down. It would also mean that the prices paid by larger mills, which could afford to pay more, would be brought down, and that would not be in the interests of the canegrower. I believe the time has come for such legislation, although it will not be required in many instances. I certainly believe that the best way to deal with this question is by separate and distinct legislation. The Government have entered into arrangements with the Federal Government to pass certain legislation, and I am glad that they are introducing that legislation separately. Reference has been made to the proposed erection of the Babinda and other mills, and I am glad that the Government are seeing their way to go on with the mill at Babinda, and the mills that they believe are required.

Mr. GILLES: They have gone back on Darrigi.

Mr. CAINE: With regard to Darrigi, what is the use of erecting a mill that can only deal with a small quantity of cane? If there is no business in it, what is the use of erecting a mill at Darrigi? The owner of a private mill would be able to pay a better price than a central mill of this kind.

Mr. GILLES: It does not work out that way.

Mr. CAINE: I am speaking of my own district, where the Pioneer Mill is able to pay a higher price for cane and make a bigger profit. That is the same as a man having a larger shop with a bigger turnover being able to sell cheaper and make a bigger profit. In the case of the mill they give a bigger price for the cane and make a bigger profit than the central mill, which does not treat so much cane. I am glad to see that that mill is to be erected, and I am sure that all along the Government have been as keen as anyone else with regard to the erection of these mills. It is no use erecting a mill if the result is to be against the growers and not at all to their interests to do so. We know that in some cases if a mill were erected ruin would stare the growers in the face. We know that if no steps to erect those mills had been taken, it would have been necessary, in some cases, to have paid compensation. It would be far better to pay direct compensation than to allow the growers to go ahead and give them a mill which would keep them back for years to come. With regard to the Jarvisfield Mill, I am pleased to commend the Government for the action they have taken to assist the growers in the Burdekin district to the extent of agreeing to help them with two-thirds of the money required for the erection of a mill on the north side of the Burdekin River. I am not saying this because it is in my electorate, but that wonderful delta country in the Lower Burdekin district produces probably the finest sugar-cane in Queensland. We have excellent land there, and if you want water all you have to do is to turn on the tap. With the facilities for irrigation, I say that men who can find the irrigation plants soon get a return for the cost in the increased amount of their cane crop. I cannot too highly commend the Government for the step they have taken in that direction. There is plenty of room there for the two new mills. Messrs. Drysdale Brothers have the mill on the south side of the river, and there is sufficient room for this mill on the north side. It will certainly ensure the progress of the district. There is plenty of scope for more cane to be grown there, and with the new mill there will be another market for the cane, which is another good feature so far as the district is concerned. (Hear, hear!) Before leaving the sugar question, I have a word or two to say about the Proserpine Mill and other mills under the control of the Government. I commend the Government and the general manager, Dr. Gibson, for the way these mills are being conducted, but I would point out that the position appears to be unsatisfactory at the present time to the growers at Proserpine. This mill and the other mills under the control of the Government were foreclosed upon by the Government about six years ago.

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Hon. R. PHILP: Before that. A long time before that.

Mr. CAINE: They were foreclosed on some years ago, and about five or six years ago a definite programme was arranged by which the mill was taken over absolutely by the Government, and an arrangement was made as to the terms upon which the growers would be paid for their cane. These terms are that the interest on the amount due to the Government is to be paid, and an additional sum, bringing the total up to £4,200 or £4,300, is to be paid as redemption. Then, if there is any surplus in the way of profits, half of that amount goes to the Government, and the remaining half goes to the growers to be divided pro rata.

The TREASURER: Don't forget that the half that goes to the Government goes in liquidation of their debt.

Mr. CAINE: Quite right, but the growers have to look twenty or twenty-five years ahead before the mill becomes their property, and it does not at present enhance the value of their property. That is to say, their property would be worth just as much if the Government were to run the mill as a Government concern like the railways.

Hon. R. PHILP: What is the base price?

Mr. CAINE: There is a base price fixed each year. Last year it was 13s. per ton.

Hon. R. PHILP: What did Drysdale pay?

Mr. CAINE: Mr. Drysdale paid last year 17s. 11d., the year before 18s. 11d., to the growers who had signed his contracts, but the other growers only got 13s. per ton. Five or six years ago the position was better than it is to-day, as, with the increased wages, the sugar farmers have now very little chance, and I contend that they deserve every consideration, and, if possible, they should get a higher price for their cane. I would urge the Treasurer that on consideration of the request that I believe will be made to him formally, there should be fixed a definite amount to be repaid each year, so that in a fixed number of years, say twenty or twenty-five years, the full amount owing will be paid off. If that were done there will be this advantage: that the sugar-growers will know that after that amount is paid every sixpence will go to the growers. It will have that advantage to the growers, and it will have this advantage to the Treasury: that I believe it will induce the growing of cane on a larger scale.

The TREASURER: How will they manage when they make no profit at all?

Mr. CAINE: A year may come when they will make no profit at all, but I firmly believe that in no year—that is, as far as the returns to hand are concerned—has there been no profit made. Last year was a bad year, but we have no report of that year to hand yet, but up till then there was no year when the amount of redemption and interest was not paid, and in addition there was a profit. I might state that, as a matter of fact, the redemption has not been paid recently to the extent that they would like to have paid it. When the arrangement was come to there was an amount of about £55,000 owing on the mill, and there were some heavy arrears of interest, and those arrears of interest to the extent of about £23,000 have been wiped off, so that to all intents and purposes it was like part of the capital. To my mind, when the foreclosure took place, there should have been a capitalisation of

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the interest, and that would really mean that a little more than one-fourth of the debt existing has been paid off. I hope that the Treasurer will give serious consideration to the proposition.

The TREASURER: I will recommend my colleagues to allow you £10,000 if you take over the mill.

Mr. CAINE: The Treasurer is making a good proposition. I grant it is liberal, but unfortunately money is not at all free these times, and I firmly believe if he said £20,000 there would be the same difficulty. If money were free, it would be a good proposition and might be taken on.

The TREASURER: I told them that three years ago.

Mr. CAINE: I am now speaking of the present. What we want is that the growers should get as much as possible for the cane after paying to the Government such a definite sum as will enable the full amount to be paid off in a given number of years, and that time to be from twenty to twenty-five years. Another Bill that has been referred to in the Governor's Speech is the Elections Bill. We certainly want to see that the name of every man who has a right to vote is on the roll, and nobody else's name. We want our rolls to be clean. There is one suggestion that I would make. It might, perhaps, mean an expenditure of an extra sum, but to my mind it would assist in keeping the rolls clean, and that is that instead of having an annual revision court we should have a half-yearly court. I believe that would assist very much in purifying the rolls.

Mr. KIRWAN: Are you in favour of the police collecting the names?

Mr. CAINE: I am in favour of them being collected. I cannot say which is the best system; but certainly they should be collected. They are being collected at the present time, and I am not complaining of that system. It may be that the establishment of electoral rights would be a good thing. It may be that compulsory enrolment would be a good thing.

Mr. HUXHAM: And compulsory voting, too.

Mr. CAINE: These are matters that I think would tend to make our rolls purer. Then, of course, there is the question of seeing that a man votes as he wants to. Surely it would be wise, in cases where the surnames are different to do away with the christian name on the ballot-papers? It would be wise to have a uniform system of voting at both Federal and State elections, as the present system certainly helps to bring about greater difficulty to the uninitiated, and even to those who are initiated, and there is more likelihood of mistakes. Again, I think in our electoral Act there is no provision for a spoilt ballot-paper.

Hon. R. PHILP: Oh, yes, there is.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You are wrong there.

Mr. CAINE: I am glad to be corrected. The next thing is to see that those entitled to vote do vote, and that nobody else votes. The suggestion of reintroducing the postal vote with proper limitations is an excellent one. To my mind, there was no justification whatever for wiping out the postal vote. There were cases of sickness, and people at a distance and the like, where that postal vote should have remained. I know in my

electorate a man wrote and told me that he had ridden 45 to 50 miles each way to vote, and he spoke of his friends who had not cared to take on that arduous task. There is no doubt that in cases of sickness and the like, a postal vote should be provided for. Then again, there is the question of compulsory voting where contingent votes are allowed. In the Act at present it is provided that you may give a contingent vote where there are more than two candidates. What is the use of that? In my electorate there were about 476 votes recorded for the lowest candidate in 1909, and only twenty-six or thirty used the contingent vote. What is the use of that sort of thing? Until you say a man must record his contingent vote, it will be no good. Once you tell them they must use the contingent vote, as the Federal Parliament said they must vote for three men in the Senate elections—once you tell them they have to do it, they will learn how to do it, and you will know in that case who really receives the support of a majority of the electors, which, in many of each case, you do not know to-day.

Mr. MACROSSAN: How would you enforce that?

Mr. CAINE: By simply providing that where the contingent vote was not recorded the vote would be informal.

Mr. MACROSSAN: That would be suicidal.

Mr. CAINE: I do not think it would be suicidal. It is the same with the Senate ballot-papers. If you only vote for two members instead of three, the vote is informal.

Mr. GILLIES: There are three men to be returned.

Mr. CAINE: In this case you want to see who represents the majority of the electors.

Mr. MACROSSAN: A man might not care to vote for either of the other two candidates.

Mr. CAINE: A man might possess peculiar views, and, in that case, he would suffer; but in a majority of cases the people would do as they were asked. Take a parallel instance: Suppose there were only two members I cared to vote for for the Senate, I would have to vote for the three or else the vote would be informal. Then we come to the other matter of compulsory voting. I firmly believe that that will have to be reverted to. I quite realise that it is probably going to rebound against the party that introduces a measure of that kind, because there are always many people who are distinctly opposed to recording their votes. But it has got to be done sooner or later, and I think that it is the only way in which we are going to get a true expression of public opinion. Touching on the Elections Tribunal Act, to which reference has been made, I agree with other hon. members that we ought to do away with the sitting of assessors in these cases. I am not casting a slur at any hon. member of this House; but it is a very difficult task for any man outside of this House to keep out of his mind political prejudices, and I fail to see how, the moment a man comes inside the bar of this House, his mind and disposition changes. He must surely be human and may either be prejudiced in favour of his own party, or, perhaps, out of single-minded, puritanical motives or ideas, may even be prejudiced against his own party. There is another

matter to which I wish to refer in the same connection. Where our own returning officers are at fault, and through no other cause an Elections Tribunal case is brought about, is it reasonable for either one or other of the candidates, or both of them, to bear the costs of those proceedings?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

Mr. CAINE: I think the whole, or part of them, provided the judge so orders, should be paid out of consolidated revenue, or from whatever fund Parliament provides for the purpose. I do not think it should be borne by the candidates. There are one or two matters not referred to in the Governor's Speech to which I would like to call attention. One is the matter of a Bill for the more effectual punishment of fraudulent debtors. This has been brought before my notice by several Chambers of Commerce in my own electorate. Very often—and perhaps this is more noticeable in the country than in the towns—a man will come into the district and incur a debt, and will not pay although he can do so. I certainly think better punishment should be meted out to these persons, but I admit that I am not prepared to suggest the means to bring this about. If anyone can do so, I am sure he will have his name handed down to history, and he will have done excellent work; but the trouble is that if you are not careful you will bring about the punishment of the innocent, and probably allow the more careful or canny individual to escape. Another matter to which I wish to refer is the amendment of the Liquor Act. I certainly think that, so far as regards the matter which has been mentioned—the size of the rooms—those hotels which were already in operation at the time that the Act commenced should be allowed to continue somewhat as the old Act was. It is quite sufficient to provide a measure to deal with new buildings. If you have an Act as you have at present, it appears that you must carry it out to the very letter, even if a space of only 10 feet is in dispute. Another matter which I would like to see dealt with is the *bonâ fide* traveller.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CAINE: This was undoubtedly abused in the past; but I think it should be possible to devise some clause by which only a *bonâ fide* traveller could receive consideration; and by that I mean a man who has been put to very considerable pains or who is tired after a long and arduous journey. It is certainly a hard case with a man of that kind. I have seen where the shoe pinches during the last few weeks, because, when a man travels 30 or 40 miles along a hard road, working his passage, he may need some refreshment. At the same time, I see some difficulty in introducing an amendment that would meet proper cases and would not be abused. Touching on the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, a good deal of reference has been made to trusts. We know that there has been a wonderful lot of work put into this matter by the other side at election time, and, as some hon. members said, an attempt was made to draw a red herring across the trail. We know that the Federal Liberal party were willing to amend the legislation to give power where trusts were inimical to the best interests of the country, but the Labour Government wanted to keep something up their sleeve for election time, and

so would not accept the amendment. It can be made, and I hope it will be made now. Reference has been specially made to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. What is the use of the Federal Labour Government appointing a Labour Sugar Commission—in the main it is not unfair to say that it was a Labour commission—and after they have come along and given their honest opinion, because it happens not to be what the Federal Government wanted, to turn it down and say, in effect, "That is no good to us; we will not worry about the contents of that commission's report"?

Mr. GILLIES: That is not true.

Mr. CAINE: That is the attitude of, at any rate, many supporters of the Labour party.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is very different from the Government.

Hon. R. PHILP: Of members of the Government, too.

Mr. CAINE: Then there are the references in the Speech to irregularities in the voting at the recent election. I ask hon. members whether it was unfair or unreasonable to make it? Is it sarcasm on the part of hon. members opposite that they confess they cannot see the loopholes that the present system of Federal legislation provides? Do they seriously mean that they did not expect that there would be a lot of double voting? They must expect it. They say that there was double voting, but that 99 per cent. of it was on the side of the Liberals. Well, if that is so, it is strange that they have not been complaining before. Have they been ready to put up with 99 per cent. of the double voting being on the Liberal side, and not say a word? If so, they have put up with it very meekly.

Mr. HUXHAM: Who said that?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Warrego, this afternoon.

Mr. CAINE: We are told that it does not concern the State. Does it not concern the State when a matter is under consideration as to whether we are going to hand over our State absolutely to the control of the Federal Government? Does that not concern Queensland? Is it unreasonable for us to see that the rolls are clean? We have the right to point out a case which we think must bring about a glaring injustice. No revision of rolls, returning officers paid by results—that is not the thing that is going to bring about what we want—and no number on the ballot-papers, and no possibility of looking into any irregularities that occur; no chance that the man who did a wrong will be punished, because there is no opportunity of finding out who did it. This absent voting has been carried a bit too far. Men who we thought had passed away, and had gone out of political life, have suddenly emerged from the other side and recorded their votes quietly. We thought they had disappeared—had passed away; but they voted.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Silently?

Mr. CAINE: A very silent but a very effectual ballot.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They are some of the dead men's votes?

Mr. CAINE: As to finance, let us one and all congratulate the Treasurer and the Government on the excellent stroke he per-

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formed in getting the money we wanted on such good terms. Whether we

[5.30 p.m.] are on this side or on the other side, we must do it just the same,

and I was glad to hear the good wishes which came from the other side recently as to financing the debt that is to come upon us shortly and which we shall have to meet, which has been incurred in the past and been handed down by those who controlled the State previously. Then, a good deal has been said about the Savings Banks and that a mistake is being made with regard to it. What is the position? I submit that no mistake has been made—the Treasurer was quite right in maintaining control. Why should we have Commonwealth Savings Banks opened? Why did the Federal Government interfere? We have a lot of excuses given, but they contain no reason or justice. We are told, "Look what Tasmania has done?" Why did Tasmania do that? I have had the opportunity of discussing the matter with the leading members of that Parliament only the other day, and I was told that they had not altered their opinion that the Commonwealth had no right to interfere. The Hon. the Treasurer has pointed out why we would be unwise to hand over our control, and I am quite satisfied that he is right. In passing, let us rememr this: Here is only an instance showing us what the Federal Government will do. We were told at the election time, "Give us the power; we won't exercise it; we do not want it"; but the Federal Government had this power in regard to the Savings Bank, and they have shown that power where there was no need, simply to compete with the State, to take from us moneys which they will not deny we were spending wisely in advances under the Agricultural Bank, the Workers' Dwellings Act, and the like. Only this morning I was in one of the suburbs, when there were pointed out to me the very large number of cottages which are going up under the Workers' Dwellings Act, and it opened my eyes to the amount of good work that is going on here as well as elsewhere in this way, and with this competition it only means that we can do less work in that direction. We are told here that the party sitting opposite are the farmers' friends. Look at our platform, they say—State this, and State the other—nationalise everything. I take it they mean: Nationalise even the farms in the end. But they say very little about the leasehold idea. With regard to the land tax, I take it that their objective is to wipe out the exemption later on. Nationalise everything, and give preference to unionists.

Mr. HUXHAM: What about the honesty of the man in your profession—don't you deal with him?

Mr. CAINE: If there should happen to be a dishonest member of this honourable profession, sit on him hard. The party opposite say, "Look what we have got for you." It is just like a prescription. Just look at these nice little compounds; they are quite harmless. But they do not show the farmer the other matters; he, however, sees the prescription as a whole, and he says, "No, thank you; I am not going to swallow that sort of thing; I know what is good for me." They try not to show him everything, because they know that the farmer will get clean away from them as soon as he sees it. They refer to the farmers' party—the country party. What is

the idea? "The wish is father to the thought." It is a farmers' party, a country party—a Queensland party.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Where are they?

Mr. CAINE: On this side of the House, not disunited, but solid. (Opposition laughter.) They are working in the interest of the farmer, as a solid union; and working not only for the farmers but for the business people, the working men—for every man in Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

* Mr. HUXHAM (*Buranda*): I am very glad that the hon. member for Bowen referred to the question of the improvement of the Brisbane River, some difficulties in connection with which may be obviated in the future. It has not had the severe devastation through floods that we had in 1893. I think that what he has sketched in the matter, as far as the canal is concerned, is a far more feasible proposition than that dealing with the reservoir, because I think a canal may be a waterway whereby goods will be carried from the ocean up to the junction of the Bremer River, which will mean cheap freights, and be advantageous to those living in the vicinity of Ipswich. But when he goes further and speaks of the question of the *via recta*, I am with him there more than on the other question, because I recognise that the *via recta* is a most important undertaking which should have been carried out long ago; but as to its running into Brisbane, on that I have quite different views, because the congestion of traffic on the north side of the river is so great at the present time, and is likely to become greater as the years go on. I think we should have another system whereby our railways nearest the river on the south side should be concentrated on the south side. The south side has facilities for a railway which the north side has not got. There is splendid ground which could be utilised for railway purposes, and effectively bring about that Brisbane railway scheme which has been talked about, and which there has been very little done to bring about. I would also ask the Minister before they think of making the south side of the river the important centre for railway purposes which it deserves to be, to take into consideration the position of matters in the vicinity of the Fiveways at Woolloongabba. Within 500 yards of the Fiveways we have a railway intersecting no less than five streets, and it is time something was done to make a high-level crossing in that very congested centre to run into the Woolloongabba yard, and to be utilised for passenger as well as for freight trains. It is a standing scandal that we should have these railways running across five streets, on account of which there is every possibility of very serious accidents occurring, and I urge the Minister to remember when he is propounding the railway scheme that this is a matter of vital importance to the 120,000 people living in the vicinity of the metropolitan area. I recognise that we have to legislate for the welfare of human beings, and it is from that point that I regret that the Governor's Speech does not contain that which is so essential for the welfare of the people; but I will deal with that later on. It is bare of social legislation which we on this side claim that it should contain—and when I say that I do not assume that we have all the virtues on this side personally; but as far as our party is concerned

I maintain that our programme has that which is soundest, and which should be carried into operation at the earliest possible moment. Our leader spoke most emphatically on the advantage which would accrue to the farmers by following our programme, because there is something substantial in it, and I maintain that he was not at all going beyond what he should have done in stating that the farmers will get greater advantages from this side of the House than are offered to them on the other side. Of course, we have the land tax and the leasehold system brought up against us, but we do not hesitate to say that future generations will see that our policy in regard to the land tax is the soundest one, because they will recognise that as all wealth comes from the land, the land should carry the burden of taxation. I want to say, in justice to the country party—I want them to recognise that although we advocate this as strongly as we do, we do not say that we have all the virtue on this side of the House, and that there is no virtue on the opposite side. I freely admit that there are many hon. members on the other side who, were it not for the party system, would vote with us oftener than they do, and I would like to see some system whereby there would be a better feeling in regard to these matters, and we should not be divided on party lines as we are at present. At the same time, I am in favour of the Labour platform, and believe it to be the soundest policy which can be devised for promoting the welfare of the people of Queensland. So far as the Governor's Speech is concerned, I am very much of opinion that the Speeches which are placed in front of us are chiefly in the nature of tinkling cymbals. Those measures which it suits the Government to put through are put through, and those measures which it is not convenient for them to put through are shelved. I maintain that we should deal with the business set forth in the Governor's Speech on the same lines as we deal with any business concern. The Government should say, "Here is the business we want you to put through. You have five or six months in which to work, and we shall expect you to complete the business, and nothing extraneous will be introduced save matters of great public urgency." Measures which are not put through one session should be picked up and passed the next session until the whole programme is completed. That is a fair proposition. Last night the hon. member for Paddington animadverted on the Government for not reintroducing the Bill dealing with our foreshores which the Treasurer introduced last session. I know the Treasurer spoke strongly in support of the Bill last session, but we see no evidence of any intention on the part of the Government to proceed with it this session. Has any sinister influence been at work that a Bill of such importance to the community has been dropped? Is it a fact, as the hon. member for Paddington suggested, that someone has been pulling the strings and the Government are frightened to bring it in? Is there some legal objection? If there is, let it be stated. The measure is of such great importance that it might very well have been brought in this session. No measure promised in a Governor's Speech should be dropped in that way. In the case of a private concern, if any business on the agenda-paper is not dealt with at a board meeting, it is brought

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up at the next meeting, and either completed or else deliberately dropped, but it is never simply passed over. That should be the way in which the policy of a Government should be dealt with. My leader referred to two serious omissions from the Speech. One of them was the omission of all reference to the Murphy's Creek railway disaster. That was a matter of such importance that there should have been some expression of regret in the Speech at the disaster, and there should also have been a statement that ample provision would be made for those who were bereft of husband or father by the accident. The Premier certainly remarked that care has been shown, and I am bound to say that the Commissioner, when speaking to me about the matter, informed me that ample provision had been made for the time being, and the Secretary for Railways told me the same thing one day when we were travelling together from Ipswich.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I told you that the day after the disaster.

Mr. HUXHAM: That is so.

Mr. RYAN: The claims are not settled yet.

Mr. HUXHAM: But this is the point I wish to dwell upon: Valuable lives were lost in the execution of duty. It is sad enough for wives to lose their husbands and for children to lose their fathers, but it is our duty to see that the families of the men who lost their lives are paid the wages which their breadwinners were paid when in active work. They did not lose their lives through their own carelessness, but in doing their duty, and probably they saved many lives by the activity they showed, and nothing short of the provision I suggest is sufficient under the circumstances. I sincerely hope the Minister will see that that provision is made, because I can assure him that on this side of the House we will back him up in every possible way, and I do not suppose that my appeal will meet with any opposition from those who are following the Government. Full wages should be paid so long as the widows remain unmarried and until the children arrive at an age when they can help themselves, and that I should say would be when they are somewhere about twenty-one years of age.

Mr. RYAN: That is their common law right.

Mr. HUXHAM: That is so. But, if there were no common law right in the matter, those people have a moral right to have this provision made for them, and I sincerely hope their claim will not be overlooked, because we are prepared to do the right thing by men who served the State well. My leader also dealt with the question of social work, and stated that the Speech was bare in that direction. I recognise that something has been done, but not sufficient. The Friendly Societies Bill, the Factories and Shops Bill, and the report of the Meat Commission may affect the people advantageously; but the one great need is in the direction of education. I am glad that the Secretary for Public Instruction is present, because I wish to point out to him the gross injustice that is being done to the children living in the metropolitan area by not having high schools similar to those which have been established in other centres. Why should the children in certain communities be penalised because in times gone by grammar schools were established in those communities and

subsidised by the State? Not many people can afford to send their children to our grammar schools. It is a great mistake allowing our children to leave school semi-educated, and expect them to fight the battle of life before they are properly equipped for doing so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The matter is being considered.

Mr. HUXHAM: It should be dealt with almost immediately.

Mr. MURPHY: You do not want the outside people to be neglected, do you?

Mr. HUXHAM: I do not want to neglect the outside people one bit, but the hon. member for Burke must remember that we are legislating for human beings. I am quite prepared to admit that the people on the outskirts have not all the advantages we have about here, but while greater facilities should be given for educating the children in the outside districts, high schools should be provided for the children here. I recognise that members on this side of the House, with all their advocacy, cannot hope to improve the condition of the people as they desire, unless greater facilities are granted for their intellectual development and the education of their characters. I believe that such development and education will be achieved by the establishment of high schools and by sending more itinerant teachers of more than ordinary capacity into the bush districts to give attention to the children there. We have established a University in the State, and greater facilities than are now offered should be granted to our children to pass through the University easily. My boy went in for the University junior examination, and I paid a small fee to enable him to enter; but when he came home recently he told me that the fee for the senior examination had been raised to £2 and the fee for the junior examination to £1 5s. Fortunately, I can afford to pay that examination fee; but how many working people in the community are able to pay it? We should see that the fee for entrance to both the senior and junior examinations are well within the means of ordinary members of the community. Many a time a person, possibly a widow, will deny himself or herself the comforts of life in order that a son may obtain a good education; but if you are going to charge a widow £1 5s. or £2 examination fee, her boy will have a very poor chance of securing the advantages of a University training. I think it would be a right thing in the interests of the struggling poor to reduce the fees, and that they should be reduced as soon as possible, so that the children of poor persons in the community may not be prevented from going up for examination simply because they cannot pay the high fees fixed by the Senate of the University. I was very pleased to hear the speech of my friend the hon. member for Fassifern. It is gratifying to anybody who is troubled with nerves when addressing an audience—and I have not got over that trouble—to know that he acquitted himself with so much credit. The hon. member is to be congratulated on the manner in which he dealt with the various subjects he discussed; but I would point out to him that he dealt with an old chestnut when he spoke of the reduction of our expenditure by £4 8s. per capita. The per capita business was played out long ago. It is not a good basis for

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an argument. I know we often speak of our wealth as being so much per capita, but what an anomaly! A man strikes a good patch—a goldmine—and he pays twenty or thirty men £2 or £3 a week each for digging out the gold, while he is possibly making £30,000 a year. He gets all the buns, and the men do all the graft; and yet we say the wealth there is so much per capita. That is a mistaken way of estimating the wealth of those men; and I maintain that we are equally mistaken when we take the deposits in our Savings Bank and say they represent, on a per capita basis, the financial position of the people. I know that in the old days a depositor got interest on £200 only, and that if he had £500 in the Savings Bank he got nothing for £300. Now a depositor can get interest on £500 in the State Savings Bank, and the Commonwealth Savings Bank will give him interest on another £200, so that a person who has that much money at his disposal can get interest on £800. I know that I should do that; but how can working men get that amount of money to deposit in the Savings Bank?

Mr. TROUT: You are a capitalist.

Mr. HUXHAM: Hon. members on this side are not members of the Labour party because they are all dependent for their living on the work of their hands, nor is that the case with workers in the same cause in the United States and in the old country, for we know that millionaires have sacrificed themselves and their positions for the benefit of the people. The Labour movement—the Socialist movement—is not a movement in which you have only workers in the ordinary sense of that word, but embraces all classes. If some of us on this side have a few more pounds than the persons we represent, we are not one whit less sincere in our advocacy of the platform of the party and not one whit less devoted to the cause. The advent of our leader to the Labour movement has done a great deal to cause the Labour party to be looked upon as something more and better than a mere class party. He could have taken his place on the other side of the House; but he is prepared to stand here because he believes that in doing so he is performing a public duty, and I believe that does him as much honour as if he were raised to the bench by the Government sitting on the other side. I wish now to deal with a few remarks which fell from the hon. member for Port Curtis and some observations made by the hon. member for Bowen, Mr. Caine. The hon. member for Port Curtis said emphatically that he was in favour of compulsory voting. Speaking for myself, and without committing my party in any way, I would say that I am absolutely with him. In my opinion, compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting are most essential.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: How could compulsory voting be carried out?

Mr. HUXHAM: I will tell the hon. member on what lines I would carry it out. When a man is summoned to act as a juror, his only excuse for non-attendance is a medical certificate, and if he does not turn up and has not sent a medical certificate of his inability to attend he is fined heavily.

Mr. MURPHY: Suppose he votes two or three times? (Laughter.)

Mr. HUXHAM: That is another matter, and there would be machinery to deal with such cases. But, although I would compel a man to go to the poll, I do not say he should be compelled to vote for a candidate. If he went there, he might give an informal vote. Introduction of compulsory voting would be the most economical way of conducting our election campaigns. The people would recognise their responsi-

[7 p.m.] bilities, and the State would be saved a lot of money if this were brought about. If the Government were generous enough to provide a fee for voting, then it would be found that the people were so interested in the Legislature that they would be at the polls quick enough in order to earn the fee. The question of a fee of 5s. for each vote recorded to be paid out of the consolidated revenue would mean a very economical expenditure on the part of the State. Then, so far as the candidates themselves are concerned, they would not have to address so many meetings, and would not have to bother at all about arranging for a canvass of electors. I know that it would be very difficult for any Government to undertake a matter of this sort, because there is so much opprobrium attached to anything in the shape of compulsion that the people resent it very much. All the same, our experience, so far, has been there is a lot of compulsion in this world that we have to put up with. We have compulsion applied to us so far as the preparation of income tax returns is concerned, and also with regard to serving on juries, and in a thousand and one different ways. But any objection to it should not be a factor to make the Government hesitate to do the right thing in bringing about a reform in compulsory voting. After dealing with the question of compulsory voting, it brings me to another matter referred to by the hon. member for Port Curtis, and that was his great concern for the Brisbane Tramways Company. I do not know of anything of more importance that the hon. member could have spoken about. We have only got to hark back to the very active part many of us took in the affairs of 1912, when I myself took a place amongst my comrades in trying to bring about an adjustment of the differences that should never have arisen owing to the action of the management of the Tramways Company. A great deal of blame was attached to this side for the action we took on that occasion, but I remember reading in Victor Hugo's book, "Les Misérables," in the early chapters of that fine work, where it said most emphatically—

"He is not guilty who commits the sin, but he who casts the shadow."

On this occasion the one who cast the shadow was the manager of the Brisbane Tramways Company. He could have got over the serious trouble that then took place if he had only met his employees in the same way that men engaged in other industries meet their employees on industrial boards to talk over their differences with regard to wages and conditions of employment. But he would not have any such thing, and the result was the turmoil of 1912, which will live long in the memories of many, and certainly will not be to the discredit of this party. I am perfectly certain that the incidents which arose over that unfortunate affair, for which Mr. Badger was solely to blame, will not be forgotten

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by those who were interested in the matter, no matter how young they may be now. There is this point I want to emphasise in connection with the strike of 1912: Many charges have been made against this party for the inhumane attitude that was adopted in regard to the supply of foodstuffs during the strike. The Treasurer referred to it yesterday, and said that we had no concern for the primary producers when we would allow their produce to rot rather than it should be handled. It was most unfortunate that that incident should have arisen. There was also another charge made in regard to the preventing of ice being supplied to the hospitals for the benefit of the sick there. That has been referred to over and over again, and we justified the position which we took up. The point I wish to dwell upon is in reference to this question of ice. An incident took place in connection with a patient at the Diamantina Hospital who was suffering from hemorrhage following on a severe illness, and some ice was required for him.

Mr. COYNE: Were the hospitals short of ice at the time of the strike?

Mr. HUXHAM: No, they were not. The case I referred to, if it could not be read by members in the "Telegraph" or "Courier," could be seen in the columns of the "Daily Standard" of yesterday's date. There was a consumptive in the hospital who was suffering from hemorrhage. One of the officials was sent to get some ice from Birt and Co., and on getting the parcel he boarded a tram, but was ordered off and told that he could not be allowed to carry the ice on the tram, although a full explanation was made of the circumstances. It seems to me that these things can be brought up against the people who took part in the strike of 1912—

Mr. COYNE: And which were not true.

Mr. HUXHAM: And which were not true—but an incident of more modern date—only yesterday—we find that callousness was shown on the part of Mr. Badger in not allowing ice to be carried on his tramears to one of the patients at the Diamantina Hospital.

Mr. RYAN: Shame!

Mr. KIRWAN: What about the Treasurer's heroics now.

Mr. GILDAY: Are you listening, Mr. Home Secretary?

Mr. HUXHAM: If the tramways were under municipal or State control, we would not have incidents of that sort happening, but facilities would be rendered in such a way that the necessary provision would be quickly granted. In Mr. Badger's case he is simply looking after his own personal interest without considering the needs of the community at all. Why, I think the travelling public of Brisbane is the greatest boon that Badger has got. Last year the company declared a dividend of 8 per cent., and on top of that a bonus of 10 per cent. was declared, making 18 per cent. in all. The hon. member for Port Curtis asked how often that dividend had been declared. It only wants to be declared for about five times and the whole of the capital is wiped off, and the asset still remains. What I want hon. members to remember is this: They must not think that Mr. Badger is

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the only one individual to be considered. It is the people who are making the dividends who ought to be considered. (Hear, hear!) I again remind the hon. member for Port Curtis that "It is not the one who is guilty who commits the sin, but the one who casts the shadow." Mr. Badger was certainly the one who cast the shadow in 1912.

Mr. KESSELL: Is the tram service a good one?

Mr. HUXHAM: The service is a very poor one.

Mr. KESSELL: You are no judge.

Mr. HUXHAM: I have travelled over the tramlines of Brisbane more than the hon. member for Port Curtis, and, as I stated by interjection when certain remarks were made about the Tramways Company, on certain lines it is like travelling over a switchback, and any man liable to seasickness will experience that feeling when travelling over the line from Breakfast Creek to the Valley junction.

Mr. KESSELL: It is a first-class service, and you know that.

Mr. HUXHAM: Don't talk nonsense.

Mr. MORGAN: Where is there a better service?

Mr. HUXHAM: In Sydney.

The HOME SECRETARY: Sydney! What nonsense!

Mr. HUXHAM: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. MORGAN: Ours is the best service in Australia.

Mr. HUXHAM: I like hon. members to have a good opinion of the country and city in which they live, as it is a nice feeling to have, but it is unwise for us to be unjust when we find better conditions prevail elsewhere, and we know the tram service here is not as well conducted as in the other States.

Mr. PETRIE: The experts say we have the best tram service in Australia.

Mr. HUXHAM: Some experts may say that, but that does not settle the case. However, to pass on. The Hon. the Premier, in speaking on the question of what was being done for the primary producer, referred to the great amount of good that had been done to the primary producer. Of course I have a different view as to who the primary producer is to what the Premier may have, because I look upon the farmer not so much the primary producer as the men and women workers of the community, and the point I want to dwell upon here is the question of providing adequately for those primary producers in the best sense of the term. The primary producers that I am interested in are the fathers and mothers of the community, and, taking them in bulk, I mean the working class. In the question of their progeny, we find not sufficient care is taken of their future as should be the case. I dealt with the question of education just now, but the point I want to dwell on is this: that where the father is dead and application is made to the Government for proper sustenance for the children, better provision should be made for them than we have done at the present time. We know much has been done, but in these times the

allowance that is made to mothers and foster-mothers is inadequate for the upkeep of their children. I was very pleased to hear His Excellency speak on this question at the last annual meeting of the crèche and kindergarten. His Excellency said it was pitiable to think that the mothers had to put their children into the crèche while they were at work, but, under the present order of things, it was the best that could be done. I maintain that a better order of things should prevail at the present time. These unfortunate mothers are separated from their children and have not that maternal care of them that is necessary to bring them up as good citizens. Although they are put under the care of a tender class of people who will care for them, still I maintain it is the duty of the mother to look after her own children, and for that very reason I say that when application is made and granted by the Home Department, certainly a larger sum of money than 5s. a week for one child, and 4s. per week for each subsequent child, should be granted. Then, again, in the case of foster-mothers, I think 8s. a week for infants under two years of age, and 6s. a week for children over two years of age, is too little to pay, considering the high cost of living that prevails at the present time. We all know that the cost of living, notwithstanding what the hon. member for Drayton said to the contrary, has gone up very considerably. Sugar, some seven or eight years ago, was 2d. per lb., bread was 3d. per loaf, and house rent was about 7s. a week for what you have to pay 14s. a week and more now. You might take the average increase all round at not less than between 30 per cent. and 40 per cent., and I am under the mark rather than over it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And the farmer is getting less for his produce.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am not speaking about the farmer getting less. It is not the fault of the community, because they are paying more.

Mr. COYNE: It is eaten up by the trusts.

Mr. HUXHAM: I maintain that to meet the additional expenditure that foster-mothers and mothers have been put to, the allowances that are given at the present time should be increased by at least 50 per cent., and, in fact, as far as the mothers are concerned, I maintain that they should have an equal amount to that given to foster-mothers. In an extract that I read the other day from a French newspaper, it was stated that the best provision that could be made for the care of our children was that the mother should have constant oversight of them, and this cannot be when the mother gets such a small allowance, and who, because of her maternal feelings has to work, and work hard. She is thereby deprived of the duty of properly caring for her children because the State does not amply provide for these primary producers. I am very glad that the leader of the Opposition spoke in the strain that he did, because he echoed the feelings of the whole of this side of the House—that more provision should be made for widows who need State assistance, and certainly ample provision should be made for the children at that trying time of life, and I sincerely hope that, notwithstanding the

statement in the Governor's Speech, that "The increased and increasing cost of government calls for the close scrutiny of expenditure," we will be prepared to sacrifice ourselves a bit that we might adequately provide for those unfortunates who are not able to live on the small pittance that is given. The position is sufficiently acute at the present time to make me feel that it is my bounden duty to urge on the Home Secretary, on behalf of the people who are experiencing privation, to give them adequate assistance. Anyone who goes through the experience that I go through about two days in the week will realise what I say is necessary. At one place I visited last Monday week one unfortunate woman is paying 14s. a week rent for a place which reminds me very much of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," where Tennyson speaks of "the warrens of the poor." I think they should get an adequate sum of money to provide for the children.

Mr. MORGAN: Can you suggest a remedy?

Mr. HUXHAM: Yes, provide for them.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Provide Government cottages.

Mr. MORGAN: Won't they have to pay rent if they have Government cottages?

Mr. HUXHAM: Yes, they would, but at the same time they would be cottages worth living in, and they would not be under the impost they are under at the present time. You don't pay as much under the Workers' Dwellings Act. Apart from that, how many people can take advantage of the Workers' Dwellings Act?

The PREMIER: 1,868 houses have been erected under it.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am not saying that much good has not been done, but who benefits by it?

Mr. KESSELL: The workers.

Mr. HUXHAM: Certainly not those who need it most. The woman who has to go out charing—what chance has she of getting the 25 per cent. deposit required for a house? It might be very well for the artisan who has been in constant work, or the young fellow who is about to be married, but the man who is married and has a large family is unable to save the 25 per cent. required under the Workers' Dwellings Act. It is beyond a man who is married and has a family to find 25 per cent. of the value of a building under that Act. And I maintain that if the Government wants seriously to grapple with the question, it is for them to do as they have done in New South Wales—erect dwellings for the benefit of those who need it most.

The PREMIER: The rent of those dwellings is far higher than the payments under the Workers' Dwellings Act.

Mr. HUXHAM: However that may be, they do not average 14s. a week for those I saw, and the one is a place to live in and the other is a stable, like the place I saw on Sunday week. I am appealing to the Treasurer that, if there is to be any question of curtailment of expenditure, it should not be in the housing of our people and the maintenance of our children who need State aid. And I hope that the Home Secretary—and I know he is sympathetic on the matter—will do his best to insist that he gets ample funds

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to dispense assistance to those people who so sadly need it. One hon. gentleman was speaking the other night about rentals. We know very well that we must pay rentals to the people who have most money, and I am going through an experience just now which makes me think that the average landlord is not anxious to accept a very low rental. I am paying a pretty stiff rent for my place in Queen street, but I confess that when my lease expires—although by my activity in my business I have improved the place considerably—my rent will have been bumped up something between 60 and 70 per cent. And I think, therefore, that the people who have the conscience to raise rents so abnormally high as that are just the people who are able to bear the greatest share of taxation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is the land tax.

Mr. HUXHAM: The land tax does not bump up rents about 66½ per cent. in five years. That is a mere fleabite, in what they are called upon to pay. I know this much: that I am called upon to pay it and much more. I shall have to foot the bill. I sincerely hope that the landlord will be more fortunate in his incoming tenant than he was in me, by getting someone to pay the high rent he expects me to pay.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You meant you hope the incoming tenant will be more fortunate than you are?

Mr. HUXHAM: Yes; that the incoming tenant will be more fortunate than I have been.

Mr. KESSELL: You did not tell us that this afternoon when you were talking about Savings Banks.

Mr. HUXHAM: The little bit that I have in the Savings Bank will soon be all absorbed by paying a rent of about £1,000 a year.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You do not want the landlord to grab that?

Mr. HUXHAM: Not much! A great deal was said by the hon. member for Wide Bay about meat trusts. Now, if there is one thing that I am more pleased about than another it is the strong protest that was made by the people at the last election against trusts and combines, because I am perfectly certain that if a trust gets a hold here we should have just the same experience that they have had in America with it. I think we have had nothing more pointed than the fact that in the cables of yesterday or the day before yesterday we found that the big shipping companies are combining against the meat trust, so that the meat trust will not have it all their own way, and that arrangements have been made, on the opening of the Panama Canal, to get boats of a sufficient length and beam to pick up their cargoes and maintain a daily service between the Pacific and the east coast of America.

Mr. MORGAN: That is one trust fighting another trust.

Mr. HUXHAM: As a matter of fact, I am dealing with the meat trust just now, and I think it is the one that concerns us most. The Chief Secretary, in interjecting regarding the price of meat, said that the 1s. 7d. per pound which had been quoted was the price of porter-house steak. I have got a series of figures here in reference to the price of meat,

extracted from this well-known book by Charles Edward Russell; and it is looked upon as a good deal of an authority on what the meat trust has done. And although it was published in 1905, we have got to recognise that between then and the present time there has been a big advance in the market. In this book we find that the price of porter-house steak advanced from 1900 to 1905 by 40 per cent.; sirloin, 50 per cent.; round steak, over 20 per cent.; chuck steak, over 50 per cent.; prime rib, over 33 per cent.; hindquarter lamb, over 34 per cent.; leg mutton, 40 per cent.; rump corn beef, 50 per cent.; plate corn beef, over 57 per cent.; ham, 50 per cent.; bacon, over 63 per cent.; butter, 20 per cent.; cheese, over 14 per cent. And it is remarkable that, whereas in 1869 the producer was getting 6 dollars per hundred-weight, in 1904 he was getting only 4.50.

Mr. KIEWAN: And they say that is good for the producer.

Mr. HUXHAM: There was a drop of 25 per cent. so far as the producer was concerned, and there was a very considerable increase so far as the consumer was concerned. So I do not think we need waste many tears on having scotched the beef trust when we did in Queensland. And I think that the experience of the Southern States will have led them to take a different turn when next we face the referenda—because we shall have it again—and I hope we shall be able to get rid of them once for all. There is another matter to which I wish to refer, and that is the remark made by the hon. member for Wide Bay, that this trust is a benevolent concern, and that it is not an American trust. Those who have read this book, "The Greatest Trust in the World," will know that the meat trust never confined itself to any one name. It had a series of names, "The Big Six," as it was called. They were the Swift, Armour, Morris, National, Schwarzschild and Sulzberger, and Cudahy Companies. This "Big Six" had the entire population of America in its control, not only so far as the supply of meat was concerned but also so far as the dairy and produce market was concerned.

The PREMIER: The secret of their power was the control of transit.

Mr. HUXHAM: I was anticipating that, because a great deal has been made of it during this session.

The PREMIER: Russell puts it all down to that.

Mr. HUXHAM: How comes it that the big English shipping companies are fighting it as we are told? The trust only needs to maintain a trade as big as it can for the requirements of the country itself and discontinue exporting, and it means that it will have the control and fix entirely what price it is going to charge for meat. It is out to make money and nothing more.

Mr. TROUT: Is there a trust here at the present time?

Mr. HUXHAM: Yes.

Mr. TROUT: And you want to give preference to the trust that is already here?

Mr. HUXHAM: No; I do not. Because the American trust is trading here under

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another name, it is nothing but the meat trust. Now, let us find out what Russell says about this matter. He says—

"It is quite true that for some years the Swift and Armour Car Lines had maintained a show of competition, but after the formal launching of the Beef Trust as the National Packing Company, even this show was abandoned, and all the refrigerator-car lines of the packers, under whatever names, were operated practically as one. The names are Legion, and from them the uninitiated would never imagine the real ownership. Here are some of the titles—

Armour Group.

The Armour Refrigerating Line.
The Armour Packing Company.
Armour and Co.
Fruitgrowers' Express.
Kansas City Fruit Express.
Continental Fruit Express.
Boyd, Lyman, and Co.
Kansas City Dressed Beef Line.
Barbarossa Refrigerator Line.
Tropical Refrigerator Express.

Swift Group.

Swift Refrigerator Line.
California Fruit Transportation.
Continental Fruit Transportation.
Libby, McNeil, and Libby.

Morris Group.

Morris Refrigerator Line.
Nelson, Morris, and Co.
American Live Stock Company.
N. K. Fairbanks.

Hammond Group.

George H. Hammond and Co.
National Car line.
Anglo-American Refrigerator Line."

That does not end the number. In this book we have a list of what comprises trusts other than those I have given, but their names are so numerous, and they all bear the meat trust brand, that I do not think it is necessary to read them. At the same time, we know that these [7.30 p.m.] people operate in America in such a way that they have been inimical to the interests of the American proletariat; and it would certainly be the same if they were operating here; and I can quite conceive the possibility that the time will come when the American meat trust, or any other trust, can get such a grip of the Australian people that they are not able to easily deal with them.

The PREMIER: We can get the grip of them first.

Mr. HUXHAM: As a matter of fact, we find that there is a great deal of sympathy shown to these trusts. We do not find that the Government has taken any very active part against the Tramways Company in giving us what we are entitled to.

The PREMIER: It used to cost me 8d. a day to come in, but now I can do it for 4d. a day.

Mr. HUXHAM: That was in a former time to those days I came to town with the hon. gentleman, and I never paid 4d.

The PREMIER: You paid 4d. from the Junction.

Mr. HUXHAM: Oh, no; 3d. It was before, and rose after a time, but not at the time I am referring to.

The PREMIER: At first from the Junction it was 6d; now it is 2d. There is no question that as far as the service goes it is good.

Mr. HUXHAM: It is a monopoly at the present time. The Tramways Company has run off other means of passenger transit; they are the sole runners on the road, and it is up to our Government to see that, under the franchise which was granted, the Tramways Company provides ample accommodation for the people who are using it. You are enabling them to pay that handsome dividend of 18 per cent., which is too ridiculous a profit for anyone to make out of a public convenience.

Mr. TROUT: How many years were they running it before they paid any interest?

Mr. HUXHAM: Unfortunately, we cannot get the whole truth of the operations of the company, because they cover their tracks in such a way that nobody can get at their real balance-sheet so as to find out what profits they have made since they put the original capital into the concern.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What sort of wages do they pay?

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Not as good as they pay in New South Wales.

The PREMIER: My word they do—the best wages in Australia.

Mr. BOWMAN: All freedom taken from them.

The PREMIER: They are mighty happy, anyway.

Mr. HUXHAM: Whilst this fusillade is passing between members on both sides, I suppose I will be allowed an extension of time. (Laughter.) I want to refer to a matter with reference to the coal trade of this port. Some few years ago a rebate was granted, with regard to coal used for bunker and cargo, of 1s. a ton. I am stating my personal opinion on this matter, and not on behalf of my party. It was then dropped to 9d. a ton, then to 6d., then to 3d., and finally wiped out altogether. During the time that the coal trade was actively stimulated by these rebates, a great deal of work was thereby provided, and I would therefore ask the Government to consider the question—if they will not reinstate the rebate—of at least providing adequate accommodation for the shipping of coal along the South Brisbane wharves. We have one there at the present time, but it is inadequate for the purpose, and another crane should be installed. More trucks should be supplied for the carrying of coal from Bundamba to the wharves, so as to enable the portside workers who are handling coal to get more employment than there is at the present time. I regret that the time allowed me is exhausted. I hope that the suggestions I have given to the several Ministers will be taken up by them and put into practice at a very early stage.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, Mackay): The general trend of the remarks of members of the Opposition, with the exception of the hon. member who has just preceded me, I think,

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has been in the direction of a tone of keen disappointment that there is no rift in the ranks of the Liberal party.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am disappointed too. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member, in a tone of keenest regret, says that he is disappointed too, but he did not voice the disappointment. All the other members have combined in saying what an extremely valuable party the Labour party would be for the farmers and primary producers of the State if they could get into occupation of the Treasury benches.

Mr. COYNE: And they will be there right enough.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think that as the wheel of events turns, the Labour party of that day—and that day will be long distant—may possibly occupy the Treasury benches in this House. But I do not think they are likely to get the support of the primary producers by the programme that the leader of the Opposition put forward. The hon. gentleman stated that every question should be a State question. The hon. gentleman surely cannot know the man on the land intimately if he thinks that the settler, the farmer, and the primary producer in this State desires to have his business run by the State.

Mr. RYAN: I did not say any such thing. You are misquoting me.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Those people desire to run their business without State interference, if at all possible.

Mr. THEODORE: Do they run their own railways?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They do not run their own railways except through their representatives in the House, for the reason that it has been the policy of Queensland and of Australia generally, since railways were first started, that the running of railways, as with post and telegraphs, should be a Government function.

Mr. RYAN: Does not the Government interfere to provide clean seed, for instance?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is no question that the Government have interfered in that direction, but what is done in that case is that the Government take steps to see that pure seed is supplied to the farmers.

Mr. RYAN: We would supply it at cost price.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What would that cost price be?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The cost price of any article is what it costs to produce that article, and all the charges in connection with the production of that article must be added to the cost before it is sold to those who desire to have it.

Mr. RYAN: We will save the profit of the middleman.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: With regard to the burning question of the middleman, the primary producers have the matter entirely in their own hands. In the sugar industry many years ago, with the assistance of the Treasury, the sugar-growers took the matter into their own hands in the way of erecting mills for crushing their own cane, and, although I will grant that those mills have not been as purely co-operative

in their operations as they might have been, there is no question—and I speak with some knowledge on the subject—that the original intention of Sir Samuel Griffith, when he put the first £50,000 on the Estimates for building sugar-mills, the cane to be grown by white labour and the sugar to be manufactured by white labour, was that the enterprise should be purely co-operative. The two mills that were erected under that first scheme were at Mackey, and without a shadow of a doubt they were erected as co-operative mills, and all the mills erected by the Government under the Sugar Works Guarantee Act of 1893 were also supposed to be co-operative mills. But, as in all questions such as this, there were certain landowners who, for the purpose of enabling the mills to be built, pledged their lands to the Treasurer to make up the security, and that is how in the course of years it has turned out that some of the mills are not purely co-operative, and there are shareholders in those mills who do not grow cane for them.

Mr. RYAN: Do you think that is right?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Whether I think that is right or not is not the question I am debating; but I do say that any man who puts his property or his money into a concern for the purpose of starting that concern and for carrying it on as a business has a right to expect that that property or that money shall return him something on his investment.

Mr. FOLEY: Anything between 5 per cent. and 500 per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The leader of the Opposition referred to the middleman, and I am trying to point out an industry in which I have been largely interested during the whole of my life in Queensland, in which an attempt has been made to do away with the middleman. Then we come to the Central and the Southern parts of the State. How many co-operative butter factories are there in operation in those districts at the present time? A very large number; and the farmers—whether they be farmers growing general produce, or whether they be farmers in the dairying line—who desire to do their business through firms other than themselves have the matter entirely in their own hands. As hon. members know, I have been a strong advocate of co-operation for many years.

Mr. GILLIES: Should the State not assist?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The State has assisted the sugar industry co-operators to the tune of over £500,000, and the State assists those who desire to erect co-operative butter or cheese factories or flourmills to the extent of a large proportion of the capital that is required to erect the premises.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Up to 50 per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So that the hon. member's interjection only bears out what I have said—that those people who desire to get away from what is termed the middleman have every opportunity of doing so in this State. The leader of the Opposition also mentioned that in South Australia the Government have erected cold stores for taking produce from the farmers and dealing with it in those cold stores, and, by inference, it was stated

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that the Government of Queensland have done nothing in this direction for the primary producers of this State.

Mr. RYAN: By inference?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; by inference. The statement was not directly made. I would point out to the hon. member that quite a number of years ago the Railway Department has had cold stores at Roma Street Station, where large quantities of butter and other produce have been dealt with; and, in view of the expansion of the dairying industry generally, it was thought advisable last year that we should considerably increase that accommodation so as to provide cold storage for butter for export. We have not yet been able to get the machinery, but, when those cold stores are equipped with electric lifts, the cost will probably be something like £25,000. That does not include the cost of the buildings, but just the cost of the equipment and of altering the buildings that we had at Roma Street Station and making them suitable for the purpose for which they were intended and installing up-to-date refrigerating machinery.

Mr. KERWAN: The whole cost will be £25,000?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It will be approximately £25,000. Since January last the farmers have been able to store there 89,670 boxes of butter. I am sorry to say that the producers of cheese have not used the stores to the extent that I desire they should. I believe it is the practice of the manufacturers to send their cheese to a central store where it is not necessary to keep it in cold storage; but the time will come when the manufacturers of cheese on the Darling Downs will bless the Government for having provided cold storage accommodation for them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is right.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The export of cheese is growing rapidly, and it is possible that the time will come when there will be constant shipments to the old country from Brisbane, and I hope the manufacturers will take full advantage of the portion of the stores which is set apart for their use.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Queensland cheese is the best manufactured in Australia.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am sorry to think that not enough of it is manufactured to fill the magnificent chambers which are there waiting at Roma street, for I see that during the six months there were only fifty-nine boxes of cheese stored there. A small quantity of drugs and a few cases of milk have been stored there. On the 20th of this month we had in the cold stores 591 cases of apples. There were 791 cases there two days before, but 200 cases were taken out, leaving 591. A small quantity of small goods is stored there at the present time, but, as in other matters, I suppose that those for whom the stores have been built—I refer to other than butter producers—must be educated up to the fact that there is accommodation for their produce. That is my answer to the inference that the Government have not done anything to assist the primary producers in the way of providing cold stores.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Do they find markets for the farmers?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not claim that any Government department handles produce for the farmers at the present time, but I am not at all certain that a scheme which I had in hand when I was at the Agricultural Department might not have been carried out with profit. I allude to a scheme for handling such produce as lambs and poultry.

Mr. RYAN: That is in our platform, but it was turned down by the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know whether it is in the platform of the hon. member's party, but in any case I am not at all certain that it would be a bad thing for settlers if such a scheme were consummated. I have been informed that the cold stores which we have at Roma street are equal to anything of the kind in Australia, and I think that is a big step in the right direction. The hon. member for Warrego made reference to quite a number of matters. The hon. member said there was no substance in the Governor's Speech, and that there was practically nothing for the people foreshadowed or outlined in the Speech. What about the proposals to assist the sugar industry as set forth in the two Bills now before the House—the Sugar Growers Bill and the Sugar Cultivation Bill?

Mr. RYAN: They do not go far enough.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Members opposite may think that, but I would point out that those Bills go just as far as was contemplated in the agreement made between the Chief Secretary of this State and the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth last December. Whether it is possible that we could go further and perhaps fare worse is a question for the Government and the Liberal party to consider. A Friendly Societies Bill is also promised. Is that not a Bill which will be of some service to the people of the State? Then there is a Matrimonial Causes Act Amendment Bill foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech. Surely it cannot be argued that that will be of no benefit at all to those who desire to be assisted in a certain direction. We have also a consolidated Railways Bill. Our first Railways Act was passed in 1865, and surely it is advisable that we should take this matter in hand now, and see whether we cannot make the condition of those employed in the Railway Department even better than it is at the present time. Why, last session members thought so much of that Bill that the second reading went through in two hours. I am sorry the measure went to the bottom of the paper, and that I have to resurrect it this year. There is also the Elections Act Amendment Bill. Surely no hon. member could for one minute say that it is not a good thing to bring in an Elections Bill—

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

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So that elections in Queensland shall be made even purer than they have been in the past. The hon. member for Warrego asserted this afternoon that all the corrupt practices at elections were brought about by members of the Liberal party, but I join issue with him there. The hon. member also dwelt a great deal on the great Brisbane strike of last year, which I certainly thought was over and done with. I was under the impression that

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we all fought that battle out on the platform during April, 1912, and afterwards in this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Your party resurrected it.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not propose to take up time in speaking upon that matter, as I have other matters to deal with. The hon. member for Warrego further stated that the last State election was won by the Liberal party by false statements, by false issues, and by misleading the electors. It was by those means, he said, that we came back with such a sweeping majority, and that the Labour party came back very much smaller in numbers than they anticipated. If those were the reasons why we came back with such a sweeping majority, then surely the great victory which the Labour party in this House has been claiming during the last fortnight for the Labour party at the recent Federal elections was gained by misstatements, false issues, duplications, and personalities.

MR. FOLEY: You are the first to say that.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What applies to the Liberal party must logically apply to the Labour party.

MR. FOLEY: Not necessarily.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, necessarily. But, according to members opposite, what applies to the party sitting on this side of the House does not apply to the party sitting on the other side.

MR. RYAN: We explained away your misrepresentations.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is no question but that the party on this side always goes to an election with perfectly clean hands and runs the election with perfectly clean hands. I believe that all parties in State politics in Queensland go to an election with clean hands, but if there are any loopholes in the law for malpractices by persons or parties, they should be stopped up, and if it is at all possible for us by an amendment of the Elections Act to put a stop to malpractices that have taken place in the past, and may occur in the future, I think it is our duty to make such amendment in the Act.

MR. RYAN: We want to make it more liberal.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The deputy leader of the Opposition when speaking at an earlier stage of this debate complained of extravagance in railway loan expenditure. He also made the statement

[8 p.m.] that it was owing to the arguments that were brought forward during last session that we were not expending money at such a rate as we had been in the past. As a matter of fact, a pull was taken on the expenditure last January twelve months, six months before the session opened. As to our gross extravagance in loan expenditure, I would point out that during the last financial year the appropriation for railways generally—that is, construction, opened lines, and rolling-stock—was £2,923,587. That was for the year 1911-12. If we turn to the Treasurer's tables we will see on page 33, Table E2, that the expenditure for that year was £2,854,560, or £69,027 less than what Parliament has said we might spend in the Railway Department.

MR. RYAN: Does that include the purchase of rails?

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THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It includes everything for the Railway Department within the four corners of the twelve months.

MR. RYAN: How did you get on with the steel trust for your rails?

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. gentleman asks me what is a very pertinent question—how did we get on with the steel trust for rails? That is a matter entirely foreign to me. I have not been able to see any difficulty with the steel trust.

MR. RYAN: The Federal Government and the New South Wales Government have found great difficulty with the steel trust in getting rails.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am not aware that we have had any dealings at all with the steel trust. Is the hon. gentleman referring to the American steel trust?

MR. RYAN: The steel trust. They operate all over the world.

MR. FOLEY: Our Minister has got a trust of his own.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If there is a steel trust, I suppose the Railway Department of Queensland must be in good odour with them, when we can get whatever rails we require from them at any time, and at a reasonable price.

MR. HYNHAM: Has there been any high rate recently?

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have not been calling for tenders recently.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Is that why you are partial to trusts?

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: With regard to gross extravagance in loan expenditure in the Railway Department, I would like to say that Parliament voted £2,300,000 in that direction last session, and our expenditure is well within that amount, and will be well within that amount on the 30th of this month. The hon. member for Eacham asked me a question when he was speaking about the system of bookkeeping in connection with the 1906 Act, and he made a statement that the system of bookkeeping was wrong. Of course the hon. gentleman really does not know anything of the subject. He necessarily cannot know anything of the subject in connection with the method by which the books are kept. I have drawn out an example for the information of the hon. gentleman which I will show him if he wishes to see it, and he will observe how the earnings on certain sections of the lines are drawn out. Say that the earnings were £100 as an example. The distance from Cairns to Mareeba is 43.36 miles, from Mareeba to Tolga 19.3 miles, and from Tolga to Johnstone River 19 miles. The section from Tolga to Johnstone River was built under the 1906 Act, and is the section the hon. gentleman referred to. With 10 miles added to this section it would leave the mileage—Cairns to Mareeba, 33 miles; Mareeba to Tolga, 18 miles; and Tolga to Johnstone River, 29 miles, instead of its original 19 miles. It works out as follows:—Cairns to Mareeba, £56; Mareeba to Tolga, £21; Tolga to Johnstone River, £23. As the section from Tolga to Johnstone River is credited with 10 extra miles, that means that

it receives an additional £7, so that it would work out—Cairns to Mareeba, £50; Mareeba to Tolga, £20; Tolga to Johnstone River, £30. If the hon. gentleman would care to see this return he may have it.

Mr. GILLIES: I suggested another system.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, but the hon. gentleman's system is one that cannot commend itself to anyone carrying on business, for the reason that the services must be charged for. If £100 worth of freight is put on to the rails on the Tolga-Johnstone line, that £100 worth of freight cannot be credited to the Tolga-Johnstone line alone, for the reason that it has to be taken, presumably, from Tolga to Cairns, and therefore that portion of the line over which the running expenses are extended must be credited with their proportion of the freight.

Mr. LENNON: Mileage proportion?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. There were other railway matters referred to; and, of course, quite a number of new railways have been advocated in the House during the session. On the one hand I am told, "You must not construct any more railways. You should spend all the money on the upkeep of the opened lines."

Mr. GILLIES: You were not told that from this side.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: On the other hand I am told, "You must build some new railways, finish the railways you have in hand, and get on with quite a number of others," and the question of expenditure on the opened lines is not touched on. So if one were to take all the advice given to one, I think it would be possible for me to say that there shall be nothing done at all.

Mr. GILLIES: Railways should be built into agricultural and mining centres.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Railway construction is carried on with the object of only building railways that will pay interest on the cost of construction. As to the suggestion that railways should only be built in agricultural and mining districts, I do not think it can be alleged at the present time that the whole of the producing interests of Queensland are not being served. We have built a number of lines into agricultural districts. We are building the North Coast Railway, which certainly runs through agricultural districts.

Mr. LENNON: You are building it very slowly.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are also building lines in mining districts.

Mr. MAY: Build them further.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: One hon. gentleman says, "You are building them too slow," and another hon. gentleman says, "Build them further." It is all a question of money.

Mr. MAY: You can lend money to the other States.

Mr. LENNON: Why don't you get a hustle on the Ingham line?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If the money was available, I would get a

hustle on to all of them and get them all finished. There will be no happier man in this House than the Secretary for Railways if he can get sufficient money to complete at an early date the building of all the lines that are now in hand, as well as those that have not yet been started, but which have been authorised by this House. In the meantime I make no promises. The promise that I make with respect to railways is when I table the plans and specifications in this House.

Mr. FIDELLY: Did you promise the via recta?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The question of the via recta has come up. I just wish to say that the matter of the via recta has been before the public of Queensland for the last thirty years.

Mr. FIDELLY: Did you promise it?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: When the Maryvale line was opened, the Premier made a promise that the plans should be tabled during the next session of Parliament, and I backed up his promise. (Opposition laughter.) I backed it up.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: A very obliging person.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As to whether I am an obliging person or not—that is not a very decent thing to say, and when the hon. member makes such a remark as that, I, at any rate, do not expect any decency from him. With regard to the via recta, the plans were not tabled last session, and no promises were broken.

Mr. GRAYSON: I did not say the Minister broke any promise.

Mr. FIDELLY: Did you make a promise at the banquet at Warwick?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say no promises have been broken. The plans were not tabled last year, and the leader of the Government made a statement at the beginning of the session as to the railway policy of the Government, and I, at any rate, have been trying to carry out, in the proper direction, the promises that I made by having proper investigations made. Those investigations have been carried out on the range at Spicer's Peak, down towards Mount Edwards, and towards the Bremer Valley, for the last twelve months, I suppose, and those investigations are not yet completed.

Mr. MAY: They take a very long time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; they take a very long time, and I am determined that whilst I am honoured with the position I am in, the fullest investigations shall be made in the public interest. I do not think any railway line should be built in Queensland, it matters not whether it is the via recta, whether it is an agricultural line on the Darling Downs or in the Burnett, or a mining railway in the North of Queensland, without proper investigations are made as to the route. The original survey of the via recta was made in 1833 and 1834.

Mr. RYAN: That is what the Premier and you should have said at that banquet.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I find, on investigation, that the officers of the department desire, if at all possible, to get a better grade than 1 in 33 on the straight. We have been trying for over twelve months, and we have only succeeded in getting 1 in 40 on a route surveyed, and which is not yet completed, provided that we do not take that

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route down to Mount Edward. I made the very closest inquiries again, during the last few days, into this matter—a matter I have taken a very great interest in ever since I have been at the Railway Department—and I regret to say that on the Mount Edward route, the Chief Surveyor tells me, and the Chief Engineer, Mr. Bell, tells me, it is not possible to get a grade any better than 1 in 33 on the straight. I think it is due to hon. members that I should give them this information.

Mr. BERTRAM: When may we expect the *via recta*?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member asks me a question which is not a proper one. I should say myself that the leader of the Government, the other evening, replied to that question.

Mr. BERTRAM: It is very indefinite.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is no hesitation on my part in saying that I would very much rather have tabled the plans last session than not, so as to get them out of the road. (Opposition laughter.) What do I want—as Minister for Railways, if I am there in the interests of the people and of this House, to see about the construction of railways in Queensland—what do I want other than to see railways continued right on?

Mr. FIDELLY: A very intelligent policy.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A very intelligent policy and a very forward policy, and a policy the hon. member will probably never be able to carry out in the Queensland Parliament. The hon. member for Wide Bay last night made the statement that day labour was practically inefficient and a burden on the people; that some of the officers of the department had said that the men on the day-labour works did not earn more than one-half the money that was paid to them.

Mr. BOOKER: That was a specific case.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I hope I am quoting the hon. member correctly. All I can say is that for many years in Queensland the practice was to build railways by contract and then, for certain reasons, the day-labour system was instituted, and last session, in order to give hon. members a full view of the work that had been done under the day-labour system, I tabled a series of statements covering the whole of the operations under the day-labour system and the whole of the operations under the contract system for practically the same number of years. They were the figures that were available, and not only that, but I asked the Chief Engineer, as I thought this would be valuable information to hon. members, to draw comparisons of railways constructed, practically in the same class of country, as far as it could be done, between railways built by contract and railways built by day labour, and I presented those tables to the House practically without comment. (Hear, hear!) Certainly I am under the impression—I was then and still am—that the day-labour system in Queensland has not proved a failure.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not say for one moment that every man who is employed on the day-labour works is as efficient or does as much work as the other man who gets the same wages. Everybody who employs men knows that every man is

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not able to do the same amount of work for the money paid to him. It necessarily follows that where we have 3,000 or 4,000 men working on railways under construction, that some of those men are physically unfit and incapable of doing as much work as other men are capable of doing.

Mr. HUXHAM: The contractor is under the same disability.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I would point out that I made a statement in the House some two years ago that I should be very pleased indeed, if at all possible, to let one line by contract, in order to see whether our officers' estimates were correct or whether they were not, but the opportunity has not arisen. The reason for that is: Take the Walla to Tobermory line, say the first 40 miles, or the first 40 miles from Blackall to Windorah, or a section of the North Coast Railway—it might have been said that you should let one of these sections by contract; but I would like to point out that it is an exceedingly difficult matter, without very great delay, to prepare the plans and specifications and quantities for the whole of the job which are necessary to be prepared before you can call for tenders. That is really the reason why I did not ask the Cabinet to approve of my calling tenders for a contract for one of these sections or one of the railways; because, as a matter of fact, we are very rarely able to have the whole of the plans for all the 40 miles of a section ready before starting work. The plans are ready for the first 10 or 15 miles, and those for the rest are prepared as they go along. But, in order to test whether our engineers' estimates are below or above the actual cost, I have asked the Commissioner to request the Chief Engineer to have the plans, sections, quantities, and estimates of the Mumbilla to Mount Edwards Railway prepared, and we propose to call tenders for the construction of that line by contract. Parliament has already approved of that line; it is 16 miles in length, and the plans are well forward, so that I hope to be able to call for tenders for its construction before very long. The hon. member for Wide Bay yesterday was deploring the congestion in the railway centres on the North Coast line, and he was suggesting—I cannot say he was advocating the stopping of railway construction altogether; he did not suggest that—that more money should be spent on the opened lines; he did not use the term "opened lines," but that is the term I use. I would like to point out that the vote for the Railway Department last year was, as I have already said, £2,300,000. Out of that sum there was £1,038,955 for new lines, including the taking over of the Proserpine Tramway; £630,094 was allocated to rolling-stock, etc.; and on opened lines—that is, relaying, duplications, making more staff stations, and doing work generally for the better working of the traffic—there is no less a sum than £730,951 being spent. Well, seeing that last year we spent a sum of £750,000 on opened lines, I think it can hardly be claimed that the Commissioner is not trying to avoid the congestion in the railway centres. At the same time, it is inevitable that there should be some congestion and that we should have to deal with such matters where we have to deal with a country such as Queensland. We have a

long spell of wet weather; and, to take the North Coast line, of which the hon. member spoke, during that spell the timber-getters still go on falling timber, the teams cannot haul the timber during the wet weather, but so soon as it is fine they rush all they can as fast as they can into the railway station yards, and there necessarily is a rush of traffic which may take some little trouble to cope with. But it is coped with, and I think—

Mr. GRAYSON: It is the same way with the produce.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The same thing applies to produce, when there is a rush on; but I think that, generally speaking, we may give credit to the officers of the department for trying to cope with their business in as business-like and economical and rapid a way as they can.

Mr. HUNTER: That applies to all railway systems.

Mr. RYAN: Are you going to say anything about that railway accident?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; but I want to deal with these matters now. I would like to point out, for the information of the hon. gentleman, that from 1902 to 1907 we spent on new lines £1,046,519, on opened lines £481,024, and on rolling-stock £209,734. In the last five years, ended 30th June, 1912, we spent £4,074,679 on construction, or four times as much as we did during the previous five years; we spent £1,047,336 on opened lines, or twice as much as we did in the previous five years; and £1,674,455 on rolling-stock, or eight times as much as we did during the previous five years, so that we cannot complain that the whole of the money voted by Parliament has been spent on railway construction, because, as against a sum of about £6,000,000 spent from 1901 to 1913 in railway construction, we have, in round figures, a sum of £4,500,000 spent on opened lines and on rolling-stock.

Mr. HUNTER: When are you going to give us some fresh carriages on the Western line?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are endeavouring as quickly as we can to overtake the demand, and we spent £530,000 on rolling-stock during the current year. And there is one thing that I think hon. members will be pleased to hear—that we are not turning out carriages for the long lines unless they are lavatory carriages. (Hear, hear!) Hon. gentlemen were asking me about the extremely regrettable collision that occurred on the Main Range at the end of January last. I may say that this was not only a very painful matter to the Government, to the Commissioner and myself, but it also, I am certain, created a very great shock to all the people of Queensland. Hon. members will, I think, take my word that our sympathies went out at once to those who were bereaved. We did not include in the Governor's Speech any words of condolence, but the moment that this unfortunate accident occurred, in which six men lost their lives, not only were words of sympathy sent to them, but we thought that some more practical sympathy also should be sent. Not one hour was lost in showing in a practical way that the heads of the department and the Government desired to help those who had been bereft.

Hon. members have referred to the question whether the wives and children were looked after. At once this matter was taken in hand, and the officers who visited those who were left, not only took words of sympathy in their mouths, but also took gold in their hands, in case the wherewithal was not in the houses, or some of them, from which the breadwinners had been cut off. The Commissioner also, with my concurrence, arranged at once for the funerals of the deceased men. I do not know that I care to say what the funerals cost; but I will say that on the day the Commissioner and I went on the very painful journey to Toowoomba to attend some of the funerals of those men, we discussed the best method by which those who were left behind could be assisted. It was a difficult matter. We had a Workers' Compensation Act, which we were supposed to work under, but if we had worked under the terms of that Act I have no hesitation in saying that the widows and children would not have received, until their claims had been sent in and adjudicated on, sufficient money to have kept them in anything like comfort. So I will acknowledge here and now that I made a suggestion to the Commissioner which went a long way towards breaking the law. I stated that if I was doing something that was illegal, I was quite certain that the House would ratify what I had done if it were necessary. (Hear, hear!) The Commissioner and I arranged that until the necessary procedure was gone through, and the necessary inquiries held—and I knew there would be a magisterial inquiry also held—that the wages of the men who had lost their lives should be continued to the widows until such time as the arrangements were made for the compensation to be paid. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. RYAN: But what was the compensation which was to be paid—that is what I would like to know?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course, the compensation to be paid under the Workers' Compensation Act is a fixed amount, but I knew there would be a delay, which was inevitable. First of all, the inquiry board would take a long time to hold the inquiry, because there were two inquiries to be held—one for the derailment and one for the collision. Then would come the magisterial inquiry, and I thought it was highly improper that any findings of the Commissioner about the first inquiry should be made public until after the magisterial inquiry had been held. Consequently, the claims were not sent in until after all these inquiries had been held. The claims with respect to five of the groups of the dependants are in the hands of the Crown Solicitor now. I do not think, as the case is sub judice, I should mention what the total amount of the claim is. I think the leader of the Opposition will agree with me that I should not discuss the matter at the present time. It is certainly not the intention of the Government to in any way try to cut down the compensation which should properly be paid to these dependants.

Mr. RYAN: You could tell us whether those claims are under the Workers' Compensation Act.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Oh, no; they are outside the Workers' Compensation Act. If they had been claims under the Act they could have been settled

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in an hour; but being claims outside the Act, they must necessarily go to the Crown Law Officers, who have the claims in their hands now. I would say that any amount that can be properly paid as compensation—we are dealing with public money and are simply the trustees of the public—certainly shall be paid, and I desire that they shall be generously paid. That has always been the custom in the Railway Department—in every just claim with respect to compensation the claims have been met generously. I do not know that I have time to enter into matters in connection with the allegations that have been made against certain officers at the departmental inquiry. All I will say is this: that I hold in my hands a minute of the Commissioner in connection with the appointment of the General Superintendent, Mr. Steer, dated 9th November, 1911, and addressed to myself, and, although I have not time to read it all, the general tenor of this minute is this—

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

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not desire to ask for an extension of time. The general tenor of the minute is that the Commissioner desired to have more assistance in his department in his office.

Mr. RYAN: I think you ought to have an extension.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I shall read it—

“APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT AND CONSEQUENT CHANGES.

“In consequence of the great number of inspections and reports required of me by the Railway Acts, the rapid construction of new railways, and the enormous increase of traffic upon the lines generally, all of which render it necessary for the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner to be frequently absent from Brisbane, it has become imperative that an addition be made to the administrative staff, and the work of the Head Office rearranged. The Commissioner therefore decided to create a new position under the title of General Superintendent, and to promote Mr. G. R. Steer to it at a salary of £800 per annum. Mr. Steer will assist the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner generally in the administration of the department, and will be subject only to the Minister, Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioner. During the Commissioner's absence Mr. Steer will (subject to the Deputy Commissioner) deal with matters submitted by the General Traffic Managers and others, and with public matters connected with traffic working; during the absence of the Deputy Commissioner he will (subject to the Commissioner) carry on other details which are now delayed. Mr. Steer will be directly responsible for a more complete supervision than has been possible hitherto. The Traffic Branch is very closely connected with the success of the department, and it must receive careful attention, as the proper serving of our customers is (next to safety) the chief factor to be considered; it does not follow that because the department has a monopoly of railway transport that we can be indifferent; every officer should act as if there were competing railways,

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and endeavour not only to retain the present traffic, but to obtain more. The General Superintendent and Traffic Superintendent will confer with the General Traffic Managers on matters affecting traffic, train movements, etc.

“Mr. Steer will control the general working of the Chief Office.

“Mr. A. J. Crowther, Assistant Secretary, will succeed Mr. Steer as Secretary at a salary of £575 per annum. The office of Assistant Secretary will not be continued at present.

“Mr. J. W. Davidson, Traffic Superintendent, will move to a room on the Commissioner's floor, and will undertake increased responsibilities, at a salary of £575 per annum.

“Mr. S. Green, officer in charge of timetables, will be Assistant Traffic Superintendent, at a salary of £375 per annum. The details of the timetable work will be provided for by a re-arrangement of the clerks under Mr. Green.

“These changes to take effect forthwith. The Commissioner has the fullest confidence in the officers in their new positions and he expects good results.”

That was the position Mr. Steer has been occupying, and I regret that I have not time to deal further with the matter.

Mr. RYAN: I desire to move, seeing that the question that the Minister is dealing with is so important, that he be granted an extension of time.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that an extension of time be granted to the Secretary for Railways to conclude his speech?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I thought it was understood that no hon. member should have an extension of time?

Mr. KILWAN: The public are interested in this.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As this was a matter of very great importance in connection with the administration of the office, I submitted it to the Chief Secretary, who made the following minute:—

“Highly desirable to rearrange so as to free the Commissioner from many duties that now crowd upon him, and the way suggested will accomplish this.

(Itd.) “D.D. 4.11.11.”

I then minuted it—

“Recommendations approved.

(Itd.) “W.T.P. 4.11.11.”

That is the position that Mr. Steer occupies in the department. A very great deal has been made of certain allegations that that gentleman did not know his position. Mr. Steer visited the scene of the derailment, in order to keep the Commissioner informed as to what was going on, and in order to assist as far as he possibly could in getting more men there if it was necessary, or attending to the comforts of the other men who were working at the derailment. As a matter of fact, Mr. Steer was never at the end of the derailment where this deplorable accident occurred, and at the time

the collision took place when these unfortunate men lost their lives the General Superintendent was at Murphy's Creek Railway Station, where he had been for two and a-half hours previously.

Mr. MAY: There were too many bosses on the job altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was fully proved that every care, perhaps, was not taken that should have been taken; but, because Mr. Steer, when he was being examined, said that, when it was all over, he thought they might all have taken greater precautions, I do not think it lies in anybody's power to blame him. I think it was a manly action on his part to make such an acknowledgment. I thought the best thing I could do was to table the report of the departmental board of inquiry. The report of the evidence of the magisterial inquiry was published in the daily Press both in Toowoomba and Brisbane.

Mr. RYAN: There was no finding in connection with the magisterial inquiry.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The magistrate holding an inquiry does not make a finding.

Mr. RYAN: We think he should. The Act should be amended.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is a matter which I am not in a position to discuss. The magistrate merely forwards the depositions to the Attorney-General, and the Attorney-General, or the Crown Law Office, examines the depositions to see whether any further action is to be taken.

Mr. RYAN: But the result is that there is no finding at all. The Attorney-General only considers whether he will take action of a criminal nature.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so.

Mr. RYAN: Now we have nobody's finding at all.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In matters such as this I am entirely in the hands of the Commissioner, and the department is entirely in the hands of the Attorney-General. It was for the Attorney-General to say whether a prosecution for manslaughter or of a criminal nature should take place against any of those who were concerned in the unfortunate accident; and the Attorney-General having come to the conclusion, I suppose, on the evidence before him that there was no case for a prosecution, it was not possible for the Railway Department to institute an action.

Mr. RYAN: I am not suggesting for one moment that you should.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is the position so far as we are concerned. I do not wish to trespass upon the indulgence of hon. members, but I do wish to be allowed to read the Commissioner's finding upon the departmental report. When the Commissioner presented his findings to me, so that those who were implicated should not be prejudiced, I showed those findings to nobody. I sealed them up and locked them away. Nobody saw them but myself. In spite of all the newspaper or public criticism as to my action, the action of the Commissioner, or the action of the Government, I consider I adopted the right course towards those who might be implicated by seeing that the Commissioner's findings were not made public until after the magisterial inquiry was finished.

Mr. RYAN: Yes, but the Commissioner's findings were the result of the departmental inquiry, but there are no findings as the result of the magisterial inquiry.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I thought I had made that clear. So far as the men who were punished are concerned, no action of the Commissioner prejudiced them during the holding of the magisterial inquiry. The Commissioner's findings are dated 21st February, 1913, and are to this effect—

"I agree with the board that without authority Guard Scanlan ceased to protect his train, and therefore the driver had no signals to guide him. Scanlan must be called upon to show cause why he should not be dismissed.

"I do not agree with the board that Driver Thompson was to blame to any great extent. The pilot section should have been defined, and marks set by a green flag in advance and a red flag and detonators to effect a stop at a safe distance from the wreck. Had that been done, the unfortunate driver would have known where he was, instead of which he was left to find his way down a long steep grade with 226 tons behind him, and, in my opinion, he should not be punished to any great extent.

"The absolute indifference of the General Traffic Manager and the Acting Traffic Manager to any safety methods is astounding, and the evidence of both needs only to be read to show this. Mr. Lloyd (General Traffic Manager) and Mr. Carmody (Acting Traffic Manager) must be called upon to show cause why they should not be dismissed the service for negligence in connection with the safety regulations. Send them copies of evidence and call upon them.

"Pilotman Rafter can only be dealt with for omitting to convey to Mr. Lloyd personally Driver Cootie's complaint of the absence of protection, but Mr. Lloyd admits in his evidence that no detonators were exploded, and he therefore knew long before Driver Cootie's complaint that there was no proper protection. It appears to me that all that can be done with the pilotman and Guard Hall is to censure them.

(Intd.) "C. E. 21.2.13."

And on 1st April, 1913, after the magisterial inquiry in Toowoomba had closed, the Commissioner made the following minute:—

"I recorded my decision after reading and studying carefully the report of the departmental inquiry board, and the magisterial investigation has confirmed my finding. The replies of Messrs. Lloyd and Carmody in answer to the secretary's letter of 26th March do not improve the position of either. They urge forty and thirty-one years' servitude respectively, but I am informing them as emphatically as possible that I expected better results from such long experience. I am reluctant to dismiss these two officers. They deserve it, but as they have been practically brought up on the Queensland railways they may find it difficult to obtain a living in any other capacity than on the railways. I have decided to reduce Mr. Lloyd to the position of traffic manager at a salary of £550 and to fine him £100, to be paid in monthly

instalments of £5 from his salary. Mr. Carmody to be reduced to the position of station-master at a salary of £266 per annum and fined £50, to be paid in monthly instalments of £3 from his salary. Positions to be found for these officers as soon as possible. Salaries to be stopped from date of suspension.

(Intd.) "C. E. 1.4.'13."

I minuted it—

"I consider the decision justifiable."

(Intd.) "W. T. P. 1.4.'13."

Mr. MAY: Why didn't you chuck them out of the service?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think that when such a deplorable accident happens as that which occurred on the Main Range, it is possible that men at such times—

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Lose their heads.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Do not remember what they would remember, were they not so troubled; and I think it is advisable at all times to temper justice with mercy.

Mr. KIRWAN: I hope that will refer to the lower grades.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Mr. MAY: High-grade officers get justice with mercy, but the poor man does not.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think those interjections are right or just. Every man who left the department during the strike of 1912—

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not referring to that at all. I will give you instances.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Every man who left his employment was given an opportunity to come back to the department. Under the Railways (Employees Appeal) Act every employee has the right to appeal against any decision given against him, and employees take full advantage of the provisions of that Act.

Mr. BOWMAN: The members of the board were absolutely biased.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The matter to which I am referring was a traffic matter; the two traffic managers were in charge, and there is no doubt they were to blame, but there were other men, who, if the traffic managers had not been there, should have protected the line where the accident occurred. Other men were to blame to a certain extent, and they were not punished. I spoke to the Commissioner for Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Carmody, and said to him that there was not a black mark against their characters, that each of them had been in the service for some thirty or forty years, and that, although this deplorable accident had occurred, he might consider all the circumstances and not dismiss those men.

Mr. RYAN: Did the Cabinet consider the whole of the evidence themselves?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I said the Commissioner.

Mr. RYAN: Yes, but I am now asking didn't the Cabinet consider it of sufficient importance to give it attention?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am not supposed to speak about what happened at the Cabinet. What I have given

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is the Commissioner's finding. As a matter of fact, it lies entirely with the Commissioner as to whether he dismisses two, four, five, or ten of the men who were at that accident. He has the final say; he is the corporation; he engages and dismisses men, and I perhaps went out of my way in asking him to consider the position of Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Carmody. Some people in the State, I know, think those two officers have been very harshly dealt with, while other people think they have not been dealt with harshly enough. All I can say is that I have given the whole of the evidence and the whole of the findings, and that I have tabled the report of the board who inquired into the matter. I have taken a procedure which has never been taken before in connection with a departmental report. I have given you the findings of the Commissioner, and with that I must leave the matter in the hands of hon. members.

* Mr. MACKAY (*Gympie*): I wish to give my hearty support to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and in doing so I heartily congratulate both the mover and seconder on most of the sentiments they expressed. Having had the responsibility of moving the adoption of the Address in Reply in the first session of the present Parliament, my sympathies were with the hon. member for Fassfern in the performance of his task, but I am sure the result of his effort must have consoled him in some measure for the loss of the previous night's sleep. I was rather surprised to hear members opposite describe the Governor's Speech as one containing nothing of a practical nature, as there is a lot of good work foreshadowed in the Speech—work which, with the assistance of members on the other side, should result in benefit to the people and industries of the State. I was also rather surprised to find that the farmers are discovering new friends in the members of the Opposition. I should have thought that after the experience of the last few years they would hardly look to hon. members opposite for anything which would benefit them in any considerable degree, but it appears that the farmers are becoming an important section of the people, so that Labour members are out to secure their votes. But I have no doubt that in the ordeal the farmers will score. The party system under which we work induces men sitting on both sides of the House to see nothing good on the other side, but I feel certain that had our opponents a chance of carrying out the programme outlined in the Governor's Opening Speech they would see a great deal of good in the various Bills enumerated there. I do not say that this tendency is restricted to the Opposition. I have heard members on both sides on many occasions express sentiments which they would not have expressed but for the party system, and give votes which they would not have given but for the party system. The people are getting the worst of the deal in party politics.

Mr. KIRWAN: Do you advocate the abolition of parties?

Mr. MACKAY: I do. On the first occasion on which I spoke here I spoke against the party system of government.

Mr. LENNON: Do you favour elective Ministries?

Mr. MACKAY: That is a question on which I do not wish to express a definite opinion just now. While admitting that the Socialists scored a victory at the late Federal elections, I think we can also claim that both Federal and State elections are a contradiction, and have been for some years past. We have had instances of that in both Queensland and New South Wales. In Queensland in April last year, a Liberal Government was returned to power with a strong majority, and now fifteen months later quite the reverse has taken place at the Federal elections. Various reasons have been suggested for this, but whatever the reason may be, I think the State Government have very good reason for bringing the conduct of the late Federal elections under the notice of the Federal Government. If our own Elections Act is not all it might be, it is quite certain that the Federal Elections Act is a great deal worse. I consider that the rolls on which the Federal elections were conducted entirely unsatisfactory from every point of view. Apart from the duplications of names which exist, which give opportunities for impersonation, and apart from the fact that the ballot-papers were not numbered, it is evident that the system of registration is extremely faulty. I know a man in Gympie, who has been there for thirty-seven years, and he received a card informing him that he was struck off the roll for having left the district. He

[9 p.m.] filled in another claim, and yet when he went to the poll to vote, on the 31st May last, he was informed that he was dead. Seeing that this man had never been out of the town for more than a week during thirty-seven years, he thought it extremely hard that he should lose his vote in that manner. I just give that as an illustration, although it is not an isolated occurrence.

Mr. BARBER: It is a common occurrence on the State rolls.

Mr. MACKAY: It might be a common occurrence on the State rolls, but it is certainly the case in connection with the Federal rolls. I could give further illustrations in addition to those which have been given during the last few nights in connection with the bad state of the Federal rolls. They are in an extremely bad state.

Mr. COYNE: Put your own house in order first.

Mr. MACKAY: We are proceeding to do that. If the hon. gentleman read the Speech from the Throne, he would see that it is proposed to amend the Elections Act.

Mr. COYNE: To put it into disorder.

Mr. MACKAY: No. Everything will be done for the best.

Mr. KIRWAN: Let us hope so.

Mr. MACKAY: As the Government are going to amend our Elections Act, I hope that something will be done in the direction of calling upon the returning officers to pass some examination to prove their fitness for the position they hold. (Hear, hear!) In our last State elections and in the last Federal election we have had cases where men have been placed in charge of various positions, and they were entirely unfitted, so far as experience goes, in carrying out those duties to the satisfaction of the electors.

Mr. POLEY: There are a good number of them in Queensland.

Mr. MACKAY: I quite admit that. As we are about to amend our Elections Act, we should take some precautions to see that the returning officers who are appointed are fitted to carry out the important duties entrusted to them. (Hear, hear!) I notice that it is also proposed to reintroduce the postal vote. I hope that this will be done with limitations. I quite agree that, in cases of sickness, the postal vote is very convenient and is a necessity. But I hope that in the case of absent voters a man will want to be genuinely absent from a district before he should be able to use the postal vote. I also hope that an effort will be made to have some uniform system of voting adopted. We have elections twice within three years, and it would be much better for the electors and save a lot of confusion if we had the one system of voting adopted. Personally, I think the Federal system of voting is a very convenient one, and we might adopt that. It does not really matter which system is adopted so long as it is uniform, but to have one system for striking out the name and another for putting the cross is altogether unsatisfactory.

Mr. KIRWAN: Would you apply it to local authorities, too?

Mr. MACKAY: I do not see why we should not apply it to local authorities. Some uniformity is required, as can be seen by the large number of informal votes recorded at every election. I observe that His Excellency made reference in his Speech to the fact that he travelled throughout the State, and noticed the large mineral areas throughout the State. I notice that the value of last year's mineral output to the end of 1912 was £4,175,355, which was an increase of over £500,000 sterling as compared with the previous year. The report of the Under Secretary for Mines shows that we have in Queensland most of the minerals that one can conveniently enumerate, and possibly further discoveries will be made. I notice that the total mineral output for Queensland amounts to £103,000,000, and we have 78,000 square miles of mineral-bearing country. We can quite realise how important this is to the State. The Under Secretary for Mines, in his report, makes these remarks, which will be of interest to mining members and those who live in mining districts—

"The decline in the gold yield continues; no new finds of importance have been made, and no special results have as yet attended the various projects initiated during the year for exploring the deep ground of our established fields, our experience in this respect differing little from that of most other gold-producing countries; and, indeed, the opinion has been expressed that, in the absence of fresh discoveries, the world's gold production is rapidly approaching, if it has not already reached, its maximum."

That is to be regretted, but it is altogether too soon to expect any results from the subsidies that were granted during the year. I sincerely hope that the Secretary for Mines will follow up his good action of last year by again putting an amount of money on the Estimates for the encouragement of mining. I think the Minister and the Government are entitled to the thanks of my electorate for the assistance which we have obtained during the last year. Had

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it not been for the assistance we obtained from the Government last year, three of our largest companies in Gympie would have had to close down. The prospecting which has been carried on has proved encouraging up to the present, but it is altogether too soon to expect definite results. The shareholders in the various companies are very confident that ultimately the venture will turn out a success, as the money is certainly being spent to the best advantage. In his annual report, Mr. Dunstan, Government Geologist, makes the following reference to the Gympie geological survey:—

“One might reflect on the vast amount of money which has been spent on opening up ground during all the years past, and in the light of recent geological investigations it is evident that a large portion of the money spent has been wasted on absolutely useless prospecting operations. Had scientific methods been adopted in the early days of mining, in simply recording all the results of shaft-sinking, making plans and sections, examining rocks and fossils, calculating throws of faults, advising where operations should be carried on or abandoned, and in solving other problems in general mining work, the money which would have been saved could have been spent to better effect in other directions, and Gympie undoubtedly would have been in a very different position to-day.”

The figures for 1912 show that the dividends paid in Gympie amounted to £26,330 4s. 5d., and the calls amounted to £41,647 1s. 8d., showing an excess of calls over dividends of £15,316 17s. 3d. The gold yield in Gympie for 1912 was 47,616 oz., valued at £166,000. This is our lowest yield of gold for the last twenty-four years. A noticeable feature was the evenness in the monthly output, and the gold showed very little variation. It is just ten years ago since our best results were obtained. Since then there has been a swing of the pendulum, and we have had a period of lean years, but owing to the subsidy we have received during recent years, those interested in mining have every expectation of bringing Gympie back to a profitable gold-producing district. I hope that hon. members will pardon me for having again to allude to the Gympie Gold-field in particular on this occasion, but I feel satisfied that mining does not get the prominence in this House that the importance of the industry deserves. We have members of the various farming interests bringing up their wants—talking about seeds, their water conservation, and their prickly pear, and members on the other side, and mining members in particular, might devote a little more time to the important subject of mining. It has undoubtedly been the means of bringing tens of thousands of our very best citizens to this State in the early days, and made Queensland what it is to-day.

Mr. HUNTER: You evidently have not listened to the speeches delivered last session on mining.

Mr. MACKAY: I think my attendance during last session will compare very favourably with that of the hon. member for Maranoa, and up to the present this session I have been absent only one day, and I have not heard the word “mining” mentioned except in connection with oil in the hon. member’s own district. I hope he is not under the impression that it is only oil we

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want. We have a large tract of mineral country throughout the State, and there are many other industries to be considered, and in keeping up the Gympie end myself, I hope the hon. member will not be jealous on that account. It has been neglected for the last sixteen years, and it is time someone took it up, as there is a lot of leeway to make up. The Speech for this session contains a lot of important matter as far as the primary producers are concerned. Sugar is not a matter I am very closely acquainted with, but from the interesting debate I have heard here, I am sure it is of very great interest to hon. members, and I am looking forward to see some genuine benefit result to the sugar-growers, and the people in the Northern part of Queensland in particular. The Bill that I am particularly interested in is the Stock and Produce Agents Bill. I am very pleased to see that Bill included in the list of Bills to be introduced, because I realise, having had some experience in that line, that there is an absolute necessity for doing something to control the numerous agents—footpath agents in particular—throughout the State.

Mr. RYAN: More than footpath agents—big agents in many cases.

Mr. MACKAY: For instance, there is the man who has no fixed place of abode, who carries his pencil and notebook in his pocket, and does his business in that haphazard style. I certainly hope that when this Bill comes before us it will contain some provision whereby a man will be required to at least take out a license, as by obtaining a license, it will mean he must be a fit and proper person to hold a license.

Mr. RYAN: You would not allow the big agents to have dummy buyers?

Mr. MACKAY: No. I am against all those illegal practices. I have had some experience in the agency business, and I know perfectly well that there is a lot of men in the business who should not be in the business, and the honest man who is doing the proper thing, and the straight thing, should receive some protection against a lot of these people who, at the present time, are simply parasites on what should be a legitimate business. I also hope that the Bill will contain some provision whereby prompt returns will be secured to the seller. That is another matter in connection with which the seller is being fleeced. I know quite a number of instances where sellers have sent to agents in good faith, and trusted them with their produce or with horses and cattle, and not only have they to wait for their returns, but in some instances they have never got them. This is the unfortunate experience that happens very frequently in the country districts, and if this Bill covers the ground that I have endeavoured to indicate, I feel certain the public generally will appreciate it.

Mr. RYAN: I think you will be disappointed. It won’t cover that ground.

Mr. MACKAY: If it does not cover that ground, I do not know what it can do. Another matter I am pleased to see the Speech allude to is the Friendly Societies Bill. That was promised last session and had to be postponed. Seeing that we have such a large number of members of friendly societies right throughout the State, I think the time has arrived when their funds should receive the protection of the law, and I

have every reason to believe that the Bill will prove very acceptable to members of the various friendly societies right throughout the State. I am also pleased to note the progress that has been made with our educational system, more particularly in the direction of high schools. We have instances in various parts of the State, where, but for the establishment of these high schools, many children would not receive the benefit of secondary education. In my own electorate, again, we are fortunate enough to have a high school, and it is staffed with men with very creditable attainments, and the children round about are certainly receiving a benefit that many of them could never afford if they had to go to a grammar school. I sincerely hope that, as opportunity offers, the Government will extend the high schools, more particularly in districts some distance from grammar schools. Another matter that I wish to allude to is the Agricultural Bank. I am very pleased to see that the Agricultural Bank is doing well. The business is certainly extending, but there is no doubt that there is a considerable number of complaints in my district through the delays that take place in connection with it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: All over the State.

Mr. MACKAY: It is recognised that it is quite an easy matter to get your application in, but there is a tremendous amount of delay, which, I think, could be easily avoided. I am also very pleased to see the progress that has been made with our Savings Bank, and I am pleased to know that the people of Queensland are sticking to their own bank in spite of the efforts made in Federal quarters to influence Queensland money to be sent out of the State. I am very pleased to see the people have realised their responsibilities and are sticking to the State bank in the way they ought to. I think the proper thing would be for the Federal Government, whether the present party remains in power or not, to withdraw this Federal Savings Bank.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No.

Mr. MACKAY: Personally, I have no objection to the Commonwealth Bank, but I do object to the Federal Government instituting a Savings Bank in competition with the various States. We are making splendid use of this money locally, and we actually need it, while the Commonwealth people do not need it, so that there is every reason why we should be allowed to keep that money and use it according to our requirements. I was also very pleased to notice that, as a result of the appointment of the Meat Commission, a great improvement has taken place in the retailing of meat. A regulation was promulgated during the recess requiring all butchers to keep their shops in a more cleanly state and make very much needed improvements in the buildings. That has certainly been a step in the right direction, and instead of buying meat from very questionable surroundings, you now know perfectly well that you will get a good article, and the public will be benefited in consequence. Another matter that has been touched upon by many speakers is the Liquor Act passed last session. I do not want to quarrel with the main points of that Act, as I supported it right through every division, and many of the provisions were sadly required; but there is no doubt about it that, in the light

of experience, when we come to consider a lot of the irritating details of the measure, some alteration is necessary. We had an illustration the other day at a place some 25 or 30 miles from Gympie, where an application was made for a hotel license. Under the Act a local option poll was necessary, and persons some 40 miles distant from this place were required to cast a vote. Undoubtedly the day was wet, but the vote that was given was very trifling; at some of the booths no votes were recorded at all, and at others the vote was so trifling as to make the thing farcical. I think it is necessary to have a vote, but I do not think it is necessary to go over the whole of the electorate; an area could be fixed near to the place where the license is desired.

Mr. HARDACRE: That was all pointed out last year.

Mr. MACKAY: It might have been pointed out last year, but now that the thing has been brought before the people and they see the effects of the legislation, it is not too late to admit that a mistake has been made and that a remedy should be provided. It is quite an easy matter to remedy it so that it will not occur again. Then, so far as the travelling public is concerned, there is a weakness in the Act which is not only irritating to the people and to the publicans, but also does not do anybody any good. Irritating details such as I have mentioned could easily be remedied in an amending Bill. Another matter in which I take a considerable interest is that of immigration, and I regret that the Government is not keeping the stream going in the way that they might. As I said in my place here last year, I do not think people should be brought here indiscriminately and simply dumped into the towns. I think great care should be exercised in the selection of people who are coming here, and as far as possible people should be brought here who have some experience on the land. We have an almost unlimited expanse of country, and I think that every effort should be made to bring out people who are likely to make good settlers, and give them every encouragement to get on the land as easily as possible. Our land laws are very liberal, and they are doing the work as far as they can be expected, but I believe an improvement could be made, and there is no harm in saying so. I certainly think the high rents that are being charged might be considerably lowered and the terms extended, and I hope it will be done.

Mr. HUNTER: You might liberalise the Agricultural Bank Act at the same time.

Mr. MACKAY: That might be done also, but so far as the constitution and manner of access to that bank are concerned there is not much fault to find with it, and if they would only get a move on and deal with the applications more rapidly and let the applicants have their money more quickly it would be much better. As to the rents, I think that to extend the payments over forty years would not be too long. I do not think the Government should set out to make all the revenue from land. My idea is to get the people on the land, even if you have practically to give it to them. We might easily reduce our rents. I know that in my district we have land at a purchasing price up to £5 an acre. It is undoubtedly worth it, in many cases probably worth a good deal more, but we have men going on to the land—young fellows many of them who, perhaps, have not a second suit of clothes—and these are the

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people for whom every effort should be made to get them a start for the first few years, even if the money was recovered years afterwards. In a short time they would be able to bear the burdens of higher rents. I certainly hope that some effort will be made—I do not suppose it can be this session—but I hope every effort will be made to have a revision of the rents before very long.

Mr. HUNTER: Why delay this good work? Why not do it this session?

Mr. MACKAY: We have got your Mineral Oil Bill to deal with. (Laughter.)

Mr. HUNTER: Oil will go through pretty smoothly.

The HOME SECRETARY: We have your railway freights to deal with.

Mr. MACKAY: There have been so many allusions to the farmers' party and so much competition for their support on that side of the House, that I think it might be becoming in me to say that I think the Government were never in a better or sounder position than they are at the present moment.

Mr. RYAN: We all recognise that.

Mr. MACKAY: Some reference has been made to the result of the last Federal election, but we have only to go back some fifteen months or so and we have another version of the affair, and if the people have changed once, it is quite on the cards—it is possible, it is probable—it will happen that they will change again, and when it comes to our turn to go before them they may repeat the vote that was given on 27th April. There is no doubt about it, our friends on the other side do not believe all they say. They know perfectly well when they talk about trusts and combines and all that sort of thing that they do not mean it seriously.

The HOME SECRETARY: They do not tell us about the tobacco trust.

Mr. HUNTER: Where does this prophet hail from?

Mr. MACKAY: He hails from Gympie. He was there on the 27th of April last year; possibly you have heard of the fact before. I do not wish to take up any more time; I just wanted to tell you that there is no second party on this side of the House.

Mr. RYAN: We have flogged them into line. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. MACKAY: During the last twelve months that I have sat here I have never seen any flogging, nor have I seen any occasion for it. Members on this side of the House have every confidence in the members of the present Ministry, and so long as they continue to give us a fair and reasonable policy, they will continue to receive the support of members on this side of the House; and whilst that is so, it is foolish for the members on the other side to throw doubts here as to a country party. I do not believe it exists. I have never been at a farmers' meeting, and I have no special desire to attend one, but I say that, so far as members on this side of the House are concerned, they are behind the Ministry, and the Premier particularly. In conclusion, I wish to tender my thanks to the various Under Secretaries, and especially the Under Secretary for Mines, from whom I have received many courtesies during the year. I hope that members on the other side will do their best to help on the business of the House; they know that there are very important matters coming before us, and if they will only cast aside that party prejudice that undoubtedly exists, we shall have a very successful session, and the people will be all the better for the second

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session of the nineteenth Parliament of Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LARCOMBE (*Keppel*): The hon. member who has just sat down said that there was no flogging on that side of the House, but how does that square with what took place during last session? On one occasion the hon. member for Wide Bay came over to vote with members of the Opposition on an amendment to the Liquor Bill, and the Premier came over and whispered

into his ear, and the hon. [9.30 p.m.] member for Wide Bay walked back like a dog. (Opposition laughter.) And yet hon. members say that there is no flogging on that side of the House. It was the most flagrant exhibition ever seen in this Assembly, and in the face of that how could hon. members argue that there is no flogging? The very fact that the alleged farmers' party is now a myth shows that hon. members on that side have been flogged into line. I wish at the outset to make reference to a few remarks passed by the hon. member for Bowen, who made an excellent speech, and in concluding referred to the Savings Bank business. In doing so, he said incidentally that he thought it would be a bad thing for Queensland—a bad business proposition and an invasion of State rights—if the Federal Government was to assimilate our State Savings Bank. I would point out that the framers of the Constitution thirteen years ago—if my memory serves me right there was only one Labour man on that convention—passed a provision in the Federal Constitution to enable the Federal Government to enter upon Savings Bank business. Those were the men who framed that Constitution, and who were jealously guarding State rights; so that in the face of the provision in the Constitution enabling the Federal Parliament to go into the Savings Bank business, how can it be reasonably argued that the taking over of the Savings Bank business by the Federal Parliament would be an invasion of State rights? To pass on from the argument that it would be an invasion of State rights to the other argument raised by the hon. member for Bowen that it would be a bad business proposition, in the face of the speech of the leader of the Opposition on that point, I do not see how any member, either on this side or the other, could reasonably contend that it would be a bad business proposition for Queensland to come into line with the Tasmanian Government, and enable the Federal Government to control our Savings Bank business. The leader of the Opposition showed that it would be a good business proposition for the State, and that there would be more money available for the Agricultural Department, and available generally for the development of Queensland, if Queensland falls into line with Tasmania, and allows the Federal Government to conduct the Savings Bank business without opposition. The hon. member for Bowen also dealt briefly with the question of trusts, combines, and monopolies in Queensland and Australia generally. He admitted that there were such trusts, combines, and monopolies existing, although the Premier denies the fact, and the hon. member for Bowen suggested that the Federal Government should pass amending anti-trust legislation to enable them to deal fully and effectively with these pernicious combinations. The history of Australia

and America proves conclusively that anti-trust legislation is utterly ineffective to deal with trusts, combines, and monopolies. Take, for instance, the coal vend case. After some considerable time the National Parliament were able to institute a prosecution against the coal vend. After a lengthy hearing, Mr. Justice Isaacs came to this decision. He said, "This coal vend is a gigantic conspiracy, a gigantic monopoly, acting in restraint of trade to the detriment of the public." He said, "Fine them £50,000 and costs." When that decision was made known hon. members opposite—the Liberal fusion members, State and Federal—on almost every platform in Australia began to pat themselves on the back, and say, "There, ladies and gentlemen, we have effective anti-trust legislation in Australia, and the extending of these increased powers to the Federal Parliament were absolutely unnecessary." That is what they said after Mr. Justice Isaacs had given his decision, but they were rather premature, because the coal vend appealed to the High Court. They said, "We are not a gigantic monopoly; we are really a beneficent institution," and the High Court said, "Yes."

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Is not that what Mr. Hughes said?

Mr. LARCOMBE: They quashed the conviction, and proved what the Labour party had contended in 1911 when the referenda proposals were being discussed, that anti-trust legislation would absolutely break down when it was given a fair and reasonable trial. The National Parliament appealed to the Privy Council, and the appeal was dismissed. The only true test that the anti-trust legislation has had in Australia proved that it is utterly ineffective. The history of America also backs up the history of Australia. For the last twenty years they have been attempting to improve the Sherman Act, to make it more effective; but, notwithstanding that they have had twenty years of anti-trust legislation in America, trusts, combines, and monopolies are more powerful and effective there to-day than they have ever been in the history of that country. So in view of these facts we cannot reasonably conclude that our anti-trust legislation is sufficient to control these pernicious combinations. They require to be controlled, because the history of America proves that they corrupt the Legislature and bribe the judiciary—they buy decisions there just as you buy ordinary commodities here in Australia—and what they have done in America they will do in Australia if they are allowed free and unrestricted scope here for the next few years. I wish to make brief reference to a few remarks passed by the Home Secretary when speaking last night. He blamed the Labour party for nearly everything under the sun. He blamed them for the late strike. As a matter of fact, the highest industrial tribunal in Australia has decided that the Brisbane Tramways Company monopoly were responsible for that general strike some fourteen or fifteen months ago, and yet the Home Secretary shielded this gigantic monopoly. The men who struck were as much the victims of circumstances as the farmers. In countries where there is no Labour party, such as America and England, there are greater strikes than we have every experienced in Australia, so it was rather an illogical argument to use to attempt to prove

that the Labour party were responsible for that strike. The Labour party stand for the settlement of national disputes by peaceful means, for the settlement of industrial disputes by peaceful means, and will continue to do so. The Home Secretary said he was a State socialist, and then went on with all the energy and ability at his command to prove that State socialism or State enterprise in Queensland and other States were absolute failures. I do not know how he harmonised his statement as being a State socialist with the information that he afterwards gave to the House, alleging to prove that State enterprises in Western Australia and other States were failures. The Home Secretary said that the Federal electoral laws were loose. That is a term that could be applied very appropriately to the Home Secretary's arguments. I think it is beneath a member occupying the position that the Home Secretary does to argue in the way he did last night. He took the case of one hotel in Western Australia, and stated that there had been several thousand pounds lost on that hotel. That was rather a flimsy attempt to prove that State enterprises were a failure. Do we not know of the enormous failures that take place in Queensland and other States of Australia and all the world over under private enterprise, every week and every year; and it would be just as logical to argue, therefore, that private enterprise was an absolute failure. But the Home Secretary was most unfair in his argument, because if he took the history of State hotels for the last ten years in Western Australia, he would have found there was a profit of some £20,000. That is a direct disproof of the hon. gentleman's argument. He took one isolated case instead of taking the whole of the hotels. If he had taken the whole of the hotels he would have found there was a profit of £20,000 during the last ten years.

Mr. LENNON: You don't take him seriously, surely?

Mr. LARCOMBE: No; but there are some electors in Queensland who do take the hon. gentleman seriously, and it is just as well for them to realise the flimsy nature of his alleged arguments, so that they will take him like the hon. member for Herbert. Again, the Home Secretary said he was a State socialist but not a socialist. That statement seemed to me to show a confused conception of sociology, because, if the hon. gentleman is a State socialist, he is assisting on the great socialistic movement. The hon. gentleman probably had in mind certain socialistic schemes enumerated and elaborated by socialistic authors; but, as a matter of fact, socialism is a growth and not a cut-and-dried scheme at all; and, when you are a State socialist, then you are a socialist. The hon. gentleman will probably have to account to the farmers' party and to his constituents for having declared himself a State socialist. Right through the history of mankind we find there has been a continual process of destruction and reconstruction. We find that, in accordance with the laws of evolution, from savagery we came to slavery; from slavery we came to feudalism; from feudalism we came to capitalism; and capitalism is now giving way to a higher development—namely, socialism; and socialism in time will give place to something still higher in the scale

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of social evolution. If it was not somewhat presumptuous for a young member to do, I would like, in conjunction with other hon. members, to congratulate the mover of the Address in Reply. I think he delivered a very effective and a very practical address, and he is to be congratulated upon his first effort in this Chamber. The hon. member for Port Curtis, the seconder of the Address in Reply, somewhat marred his speech by pleading for liberal treatment for the Brisbane Tramways monopoly, and also by casting an inferential reflection upon certain members of the Elections Tribunals of last session. While congratulating the mover of the Address in Reply, I do not think we should forget the very effective speeches delivered by the leader of the Opposition and his deputy. The leader of the Opposition was particularly effective when referring to the fact that there was no mention in the Governor's Speech of any proposed anti-trust legislation. The Premier, in reply, attempted to prove that there was no danger, as there were no trusts, combines, or monopolies in Queensland or in any other part of Australia. Now, if that be so, why was it that a Reference of Legislative Matters Bill was mentioned in the Governor's Speech twelve months ago? The very fact that at that time the Government were apprehensive points to the fact that there is grave danger, and that there is grave danger is attested to not only by members of the Labour party but by some of the strongest Conservatives in Australia. Mr. McWade, a member of the Legislative Council of Victoria, made that plain in a speech delivered some months ago, when moving a resolution calling upon the Government of Victoria to take immediate steps to prevent the American meat trust from coming in and committing the same depredations in Victoria as they have committed in America. In speaking to that motion, Mr. McWade pointed out that the American meat trust within the last five years had cornered 31½ per cent. of the sheep and lamb exports from Argentina, and had appropriated 41½ per cent. of the beef exports from the same country; and he pointed out that what took place in Argentina would take place in Australia unless immediate and drastic legislation was introduced and passed by the States of Australia, or by the National Parliament. Mr. McWade is no Labour man; he is a Conservative; and his testimony ought to be taken to heart by members on both sides of the House. In elaborating his speech, Mr. McWade went on to prove that the total impost upon the taxpayers of Australia would be £1,000,000 within a very short time if the American meat trust were established in the Commonwealth, and that statement was borne out by several other members of the Legislative Council of Victoria who supported the motion. Now, after being hunted out of Victoria and other States, the meat trust has been welcomed in this reactionary State.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Who hunted them out?

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Governments of those States. They should not be allowed to come here and invest their capital unless legislation is passed enabling the Government effectively to control them. But there is no suggestion of any such legislation being passed, and they will be free to pursue the pernicious policy that they have

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pursued in America and in other parts of the world. The London "Times," which cannot by any stretch of imagination be classed as a Labour paper, pointed out in a very able article, some months ago, the tactics of the American meat trust. It pointed out that in America for a time they paid a very high price to the producer and reduced the price to the consumer; but, after they crushed out competition, the position was reversed. Down went the price to the producer and up went the price to the consumer. If we bear in mind the testimony of Mr. McWade in the Victorian Legislative Council, what the London "Times" has written, and what has been written in other anti-socialistic papers throughout the world, we can reasonably assume that it is a real danger, and that it was a gross omission on the part of the Government not to introduce legislation such as was suggested by the leader of the Opposition, particularly in view of the referendum proposal vote, when the electors of Queensland decided in an unmistakable way that they were satisfied that there was a danger, and that the National Parliament should take steps to prevent taking place in Australia what has taken place in America and in other countries. As far as the Governor's Speech is concerned, undoubtedly it is disappointing. I feel sure that hon. members on the other side are really disappointed with it themselves, and the "Daily Mail" very aptly described it when it said it was a meek and timid-looking statement, and if the development of Queensland was not to proceed on a more handsome scale than was indicated in the Governor's Speech, then there was a very bad time ahead of us. That was not said by a Labour paper, but by the "Daily Mail," and they were very pointed in their remarks. I see, according to the Speech, that His Excellency, during the last twelve months, has travelled over a good portion of Northern and Central Queensland, and made himself acquainted with the country he traversed. It is a pity that his advisers did not follow his example. They never come near the North or the Central districts unless they are looking for votes, and when they do come they very frequently come in a very perfunctory way, address a meeting for political purposes, and move on. Why, the Premier has twice visited the Central district in the last few months, but he has contemptuously ignored Rockhampton. He has not held one public meeting in Rockhampton during his last two or three visits.

Mr. BOWMAN: He has shunned Brisbane too.

Mr. BARBER: And Bundaberg too. (Laughter.)

Mr. LARCOMBE: Well, after the result of the Federal elections he ought to shun Queensland. (Opposition laughter.) According to the Governor's Speech, there is to be an amendment of the Elections Act introduced. I trust that this Bill will provide for a uniform roll for Federal and State elections in Queensland. There seems to be no reason why there should be a different qualification for a State elector from that required in a Federal elector. If six months' residence is a sufficient qualification for a Federal elector, it should be sufficient for a State elector, and I think we should bring the Queensland law into line with the Federal law in this respect. I trust also that the amending Bill will make

provision for a uniform system of voting, and that our State system of voting will be brought into line with that of the Federal system. According to the figures in to-day's "Telegraph," there were 13,000 informal votes cast in Australia at the last Federal election, and a large proportion of those were cast in Queensland. Those informal votes were largely due to the fact that we have two different systems of voting, and I hope the amending Bill will do away with that anomaly, because undoubtedly it is a very prolific cause of informal voting. I notice, further, that the iniquitous system of voting by post is to be reintroduced in Queensland. Probably that proposal is made on account of the result of the last Federal election, but, as the leader of the Opposition effectively pointed out, we could expect nothing less from the present Administration. It simply indicates the reactionary nature of the present Government of Queensland. In theory the system of voting by post seems unassailable; nothing seems more effective than postal voting, which will enable every elector to record his vote, but in practice, like many other measures which appear very sound in theory, it has proved absolutely worthless. We know from experience that the postal vote is more a means of corruption than a means of convenience to the electors, and we can reasonably aver that there is no justification for reintroducing it in Queensland. In 1907, the then Home Secretary, the Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, in moving the repeal of the postal vote provisions, said—

"I feel that the time has come, from our knowledge of what happened at the last election through the unsatisfactory working of the postal vote, when the House will consent to the repeal of the postal vote clause."

He further said—

"It has been found in practice that the best way to deal with the postal vote is to wipe it out altogether."

That was a fair and impartial statement of the position, and the support accorded him by members who are not associated with the Labour party proves that there is absolutely no necessity for the reintroduction of the postal vote in Queensland. It proves also that its reintroduction will mean increased corruption and increased malpractices, which the Government contend they are particularly anxious to put down. When speaking on this proposed measure, the hon. member for Port Curtis gave as a reason for its reintroduction the convenience of the women of Queensland. This new-born solicitude for the women of Queensland on the part of members opposite is rather amusing. What sympathy have those hon. members shown with the women of Queensland right throughout the history of Queensland politics? In 1904, when the Elections Act was going through this House, the hon. member for Toowong moved an amendment providing that adult franchise should only come into operation when there was a reduction in the number of members in the Legislative Assembly. There has been no reduction in the number since then, and there is not likely to be any reduction for some considerable time to come, so that if the hon. member for Toowong had had his way the women of Queensland would not have had a vote to-day. In that amendment the hon. member was supported by the present Treasurer, the hon. member for Normanby, the hon. member for Townsville, and

several other members on that side of the House, including, if I recollect rightly, the Minister for Railways. Yet members opposite give as a reason for the reintroduction of the postal vote the convenience of the women of Queensland! As a matter of fact, they fear the women of Queensland, and they have reason to fear them, because before the women of Australia had a vote there was not one Labour Government in Queensland, excepting the short-lived Dawson Ministry. Since then we have had a Labour Government in South Australia, in Western Australia, in New South Wales, and in the National Parliament of Australia; and there will undoubtedly be a Labour Government in Queensland within the next eighteen months, to a great extent as a result of the women's vote. The next paragraph of the Governor's Speech deals with the alleged irregularities at the last Federal election, and says—

"If personation, plural voting, and other illegalities were not rife at the recent Federal polling, it was not, in the opinion of my advisers, because existing arrangements do not encourage and facilitate such practices. Therefore it is their intention to request the Commonwealth Government to appoint a commission, consisting of the Chief Electoral Officer, his State deputies, and the principal State electoral registrars, to devise some means whereby the Federal electoral rolls and the conduct of the Federal elections will be above suspicion."

That is a most insolent and most impudent and most pragmatical paragraph. The Federal Government are quite competent to look after their own rolls, and if Queensland Liberals wished to bring this matter of alleged corruption before the National Parliament they had the opportunity of doing so through their Federal representatives. It is really degrading the dignity of the Governor's Speech to introduce such a paragraph as that into it. Why cannot members opposite take their defeat in a manly way? Why was that paragraph introduced? Simply because the Liberals were overwhelmed with defeat at the last Federal elections, and then, like schoolboys playing at football, they complain of the referee, of the state of the ground, or some other triviality. (Opposition laughter.) They have cause to be afraid on account of what has taken place, because it is an indication of what will take place in Queensland in eighteen months' time.

Mr. RYAN: Or sooner.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I am glad of that interjection, because it reminds me that when I left the Central district many of my supporters came to me and asked when the dissolution was going to take place. (Opposition laughter.) I told them that they need not be alarmed, because the result of the Federal elections had killed the third party. There would have been a strong third party if they had had any reasonable chance of getting back into Parliament and getting on to the Treasury bench. It is had enough to be without a portfolio, but it is worse to be without a seat. (Opposition laughter.) The members who were forming a third party realised that, and I congratulate them on their sound common sense. Goodness knows what they were going to do. They were going to blow up the Government; they had adjusted the fuse, but when they struck the match they were horrified at the prospect, and instead of applying

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it to the fuse they hurriedly picked up the fuse and ran for their lives; and we may be sure that during the currency of the present Parliament the fuse will not be again adjusted. (Opposition laughter.) The leader of the Opposition was really right when he told hon. members on the front Treasury

bench that they could sleep [10 p.m.] soundly, as there is no chance of them being supplanted by the third party this session anyhow. The percentage of personation and irregularities generally at the last Federal election was no greater than it has been at any other election. (Hear, hear!) We have that on the authority of the Chief Electoral Registrar, Mr. Oldham. Surely we would take the decision of a fair and impartial authority like Mr. Oldham before we would take the prejudiced and biased opinion of any hon. member sitting on the front Treasury bench.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Or the "Courier."

Mr. LARCOMBE: Yes. I would sooner take the word of the Chief Electoral Registrar. In the face of that, we cannot see that there was any justification for the insertion of the paragraph in the Governor's Speech to which I have referred. The confidential circular that was read by the Premier really disproved the argument that he set out to prove. He set out to prove that the Federal Government encouraged corruption at the last Federal election. He said, "I will read the confidential circular issued to the returning and presiding officers," and he dropped his voice to a whisper as he read out the circular. This confidential circular was an instruction to the returning and presiding officers allowing an elector to vote even although he had been personated. It further gave instructions that it was not to be made public. Surely any reasonable-minded person can see why that instruction was given. If personation was rampant, it would have been a dozen times more so if the electors knew that they could vote in their own name although another person had impersonated them. If that information had gained ground, the personation in Australia would have increased by at least 50 per cent. (Hear, hear!) The Federal Labour Government proved that they were genuinely desirous of preventing any personation by issuing that circular. There was only a small percentage of electors who knew that they could vote even if they had been impersonated. It was fortunate that that was not made public before the last Federal election. If the Federal Government are going to be attacked, they should be attacked by a Government that is itself above suspicion. Let the first stone be cast by those who have a clean political career, and not by hon. members opposite who have achieved their political positions by political dishonesty. Now, the Federal Labour party is as honest as any Government that has been in existence in Australia. What did the Queensland Government do when Mr. Kidston was retiring from politics? What did they do to get him to retire? They promoted him to the Land Court. They altered the Land Court Act to retire the members of the Land Court, and appointed Mr. Kidston to a position as a member of the court at a salary of £1,000 a year for fifteen years. You never find the Labour Government trying to get rid of a strong politician in that way. What was done by the Queensland Liberal Government was also done by the Federal Liberal Govern-

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ment. Senator Pearce was selected either by the Watson Government or the Fisher Government to go home to England to represent Australia as the Minister for Defence. In the meantime, before he went home the Labour Government was defeated. What did the Liberal Government do? Did they honourably uphold the action of the Labour Government when they came into power? No, they did not. They dismissed Senator Pearce, cancelled his appointment, and appointed in his place the Hon. Colonel Foxton and sent him home to represent the Federal Government. Yet this Liberal party talks about "spoils to the victors." It is nothing else but "spoils to the victors" where hon. members opposite are concerned. When the Labour Government took office, did they pack the High Court with Labour judges? Not a bit of it. What did the Liberal Government do? They first of all appointed Sir Edmund Barton. They got him to retire in a manner somewhat similar to that adopted by the Liberal Government in Queensland when Mr. Kidston retired. Sir Edmund Barton has high qualifications, and I was pleased to see him appointed to the High Court; but when you see Liberal Governments pursuing a policy like this, it makes you feel rather nettled when they turn around and accuse the Labour Government of political corruption. As a matter of fact, the political corruption in Queensland, in Australia, in every State in Australia, and all the world over has been practised by the Liberal parties and Liberal Governments only. The Fisher Government has been congratulated, not only by their own organs but by anti-Labour organs in Australia, and outside Australia, on their high standing and political morality. I wish to say a word or two about the primary producers, their enemies and their friends. I think hon. members opposite are afraid of the magnificent way in which the Labour party's policy with regard to the primary producers has been placed before this House and the country by the leader of the Opposition and his deputy. If hon. members opposite are not afraid of the Labour party being able to show that we are the real friends of the farmers—that we are the real farmers' party—if they are not afraid of the exposition of the Labour party's policy, why is it that so many members opposite who have spoken should get up and reply to that particular point? It has been replied to by the Premier, by the Treasurer, by the Home Secretary, and by the Secretary for Railways, and every private member who has spoken on that side. If members opposite did not see that there was something solid in what was stated by the leader of the Opposition there would not have been so much attention devoted to his speech.

The HOME SECRETARY: We will fall down with fright directly. (Laughter.)

Mr. LARCOMBE: The hon. gentleman does not look very well to-night. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: He feels very weak. (Laughter.)

Mr. LARCOMBE: I think the hon. gentleman feels the position very seriously after what has transpired during the last few weeks. We are all agreed as to the importance of the primary industry, and we all agree that the primary producer should receive every consideration and encouragement,

but they are not receiving the consideration and encouragement they are entitled to. The question naturally arises, Who is responsible for that? It is not the Labour party, because the Labour party are not in power, so it must be the Liberal party or the Fusion party. It is really flattering to call them the Liberal party. I think I can prove what I say, that the alleged Liberal party sitting opposite are the enemies and opponents of the primary producers. The Liberal party are the opponents of the primary producer, because they make the primary producer suffer because of the existence of the trusts, combines, and monopolies. The hon. member for Warrego referred briefly to this matter, and I want to quote from a South Australian Commission which dealt with these combines in Australia, and their effect upon the primary producer. Now this commission was not composed wholly of Labour men. There was a majority of anti-Labour men on it, so we can fairly assume that the report is a correct one, or we can at least assume that it was unbiassed. One paragraph in the report of that commission says—

“Owing to a wheat ring the farmers of South Australia were robbed of 2d. per bushel on their wheat; and taking it on the yield for that year, they came to the conclusion, therefore, that the farmers of the State lost a sum equivalent to £167,000.”

Taking the whole of Australia, they argued that the farmers lost a sum equal to £625,000 as a result of the operations of this wheat ring. And yet you never hear any reference to it by hon. members opposite. Never the slightest suspicion of legislation dealing with these combinations. Further on the commissioners say—

“Your commissioners cannot but regard the explanation of the failure to pass the reduction of freights on to the farmers as extremely unsatisfactory. After careful consideration, your commissioners have come to the conclusion that the existence and operations of ‘honourable understandings’ are decidedly inimical to the interests of the wheat-growers.”

That is the finding of the Royal Commission in regard to the shipping monopoly of Australia. Never a word mentioned in the Governor’s Speech or by hon. members opposite as to the method of effectively preventing this scandalous state of affairs. These combines and monopolies can operate without restriction, with perfect freedom, and rob the farmers of thousands of pounds annually, and yet the Premier gets up and tells hon. members that the rural workers’ log is going to ruin the farmers.

The HOME SECRETARY: You will encourage them with the land tax. It will assist them to raise good crops.

Mr. LARCOMBE: At the proper time I will deal with the Labour party’s land tax proposals. It is a tax that will not fall on the farmers at all. As a matter of fact, were a land tax in operation many of the present little vexatious taxes would be repealed, and the farmers would be better off than they are under the present Government. However, the Home Secretary did not tell us that in other States of Australia, where Liberal Governments are in power, they have a land tax. They have a land tax in Victoria and in South Australia, and never a word do hon.

members opposite utter about that. The land tax there is in operation under a Liberal Government.

Mr. HARDACRE: The land tax made millions of acres available.

The HOME SECRETARY: Where? Not in Queensland.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Federal Labour Government, in their policy speech, made provision for the establishment of a national line of steamers in Australia. They recognised how the farmer was being robbed by this pernicious shipping combine, and they are going to commence with a small line of steamers to assist the primary producer and the taxpayers in general.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is that the reason why they took away the Vancouver service from Queensland?

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Home Secretary knows quite well why the subsidy was withdrawn from the Vancouver service. He knows quite well of the reciprocity treaty entered into between Canada and New Zealand, and the advantage that New Zealand has over Queensland, and until we enter into a similar arrangement the National Government were quite justified in doing what they did.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why should Queensland contribute?

Mr. LARCOMBE: They will contribute a good deal more when reciprocity is arranged, and the National Government, with Mr. Fisher at their head, have been negotiating for some time with Canada to bring about that arrangement.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is that the reason why they insisted on the headquarters of the Pacific cable station being removed from Queensland?

Mr. LARCOMBE: If the Home Secretary wants to stop all night, I am prepared to discuss these questions with him, but if he wants to get away in time to catch his tram, then he should let me resume my argument. The National Government provided for the establishment of a line of steamers, and the West Australian Government did similarly, and notwithstanding what the Home Secretary said last night, that service has been a success, and a great benefit to the primary producer. However, I want to give a little additional information to prove that the Labour Government are the true friends of the farmers. Not only indirectly, by means of their grand legislation, have they encouraged the farmers of Australia, but also directly through giving the farmers free farms in the Northern Territory and in lending money at 4 per cent. Is this alleged farmers’ Government lending money to the farmers at 4 per cent.?

The HOME SECRETARY: Did they not also establish a laundry there? (Laughter.)

Mr. LARCOMBE: I will tell the Home Secretary what they did. They provided fair and reasonable treatment all round, not only for the farmers, but for everybody else in the Territory, and that is what the Queensland Government is not doing for the taxpayers of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A howling success.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why, they sweated their own employees.

Mr. LARCOMBE: We often hear about the “stinking fish” party in Queensland. There you have an example of the “stinking

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fish' party in the State—they are decrying the Northern Territory. Is that the way to attract immigrants to our shores?

The HOME SECRETARY: Why, the Federal Government sweated their own employees.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Home Secretary talks about sweating under a Labour Government in Australia. As a matter of fact, the Labour Government in New South Wales, in Western Australia, and in the National Parliament have set down a minimum for their public servants much higher than the present Queensland Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is that why the Labour Government in New South Wales are letting their railways by contract now?

Mr. LARCOMBE: I can quite see what the Home Secretary is attempting to do. He realises that I am proving conclusively that the Labour party are the true farmers' party, and he wants to exhaust my time before I can get this material in. I want to get this material in in order that my constituents and the constituents of Queensland generally may realise who are the true friends of the farmer. The Home Secretary referred to the land tax. On every platform that I spoke from in the farming districts of Keppel I dealt with the Labour party's land tax proposals, and I got a magnificent vote in all of them, notwithstanding the gross misrepresentations indulged in by the Liberal organ, and the Labour majority in the electorate I represent was over 1,100 at the last Federal election. Now the farmers in Keppel are satisfied who are their true friends, and I am satisfied that the farmers in Queensland generally will also be satisfied similarly within the next eighteen months. I want to point out further, that in addition to giving free farms, and in addition to lending money at 4 per cent.—1 per cent. cheaper than the alleged farmers' party in Queensland—they are also assisting indirectly by magnificent legislation. They are attracting people to Australia to an extent that was never heard of previously under an anti-Labour Government. We know the primary producer depends to a great extent on the population of the industrial centres of Australia for his markets, and by encouraging people to come to Australia they are actually benefiting the farmer.

The HOME SECRETARY: Will you give him free freights on the railways?

Mr. LARCOMBE: We will give them much cheaper rates than the present Denham Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is that why the New South Wales Labour Government are increasing the railway freights?

Mr. LARCOMBE: They are going to do nothing of the kind as far as farmers' products are concerned. A paragraph appeared in the "Courier" the other morning specifically stating that there was no intention to increase the freights on primary produce.

The HOME SECRETARY: What about the workmen's tickets?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LARCOMBE: Why does the Home Secretary attempt to wilfully mislead the electors of Queensland on that point? I want to point out that in the last two years under an anti-Labour Government the excess of arrivals over departures in Australia was only 27,000, and for the last two years under a Labour Government it was 99,000, or an increase of 72,000 persons.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why do you oppose immigration?

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Mr. LARCOMBE: The interjection of the Home Secretary is ridiculous on the face of it, because, if we were opposed to immigration, how is it that people are coming here in greater numbers under a Labour Ministry than they were under a Liberal Government? From the very facts of the case that assertion is on the face of it, to say the least, absurd. It may be argued that although the excess of arrivals over departures is so great, the population has not increased at a greater ratio. But we find that in the last two years, under the Liberal Government, the population increased by 192,805 persons, whilst under the Labour Government, during the last two years, the population increased by 244,747 persons, or an increase of 51,942 persons more in the two years in which the Labour Government was in power than actually occurred in the two years that the Liberal Government was in power. That again proves what the National Labour Government has been to the primary producer, for it has increased the population, and thereby increased his market. Now, I wish to deal with the Labour Government in Western Australia. The first thing they did when they were returned was to broaden the Agricultural Bank Act, enabling farmers to borrow up to £2,000 where the amount had been smaller under the Liberal Government. In the first year of the Labour Government the amount advanced to farmers was £405,943, while in the last year of the Liberal Government the amount was £283,159, so that there was an increase of £122,784 in one year that the Labour Government was in power over what the Liberal Government had advanced. How does that square with the argument that the Labour party is opposed to the farmer? It cannot be squared, and it proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are what we contend—the true farmers' party. It is all very fine for hon. members to get up and argue in a vague general way that we are opposed to the farmers, but when they get figures like these put before them they are silent.

The HOME SECRETARY: He will know all about it when he gets the rural workers' log.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Home Secretary knows quite well that that is not in the Labour platform. He knows well that it will be presented whether a Labour or a Liberal Government is in power, and that it is a matter on the industrial side of the movement. But, further, I want to point out that a deputation representing primary producers—the fruitgrowers—waited on the Labour Government in Western Australia and pointed out that their export trade was hampered, and that they were being robbed by a ring of the prices which they should have received for their fruit. They asked the Labour party to give them assistance, and without any talk at all the Labour Government of Western Australia advanced £10,000 to enable them to send their fruit to other countries. They advanced that £10,000 on their fruit. Then the 1911 season was a dry season in Western Australia, and the Government provided water throughout the stricken areas, putting down wells and making dams for the farmers, at a total cost of £88,557, and, in addition, they distributed water in tanks and sold it at cost price to the farmers. I could go on at

greater detail enumerating the wonderful assistance that has been given by the Labour Government there to the primary producer. I might mention, before leaving that subject, that the farmers there are being rebbed as well as those in other States by the high prices they have to pay for agricultural implements, and the Labour Government, in response to representations by them, have decided to establish works for the manufacture of agricultural implements, and it is estimated by competent authorities that the cost of those articles will be reduced by at least 50 per cent. as a result. There you see what a Labour Government is doing in a practical way when the farmer is threatened; and the farmer is being threatened in a similar way here; but there is not a suggestion of the establishment of a works of that kind in Queensland. I had better pass on from that subject; but I think from what I have shown of what the National Labour Government and the Labour Government in Western Australia have done for the primary producer, that a Labour Government here would do similar things for the farmers of this State, and I hope that the farmers will read the fine exposition of the Labour platform, and particularly that part of it relating to primary industries, given by the leader and the deputy leader of this party when they spoke the other night; and if they do and they realise truly the ideals and the aspirations of this party, and what probably will take place if a Labour Government is returned, there will be no doubt as to the result when next we go before the electors.

The HOME SECRETARY: They will fall on your necks and weep.

Mr. LARCOMBE: They did that in Wide Bay.

Mr. RYAN: So long as they come to the poll and vote.

The HOME SECRETARY: So long as they vote often.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Then I want to deal with this broken-pledge Ministry. We have often heard of "the Ministry of all the talents" and of Ministries of similar designations, but I think no Ministry has so fully earned the title of "the broken-pledge Ministry" as that now sitting on the front Treasury benches. Wherever you go, in any part of Queensland—and it is not confined to Labour men—you hear of some broken pledge, some railway not constructed or something of that sort, and I am satisfied that the taxpayers as a whole realise, as the farmers do, that they are being hoodwinked by this present Government. The present Government seem absolutely to eschew the ordinary ethics of political morality. In fact, their very return was due to their deficiency in that respect, and they have been pursuing a similar policy ever since. The election cry was the strike cry; it was a deceptive cry, and they have been deceiving the Parliament and the electors ever since. The Premier has been touring Queensland lately, making a fine lot of promises. He went to Mount Morgan and promised all sorts of things to them there if they would only put Mr. Dyer in and put Mr. Higgs out and defeat the referenda. He promised, amongst other things, that he would continue the Dawson Valley line. That was in answer to a deputation that waited on him. But the deputation realised that he had promised the same twelve months before, and one of them,

Dr. Richards, asked the Premier whether he could not fix a definite date at which it would be recommenced. The Premier said, "No." Dr. Richards said, "Why not?" and then the Premier at once got offensive and insulting, and told him that he was talking rot and rubbish. And the Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin"—and mark you this is the organ that is supporting the Liberal party in Central Queensland—said, "The Premier has a stock cry for anybody that disagrees with him. He tells them they are talking rot." As a matter of fact, Dr. Richards was not talking rot; he was talking good common sense. He is an educated man, a highly intellectual and cultured man, and he knew what he was talking about, and for the Premier to talk to him in that way indicates to me that he is entirely unfitted to occupy the exalted position of Premier of this State.

The HOME SECRETARY: That settles it.

Mr. LARCOMBE: That is not only my opinion; it is the opinion of the "Morning Bulletin," which espouses the [10.30 p.m.] cause of the Denham Government in Central Queensland, and when their organs are turning on them in that way, we may fully realise what is going to happen later on.

The HOME SECRETARY: We might call them the barrel organs.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It was the opinion of the referenda vote also.

The PREMIER: It only shows that your statements are grossly and absolutely incorrect.

Mr. LARCOMBE: They are not incorrect, they have been testified to by a report from the "Morning Bulletin" in Rockhampton, and, as I pointed out, this paper is not a Labour paper at all.

The PREMIER: The "Morning Bulletin" did not report the Premier.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The "Morning Bulletin" did report and criticise the Premier. I have a copy of the quotation here, which I could give if time permitted. It says, amongst other things, that—

"The Government has never had any difficulty in finding money and men, not only to continue the extensions in the South, but to project and build entirely new railways. Mr. Denham apparently does not perpetuate such things by inadvertence. It is a fixed and sacred policy with him, and the man who, like Dr. Richards, ventures to disagree with it is politely told that he is 'talking rubbish.'"

The PREMIER: That is their comment, not my reply.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Premier is shifting his ground.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him by the Standing Order.

Mr. MACKINTOSH (*Pit'sworth*): I move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

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

Mr. Mackintosh.]