

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 JULY 1913

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TUESDAY, 1 JULY, 1913.

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

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Agent-General for Queensland for the year 1912.

The following paper was also laid on the table:—

Copies of correspondence in connection with an application by Messrs. Fisker and Bunning for a license to sink an artesian bore on Lucknow Station.

SEPARATION.

POSTPONEMENT OF NOTICE OF MOTION.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*): I desire to withdraw the notice of motion standing in my name with reference to the separation of Central and Northern Queensland.

Mr. Adamson.]

I do so because I have received an assurance from the Premier that he will give a full day to the discussion of the separation question on the 24th July, or some other convenient day.

The PREMIER: Substitute the 24th July.

Mr. ADAMSON: Very well, I will give notice of the motion for that day.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot do that, as the Standing Orders do not allow of the giving of a notice of motion for a day later than the eighth next sitting day of the House.

Mr. ADAMSON: In that case, I give notice for 17th July.

RABBIT BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. Tolmie, *Toowoomba*), it was formally resolved—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to the incursion and migration of rabbits.”

RAILWAY EXTENSION, LONGREACH TO STONEHENGE.

On the motion of Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*), it was formally resolved—

“That there be laid on the table of the House copy of the last report of the Commissioner of Railways on the extension from Longreach to Stonehenge.”

The PREMIER (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I beg to lay on the table a copy of the report of the Commissioner for Railways on the extension from Longreach to Stonehenge dated 30th June, 1912, and move that the paper be printed.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. WILLIAMS (*Charters Towers*), who was received with Government “Hear, hear!” said: I had very great pleasure in hearing the interesting and businesslike Speech of His Excellency the Governor. The mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply have received congratulations from all sides of the House, and I desire to join in those congratulations. I had counted on the sitting of Parliament taking place at a later date, but it is evident that there is very good reason for meeting early. In fact, it is imperative that we should do so, in order to help a section of the community—the sugar-growers; and I am pleased that we have met earlier than usual, especially if it means that we shall have a short session and be able to get away to our homes earlier than we did last year.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

[*Mr. Adamson.*

Mr. WILLIAMS: Now, hon. members on the other side of the House have complained that the Speech of His Excellency the Governor is a colourless Speech. What colour is it they want? What more colour do hon. gentlemen want? Do they want it to be a red colour?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: The complaint came from your side.

Mr. WILLIAMS: No, I think it was hon. members on the Opposition side who stated that the Speech was colourless. I think there is plenty of colour in the Speech, and I am satisfied with it as it is.

Mr. BERTRAM: It looks pretty blue. (Laughter.)

Mr. WILLIAMS: We have sometimes seen chemists' shops which have a bright red light on one side and a bright blue light on the other side, and we have also seen chemists' shops which have not got any bright lights burning at all, but I have invariably found that you can buy just as good articles from the chemist's shop without the lights as from the chemist's shop with the bright red and blue lights. What do hon. members opposite want? Do they want to put more red colour into the Speech? Do they want another Industrial Peace Bill, like we had last year, or do they want the Police Offences Bill to give us something to talk about? I trust not. I am quite satisfied with the Speech of the Governor as it is. We have got plenty to deal with in the programme laid before us, and if we only deal with it properly, it will take us all our time to get through it during the session. I am sorry to make reference to a matter which is rather against the House. I consider that this House should be the workshop of the Government of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) I regret to say that instead of this House being the workshop it is known as the talking shop.

Mr. MURPHY: It is all done on your side. (Laughter.)

Mr. WILLIAMS: No, it is not, in spite of what the Independent party says. Now, that is not altogether the fault of hon. members, because when one member of a district gets up and makes a speech, another member has also got to get up and make a speech too, as if he fails to do so, his constituents will say that he is a lazy man, and he will be told, “The hon. member for Woogaroo got up and made a fine speech, and you ought to have got up and said a lot more than he did.” (Laughter.) There is a good deal more time wasted in talk in this House than there should be, but it is not altogether the fault of members. I have got a suggestion to make with regard to that. I understand that there is a proposal to ask for an increase in the salaries paid to members of this House. I quite agree that our legislators are not too well paid in Queensland, but I do not think that the country would be prepared to grant an increase in salaries to members unless this House first set itself in order and got to work in a business-like manner. (Hear, hear!) I know that our Standing Orders are very good, and have been held up as a model set of Standing Orders all over Australia, but I have a method to suggest in connection with business in the House, which, if it does not appeal to the loquacious mem-

bers, will certainly meet with the approval of the earnest members of the House. The suggestion I have to make will affect those members who wish to talk too much and who talk too often, and I think this will have some deterrent effect on those who talk too much. We have one party in this House which is a very much misused and abused party or group known as the farmers' party. There is no question about it but that at one time the farmers' party were a great help to the Labour party.

Mr. GILDAY: They are still.

Mr. FHELLY: They were on the 31st May.

Mr. WILLIAMS: They used to help the Labour party until they were called upon to put their hands into their pockets too much, and they then left them, and it showed their common sense. I can show how a proposal can be designed for dealing with the talkative members. I suggest that a certain portion of "Hansard" be allotted to each member. Let each be notified that he can talk a certain number of columns, and that will be his share. If he exceeds the amount allotted to him, then he should be called upon to pay for it.

Mr. KIRWAN: What about the silent members?

Other OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Could members sell their share?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am sure the House will take notice of my remarks, and I think we will be able to produce a workable scheme. At any rate, we ought to do so before we ask the Government for an increase in our salaries.

Mr. FOLEY: How much would you allot to each member?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I was sorry that there was no mention in the Governor's Speech of a Miners' Homesteads Bill. The Bill was introduced last year, and for the purpose of enabling the people on the goldfields to take up larger areas of land under the miner's homestead provisions than they could under the law as it is at present. It would enable a farmer to get a real good sized holding. The Bill was distributed last year by the Minister or the Under Secretary, so that it could be properly considered by members, and we understood it would be brought on again this session. I have spoken to the Minister for Mines on the matter, and he assures me that this Miners' Homesteads Bill will be brought on as a measure this session. I would also have liked to have seen in the Speech a greater reference to mining.

Mr. FOLEY: You want more colour in it.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think there is plenty of colour in it as it is. Last year the House paid very patient attention to the speeches made by members from mining districts, and the House having indulged itself in that way, I do not propose to reiterate this year what was said last year on the subject of the mining industry. I would only like to remind hon. members that since Queensland first became a colony until the end of 1912 the gold returned was valued at £75,000,000. I must take some credit for my own electorate for contributing its share of that amount, as I see that Charters Towers Gold-

field has contributed in gold to the value of £25,000,000, or more than one-third of the total output. I would like to remind hon. members also that the prime factor in the establishment of Queensland as a colony was the opening of the Gympie Goldfield. It is well known—some hon. members were in the State at the time and they can bear me out—that at that time Queensland was in a hopeless condition bordering on bankruptcy, and it was said that Queensland was thinking of going back to its parent state of New South Wales just when Gympie came to the rescue of the Government.

Hon. R. PHILIP: No, not so bad as that.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I have heard that it was so. I have been told that it was owing to the splendid way that Gympie came to the rescue of Queensland that helped the colony so much at that time. The same thing happened with regard to the opening of Charters Towers and Croydon. Both of these mining fields were the means of opening up the country, and I say publicly but for the fact of these goldfields coming into existence and being opened up then, Queensland would have been a very small State indeed, and would be now largely composed of pastoralists. I think that hon. members will recognize what the mining industry has done in the past, and in the future it will continue to do an important amount of good work for the State. We all remember how in 1893, when things were very bad, when the banks went smash, and we had floods everywhere, that Charters Towers was, practically speaking, carrying most of the State on her back owing to her splendid mining returns and the fine returns that the railway to Charters Towers was showing. The representatives of mining constituencies are invariably generous with regard to the expenditure of money in other districts and for other industries, and all I ask in that direction is that we should get similar generosity given to us by other members of the House. There is in view a very large deep-sinking scheme in Charters Towers. I cannot tell you what the details are, because I think these details have not yet matured. It may mean to the people of the town a very large sum of money, and it may be that this House will be asked to assist them in the shape of putting up £1 for £1. I would point out, in regard to all the schemes from mining fields, that we are in this position: That there is no temptation to try and get money from the Government to waste, because we have to put up £1 for £1, and if the thing goes down we lose our money. Therefore, hon. members can be quite certain that any scheme brought forward on behalf of a mining district will not be an extravagant scheme. Just before I came into the House I was asked how many railways I had to ask for. I never had but one railway, and I have that railway still—the Blair-Athol Railway.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: It was promised.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Promised! We were promised a survey a few years ago, and I believe we will get a survey this year—the beginning of a survey, and that is all. I would like to say that a part of our railway policy is certainly wrong. Seeing the magnificent service of steamers there is on this coast, some greater attention should

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be paid to the communication with inland centres before so much railway construction is done on the coast. I have no objection to that railway on the coast, but certainly it is a wrong thing to build that railway before such a railway as the Blair-Athol line. If the Blair-Athol Railway were built, it would give a short means of communication from the South to the North-west, and would be the means of bringing the mails up, and also coal for the goldfields and for the railways themselves. I do not know what wise man came to think the building of the coastal railway was necessary before the building of that inland railway, but I think it is absolutely wrong. I am going to say something later on about the grievances of the North, but I cannot help thinking that before long another two parties will be disputing and saying they have grievances against each other—I refer to the inland people against the coastal people. I consider the coastal people are getting much more than they should, seeing how neglected the inland people are. I do not at all object to a fair deal, but when you come down the coast and travel in some of those magnificent floating palaces like the "Canberra," and see the splendid accommodation provided, it seems impossible to believe that a coastal railway is necessary before that inland railway.

Mr. MORGAN: Can the railway compete with water carriage? That is the point.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It is impossible. If they could do that, then there might be something in it. I think that what should be done is what the Mackay Harbour Board are doing. Harbour boards should be encouraged to borrow money to improve their harbours, and let us have more railways in the inside districts. I do hope, if that loan is to be given to Mackay, that great care will be taken to see that it is spent in the best manner, because if you lock up a lot of Government money in these works, then you cannot go on with other enterprises. I think the hon. member for Townsville will support me in saying that he has known instances where large sums of money have been wasted on harbour works.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Where? (Laughter.)

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think the reason largely is owing to the fact that no competent engineer is appointed to continuously supervise the expenditure.

Hon. R. PHILIP: Charters Towers got the greatest benefit from that expenditure.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Charters Towers never did anything wrong like that.

Mr. KIRWAN: It never got a chance.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Never. With regard to the railway service to Charters Towers, I am quite satisfied with the number and speed of the trains, but I agree with the complaint of the hon. member for Warrego about our carriages. I am sorry the Secretary for Railways is not here—

Mr. MAY: We want new carriages.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It is quite possible that the new carriages are allotted in a fair proportion—that a certain number is kept in Brisbane, and a certain number sent away to the West and North, but it is marvellous to me to see how many old carriages there are running on the railway line

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from Townsville to Charters Towers. (Hear, hear!) I often travel on the line down in Brisbane, and I find the most beautiful, clean, and luxurious carriages, and I would like to see more in the North.

Mr. FOLEY: Any old thing is good enough for the North.

Mr. WILLIAMS: There are many other matters in connection with my own district that I could speak of, but I do not wish to detain the House on those matters, as I will deal with them on other occasions. Speaking generally, I must complain of the want of attention on the part of Ministers with regard to the North.

Mr. BERTRAM: You started to commend, and now you are condemning.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I would like to tell that hon. member that it is the blessed privilege of members on this side to be able to get up and roast Ministers: you cannot. (Opposition laughter.) I do complain of the want of attention on the part of Ministers with regard to the North. His Excellency the Governor has shown what he can do. He can leave Brisbane and go North and see the wants of the place, and I must confess that I think Ministers, if they tried, could do much better than they do.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HUXHAM: You don't call that a roasting, surely. It is very tame.

Mr. WILLIAMS: You dare not say that much. (Laughter.) Anybody would think that Ministers don't like the heat of the torrid North, and I hope they will get over that feeling. During recent years there has been a revival of the talk about separation. While I do not believe in separation, I certainly think if Ministers wish to stop that cry, the sooner they get about and around those constituencies the better, because the laxity of Ministers in that respect is largely the reason why the country people are dissatisfied.

Mr. GILLIES: Fulfil their promises.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Speaking with reference to the North—I am sorry to have to bring these matters up, but they have to be brought up—I noticed a leading article in the "Brisbane Courier" suggesting that as the trade of the port of Brisbane is becoming so great, and as they have to accommodate such big steamers, and the work is becoming so expensive, it should be made a national work. That means, I take it, that the people of the North should pay for the port of Brisbane.

The TREASURER: That is not likely to come about.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I may have misread the paper, but that was the suggestion, and I hope it will drop at that.

The TREASURER: The revenue from the port of Brisbane is very considerable indeed.

Mr. WILLIAMS: And the revenue from the port of Townsville is also very considerable.

The TREASURER: I quite agree with you.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am glad to have some assurance from the Minister that that is not likely to come about. With regard to the sugar industry, which I consider of the

greatest importance to the State, I am very glad that the Government intend bringing in two measures to deal with the industry. I should have thought that the second measure introduced should have [4 p.m.] been the first—that is the one in reference to black labour. I do not happen to belong to a sugar district, but I can assure the sugar-growers that they will have my sympathy and support in assisting them through their troubles. With regard to that question, I should like to refer to the way in which our Premier has been misrepresented by those people from the South.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Poor fellow!

Mr. WILLIAMS: It looks as if a trap was laid for him. He was led to talk about these Bills before hon. members thought there was any chance of Mr. Fisher passing his Bills in time for us to do anything with them.

Mr. FOLEY: It was our Premier's fault.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It was not. Hon. members on this side of the House would have been willing to sit for another month to get them through.

Mr. FIDELLY: Mr. Fisher passed them to come into force by proclamation.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Then, I notice that a reference has been made to more sugar-mills in the North, and I certainly hope that the Ministry will keep every promise that has been made in that direction.

Mr. LENNON: They could not; it is not their way.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I have heard that a member in the other House made a suggestion as to whether the sugar industry was worth carrying on. I am quite sure that will not be the feeling of a majority of members in this House, because it should be assisted if for no other reason than for the purpose of populating the Northern country so that we may be able to defend it from attack. The Speech also refers to one of the most important matters that we could have mentioned. I refer to the Elections Act. I would not for one minute like to suggest that the Federal Labour party did anything wrong, or deliberately wrong, in preparing that Bill, but I do say this: that if anybody wished to bring in and pass a Bill that would open the way to so much fraud and everything else of the kind, he could not have succeeded better than by passing that measure.

Mr. MURPHY: It is pretty well the same Bill that has been in operation since the inception of the federation.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I do not care who the duffers were—Liberal or Labour—who passed it, the Commonwealth made a hash of it, and has shown itself so grossly incompetent that they are not able to frame a Bill of this kind, and I think it might be a very good thing if we came along and showed them how to make one. There is no doubt that every hon. member in this House, if he wishes to get an honest roll, must admit that things were wrong in the Federal election.

Mr. LENNON: So they were at the Charters Towers State election.

Mr. WILLIAMS: What was that?

Mr. LENNON: The postal vote.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am going to deal with that. We do not know what the Bill will

be like, because it has not been introduced, but I certainly think that women should be allowed to vote in that manner. I quite understand what the hon. member for Herbert has said—that there were abuses when the postal vote was in force. I dare say there were, but I understand that the abuses that were complained of were that some justices of the peace had acted dishonestly.

Mr. LENNON: I am quite sure they did.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I would make the punishment so stiff for that, that if a man did it he would get five years in gaol. (Hear, hear!) I think we shall do well to hedge the privilege of voting around pretty well so as to stop personation and fraud. Men and women can go out to picture shows and theatres time after time in the year, and I do not see why they should not be able to go to the poll and vote in their own wards. That would enable us to identify some of the rascals who come in and record votes, although certainly we could not catch them all. We could not catch, for instance, the ghosts who came and voted at the last election. It also has been suggested that it might be a good thing to issue a certificate, like a miner's right. I am not prepared to say now whether that would be successful, but something should be done. One of the chief causes of the trouble, in my opinion, is the absentee vote. I do not believe in it at all. It is a convenience, certainly, to men who are perambulating about, but if they knew what trouble and fraud there were over it they would cheerfully resign it.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is a long way preferable to the postal vote.

Mr. WILLIAMS: If a man was going away, and knew he was going away before the issue of the writs, he might have such a vote; otherwise I would not have it at all. It leads to too much fraud.

Mr. MURPHY: You ought to have to take the voter's photograph.

Mr. WILLIAMS: There is one measure that I should welcome, and that is the Elections Tribunal Bill. I quite agree with hon. members who sat on the panel of assessors that it is not fair to ask them to sit. I feel it all the more, perhaps, because I happen to have been chosen for the panel this session. I notice also that the Ministry is going to try to find the mineral oil that is believed to exist in this country. I have no doubt that it is an excellent scheme, and I hope that oil will be found. I hope that while that is being considered, and while the Hon. the Premier and the Ministry are talking about prospecting for oil, they will do something with a view to getting up prospecting parties to look for gold in the neighbourhood of the present goldfields. We know gold is there, and the prospects are something more certain than oil. In any case, I congratulate the Ministry on the steps they have taken to establish that industry. The Speech also mentioned a matter of the greatest importance to the State, and that is prickly pear. When one hears those words one naturally thinks of the name of the hon. member for Toowoong. I was very glad to hear the congratulatory remarks that were made about him, because he is an old personal friend.

Mr. LENNON: A brother unionist. (Laughter.)

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Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, and I was very sorry to see that he had retired from the Ministry, because I think his absence is a loss to the country. Various suggestions have been made as to how the pear should be dealt with. I try to learn as much as I can, because I do not profess to be an expert as to the destruction of prickly pear, and there seem to be two schemes. One is that it should be tackled in a large way—that concessions should be given to the men with large capital—and the other is that the country should be cut up into smaller plots. I do not mind which way it is done, but whoever does it—whether the big man or the small man—should be very richly rewarded. As one hon. member said, why should the prickly pear get all the profit from the land—why should not somebody else get some of it? I sincerely hope that that very serious matter will be dealt with in some way. I am sorry to say that the prickly pear has started up in the Charters Towers district, and I am very much afraid that if it is allowed to spread, it will travel down to the rich country in the Burdekin Delta. The Government should take steps to eradicate it now while it is possible to deal with it. We have been in correspondence with the Government about it, but they hardly seem to realise their responsibility. I hope they will do so.

Mr. LENNON: What about your local authorities' responsibility?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, but the local authorities there are too short of money. I do not know how they are going to get revenue for prickly pear. In some parts of the northern mining fields, hon. members will know that our revenue is very small, because we can only rate on the unimproved land values; consequently the rates are very limited, and it will be impossible for these local authorities to do anything at all. The discussion on this matter makes one think how much better it would be if we could stop these pests before they get so big. (Hear, hear!) It seems to me a marvellous thing, and it does not speak well for the intelligence of the Governments of Queensland, or the people of Queensland, that we have not discovered that pest before. There seems to me nothing to marvel about in the existence of the pest. I believe it has existed in India and Ceylon and other places for years. The trouble I think is that our system is not right. The Minister for Public Lands and his Under Secretary have quite enough to do to look after the other work in the Lands Department. I think we do not employ enough experts. I think the Department of Agriculture is the most important in the whole of the State, and I would like to see an officer appointed, like the Commissioner for Railways, to take a large part of the work out of the hands of the department—to look after such things as the starting of these pests. I think it would have been an immense improvement if years ago we had had such men; they could have seen what was going to happen when things like the prickly pear and the water hyacinth came in.

Mr. HUNTER: You are allowing phylloxera to come into the State now, and are not attempting to deal with it.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think the hon. member will agree with me that there should be

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some men in these departments who are capable of finding out and dealing with these matters. I am quite certain that the staffs we have at present are very good; they consist of capable men, but they themselves will admit that they are not there for that purpose, and could not do the work. No doubt if they did they would want very much larger salaries. I think that that applies to more than one department. Where possible in a great country like this, with growing possibilities, we should apply to the expert a little more than we have done; we are apt to bring the expert in after the trouble happens. I have said that the agricultural industry is the most important in the State. In the old days, no doubt, pastoralists proved excellent pioneers, and did good work, and I am glad to see they have been having a good deal lately, but eventually what will come about will be that the agriculturist will move them back and take possession of the State for the purpose of agriculture, and the sooner that comes the better it will be for this State. We all know what intense cultivation can do in small countries like Belgium, France, and other countries, and with our magnificent areas of land we should be rich in that particular industry. I hope to see it succeed. The Speech also deals with education. Everybody will wish all the children to be educated—I do not think there is anybody who would depart from that principle—but there is also another body of people to be considered, and that is the school teachers. In deciding upon any expansion of education, we ought to be careful to see that the teachers are getting a fair thing. There is always a limit, I know, to expenditure, but I do think that the teachers—particularly in the country places—should get a better deal than they are getting now. One reason is that they deserve it, and another reason is that it would be a good thing for the country. We want a good class of teacher; we want to encourage a good teacher to stay in the service. I think that whatever amount is required to be spent, the matter of the teachers ought to be considered. A matter of great importance also mentioned in the Speech is the maturing of the loans. I think from what has fallen from hon. members on both sides that we shall have very little trouble about that. One hon. member spoke of the folly of each State going to the money market by itself, but I cannot see that. I think that a certain amount of healthy competition will be a good thing. If the State can show it has done good work, and it has good assets, it should get the loan. If the States are all mingled up together under the head of somebody in Melbourne, what is to prevent an extravagant State like New South Wales getting the loan without the security that we have? There might be nothing to prevent that. We are going on very well as we are, and I think the best way of getting a loan is to apply by ourselves. I understand that it is proposed to bring in an amendment of the Liquor Act. I quite agree that the Act should be amended, when it has been found in working practice that its operation is very harsh, and I think that even the most ardent teetotaler will admit that it is unnecessarily drastic. The Premier himself has been travelling round lately, and I understand has found out that hardships do exist. There is another thing that I would like to refer to—that is,

the suggestion that a farmers' party was formed. Really, I think the suggestion is rather laughable. You cannot have in this Liberal party one party inside the other.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER interjected.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am laughing at hon. members opposite because they have found a mare's nest.

Mr. MURPHY: Why do they elect a chairman?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Everybody on this side knows that the farmers' party was simply a group. The Labour party were very much annoyed that that party did not materialise. To counteract that they are now coming forward, saying "We are the farmers' friends." I am told that just now, at the picture shows, there is a dearth of comic turns. I suggest that the biggest draw that they could get would be a comic turn in which the Labour party is represented as the farmers' friend.

Mr. HAMILTON: And you as the clown of the circus. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. WILLIAMS: There is no doubt that the attitude of the Labour party has really been to sow discord between the farmers' representatives who are on this side of the House. I have heard a good deal about the verdict of the electors as shown on the 31st May, and prophecies of what will happen when the next general election comes along. I would advise hon. members that it is not always safe to prophesy. (Hear, hear!) I recollect that at the last State election the Hon. Charles McDonald, who is a very thrifty person, lost somewhere about £50 over the results. He prophesied that hon. members on the other side would come in in large flocks, and would fill the Treasury benches, and practically the portfolios were all allotted. It is always dangerous to prophesy. After previous Federal elections, when Labour men were put in, when the State elections took place shortly afterwards, Liberals were returned at the head of the poll. Then what is the good of prophesying?

Mr. FOLEY: Didn't you prophesy that Edwards would win the last election?

Mr. WILLIAMS: No. (Laughter.) I understand that hon. members opposite have a plank in their platform called the "nationalisation of all means of production, distribution, and exchange."

Mr. THEODORE: We have no such plank.

Mr. WILLIAMS: You have no such plank?

Mr. THEODORE: No.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It is the objective of the party.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Well, is not that the same thing? (Opposition laughter.) Hon. members are fencing. We all know that the object of the Labour party is to nationalise all the industries. Well, if they are going to nationalise the farmers, how can they be the farmers' friends, because we know their method of nationalisation is nationalisation without compensation? The way they will nationalise will be by making the conditions of employment so bad for the employer that he will be crushed, and will have to go out without a shilling of compensation. The farmers' party can justly fear

the rural log. There is no doubt it has not materialised yet, but it will as soon as certain people have the power, and the farmers' party, apart from anything else, are quite justified in shunning the Labour party absolutely for the very fear of being crushed out of existence. Reference has been made to the Agricultural Bank. Well, I think the Agricultural Bank is an excellent institution, and you cannot do without it.

Mr. KIRWAN: What do you think of its management?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am glad the hon. member has referred to that, because I was going to say that the management was defective because it is a socialistic enterprise run by the Government. It is like the Post Office—we have got to have it, but it is very bad. I would like to deal with one matter that I am much concerned in, and that is the question of roads. In our haste and rush to get railways, the people of Queensland are forgetting all about roads. So far as I can see, we really do not know what a good road is. I think that, if we had good trunk roads right throughout the State, the demand for railways would decrease to a very great extent. We in the North are the Cinderella of the State—nobody ever goes there, or does anything for us—but I hope that we will at least get a good trunk road from Charters Towers to Georgetown. It would not cost a great deal, and it would open up a fine piece of country, and I believe it would lead to the adoption of steam traction on the road.

Mr. FOLEY: If the Government do that, it will be socialism.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That is not socialism; that is road-making. (Opposition laughter.) The hon. member does not know what socialism means. I will tell him what I think about it on some occasion when I have more time. There is always a great fuss about railways. I certainly would like to see some system adopted in connection with the construction of railways. We have a large asset in our Crown lands, and I cannot see what is the good of allowing them to lie idle when we could make them productive. We have always been quarrelling over the question of land tenures. Some people say the freehold tenure is the better, and others prefer perpetual leases. Whichever is the better of the two systems, I think that if you ask a man to open up new country, you must give him some reward for his enterprise, and a very good plan would be to sell the land to settlers for 100 years. In the old English days, when Hereward the Wake cut off a man's head, he got a large block of land for ever. That was wrong. If a man was allowed to buy land for 100 years, he would be satisfied. It would be an inheritance for his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Is not that the same as a perpetual lease?

Mr. WILLIAMS: No. With a perpetual lease the trouble is that as soon as the unfortunate settler gets a little ahead, in ten years his rent is reappraised and increased. If New South Wales had adopted the system I suggest, and had sold her lands for 100 years, look at the magnificent heritage they would have falling in now! I

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would like to see the same system adopted with regard to railways. The value of land is what it will produce, and there is no use in allowing land to lie idle in the North for forty or fifty years. I would like to see that land given to people who would build railways. I would give it to them for nothing for fifty years. It would save a great deal of the trouble of having to go to the loan market, and it would certainly make the land productive.

Mr. MURPHY: Would you take the railway and the land back at the end of the fifty years?

Mr. WILLIAMS: Possibly; but it would depend on the terms.

Mr. GILLIES: Confiscation.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Not at all. I have no doubt capitalists would be found who would be prepared to build railways if they were given the land for long enough. My time is short, and there are other matters to which I would like to refer.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: We will give you an extension.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I do not want an extension of time, as there are other hon. members wanting to speak. There is just one question, however, that I will refer to, and that is, the question of trusts. I think you would have to get a very strong magnifying glass to find any trusts in Australia.

Mr. KIRWAN: Mr. Glynn says there are trusts.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Well, the Labour people have tried very hard to find any trusts, and they have not been able to find any. They believed that they had found a trust in the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, but they found that it was selling sugar cheaper than anybody else. The Commonwealth has ample power to deal with any pernicious trust. I think it was the hon. member for Keppel who spoke of the coal vend case. Now, the coal vend case did not fail because the Government of the Commonwealth had not power to deal with trusts; it failed because it was found that the coal vend was a good trust. Mr. Hughes and a number of others along with him said that it was a good arrangement, because it gave the owners of the coal a chance of selling their coal at a fair price, and it gave the wage-earners a better wage. There is one person who is referred to very contemptuously by members on the other side—that is Mr. Badger. I may say that I have heard him called “a Yankee vicious boss.” I do not know Mr. Badger. I know of hundreds of Australian boys who have gone to America, and they have been very well treated there. They are not called “blooming foreigners,” or “blooming Australians.” They are treated decently. Why should we insult a citizen of a great and friendly Power? In America, there are millions of people of our own blood. If hon. members opposite do not like “Yankees,” why do they bow down to their great friend “Brother O’Malley”? Is he not a “Yankee boss”?

Mr. LENNON: He is a Canadian.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I object to insults of this kind. The hon. member for Bowen spoke very well on the matter of water conservation. It is certainly a very big thing

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and should be taken in hand by the Government without delay. We should not be

dependent entirely on the know-
[4.30 p.m.] ledge which we have in the public departments, but should secure the services of an expert and pay him well for his advice. Something has been said about the Savings Bank. The leader of the Opposition was very pathetic in picturing the beautiful and lovely reward we should have had if we had allowed the Commonwealth to take charge of our Savings Bank business. The hon. member said—

“There is an offer given to the State of first call for State requirements of 75 per cent. of new business, and the staffs now employed to be kept on.”

The great point is what are State requirements? Who is to be the judge of what the State requires? The Commonwealth would come in and say, “We are the judges; you do not require 75 per cent.; you only require 25 per cent., and we will collar the rest.” Hon. members know that during a time of stress—I refer to the Brisbane strike—when anyone reading the Constitution Act would have supposed that all that was required was for the Governor of the State to declare that there was domestic violence in the city, and we should get the assistance of the military. But when Mr. Fisher came to read the Constitution Act, he said, “No; that is a matter which we have to decide.”

Mr. POLY: The Governor-General said so.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That is the same thing. So I say that when the question of the interpretation of the Savings Bank arose, the requirements of the State would not be what the State Government said they were, but what the Commonwealth Government said the State required. I should like, in conclusion, to say that the most important thing we have to consider is the state of industrial unrest. Instead of having the wild unrest and the trouble they have had in New South Wales, members on both sides of the House should endeavour by some system to bring good employers and good employees together.

Mr. LENNON: Is this the only country in which you find that state of unrest?

Mr. WILLIAMS: No, it is not the only country, but that is no reason why we should sit back and do nothing.

Mr. FIBELLY: What happened to your motion last year?

Mr. WILLIAMS: My motion of last year was blown out, and I shall probably not bring it in this session. I notice that the hon. member has got in ahead of me. There has been a good deal of discussion in the Press about this matter, and I hope it will have the attention of Ministers. Some people seem to think that my proposal is not practicable, but I am inclined to think that it is. One way of giving effect to it would be through the income tax. There is no reason why some remission of income tax should not be given to those employers who make their workers partners with them. However, I have now come to the end of my time, and I conclude by congratulating the Ministry on the Speech delivered by the Governor at the opening of the session. I hope that we shall all do our best to get through the work laid before us as soon as possible. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): I wish to offer a few brief remarks before the Address in Reply goes through. I have listened with a good deal of attention to the debate which has taken place, and have followed the hon. member who last spoke very closely. The hon. member said he was satisfied with the Governor's Speech, and yet before he sat down he proved, not only to himself, but to every member in the House, that he was anything but satisfied with it. Whatever else the hon. member's speech may be remarkable for, it is certainly the most illogical speech that has been delivered during the course of the debate. The hon. member made some suggestions, but I am very much afraid that they are much like other suggestions he has made elsewhere—that they will be found not to be practicable, and that they will not meet with a very hearty reception. The bulk of his speech was delivered last session and printed in "Hansard." The most remarkable thing in his speech is that he finds fault with the Government in reference to railway carriages in use and railway rates, and yet he voted with the Government against a proposal to revise the railway rates, though the burning question in Charters Towers is this very question. The people of Charters Towers considered that they had been penalised in connection with railway rates, and have given the hon. member instructions to do something to get them revised. From the beginning to the end of his speech the hon. member talked first on one side of a subject and then on the other side, and proved quite clearly that he did not know what he was talking about. When he spoke about socialism and nationalisation of industries he proved he knew nothing about the Labour party's platform; in fact, he really did not know what he was talking about. With reference to the Opening Speech, with the exception of the Bill dealing with the sugar question, there is no measure mentioned that might not have been left to some future time, for all the difference they will make in the well-being of the people. Some of them may be placed on the statute-book this session, but it will make very little difference whether they are placed on the statute-book this session or next session. The hon. member for Fitzroy was no better satisfied with the Speech than some of his colleagues. He practically said that the tone of the debate was a reflex of the tone of the Speech: he blamed the Speech for the character of the debate, but, apart from ventilating his own personal grievance, he did very little to elevate the tone of the debate or to contribute anything new to it. We have heard a great deal more during the debate about primary producers—the men on the land—than we have heard for a long time past. But it seems that the third party has been born out of due time. While there is a very vigorous third party outside, the third party inside this House is not fully developed. Certainly it is lagging behind its literary organ and behind some of its organisations in the country. It has not even been developed up to the point of defining what is meant by the "primary producer," or stating clearly what its aim is. Certainly the primary producers we have heard of up to the present time in this House are nothing more or less than gentleman farmers. I think the primary producers are a more comprehen-

sive class than that. If I do not represent the primary producers, I would like to know who does? (Hear, hear!) There is no talk about the miners at all when a number of primary producers talk about primary production. It seems to me that these invidious distinctions are quite uncalled for as regards the town against the country, and the farmers against the manufacturers. I am glad that I belong to a party that stands for the workers generally, whether they are primary producers or secondary producers, whether they work in the country or in the city, or whether they work by hand or with their brains. (Hear, hear!) In spite of all the criticism levelled against the Labour party and its platform and principles, there has been nothing said that is likely to damage it, and there has been nothing very destructive. I think that the more the Labour platform is discussed, the better it is understood and the more it is appreciated, but it certainly has to be read and much better understood than it is by hon. members on the other side before they can criticise it in any shape or form. One statement which has been repeatedly made by the representatives of the primary producers is that all that they want is to be left alone. In print and in their speeches it is stated repeatedly that they want to be left alone to work out their own destiny, to work out their own salvation. They say that they do not want any interference; that they do not want this Chamber or anyone else to be continually tinkering with their affairs. That is all very well so far as it goes. But the hon. member for Bowen does not want the cane-growers of Proserpine to be left alone with the burden of liabilities that rests on their shoulders, nor the prickly-pear selectors with their present leases. The hon. member for Wide Bay does not want the squatters to be left alone so far as the blowfly and a number of other pests that affect the country are concerned. Whenever there is anything worth having, they want to be left alone, but as soon as they are in difficulties, and have to contend with anything, then they want to shoulder the responsibility on to the Government. On the one hand they are rabid individualists, and do not want any interference but merely want to be left alone, while, on the other hand, they are the greatest socialists in the State. (Hear, hear! and laughter.)

Mr. KESSELL: That is not true with regard to the man on the land, as he is always prepared to pay his taxes.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: When the hon. member for Wide Bay talks about the blowfly pest and cows and such matters, he knows what he is talking about, but when he touches on political economy, he shows how little he knows about it. The other day he said that labour got by far the largest dividend out of the wealth production. On the very first page of "Knibbs," referring to the last information obtainable—namely, that of 1911—it is stated that the wealth of Australia amounted to £129,000,000, while the wages paid to the workers amounted to £23,000,000. Whatever qualifications may be made on that sum, and whatever deductions may be made, I am quite satisfied that labour does not get anything like a fair deal. That is one of the causes of the unrest and dissatisfaction that exists in the world to-day—because labour does not get a fair share of the wealth it produces. Coming to

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the Speech, it says here, in reference to the visit of the Governor and the prosperity of the country—

“During the recess I added considerably to my knowledge of Queensland and its people, by travelling extensively in the Central, Western, and Northern portions of the State. Throughout the entire journey I observed with pleasure the surpassing richness of the grasses, and the splendid condition of the sheep and cattle. There is ample scope for further pastoral development, for no part of the spacious and magnificent grazing country I passed through is stocked to anything approaching its full capacity.”

I do not suppose that anyone will question that statement. Everyone believes that there is room for expansion and closer settlement in various parts of the State. In the pastoral districts there is a cry for grazing selections from the small men. In some instances this is a *bonâ fide* cry, but there is also a cry for land from men who are not *bonâ fide* selectors at all. To get a holding in the western districts of the State is considered by many equal to drawing a horse in Tattersall's sweep. Men who are not adapted to that kind of life are going in for grazing homesteads. They have to get financed, and after they have lived on the homestead for five years, they are enabled to transfer it to someone else, so that instead of these men becoming settlers, they allow the land to revert back, in a great many instances, to the squatters themselves. That is not a good thing for the State. I am not prepared at this stage to suggest a remedy for that kind of thing, but it shows that in spite of all that was done in the Land Bill, when so many methods were devised and so many means adopted by introducing provisions for preventing this sort of thing, it goes on just the same, and will continue to go on. The Speech continues—

“On every side I found prosperity, contentment, and loyalty to the Throne, nor would it be possible for me to speak too gratefully of the courtesy and kindness I received from all classes during my tour.”

In some places that prosperity and contentment has disappeared since the visit of the Governor. I believe that when he passed through the Cloncurry district a large number of men were settled there, but since his departure there has been a change, and these men have been scattered to the four winds of heaven. They are practically locked out. I point this out for the express purpose of proving what was said when the Industrial Peace Bill was introduced into this House. We were told that the Bill would affect the employers just in the same way as it would affect the employees, and that while the employees would not be permitted to go on strike without complying with the provisions of the Act, the employers would not be permitted to lock out their employees. Yet we find in the case of the Cloncurry district that nothing more or less than a subterfuge was adopted, and the employers there have been the means of locking out more than 1,000 men. These men were practically forced to go off somewhere else. It goes to show that from the employer's standpoint this kind of legislation has no effect at all on him. When these men went into the western districts, they expected that as long as the mines were

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paying propositions they would be all right, but they have been locked out for some weeks past, and no doubt the employers expect to starve them into submission. So, while contentment and prosperity prevails one day, the reverse may be the case next day. It is not merely the men who have to suffer, but their wives and children who are dependent on them have also to suffer. In referring to the report of the Meat Commission the Governor says—

“The commission is to be complimented on the thoroughness with which its work was performed, and on the value of its report, which is now in the hands of hon. members, who will have ample opportunity to discuss its findings. Its recommendations in regard to retail selling have already been satisfactorily carried out, and the slaughter-house inspection, the need for which is shown in the report, is now conducted so rigorously that the shortcomings and irregularities brought to light have practically vanished.”

I am not at all sure that it has altogether vanished, particularly as regards getting the meat from the slaughter-yards to the shops is concerned. Quite recently I was travelling in a train, and when we got to a way-side station I saw quantities of meat, consisting of liver, heart, sheeps' heads, etc., being thrown out just near the shed on to a piece of dirty old canvas. It was not merely put down, it was thrown out so that they could get it out of their hands all the quicker, and it was removed from the platform into the guard's van. There is nothing to protect it from the flies or the dust as there should be according to the regulations under the Slaughtering Act, and in that connection it does seem to me that there is room for a very great deal of improvement in some of these slaughter-houses.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is the carriage of meat on the railways. I saw that myself when in the North.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, and the carriage is for very long distances in some cases, and certainly there ought to be much better protection than there is at the present time. Just a word or two in reference to the statement in the Speech on electoral matters. His Excellency, in this connection, 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—”

“To request,” mind you—

“the Commonwealth Government to appoint a commission”

And then they go on to name the commission. That is nothing more or less than a contemptible insinuation that the Commonwealth Government made those provisions, and that they provided these encouragements for people who want to personate other people during election time, while everybody who knows anything about the electoral rolls must know that there is a very large number of duplications, and it is inevitable that it should be so, for the simple reason that the Commonwealth rolls were made up to the end of November, and all the removals that took place after that time, and all the additions, had to be made

on a supplementary roll, and the consequence was that if anybody removed from one town to another, or from one subdivision to another, in the great majority of instances they were on the supplementary roll as well as being on the principal roll. For that reason, everybody knows that duplications are fairly numerous; but to assume that because they are numerous, numerous impersonations have taken place, is assuming something that certainly, up to the present, has not been proved, and if there is no better evidence than that which came from Western Australia, as quoted by the hon. member for Rosewood, then it might be dismissed altogether. It is just as well to remember that the Labour party are not responsible for the Electoral Act. They did not pass it, and previous elections have taken place practically under the same conditions.

Mr. KESSELL: Didn't they amend it?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, they amended it by abolishing the postal vote, and that certainly did not increase the opportunities for irregularities. Just the reverse. So the statements that have been made in this connection have not a vestige of truth behind them. The Federal Labour party, as well as the Labour party here, are just as anxious as hon. members opposite are to have a clean roll and also to have clean elections—(hear, hear!)—and it is nothing less than a piece of impertinence to talk like that, and practically nominate a commission to make inquiries, and in the same paragraph to talk about reintroducing the postal vote. If ever there was anything in connection with voting that was iniquitous, and an instrument of torture in Queensland, it certainly was the postal vote, and at that time everybody was so convinced of it that there was very little opposition to its being abolished.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It was discredited.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes. As far as the postal vote is concerned, in the election which took place in Charters Towers in 1907 there were 1,200 postal votes recorded, and very few of them, it can be taken for granted, were for the Labour party. In the 1908 election there were 2,500 postal votes recorded, and the Liberals knew to a vote how many belonged to them—certainly all they collected belonged to them—and the most iniquitous part of the whole business is the fact that the postal vote is open—no secrecy about it. There is no getting away from it, and even when the voters wanted to carry out the spirit of the Act, and went away from the justices of the peace to record their votes, they were furnished with a broad-pointed pen and a piece of blotting-paper, which made the revelation that was needed. It was quite a common thing, and cannot be denied, that mine managers at Charters Towers and justices of the peace went to the wives of miners who were working in their own particular mines, and practically told them that their bread and butter, and the bread and butter of their children, depended on the way they recorded their votes. The result was that those people were practically forced into voting contrary to their own will, and contrary to their wishes, and anything that will bring about that state of affairs is not a desirable thing, whatever advantages it may have. The Home Secretary, when he was speaking, made a very pathetic appeal

on behalf of the people who live in the bush and a long way removed from polling-booths; but, as a matter of absolute fact, out of the 20,000 postal votes that were recorded in the 1908 election, over two-thirds were recorded in the city where the voters did not live a stone's throw away from a polling-booth, while less than one-third were collected from people in the bush. It is a well-known fact, generally speaking, that people who live in the outside places take a keener interest in electoral matters and make more sacrifices to record their votes than people who live in the cities; so, as far as they are concerned, there is not much strength in the argument that it is necessary or essential to have the postal vote. I, for one, would be very sorry indeed to see a change take place as far as the postal vote is concerned; and let me say also that our own Elections Act is by no means perfect. It has been repeatedly pointed out in this House that not only is it difficult for people to get their names on the roll, but when they are on the roll they are not allowed to vote. At every election that takes place there are numbers of people who have never been out of the district, and who have never been away from the town, whose names are on the roll, and yet when they go to record their vote they are told by the returning officer that they cannot record their vote. That is one of the things that does want attending to. At the last State election that took place, there were twenty-three persons in the Queenon electorate whose names were on the roll, and yet they were not allowed to vote, although they had never left the place. They had no other way of exercising their right to vote, and yet we find they could not get a vote.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Were they on the roll?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Their names were on the roll, and they had never been out of the district. The reason given was not a satisfactory explanation to these people; and let me say here that if the postal vote is so safeguarded that there cannot be any such thing as corruption, then it will not be much use to anyone. When you once allow a ballot-paper to go away from the polling-booth you have no control over it, and, whatever there may be on the statute-book, if canvassers are allowed to take ballot-papers to private houses, irregularities will take place, which is undesirable in the interests of clean and pure voting. Now, I want to say a word or two in reference to railway matters. It has been our boast up to recently that Queensland has been practically free from railway accidents. I am quite sure that every member of the House, wherever he sits, will regret that we can no longer make that boast. I am sure that every member regrets that such a disastrous accident should take place as that which took place at the beginning of the year, and I am sure everybody was pleased to hear the Premier and the Secretary for Railways say that the people who suffered—that is, the women and children—will be very well looked after, and that they will be dealt with on generous lines. I do think that, in addition to the report that has been laid on the table already—that is, the Commissioner's report in connection with the second inquiry—there ought to be a report into the first derailment that was the primary cause of the accident. I know that in some parts of the State where 40-lb.

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rails were taken up and heavier rails put down, they have been put down on practically rotten sleepers, and if that kind of thing is done to any great extent we need not be surprised if we hear of other derailments, and have them much more frequently in the future than has been the case in the past. It does seem to be false economy to do things on these lines. I think when the heavier rails are laid down, and it is expected to draw heavier loads at a greater rate over them, it would be good business to have good sleepers under the heavy rails. And I am inclined to think that results which have taken place may have been caused by this in some respects. At any rate, it would have been some satisfaction to the House itself, as well as to the country, if a report had been tabled in connection with the first derailment.

[5 p.m.] Now, I would just like to say in that connection that one of the most remarkable things that took place is that the higher grades of officers seemed to have no system and no method about the business at all, and one thing that the House needs some assurance about is that these individuals will know in future who takes precedence, who is to have the responsibility, and who is to give orders at a time like this. It is a mystery that a number of officials should be there, no one knowing who was to give orders, and who was to accept the responsibility. Fancy a ship under similar circumstances! Certainly we would not expect the orders to be given from the stokehole, and from nowhere else than from the bridge. I do think that there is room for a change in that respect. I was glad to hear that the dependants of the people who were killed will be generously dealt with. I would like to come from that accident to another that took place on the Northern Railway shortly afterwards, where one of the employees of the department, a lengthsmen, who was out on a dark, stormy, wet night looking after a bridge and approach, when the approach was washed away, and he with it. And I saw it reported that his body had been dug out of the sand only about a week ago. I do not think that his dependants have had any consideration at all up to the present time, and I would like to express the hope that those people will be dealt generously with by the Railway Department, as well as the others. Although there was only one individual in this case, and the accident is not so conspicuous as the other, and does not loom so large in the public eye, this man was there at the post of duty, and his wife and children have been bereaved, and I hope that they will receive direct generous treatment at the hands of the Government. I would just like to express the hope, in passing, that the generosity will be on a larger scale than was displayed to a man who came from his tent—he was not a railway employee, but was camped near the Torrens Creek Meat Works—who by some mysterious means was impelled to get his hurricane lamp to see what things were like down at the creek. He saw the approach, and this other man had been washed away, and that trains coming along would certainly go to destruction there in a very short time. He used his lamp, and managed to stop the train. Statements are made—I do not know whether they are true; I am sorry that the Minister is not in his place, because I would like to hear the

facts of the case—but I am told that the Railway Department rewarded him with the magnificent sum of £50.

Mr. KIRWAN: That appeared in the Press, I think.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I do not know where it was, but I was told that. But certainly, when one takes into consideration that this man saved the lives of the driver and stoker of the first train, as well as a good deal of the Commissioner's property, their generosity did not run on a very lavish scale in that connection.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: He was a pretty old man, too.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, I think they might have dealt a little more generously with him, at any rate. I have already pointed out that the people in Charters Towers are dissatisfied with the railway rates as they exist. It was stated just before I left that flour can be sent from Warwick to Brisbane for 10s. per ton, whereas it costs £1 2s. 6d. to take a ton of copper from Charters Towers to Townsville, or over twice as much for half the distance. Not only is the freight on that class of goods very high, but the freight on some other goods, such as general merchandise, from Townsville to Charters Towers is £3 3s. per ton. Men in Charters Towers have been successful in getting a good deal of the trade with Cloncurry and that district, but they are handicapped by having to pay £3 3s. per ton to bring their goods to Charters Towers, and then, if they want to send them to Cloncurry or Selwyn or Friesland or Duchess, they have to pay the same freight as they would if they came from Townsville. That is practically a handicap of £3 3s. per ton when in competition with Townsville people. And if that is not an anomaly that wants rectifying, I do not know what is. The hon. member for Charters Towers had instructions to attend to this matter before he came away, but I was surprised to find him voting against the motion of the hon. member for Maranoa to get a revision of these rates. Certainly his speech to-day, and the vote he gave on that motion, are as opposite as the poles. The same thing applies also so far as fares are concerned, which in the South here are very much lower than we have to pay in the North. For instance, so far as passes are concerned, a man can get one for the whole of the lines for £100, and for the Central and Southern lines for £80, to travel over 3,000 miles of railway, but if he wants one for Charters Towers and West it costs him £67 for less than 700 miles. Of course, the explanation that is given is that it is the mileage rates. But why is that? If he is going to have a stated amount for the Central and Southern system, why should he not have a stated amount for the Northern system? The traveller is penalised at every point so far as his fares and his freights are concerned. Then take the shorter distances. The fare for a 6-mile run from Townsville, second class, is 1s. 2d., whilst for a 6-mile run for anywhere outside Brisbane it is 5d., which goes to show that, so far as fares are concerned, as well as freights, there is no analogy between the two places at all, and the North has to pay, and to pay unreasonably high, for everything it gets. Now, I just wish to say a word or two in regard to the loans and railways that were touched

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on—which are practically linked together in their cost and construction, for you cannot make railways without loans. The Premier and the Treasurer, when they were dealing with the last loan that was raised, both seemed to chuckle in their sleeves at having scored a point over the Southern States, and got their loan on the London market whilst the others were preparing to go there. While that may be regarded as good business, it certainly does not run on all-fours with the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you." While it may be regarded as fair and legitimate from a political standpoint, it does seem a strange thing when looked at in other places, and in other respects, that a Treasurer, who confessed that he was not in want of money, and that he was in no hurry, and could have gone until the end of the year—

The TREASURER: I did not say until the end of the year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Should have sneaked off to London and got in before them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not "sneaked." (Laughter.)

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, sneaked. The hon. member may regard it as fair, but other people may be pardoned if they do not see it in that light, and in some other places it might be regarded as most contemptible. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: Have I not to look after the interests of the State?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is just a moot point whether he is protecting Queensland, because it is one of those things that cuts both ways. The point I want to make is this: That the Government brought before this House an ambitious railway policy in 1910. In 1911 they brought a further railway policy before the House, and went to the country. At the commencement of last session the Premier called a halt, and made a statement here which practically brought about ten railways in the State to a termination. Some of them, according to the hon. member for Fitzroy, ended in a swamp, where they are not likely to bring in any revenue, or to confer any benefit on anybody. The result is that while the Premier said they had placed this money, on his own showing they have only placed about three-quarters of a million; there is £1,250,000 which is certainly not earning anything like what it cost.

The TREASURER: The hon. member is entirely wrong. He is barking up the wrong tree.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: No; he said he loaned to the Southern States £510,000 and £253,000.

The TREASURER: The hon. member must recognise that in connection with money of that description it is not allowed to lie idle—it would be suicidal.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes; I do not deny that—I say that the money is not earning what is being paid for it.

The TREASURER: How do you know?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I have very good reasons for saying so, and it will be seen later on that I am not far from right; but the point is this—that there is money that is not being used to the best advantage.

There are railways sanctioned by this House, which have not been gone on with, and this has brought about the resignation of a member of the Ministry, and very nearly the resignation of the hon. member for Dalby. If he had listened to his constituents that hon. member would have resigned as a protest against his railway being stopped. The money is not being put to the best use. The railways have not been made payable; they have been suspended, and men are going about the country looking for work. For that reason—whatever anyone may say about it—it does not commend itself to me as a good, sound policy. Before I sit down there is a local matter I wish to refer to in reference to holidays. There are two or three Acts dealing with holidays—the Holidays Act, the Industrial Peace Act, and also the Factories and Shops Act. I believe that last year in Ipswich they wanted to change their Labour holiday from the first Monday in May to another day, and they appealed to the Minister as to whether he could not suspend that section of the Act dealing with the holidays, and he very justly told them that he had no authority to suspend any Act or portion of an Act, and that the only thing to be done was for the employers and employees to come to an understanding that no payment should be made at time and a-half, and nothing would be done.

The TREASURER: Was not that a sensible proposal—you are not quarrelling with that?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, it was, and I commend the hon. gentleman for it, and give him due credit. Now, on Charters Towers, although in the Factories and Shops Act it distinctly states, not that another holiday can be substituted, but that the first Monday in May is the holiday and that it cannot be changed, yet, notwithstanding that fact, a handful of people on Charters Towers known as the Traders' Association sent down to the Government and got the Government to proclaim that all the holidays that fell on the Monday—that is, with the exception of Boxing Day, Easter Monday, and Christmas Day—should be kept on Thursday. There was a protest from the Eight Hour Day Committee about the first Monday in May being kept on a Thursday; but, notwithstanding that, this proclamation was issued, and the consequence was that the first Monday in May was included and was expected to be kept on Thursday—although the Factories and Shops Act distinctly and clearly states that this holiday has to be kept, and that no substitute can be made for it. A wire was sent down to the Chief Inspector, who stood by the Treasurer, and who had the Act to guide him, and he said that because Thursday had been proclaimed it should be kept. As far as miners and other people were concerned, they got the holiday, but the shopkeepers were off on a Thursday—a day when they did not want a holiday, and when there was nothing doing—and the consequence was that they had to go to work on the Monday. What I want to know is this: How does it happen that any Minister has power by proclamation to override the clear and explicit provisions of the Act, and particularly in opposition to the wishes of the bulk of the people of the community? If the whole of the people had wanted to change the holiday it would have been all right, but on every past May Day the holiday has been celebrated on a Monday, and all the workers wanted it on a

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Monday; it did not suit their purpose to have it on a Thursday. There was only a handful of people whom it suited to have it on a Thursday, but they had the ear of the Government, and evidently could get this change made in spite of the clear and explicit terms of the Factories and Shops Act.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is always done by request, and with the consent of the local authorities.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: But nobody has any right to request, and the Minister has no right whatever to consent, to a change taking place when it is clearly laid down in the Act, and according to the Act there cannot be another day substituted. In the Industrial Peace Act there is provision made, because it provides that any other day may be substituted for it, and under the Holidays Act it would have been perfectly justified; but under the Factories and Shops Act, as the Minister correctly said, he had no power to suspend or change it. The shop assistants at Charters Towers got time and a-half, but they got Thursday for a holiday, a day they did not want. Before the Minister sanctions a thing like that by proclamation, he should be quite sure he is doing the right thing, but in the case I have mentioned I do not think he was doing the right thing, and I hope that next year the same thing will not occur again. There is quite a number of other things that I intended to deal with, but I shall be able to deal with them later on in the session when the various matters are brought up.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER (*Maryborough*): I also wish to congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply on the able way in which they handled the various subjects in connection with the Address. I have also much pleasure in congratulating the Ministry upon the loyal supporters behind them. There is no doubt that they have a solid party, and notwithstanding the attempt of certain sections of the Press to make a cleavage in their ranks, no such cleavage exists. I am very pleased indeed to notice that the Government consider themselves justified in proceeding with the erection of additional sugar-mills, and I trust that they will also find that they are justified in giving the construction of these mills to Commonwealth workers. The reason I ask this is because we have a number of mechanics in Queensland and in Australia who are competent to undertake this work, and so are the firms who employ them, and it would be hardly fair if no preference was given to local firms when you take into consideration the difference between wages paid in the old country and those in Australia. For instance, the mechanical engineering trade in Great Britain pays from 75 to 80 per cent. less than what they do in this State and the unskilled labour is paid 100 per cent. less there than what is paid in Queensland. I know that it has been promised in previous works that have been constructed for the Government, such as bridges, that the Government were agreeable to give the local tenderers a preference up to 15 per cent. over the landed cost in connection with oversea competitors, and I think that there is every justification for that when you take into consideration that the whole of Queensland is finding the money at less than what we are paying for the British loan. The

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British loan will cost us about 4½ per cent., and we are lending the money to the central mills for 4 per cent. Then again, for every man, woman, and child in Queensland we get a return per annum per capita of £1 5s. from the Federal Government; and that in itself is an asset that should not be lightly put aside. Then we have another matter to consider. We want people in Queensland as long as we can employ them, and we want those people for the purpose of defence. If we are to retain this State and Australia as a white man's land, we must fill it in some way, otherwise other countries—such as Japan, with her 55,000,000 people, not having sufficient land for her population—will certainly turn their attention to our Northern Territory if we do not use it ourselves. I sincerely hope the Government will see their way to have these sugar-mills constructed in Australia, and in Queensland, if possible. Breakages can be repaired more expeditiously and cheaply if the patterns are in the State.

Mr. KIRWAN: They can make the sugar-mills at Walkers' all right.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: And at other foundries too. Walkers have proved beyond a doubt that they can make sugar machinery as good as can be made in any part of the world, owing largely to the capable management and to the capable mechanics employed there. I also notice that it is intended to introduce a Fisheries Act Amendment Bill. Recently I spent between two and three months travelling through the Southern States to get all the information I could in connection with all classes of farming. I visited various agricultural districts, and saw both dry farming and irrigation, and got into touch with the man on the land. I also visited the fisheries in Victoria, and I was particularly struck with what is going on at Cunningham in Gippsland, Victoria, where they are carrying on the fishing industry in a scientific manner. They are catching the fish in large quantities and paddocking them, and sending them to the Melbourne market as required. I was told by fishermen engaged in the industry that they are getting 15s. per case of 60 lb. of fresh fish. Doubtless if similar methods were adopted in Queensland, we could build up a great industry. I am also pleased to see that we are to have a Stock and Produce Agents Bill. For some time the Farmers' Parliamentary Union has been urging that such a measure should be introduced. It is, perhaps, a little late, but I believe it will do a great deal to remove the friction which has existed between the so-called middleman and the producer. What the farmers want to be safe-guarded against is what is generally known as the "kerbstone" agent, whether he is a stock and station agent or whether he is a produce agent. Such a man cannot be followed if he does not do justice to the man who has entrusted his produce to him, because he has nothing.

Mr. KIRWAN: The fish ring is worse than any kerbstone commission agent. You may get some proof of it before the debate is finished.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: The matter will be thrashed out in this House, and before the Bill goes through I intend to have something considerable to say about it. I am sorry to notice that no mention is made of State granaries in the Speech. We are now producing hundreds of thousands of bags of maize in

this State, and many a farmer is forced to take the market price when he harvests his crop because he has no place where he can store it until the market is more favourable. It would be a remunerative undertaking for any Government to erect granaries in all large agricultural districts for the purpose of storing surplus supplies of maize.

Mr. MORGAN: They are doing that on the Downs now.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: That is so; but the Downs are not Queensland, though some people appear to think that the Downs are the whole of Queensland. We want the privileges enjoyed by the farmers on the Downs extended to other parts of the State. I also regret to notice that there is no reference in the Speech to the adoption of measures for increasing our wheat production. An enormous amount of wheat, bran, flour, and pollard is imported into Queensland from the Southern States. If hon. members will turn to page 371 of Knibbs's "Australian Year Book" for 1912, they will find that the value of the wheat crop of Australia is £16,500,000. They will also find that the value of the Queensland crop is less than it was in 1907. According to Weedon's "A.B.C." for 1912, page 4, Queensland had only 42,962 acres under wheat, with a yield of 285,109 bushels, whilst according to Knibbs, page 362, Victoria had 2,388,089 acres under wheat, yielding 34,815,019 bushels. In view of the fact that Queensland has an area of 429,000,000 acres and Victoria has an area of only 56,000,000 acres, there is a great disparity between the production of wheat in the two States. Hon. members may say that this is on account of many disabilities that we labour under in this State; but I am convinced, from having travelled through the agricultural districts of the Commonwealth—namely, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and the north-west coast of South Australia right up to the Gulf—that we could produce far more wheat than we can consume in Queensland. We import enormous quantities of wheat, flour, and offal. Unfortunately, I am not able to give the quantities because for some time past the Commonwealth Customs have not kept a record; but I find from the last report of the Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture that we mill four times as much wheat as we produce, and that we also import very large quantities of flour and offal. The same report goes on to say—

"A study of the analysis of soils from cereal-growing districts made by the Agricultural Chemist, and appearing in this report, shows that in many instances the amount of available phosphoric acid present is below the quantity required for the production of a full crop of wheat."

I went to agricultural districts in the other States for the purpose of getting information first hand on these matters, and I found that the Governments in their treatment of the land, in giving information as to suitable seed, irrigation, dry farming, and fertilising the land, they are all a long way ahead of Queensland. From what I saw [5.30 p.m.] and heard, I am convinced that we could produce a large quantity of wheat in Queensland if we adopted the methods followed in the various agricultural districts in the different States. Those districts have all kinds of climate, all

kinds of rainfall, and all kinds of soil, and those conditions are in many instances similar to what we have in Queensland.

Mr. HUNTER: There is only one kind of rainfall in Queensland.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: They have the same rainfall in some parts of the Southern States, but they know how to cope with it, and we ought to get more expert information with regard to this matter if we are going to make Queensland a wheat-growing country. The farmers in the Southern States succeed to a large extent because Government experts provide them with analyses of soils, and show them, by experimental plots in different districts, what should be done so that they may adopt the most suitable class of cultivation and use proper fertilisers. If all this information were supplied to farmers in Queensland, I am sure we should be able to grow wheat here successfully, notwithstanding our rainfall.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That information is supplied here.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Yes, but it is not supplied in the way it should be. I do not for a moment blame the Agricultural Department, or the administration of that department, in the slightest degree. That department was started when we were a squatting community, and I am afraid it has not grown with the requirements of an agricultural country, except as far as the sugar industry is concerned. There is no doubt that experts have been provided for the sugar industry, and I contend that if the same amount of money as has been expended in that direction had been spent in supplying expert information to the general farmer, especially information as to how he should grow wheat, we should have a very different state of affairs in Queensland, as far as the growth of wheat is concerned, from that which exists to-day.

Mr. BOWMAN: Haven't your State farms done a great deal in that respect?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Very little. A great deal of good has been done by experimental farms, but not in the direction I suggest. You may have five or more descriptions of soil in one district, and the farmer wants to know what he ought to put into those soils in order to obtain the best results. That information could be supplied to the farmers if we adopted the methods employed elsewhere, particularly in Tasmania.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We supply analyses of soils to anyone; we give full information.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Yes, but what is needed is that the expert should be sent to the land to take his own samples of soil for analysis, and then give the result of the analysis to the farmer. As a rule a farmer knows very little about the methods of taking soil for analysis—I am not speaking of the gentlemen farmers who were mentioned just now, but of the average settler, the man who is struggling on the land and wants to make a home there, and I say he does not know how to take up soils for the purpose of analysis, nor is he very good at correspondence; so that it is necessary that the expert should be sent to the land to tell him how to treat the soil. We spend nearly £500,000 per annum on education, and the education given in our State schools no one will find fault with, but unfortunately, in most cases it only fits the

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persons who receive it for occupations in the city. The Agricultural Department is a starved department, and should be supplied with more money. If it was supplied with more money, then I think that under the capable management of the present Secretary for Agriculture we should get good results.

Mr. HUNTER: It is time we had that country party here, all right.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: More socialism.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: This is no more socialism than the State supplying information for those engaged in the sugar industry is socialism. Why should not the general farmer receive the same consideration as the sugar farmer? My object in getting up this afternoon is to try to get money provided for the Agricultural Department, in order to enable it to employ experts to go into the agricultural districts and tell the farmers what crops their soils are suitable for, what fertilisers to use, and all about the rotation of crops. I found that in a district near Mildura, in Victoria, they produced splendid crops of wheat, and those fine crops are the result of the methods of cultivation they employ—not methods the farmers have taught themselves, but methods which have been supplied to them by others who have devoted themselves to research in other parts of the world, where dry farming has been carried on successfully. The same remark applies to irrigation. If you go to Mildura you will see a settlement of about 7,000 people, who are happy, and possess smiling homesteads, and everything up to date. Why? Because they were assisted on land that none of us would look at here in Queensland; we would not take up 1,000 acres of such land if it was offered us at 1d. per acre. In visiting that irrigation settlement, one cannot too highly appreciate irrigation, and this method of cultivation could be applied most profitably to many places in Queensland, notably in the Burnett and Wide Bay districts. The Burnett River could be locked some distance below Gayndah, where there are high, rocky banks, with a comparatively narrow channel, and it would provide sufficient water to irrigate Ideraway and a lot of other lands round about. The same could be done on the Mary River about Maryborough. In going through the Hawkesbury Experimental College, I noticed that they had 3,200 acres there for experimental purposes, and of that area 3,000 acres was nothing but sand, but irrigation is playing a great part there. They have got an electrical plant that turns out 14,000,000 gallons of water per annum at a cost of 3s. 8d. per 1,000 gallons. That is what could be done here. That is what was done in Mildura, in Victoria, and they have also done it at Renmark, in South Australia. We know how well they have done in agriculture in the north-west coast of South Australia, where their rainfall is very small. I have a return here which shows that in South Australia they have 938,000 square miles of country, on which there is a rainfall of not more than 10 inches per annum, and they have over 1,000,000 square miles on which the rainfall is not more than from 10 inches to 20 inches.

Mr. THEODORE: The rainfall comes at the proper time there.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Not in all cases. I happened to be in touch with the men who were engaged in cultivation down there.

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These men take up their land and make their furrows, and then when the rain comes—they wait for it if it does not come at the exact date—they plant their wheat, and with it they plant the fertiliser of super-phosphate at an expenditure of 2s. 6d. per acre, and from that they get their return. The difference is this: that we want to give more instruction to the farmers in certain districts. You have to have different kinds of farming for different soils. You have to work your soil back. You must plough deeper and you must also pack your seed and fertiliser if you wish to do well in certain districts. We find that these things are done in New South Wales and Victoria, and even in Tasmania, where they have a rainfall somewhere equal to what we have.

Mr. HUNTER: Our winter rainfall.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: There is no question about it, that there are many on the land in this State to-day wasting their time for want of knowledge how to get the best results from the land by the use of fertilising manures—how and when to apply them, and thus enable them to employ labour at good wages.

Mr. HUNTER: The department should give them the information.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: The department should turn their attention to the appointment of a district council for the purpose of assisting in educating the agriculturist and providing first-class scientists to make a study of the seeds, soils, fertilisers, irrigation, and drainage in connection with farms. (Hear, hear!) In little Tasmania they have no less than sixty-seven boards of agriculture. That is what is said by the head of the Agricultural Department in Tasmania—

“During the year many boards have been visited, either by myself or by one or more of the members of the expert staff of the department. A number of lectures and practical demonstrations have been given, and have been well attended. The practice of submitting matters of general interest to farmers for the consideration of the various boards of agriculture throughout the State has been continued, and much valuable information is disseminated thereby.”

Then again he says—

“The farmers to be successful now must keep abreast of the times, and to do this they cannot afford to miss any opportunity of gaining information.”

The whole of what I say is based on that—that the farmer is not equipped with the information necessary to make ordinary farming successful in Queensland outside the sugar crop. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. HUNTER: Blame the Minister.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: He has not had time to do anything yet. He is doing very well. This is a further paragraph from the Tasmanian report—

“A start has been made to systematically analyse the soils of our principal fruit-growing districts, a work which will necessarily take time, but which, when completed, will be of the greatest value to all fruitgrowers, as it will show definitely how to treat and manure the various fruit soils in order to obtain the best results therefrom.”

Now, we have enormous tracts of Crown lands adjacent to existing railway lines

which are producing fairly large timber or heavy undergrowth, which shows that the land is capable of production. We have between Gympie and the Isis the country known as the Wallum Crown lands, and in that region between the North Coast Railway and the coast there are over 100,000 acres of Crown land. The soil must have certain good qualities to produce the timber and undergrowth. If it was utilised for producing fruits or cereals, there would be no need to provide communication to it, as it is quite close to the railway as it is. There are tens of thousands of acres of land there which should be brought into use, but which at the present time is only a harbour for vermin and noxious weeds. I notice that we are going to have a Rabbit Bill at last. This is a matter which has come up for discussion before, and I have heard it said by a member sitting on this side of the House that the regulations in connection with the rabbit question ought to be relaxed. It was given as a reason for relaxing the regulations that as the rabbits were migratory, if there were no fences then they would all migrate northward. When I was travelling through the other States I made it my business to find out the opinions of some of the oldest farmers and settlers in those States. I asked them what they thought about relaxing the regulations against the rabbits to let the rabbits migrate northward, and they absolutely ridiculed such an idea. They point out that there are two classes of rabbits—the migratory and the non-migratory. The migratory rabbits generally live in small warrens or in the bushes or logs, and in the cold weather they might migrate to the north. The non-migratory rabbits live in larger warrens, and never leave them unless they are starved out. It is the non-migratory rabbit which is more numerous and destructive, and if they are driven out of their warrens, they depart for more congenial pastures, either to the north, south, west, or east. These are the rabbits which are doing all the harm in the Southern States, and, therefore, I think it would be nothing less than criminal for any Government to relax in the slightest degree their endeavours to keep the rabbits from spreading over Queensland, especially the agricultural parts. I have seen the enormous losses that have been sustained, and which will continue to be sustained, by the farmers and graziers of the other States, by the presence of such huge numbers of rabbits and hares. In New South Wales, in the year 1910, the export of hares and rabbits totalled no less than 8,000,000 pairs, and you can go on to places like I visited—Orange, Blayney, and Bathurst—in those three districts, which are all adjacent, they send 35,000 rabbits weekly for export. Yet, in the grazing lands, there is still an increase, and the agriculturist has to turn his attention to wire netting, digging out, and fumigating. Those are the non-migratory rabbits, and we ought not to be led away by any misstatements—I do not say they are wilfully made, I am sure not—as to what would happen to these rabbits if they only had free access across the country. I think there is one means by which we can have a great deal better legislation in connection with closer settlement in some of the larger agricultural districts of the State, and that is by more decentralisation in the Lands Department. They cannot control matters at such long distances from Brisbane. There is no doubt that our Lands

Department is excellently managed. I do not think I could put my finger upon a man who does not seem very capable, and fulfils the duties entrusted to him, but there are duties beyond their power, which can only be properly handled by having a man on the spot to see how the lands can be best handled. I hope the time will come when such districts as the Burnett, where we have 2,500,000 acres of land, will have more experts and officials on the spot to see that the land is properly handled.

Mr. BOWMAN: Have you no land agent there?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Yes, we have one land agent, but it is impossible for him to undertake the heavy duties devolving upon an office of that kind, and what I am asking for. If it is necessary to have an army of officers down here, how can one be expected to carry out the duties in a district where there is one-seventh of the half of the population of Queensland? Another thing is this: There is one industry which is rapidly growing, and it is a very profitable one, if properly handled, and that is the poultry industry. If that industry was encouraged more by the Department of Agriculture and the Justice Department it would be very much better. We know we have poultry shows which are not run for profit at all. They are run simply by the subscriptions that are voluntarily given, with no endowment, and they are not allowed to run art unions to assist them to pay expenses, although anyone can run art unions for educational purposes. I would like to know what can be more educational than a well-equipped poultry show. I do not know anything that would distribute more knowledge and do more good to a large number of people, and why they should be debarred from the advantages that others possess, I cannot conceive. I hope it will be remembered that there are two classes of poultry shows—one run for the purposes of gain and one for the purpose of education—and those that are run for educational purposes should have the sympathy of the Justice Department and of other departments, and they should be given an opportunity to raise funds, when no endowment is given. The report of the Royal Commission on the meat industry was very instructive reading. I am sure everyone will admit, and we will probably have an opportunity of dealing with that later on, but there is one thing that is quite clear: it shows the great advantage that meatworks are to our cattle-breeding country, and I hope the day is not far distant when we will enjoy this privilege in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts by the establishment of meatworks at Port Maryborough. At Geelong there are new meatworks, and right throughout the district the people are loud in their praise of the difference in prosperity since the establishment of those works. There is another matter, although I do not intend to dwell on it at this stage, and that is the proposition for an alteration in the Elections Act. No doubt it does not come too soon, and in the interests of justice and fair play the sooner it comes the better, and I speak feelingly when I say that. I think hon. members on the other side, too, will sympathise with me when I say it. (Hear, hear!) It is very gratifying to know that during the last twelve months there has been practically no industrial strikes or lockouts in Queensland.

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An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Is that due to the Liberal party?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Due to the Liberal party passing the Peace Industrial Act.

Mr. MURPHY: What about Cloncurry?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: If the hon. member will only take the trouble to investigate the facts in connection with Cloncurry, he will see it was no strike nor lockout. A certain number of men—and quite within their rights—said, "We want you to employ us on day work and not piece work," and the employers quite rightly said, "We are not going to employ you on day work. There is piece work for you." The men left, and consequently it was neither a lockout nor a strike.

Mr. MURPHY: It is an industrial trouble.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: It is an industrial trouble, but neither a strike nor a lockout, and you cannot pass legislation to provide for contingencies of that kind. There is one thing quite certain, and that is, that the industrial peace of Queensland compares very favourably indeed with the industrial peace of any other State of the Commonwealth during the last twelve months. The more the Industrial Peace Act is known and understood, the more it will be appreciated by those who opposed it the strongest.

Mr. McCORMACK: One of the biggest industrial troubles that ever occurred in Queensland is in progress at the present moment.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: I believe the Industrial Peace Act will be able to cope with that trouble.

Mr. THEODORE: Who are they going to put in gaol?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: I believe the common sense of both the employer and the employees, when they are working under an Act like the one passed last session, will keep them from any such disastrous results as the putting of people in gaol. I think the people of Queensland have as much common sense as the people of any part of the world, and I do not think anyone will go to the extreme as to make it necessary to punish or penalise them. I sincerely hope so, at any rate.

* Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I rise to support the motion moved by the hon. member for Fassifern, and seconded by the hon. member for Port Curtis, in reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor in opening this session of the Parliament of Queensland. I have to congratulate the mover and the seconder on the way in which they handled the subject, and I

[7 p.m.] think they did it with credit to themselves and also with satisfaction to the House. I would like to refer to the absence of Mr. Wienholt from this Chamber. I think that we lost a very able debater and a very good member, and I am sure that this House and also the electorate of Fassifern will find the new member, Mr. Bell, a very able follower of Mr. Wienholt. Dealing with the subject of the Speech itself, I note that His Excellency says, in opening, that he is gratified to be able to congratulate the country on a continuance of the good seasons with which it has been favoured for a good many successive years. I regret very much that, whilst the major portion of Queensland has had the benefit of good seasons, there are parts of it—more particularly the parts of it in which I am

interested, that is to say, the Northern Downs—which have had particularly dry seasons during the last twelve months. The dairying, cultivators, and the people on the land generally have suffered very many reverses, and in some cases the dairy stock had to be taken from the Dalby district and brought down to the Moonie River district for grass, which meant that the land, for which the people had paid large prices, was lying idle, and they had to pay agistment and to travel stock from my electorate, and also from Murilla, and on the whole suffered very severe losses by additional freights and expenses. His Excellency also refers to his visit to various parts of the State, and speaks of travelling in the Central, Northern, and Western portions of Queensland. I know that, in addition to His Excellency, several Ministers—in fact, the majority of them—have occupied the recess in touring the State. I think it is very wise of them to do that, and to keep up the practice, because unless they do so they cannot keep in touch with the growing settlements and new districts. I had the pleasure of seeing two different Ministers in my district, and I am sure they were honest in their remarks when they said that they were very much surprised at the very great progress that had been made in it. I hope, as I said, that they will continue that practice, because if they do not they cannot expect to be able to help to legislate satisfactorily for these districts. His Excellency further, in his Speech, refers to abattoirs, and speaks of the meat industry. Now, I would like to say this briefly: That, although they are starting abattoirs, they are to be only for the metropolis. Probably that is a move in the right direction; you must deal with the larger centres of population first. But I want to tell those persons who are responsible for the government of the country that we do not want everything in the metropolis. There are other places that require consideration, and there are towns all over Queensland, and especially towns like Toowoomba. In addition to these abattoirs, the people in the metropolis are very well catered for at present by private enterprise. You have private firms carrying on their business under proper supervision and observing the regulations to the very letter. There has been a very marked difference in the way in which the regulations are now carried out in the country towns. For a time these things were very slack, and it is well known to this House what went on. There was absolutely no supervision, and what was said about lumpy stock getting on to the market and being sold to the consumer was absolutely true. I have known cases in which people have gone to the saleyards and bought lumpy beasts, and they have disappeared—they were not boiled down. Whether they were sent to other markets or not, the fact remains that they disappeared. It is suggested that legislation should be brought in to deal with the Elections Acts. Personally I am not very keen on the introduction of the postal vote. I have had one experience only, and it has been more than unsatisfactory. I say, as far as that is concerned, that it is desirable to extend the franchise and the opportunity to exercise it to persons who are not in a condition to attend the poll, and I would suggest that the legislation should be watched very carefully, and that a person living within 5 miles of a polling-booth should be allowed

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to exercise the postal vote only on some doctor or some nurse certifying that she is unfit to go to the poll. My experience of an election was only once when the postal vote was in operation, and it certainly did not affect the result, but if we had been anything like close I could have knocked the whole thing to pieces. I had no fewer than eighty-seven postal votes, with the names "J. T. Bell" written by one person, and that one person was one of his committee.

Mr. KIRWAN: It was quite the thing right throughout Queensland; they were paid to do it.

Mr. VOWLES: It was a handwriting I knew very well, and in some instances the names were practically the same.

Mr. LENNON: Then you will not support it?

Mr. VOWLES: I will support it with certain limitations, but not without very great restrictions. Then the Speech makes a reference to prickly pear. I dare say there is as much prickly pear in my electorate as there is in most other electorates, and I have had a good deal of experience with the land laws, and have seen the practical side of it. I do not think there is any land in my electorate that is not occupied, unless it is useless land, and there is not much of that, and I think that those settlers have not had the encouragement that they might have had from the department, and have not been treated as liberally as it is possible to treat them. We are told by Mr. Temple Clerk, whose book I have here, that this pest is rapidly taking charge of Queensland, and is occupying land at the rate of 1,000,000 acres annually, and if that is going to go on for ten years, whilst we are experimenting on 100,000 acres, then in that time, according to one of the officers of the Lands Department, 10,000,000 acres will have gone to rack and ruin. We are spending money on commissions and scientific research, and so far we have not got any results. I believe Dr. White has stated that the methods adopted by Mr. Roberts at Dulacca even exceed expectations. If that is so, what is the use of further expense in the direction in which it is going? If the amount of money that is being spent by these commissioners going round to different countries and seeking information, and these departmental expenses, and the expenses of these scientists, were put into poison, we would have enough to clear that 1,000,000 acres that we are being told by Mr. Clerk is being lost every year. Mr. Clerk, in his letter, seems to me to be reprimanding his department very severely. I consider that the production is a most remarkable one, coming from a subordinate in the department. He is criticising the Government methods, criticising his department, and posing as an authority on the subject, and I do not know how he can pose as an authority.

Mr. THEODORE: Mr. Clerk is an admitted authority, and is supposed to know.

Mr. VOWLES: It is a pity he was not an authority in Dulacca, where the pear is, because it was during his time that the pear took hold. He appears to have a brief for Mr. Roberts, too. He tells us that that man has been treated very badly, and should have been given larger areas and better conditions.

Mr. KIRWAN: If you gave it in areas of 10,000 and 20,000 acres, you would soon get people to clear it.

Mr. VOWLES: It remains to be seen what Mr. Roberts is going to do, and whether his experiments will be a success. Practical men, who have visited the district and seen his work within the last few weeks, are very sceptical as to what the result is going to be. They say he is making a certain amount of progress, but he has got no further than we have got during our knowledge of prickly pear. He has killed the top growth, but he has not yet proved that he is able to kill the bulb. If you do not kill the bulb, or the seedlings, you may just as well leave it alone. The question of prickly pear brings me to the subject of the Land Act. There was a deputation recently in Brisbane, representing a very large body of selectors. One gentleman alone represented 600 selectors, so you can imagine how many selectors were interested in the conference, and the amount of land they held. The Minister favourably considered one suggestion which was made, and that was that the rent-paying term of the prickly-pear selections should be extended. I think that that was the very least that he could have done; because when he is doing it, we are told in the first place that this land is not an asset to the Crown—in fact, it is a menace to the other tenants of the Crown—and it would be better to give it away altogether, as was done in the past, with a bonus, than to let it stand there and help to depreciate the value of surrounding land. Now, what is good for the prickly-pear man and the prickly-pear areas should be good for every other class of selector, and I wish to say a little on the subject of the agricultural farm selector, and also of the grazing farm selector in prickly-pear areas. The Secretary for Public Lands, in replying to that deputation, said that there were no agricultural farms with the prickly pear on them. I was much astonished to hear such a statement. It is rather the reverse. In some districts you find there are prickly-pear selections with no prickly pear on; but if you look down to some of the agricultural farms, you will find pear on them that is almost an impossibility to clean; yet that land, according to the law, must be opened at a minimum of 10s. per acre.

Mr. THEODORE: That was a very serious statement of the Minister for Lands.

Mr. VOWLES: I don't care. What I say is true.

Mr. KIRWAN: We only have it from that side of the House now and then.

Mr. VOWLES: I own a prickly-pear selection, and I know something about it. Only last week I drove out 23 miles to a place known as Canaga, and was shown a selection which had been selected at 10s. an acre. It was thickly infested with prickly pear, although there were flats that had scattered pear on them, and that man was asked to pay 10s. an acre for the land; but if he had his dues he should be given a bonus of 10s. for it. The question may be asked—Why did he come to select? He is in the same position as many another man. In the first place, he was told how prickly-pear land was going to improve in value, how easy prickly pear was to get rid of. He invested his capital, and there he is—he can neither make use of his land nor get rid of the prickly pear.

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Such cases require legislating for. I submit that the land laws, more particularly as regards prickly-pear selections, are experimental. We have made changes in them from time to time, and further changes will have to be made so as to make provision for the clearing of the prickly-pear land from the pest. The agricultural farm man is not asking—and he did not ask the Minister—for any consideration by way of reduction of his purchasing price—neither did the prickly-pear man. I would like to impress on the House that they are all quite prepared to meet their obligations to the Government in the way of payment. All they ask for is this: "We have got into something we do not understand—the Government did not understand, or they would not have put us there—therefore, we ask you to reconsider our position, and give us extended time, so as to enable us to live and make a little money in the meantime, and carry out our conditions."

Mr. THEODORE: I am afraid they will have to wait for a Labour Government.

Mr. VOWLES: If they have to wait for a Labour Government, I am afraid they will have to wait for a very long time. I am certainly with the Minister when he stated that the first thing to be done is to clear the pear—keep a man up to his conditions as far as that is concerned—but the man who sinks his time and labour and money in doing it should be given every consideration. Now, take the case of the grazing farms. There are plenty of places on Northern Downs, in Murilla, and in remote parts of my electorate, where there are grazing farms. When these lands were selected as grazing farms, there were no conditions as to prickly pear; those conditions have been imposed upon them since they selected their land. There were other grazing farmers in other parts of Queensland who were on the same rental basis as regards payment as those people who are in prickly-pear areas, but they, on account of having no pest, had not, of course, to go to the annual expenditure that those people who have the pest are obliged to do. The Act makes provision that in certain cases after the expiration of the term of a grazing farm, the Land Court may, if money has been expended in the clearing of pear, grant a concession by way of extension of lease, or other concessions—it does not say what they are. It is a remarkable thing that, although applications have been made to the Land Court by selectors to avail themselves of those sections, no action has ever been taken. These are men who, when they selected their land, and entered into a contract with the Government to undertake to pay certain rent, and that is all they undertook. Since then the Government, which is a privileged landlord, puts on them, by Act of Parliament, further conditions, and requires them to clear prickly pear, and keep the land clear of it. In some instances these men have to pay as much as £200 a year.

Mr. LENNON: When the railway line to Tara was going through, did you not say that it would be a good paying line?

Mr. VOWLES: No, I never argued that; I was not in Parliament then. Whoever did so did not know what he was talking about, because there is prickly-pear country, brigalow scrub, and melon holes, and it would take a fortune to make it pay.

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Mr. THEODORE: That is a different tale to what we heard.

Mr. VOWLES: It would pay if the Government did as I wanted them to do, and that is to purchase some of the big properties round about it—such as Loudoun and Bon Accord. There are good blocks of 30,000 and 40,000 acres through which the line passes. If they did that and put closer settlement on it it would pay. They are resuming Halliford, though it is full of pear, and it can only be taken up as cheap land. If the line is going to pay, it will have to be extended to the wool districts and through clean country to Brigalow Creek and right down towards Surat. We have heard a good deal about the *via recta* and the Drayton deviation. Well, I do not think this Government would be justified in proceeding with either of those works while the agricultural lines remain unfinished. Those two lines are simply for the benefit of closely-settled districts and to deal with the increased trade which has occurred since the railway was built. The lines that are being asked for are in districts where the people have gone out and pioneered. In many cases before they went out they were promised railway communication within a reasonable time. Whilst on the subject of railways I would like to refer again to the accommodation provided on the Western Railway. You can take any Tuesday or Friday when the Western mail trains are running, and you will find a shameful state of affairs. There is not even adequate seating accommodation, and very frequently there is no lavatory accommodation, or, if there is, it is reserved for some individual or individuals, and the general public have to suffer both going out and coming in. There is another matter that I would like to refer to in this connection, and that is the railway service from Roma, Chinchilla, and Dalby, to Toowoomba. The train arrives at Toowoomba every night at half-past 9 o'clock, but there is no train to Brisbane until the next day, with the result that all the people arriving from the West have either to remain the night in Toowoomba or else come down in what is called the "dog box." Every week nearly I have to travel in the "dog box"—(laughter)—and I speak very feelingly. The accommodation we get is one second-class carriage, and sometimes it is full to overflowing. It is high time that the Commissioner put on decent railway accommodation if he is going to have a service west of Toowoomba. Don't let us be shut up in Toowoomba all night, but let us get to Brisbane, because the loss of half a day is a serious thing to the Western man. With the Western mail, when you get to Toowoomba from Brisbane, the Toowoomba people get out, but just as many get in, and it is quite the exception when I go from here to Dalby that I get a seat for 150 miles. You reach Dalby at 10 o'clock at night, and the people who are going further west are glad to see the last of the Dalbyites so that they can get lying down room. Many of those people are travelling to Charleville and Cunnamulla, and that is the kind of accommodation they get. I notice that there has been a certain desire evinced on the part of the Opposition to befriending the farmer. I do not know where the desire springs from, but it is not so long since I saw the report of one Labour candidate

who said that the Labour party never had the farmers' support and they did not want it—

Mr. THEODORE: That was disproved on 31st May.

Mr. VOWLES: And he said he would like to get them under his heel and keep them there.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Who said that?

Mr. VOWLES: One of your people. The farmer knows it, too, and I can assure you he is not going to be caught with chaff, and you are not going to get him under your heel, but he is going to keep you under his heel.

Mr. BOWMAN: Mr. Page got the farmers' vote in your district at the last election.

Mr. VOWLES: On the subject of pure seed, I would like to see the Department of Agriculture take the matter in hand. I know what occurred only last season. There was a limited amount of seed which came from Roma, I think it was, and it was sold to certain realisers. I know exactly what they got, and I know they supplied ten times the quantity in my electorate, so that it could not all have been true to label. I think the department should take the matter in hand. They should acclimatise cereals, and get varieties suitable for the different districts and retail the seed to the farmers so that the latter would know what they were getting. The Rabbit Bill affects my district. I think the rabbit question is one that should be nationalised. It is not a fair thing that any one set of individuals should have to pay for dealing with the rabbits. There has never been a rabbit seen in the Dalby district, and I cannot see why the people in that district should have to pay for the destruction of rabbits any more than the people of Brisbane. There are lots of people in my district who are religiously paying the rabbit tax, and they want to know why. Some of them would be pleased to see some rabbits, because then they could have a bit of sport; they could do some shooting; but we cannot get even that much out of it, and we have to pay while the people in the coastal districts pay nothing. I am very glad to see that there is to be an amendment of the Liquor Act. There is no doubt that the Act is farcical as it is at present. I referred, when the Bill was before the House last session, to the clause dealing with the cubical dimensions of bedrooms. I know instances in my own electorate, as well as others in Brisbane, where people provided, not the 800 cubic feet required by the Act of 1935, but 900 cubic feet to be on the safe side. As the Act stands at present, no person is allowed to sleep in a room containing less than 1,000 cubic feet; but, if you pull down a wall and put two of those rooms into one, you have 1,800 cubic feet, and then three persons are entitled to sleep there. Surely that was never intended. When the members of another House—especially the medical members—were studying the health of the people and wanted 1,000 cubic feet, they should have considered those structures which were already in existence. There are other matters in the Act which require attention. There is the man on the steamer trading between ports on Sunday. As the Act stands, he cannot have a drink on Sunday. That is a slip which was never intended. The section was meant to apply to packet licenses and not to oversea steamers. Then there is the provision dealing with the *bonâ fide*

traveller. The man travelling by steamer between Brisbane and Cairns, who gets off at one of the intervening ports on a Sunday, is a stranger so far as refreshments are concerned, and the man who is accustomed to liquor on a hot summer day in the North requires it—and he generally gets it.

Hon. R. PHILP: The Northern people are much more temperate than the Southern people.

Mr. VOWLES: I am very pleased to hear it, but I would like to see "Knibbs" on that. The same thing applies to passengers by trains and coaches. A man arriving at a Western town on a Sunday after a long journey along dusty roads cannot get his drink. Surely that can be easily rectified. The old limit of 5 miles constituting a man a *bonâ fide* traveller possibly was abused; but if you make it 20 miles then nobody will travel that distance merely for a drink. If a man is travelling solely for the purpose of getting drink, you can easily legislate to deal with him.

Mr. THEODORE: It would be pretty hard for the man who travelled *bonâ fide* 19 miles.

Mr. VOWLES: Well, there must be some limit. There is another matter I want to refer to in connection with land. I would like to see the Fencing Act amended. The Act is altogether impracticable. It goes back to 1861, and there has only been one small amendment since then. It was brought in and passed before the advent [7.30 p.m.] of wire fencing in Queensland.

In that Act you have the test of what is a proper fence in the country. A fence has to be erected, the cost of which is equivalent to the cost of a three-rail fence. Just imagine what would be the cost of a three-rail fence on Jimbour Plain, where you have to travel probably 50 miles to get the rails and cart them to the scene of operations. Why, the cost would be considerably over £100 a mile. Yet that is the present test of what constitutes a fence in the country under the Fencing Act. There are many other things in connection with that Act which require amending, notably the provisions with regard to existing improvements and the six months' limitation. Many persons do not know anything about the six months' limitation, with the result that they lose their remedy at law. Particularly in this the case in dealing with new lands, where the six months do not begin until the license to occupy is issued. People do not know where they are in such cases, and the Lands Department often do not know whether the matter is one which should be settled by individuals in a court of law, or whether it should be settled by the Land Court. There is another matter which I have been asked to bring before the House for its consideration, and that is the subject of closer settlement. In fact, I have been asked, if the Government will not consider the application of the Jimbour settlers, to bring in a motion asking the House to express its opinion on the subject.

Mr. THEODORE: Are you going to do it now?

Mr. VOWLES: I cannot say that at present I am going to do it. This is not the proper time. As hon. members know, Jimbour was repurchased by the Crown at a high figure, and after it was subdivided it was selected. The land has

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been selected by people from all over Australia. We have settlers there from New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria, and, in fact every one of the States, including the Northern Territory, and we have also representatives from England, Ireland, and Scotland. Those people have come and selected the land, and they are not able to make a "do" of it. The remarkable thing to me is that they do not complain about the value put upon the land, though some of them have paid up to £6 10s. an acre for it, and have to pay 8 per cent. on the capital value to the Government by way of rent and redemption, and then make a living for themselves. Two deputations have at different times waited upon the Minister for Lands, and I was present with both. One was a deputation of representatives of selectors at Kaimkillenbun, and the other a deputation representing selectors at Kaimkillenbun, Perriman, and Macalister. They pointed out to the Minister that they had had to contend with very adverse seasons, and showed that they had spent the whole of their capital in improving their selections. These selectors have spent large sums on their holdings. It is not an ordinary case of selection, and these men have spent from £1,500 to £3,000 and £4,000 on improvements—not extravagant improvements but necessary improvements—ploughing, and putting in seed, and paying the first deposit on their lands; and they have never got a crop. They have to meet the heavy demands made upon them by the department, but they are not asking the department to reconsider the purchase money or forego any part of the purchase money. They simply ask the department to extend the time for the payment of the purchase money over a greater number of years, so that their payments will be 4 per cent. interest on the capital and 1 per cent. redemption, instead of 5 per cent. interest and 3 per cent. redemption which they have to pay at present. They urge that this would be a fair thing in view of the fact that they have spent large sums of money on their selections and have not yet got any return out of the ground. In addition to the payments they have to make to the department they have to pay shire taxes, the marsupial tax, and all classes of taxation, and have at the same time to make a livelihood for themselves and their families. And all they ask is that the time for the payment for the land should be extended, so that their annual payments may press less hardly on them, but as far as I know the department is not prepared to accede to their request. It is all very well to talk about the solemnness of contracts, but there are other things to be considered. This is not a personal matter, or a matter of business altogether. The main object of the department is to put desirable people on the land.

Mr. KIRWAN: And keep them there.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, and keep them there, and if you find that they are disappointed, and things have not come up to their expectation, the department should recognise that as they are bona fide settlers, that they are doing their best, that it is through no fault of their own that they have met with reverses, and that they are therefore entitled to every consideration. This is a national matter, and those selectors should be considered in the interest of the State. The New South Wales system is one under which the payment is extended over thirty-eight

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years, with 4 per cent. and 1 per cent. interest and sinking fund payments. That is what many of these persons have been accustomed to, and that is what they ask for. They say that when they came here they were not aware that there were so many outgoings to be reckoned with, that they did not know they had to pay such high prices for the storage of their stuff before it was sold, that they had to pay such high rates of commission, which they affirm are double what they have been accustomed to, that they did not know that the seasons were so uncertain, and generally that they did not know that the whole business was as precarious as it turned out to be. Those people are on the land and have sunk their money there. The department says, "We will not deal harshly with you, but will treat every man on his merits and deal with each case individually." That is all very well if you have a sympathetic Minister, but we may have a sympathetic Minister one day and a Minister who is not sympathetic the next. These men want their business done in a business-like way, and not left to the caprice of a Minister who may not be sympathetic. The Scotchmen who are settled there brought £3,000 and £4,000 each, and they do not want to lose it altogether. They say, "You have got our money; extend the term for our payments, and make them less harsh, so that we may make a decent living in the meantime."

Mr. HUNTER: What have the Government to say about it?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know, and am waiting to hear what they will have to say about the matter, though I am rather afraid that it is not going to be quite satisfactory. Newspaper articles on the subject have appeared in the "Toowoomba Chronicle," and have been copied into the daily papers, adversely criticising the selectors and their methods. Who wrote them has never been found out—probably he is some fictitious individual. Some people think these articles are a joke, but they have not been taken as a joke by the Lands Department. One reason given why these selectors should not receive consideration is that one of them has got a motor-car, but it is not mentioned that he had £7,000, and that he has sunk that money in the ground. Another selector is charged with extravagance because he is a bit of a sport, and had a shot at some pigeons, when it is alleged he should have been digging up the soil or carrying out farming operations. Other selectors have been accused of having grand furniture and beautiful houses. Men go on to the land with their wives and families, and they sink from £3,000 to £6,000 in improvements and work on that land. Well, if they are going to live there, surely they are entitled to a decent house to live in. (Hear, hear!) These are the remarks and the criticisms which we saw in the newspaper. We find that people who know absolutely nothing about these things are criticising bona fide men who are trying to make a livelihood and carry out their contract. I was pleased to hear the leader of the Opposition say that he would do everything to facilitate the passage of measures that came before the House.

Mr. THEODORE: He did not say that. He said all reasonable measures which we approved of.

Mr. VOWLES: The measures that come from this side are all reasonable, and that is what he intended. I trust that the leader of the Opposition will be true to his promise, and that his party will carry it out.

Mr. THEODORE: Is that your benediction?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, my benediction. (Laughter.) I would like to say, in conclusion, that I think the time has arrived when the Government should make a trial in the construction of railways by contract.

Mr. HUNTER: Is that all?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, I think it is necessary. I am connected with a local authority, and we found that it was absolutely necessary to find out what we were getting for our money—to find out if we were asked to pay more for day labour than we would be by contract. I do not mind telling you that we found that we were not getting a fair thing from the men by day labour. The same thing applies to the construction of railway lines by day labour. I am certain it applied to the construction of the Tara line, because there were dozens of men drawing pay who were not doing even average work.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is a strong indictment on the Railway Department.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, it is; but it is true all the same.

Mr. KIRWAN: Will you support a Royal Commission to inquire into the Railway Department?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. I do not see why we should allow such a state of things to exist in our own interests. We are the custodians of the people's money, and we should find out which is the most profitable way to carry on. Personally, I do not believe in huge contracts and huge profits, but I do not agree with the present system adopted by the officers of the Railway Department as to the cost of a railway. There is no one to check their estimates at all. They simply make an estimate, and if they do it for less than the estimate they turn round and say that they made a profit of so much. Anyone can do that. If I know a thing will cost £10,000, then to be on the safe side I will say it will cost £12,000; and if I do it for £11,000, I will say that that is a profit of £1,000.

Mr. MURPHY: What about the statement which the Minister for Railways presented the other night?

Mr. VOWLES: My experience has been that the day-labour system is dearer than contract work. In our district we have proved that you get more value out of contract work.

Mr. GILLIES: What about the Cairns Railway?

Mr. VOWLES: I know that the hon. gentlemen opposite advocate day labour. It is part of their religion, and they cannot advocate anything else. But I am giving facts as to what happened in my own district.

Mr. THEODORE: The facts show that the railway men on day labour do good honest work.

Mr. VOWLES: Sometimes. I hope hon. members will remember what I have said with regard to land in prickly-pear areas. It is absolutely necessary in the interests of the man on the land that something should

be done to help him. He is the small selector. I am appealing, on behalf of your friends—the small men. Legislation should be introduced whereby agricultural farms and grazing farms in prickly-pear areas should be distinguished from agricultural farms and grazing farms outside prickly-pear areas. I hope that the position of the Jimbour selectors will also have the consideration of hon. members. If I get an unfavourable reply from the Minister, then when I bring forward that motion to which I have referred, I trust that it will receive the support of every member here. What I have said will bear any scrutiny and any inquiry. The Government have only got to ask their own officials in the district. These officials thoroughly know the conditions of the selectors. If the Government make these inquiries, I am sure that they will immediately grant what is being asked.

Mr. McCORMACK (Cairns): Before addressing myself to the main question before the House, I would like to have a word or two on a matter which has been referred to by one or two members speaking in connection with the administration of the Industrial Peace Act by the Government, and with reference to the Hampden lockout. I happen to be the secretary of the union which is concerned in this matter. It is a remarkable thing that when the Industrial Peace Bill was going through the House the Minister for Works told us that lockouts would be prevented, but in spite of that we find that since this lockout the officials of the court, the judge, and the Minister have done nothing in connection with the matter, although it involves something like 5,000 or 6,000 men and dependants.

Mr. BOWMAN: Shame!

Mr. McCORMACK: In fact, it is one of the biggest disputes that has taken place in Queensland for a considerable time, and ranks third, next to the general strike and the sugar strike of two years ago. I thought that the department would have taken some action in this matter, as it is necessary that the country should know something about the lockout and of the affairs leading up to the lockout. It is also necessary that this House should know the real facts of the case. (Hear, hear!) About twelve months ago, just after the general election, an agreement was arrived at between all the various companies in the Cloncurry area. I was the representative of the men and there were other representatives there, and we drew up an agreement setting out the wages to be paid and the conditions of employment that should obtain in those mines and at the smelters. These wages conditions had no reference to contract work at all. There was a certain amount of contract work carried on, such as wood cutting and carting, and quarrying for flux, but that was work over which the mines authorities could not exercise proper supervision. Work was carried out under the agreement arrived at between the association and the various companies, and there was no mention of contract work whatever. I am pointing out to members of this House that the Government has not done its duty in connection with this lockout. It concerns not only the men engaged in the mining industry, but the shareholders in these various mines, the railway men, and the Railway Department, who suffer from the great loss of revenue that is taking

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place as a result of the lockout. I really believe that the lockout was brought about to affect the share market as regards one particular mine out there. (Hear, hear!) There was no mention of contract work in the agreement which was arrived at. Now, here is a notice to contractors which was issued by the company—note that it is headed "Notice to Contractors"—

"NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

"Friezland.

"Herewith I enclose a notice to employees, from which you will note that it is the intention of this company to close down all our works and mines on the 5th of June, provided the terms of agreement mentioned are not adhered to by the A.W.U. You will therefore cease to forward supplies to this company until further notice.

"(Signed) ERLE HUNTLEY,

"General Manager,

"Hampden-Cloncurry Mines."

In that notice to contractors, to whom no exception was taken by the men, it instructed them to knock off their contracts. Here is another notice which I will read, and I hope the Minister will listen carefully to what I have got to say. This is a notice to the employees of the various mines, and reads—

"NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES.

"An agreement was entered into last year with the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Workers' Association fixing wages, etc., at which time piecework, contracting, and bonuses were in vogue. Lately, steps have been taken to stop piecework, contracting, etc., without in any way consulting the companies operating in this district. The management of these companies consider this a breach of agreement, and unless such piecework, contracting, etc., are recognised as a condition of employment, regret that they will be compelled to suspend operations on 5th June next.

"(Signed) ERLE HUNTLEY,

"General Manager,

"Hampden-Cloncurry Mines."

The agreement, as I mentioned before, had no mention of contracts at all, and these companies have combined together to alter the conditions of employment without recourse to the court, which the hon. gentleman told us would settle all these disputes. If the men are liable to the pains and penalties contained in that Act by striking, or by threatening to strike, to alter the conditions of employment, I hold that the employers are also liable to the penalties, as employers in the first place for instigating a lockout, and as a combination of employers who arrived at a common agreement to take certain action if the employees would not submit to certain terms of employment. I hold that that is the case, and I can prove my case that the dispute is not one of wages or conditions at all. I will read some comments upon this particular mine, or the particular manager, who caused this lockout, and I will prove to the satisfaction of this House—at least I think so—that there were other forces at work which caused this lockout, which has been pushed upon the workers generally in the Western parts of Queensland. We know that the Hampden Com-

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pany had made certain promises to its shareholders which it could not fulfil, and to prove that I will quote from a current paper, a recognised authority on these matters, and that is the Sydney "Bulletin," which, on 29th May, says—

"Hampden-Cloncurry balance-sheet is not a model of clearness. At a general meeting the chairman of directors reckoned on producing copper at £39 per ton. It seems impossible to make the report tally with this estimate of £39.

The total cost of producing 2,790 tons of pany. The Sydney "Bulletin," also of 29th May says—

That is the real cause of the lockout, and I will read another quotation from the "Bulletin" to prove that the lockout was really the result of an attempt to rig the share market and not as a result of the employees making certain demands on the company. The "Sydney Bulletin," also of 29th May, says—

"The methods of some of the groups that control Cloncurry mines are rapidly putting the Cloncurry scrip in the same street as that of Cobar. Hampden is being jockeyed up and down. The certainty of the present labour trouble was well known to a few weeks before it occurred."

It was not known to myself.

Mr. MAX: It was not known to me.

Mr. McCORMACK: And I was secretary of the organisation. I complain that the Government has not done anything in this matter. The judge of the Federal Arbitration Court has power to step in and stop these affairs. What is the good of our Industrial Peace Court if it cannot give relief to these 4,000 or 5,000 men who have been driven out of Western Queensland, and put to considerable expense? Everyone knows that it requires a considerable sum of money to get away from Cloncurry. There is no other employment in Cloncurry, and the nearest place at which work could be obtained is Charters Towers or Townsville. The Government has done nothing in the matter, and to prove that they should have taken some action, if this Act is to be any good at all, I will read the interpretation of the word "Lockout" in the Industrial Peace Act, which is as follows:—

"'Lockout'—The act of an employer in closing his place of business, or suspending or discontinuing his business or any branch thereof, or a refusal or failure by an employer to continue to employ any number of his employees, with intent—

- (a) To compel or induce any employees to agree to terms of employment, or comply with any demands made upon them by the said or any other employer; or
- (b) To cause loss or inconvenience to his employees, or any of them; or
- (c) To incite, instigate, aid, abet, or procure any other lockout; or
- (d) To assist any other employer to compel or induce any employees to agree to terms of employment or comply with any demands made by him."

That is the interpretation of "lockout,"

and these companies, and this company in particular, the Hampden-Cloncurry Company, has been guilty of that, yet there has been no action taken by the Government. I think the Act gives power to the judge to step in. We know the men did not want to cease work. We know that numerous other companies—I have the personal opinion of one manager out there, at least, that he did not desire this trouble, and yet we have the trouble brought about, and 5,000 men and their numerous dependants put into this awkward position, just because a few share-brokers desired to rig the share market.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Can you not bring it before the Industrial Peace Court?

Mr. McCORMACK: After everyone has left Cloncurry? What is the use of bringing it before the court? Some of the men are here, some are in Cobar, and some are in Broken Hill, and what is the use of bringing it before the court?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Did you in any form call the attention of the judge to it? I do not think you did.

Mr. McCORMACK: The judge of the Federal Arbitration Court does not wait, when the employer locks out his employees, for the union to notify him. He immediately takes steps to have the matter brought before the court. He asks for a compulsory conference in regard to the matter.

The HOME SECRETARY: The matter must be brought before the court.

Mr. McCORMACK: You have your officials. You have the registrar. You have him attending in connection with the affairs of the Sugar Board, and why should you not have him attending to this affair? I hold that these companies are also guilty under section 38 of the Industrial Peace Act, which reads—

"(1) Any industrial association of employers which, for the purpose of enforcing compliance with the demands of any employers, orders or incites its members to refuse or offer employment, or to continue to employ, shall be deemed to do an act in the nature of a lockout."

Now, these companies have met together in the face of this law, and they have agreed to do a certain thing, and in the event of the employees not agreeing or not accepting these conditions, they have said, "We shall lock you out in defiance of this Industrial Peace Act." I said when the Act was going through this House, that it was impossible to force the employers to recognise the Act. The Government told us that the employer was really the only person who would suffer to any extent under the Industrial Peace Act: that he was there, and we could take his goods and his chattels, but the labourer could pack up and clear out, and we could not get hold of him; but in this particular instance the companies had a joint meeting, at which several of them were against taking this drastic action, yet we find they formed a combination of employers and they locked out their men to force certain conditions of employment upon them, which did not obtain previous to the lockout.

Mr. KESSELL: Did not the men make any demand?

Mr. McCORMACK: No demand whatever. I can assure the House that every word I am saying is true. I was in Towns-

ville at the time, and I really did not think it would become so serious, or perhaps I would have gone out West; but since then I have found out that it would have been useless to approach the employers, for the simple reason, as the quotations I have read from the Sydney "Bulletin" have proved, that the employers, or directors, or somebody else—I cannot say who it was—determined that a certain condition of affairs should be brought about, and, as a result of that lockout, shares dropped 3s. or 4s. the first few days. I think this is a matter that requires ventilation in this House, because so many people had stated that it was a strike. It was nothing of the kind. The Industrial Peace Court is useless if the judge cannot interfere in these matters, and in this particular instance he has not interfered, and the Minister for Works has taken no action. He took action in the sugar strike, which was not a great deal more serious than this affair in which he took no action. How does he expect the employees—how does he

expect the unionists of Queensland [8 p.m.] land to recognise his Industrial Peace Act? But straightaway action under the strike clauses was taken here in Brisbane in connection with the unloading of the "Grantala." And I think that the Industrial Peace Act and the framers of it had only Brisbane in view.

The TREASURER: The hon. gentleman is altogether wrong; I took no action, nor is it my province to take action.

Mr. McCORMACK: No, it is not his province. He did not intend to take action, and the Act was never intended to apply to any other place than Brisbane, where the hon. gentleman's interests are situated, and where they might be affected.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: It was generally considered a strike.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member for Maryborough might have considered it a strike. I have proof that it was a lock-out, and from outside sources, too.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Why did they not come under the court?

Mr. McCORMACK: There was no court to come under. They were locked out. And anyone who has lived in Cloncurry will know that the moment a man's employer informs him there would be no more work, he would take the first train and get away, because it is 600 miles to the next probable employment. And that is what happened. If you read the papers you will notice that 600 or 700 men left by the first train after the lockout, and, in fact, the Railway Department had to put on a special train to take them away. I hold that the Industrial Peace Act has broken down in the first important industrial trouble that has occurred in Queensland since it was passed—absolutely broken down.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: It was never put in use.

Mr. McCORMACK: It was not put into action? Apparently it was not. The Federal Arbitration Act comes into operation automatically, and that is what we wanted here in Queensland. In connection with the Governor's Speech, I expected to see some amendment of the Industrial Peace Act in connection with the sugar-workers. The position in regard to the boards is that the

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men who will cut the cane in Queensland this year, or in any other year, will have no representation on the boards. The men who come year by year to work in the sugar-fields come, not from Queensland, or rather, not from the sugar districts, and were not in these districts when nominations were called for, and when lists of voters were asked for from the farmers. These men have made their objections to me. They have said: "Why should so-and-so be on the board?" Not one cutter of cane has the power of electing representatives to the board that will fix rates of harvesting in the industry.

Mr. SWAYNE: A portion of them are local men.

Mr. McCORMACK: Canecutters are men who come from other places. It is a seasonal industry. Does the hon. member for Mirani tell me that all the cane is cut by local labour?

Mr. SWAYNE: A very large proportion is.

Mr. McCORMACK: Then why the necessity for advertising for labour as you do? In my particular district they all come from other districts. Being a seasonal industry, they go into other industries during the slack seasons, and come back into the sugar industry when the cutting starts.

Mr. SWAYNE: Some stay on the whole year.

Mr. McCORMACK: At £1 5s. a week. Canecutters are not the class of men who stop on for that. I admit that a few of the farmers' sons who are in that district are cutters, but that does not apply to other districts, and even in the hon. member's district the majority of them come from other districts. There is a necessity for the amendment of this Industrial Peace Act, and if the men themselves are going to accept it and try to get the settlement of their conditions through it, I can only reasonably ask that the Government should do everything in its power to make the Act one that will meet with the workers' approval. Here they are asked to work under conditions fixed by boards that they have not voted for.

Mr. FOLEY: That was the intention of the Bill.

Mr. McCORMACK: The intention was to exclude these men, and whilst at the present moment we have arranged agreements all over Queensland, or rather over most of Queensland, without going to the Industrial Peace Court, still these boards will come into operation and will fix the price of canecutting for the coming season. I take it that will be their duty. The proclamation says "harvesting of cane." Now, if that is so, how can you expect the workers coming into the districts to accept those rates? I say they will not, and that there is an urgent necessity to amend this Act. It is not allowed to the union to act; we can only act in these cases because the employer recognises us as the authority with which he is to deal. The Act should allow every man who is employed in the industry, whether he is actually working in it at the time or not, to have a vote for the election of representatives on those boards. Speaking on the main question of the Speech, I should like to say that I am pleased to see that the Government are going to do something in connection with boring for oil in the Maranoa district. I think it is a very wise proceeding and one that is very commendable. A remarkable

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thing that occurred in connection with this was that when one hon. member on this side was speaking in connection with the starting of a line of steamships, the hon. member for Wide Bay interjected: "Where would you get the money and where would you get the brains?" Yet here the Government proposes to nationalise the oil industry, and the oil industry in the world's affairs is almost as big an industry as the shipping industry, and one of more importance to the producer, because he uses his oil every day. The hon. member for Drayton has given us an illustration of how the Standard Oil Company are squeezing him when he has to purchase oil, and I thoroughly agree with the Government's idea of boring for oil in the Maranoa district. I think it will be a fine thing for the country and for the users of the oil, and if the Government have control of it there will be no fear from that octopus, the Standard Oil Company of America. Another matter to which reference has been made is the Elections Act Amendment Bill. We have heard a good deal about the necessity for it; we have heard a good many speeches accusing the Commonwealth Government of laxity in compiling the rolls, but I find on reference to the jurors' roll that 11 per cent. are dead. (Laughter.) Now, here is our own Government asking the Commonwealth Government to revise its electoral roll when on their own roll of jurors 11 per cent. of the names represent dead men.

The TREASURER: Those names cannot be voted under.

Mr. McCORMACK: I hold that the office of juror is equally important with the office of elector, and there is nothing to stop the people who are concerned in these matters from stuffing the roll of jurors. I only mention the fact to show that the Government would be well advised to sweep their own floor before they attempt to sweep the floor of the Commonwealth authorities.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCORMACK: I think that we have heard sufficient about the postal vote in this House, but, with the hon. member for Dalby, I hope that the Government—if they are determined to reintroduce it—will provide sufficient safeguards to prevent the scandalous misuse of the postal vote that operated on the previous occasion when it was used in Queensland, especially in the North. I can only speak of one place, but there was proof of misuse. The commission that reported on it proved that there was misuse, and up to the present moment we only have newspaper statements that the Commonwealth rolls were misused, that people resorted to double voting, and all that sort of thing. There has been no specific charge against any individual up to the present. There was a man who lived in Victoria who was alleged to have said that he voted nineteen times. Now, what is wrong with the authorities taking action against that man? Has any action been taken? We hear of these statements from the newspapers—they were naturally very sore about the election. I notice a reference in the Governor's Speech to the building of central sugar-mills. I am very pleased to see that the Government have decided to go on with the building of the Babinda Mill. It is in my electorate, but apart from that I am very pleased that they have decided to do so. No doubt the visit of the Premier to

Cairns, and the information which he gained there, and the trip through the particular land which is to grow sugar-cane for this mill, convinced him that the proposition was a good one, and that the State would be safeguarded by investing their money in that particular mill. I am sorry that the other propositions cannot be gone on with as well, because I believe that this particular industry is the only industry which will populate our Northern sugar-fields. While on the question of sugar, I would like to mention that the Government are very late in coming down with one Bill—the Bill to abolish black labour from the industry. We know very well that at the end of last year Mr. Fisher made certain arrangements with Mr. Denham—he introduced certain Bills abolishing the excise and bounty—and up to the present time the Government of Queensland have not carried out their portion of the arrangement.

The **TREASURER**: He took from September to December.

Mr. McCORMACK: I will show the Minister the great injustice he is doing to his own particular supporters in this connection. The old law holds good still. The sugar-mills are crushing, sugar is being produced, and the farmers who are sending cane to the mills—in some cases small farmers—are only receiving the bounty, and no Act of Parliament passed here, I take it, will give them any more this year. They will have to be contented with the bounty that the Commonwealth Government pay.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: How did they know what the Commonwealth Government were going to do?

Mr. McCORMACK: The Commonwealth Government, as they promised to do, would have brought these Acts into force by proclamation. Had this State Parliament done their duty there would have been no excise and bounty regulations this season at all, and there would have been a certain amount of extra money going to the growers.

The **TREASURER**: The Fisher Government made it impossible.

Mr. McCORMACK: The Fisher Government carried out their part of the contract. This Government, up to this moment, have not carried out their part of the contract, and the farmers who are supplying several mills that have been crushing for three weeks are losing 2s. 2d. per ton on their cane—the difference between the excise and bounty, and no Act of Parliament passed now will give to that farming community the 2s. 2d. a ton they have lost, because this Parliament was not either called together at an earlier date, or the matter was not dealt with in the previous session.

Mr. MORGAN: It was Fisher's fault.

Mr. McCORMACK: This is an important matter to Queensland, because, after all, every one of us will get some of this 2s. 2d. It was such an important matter to the people of Queensland that this Parliament should have been called together immediately after Christmas, and instead of being in the awkward position that we are to-day, and not knowing what Mr. Cook is going to do.

Mr. MURPHY: He does not know what he is going to do himself. (Laughter.)

Mr. McCORMACK: That was no excuse for this Government not doing what was a fair thing to the growers. I know there are men in my district who have 1,000 tons of cane, and it is crushed now, and they have only received the bounty on it. These men say they were robbed of 2s. 2d. by the delay of this Government in passing the necessary legislation to have the other brought into force by proclamation. They had any amount of time to do it. There is no excuse for not having done it, except the excuse that the Premier wanted to make it an electioneering cry. He wanted to use it as a means of defeating Andrew Fisher for Wide Bay—I am making that statement in all sincerity—that he was going to use the question of delay, and try to put the blame upon Mr. Fisher. We all know that Mr. Fisher was returned by a larger majority than he ever before received in a sugar district.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Not in a sugar district.

Mr. McCORMACK: The result has been that the Ministry, in endeavouring to make a little bit of cheap political capital out of this affair, injured the farmers and did not help their own cause. They refused to call Parliament together early to make provision that the farmer should receive a full price for his cane, as immediately thereupon the Federal proclamation would have been issued. They were afraid that Mr. Fisher would get some benefit in the election campaign from his having abolished the excise and bounty.

The **TREASURER**: You are altogether wrong.

Mr. McCORMACK: That is a position that appeals to everyone.

Mr. SWAYNE: Are you serious? Tell us why they did not do it in 1910—three years ago.

Mr. McCORMACK: I say here that if Mr. Denham agrees upon a certain course of action, he would not take that course of action if it did not meet with the approval of his followers, and in that particular instance, no doubt, Mr. Fisher had real good reason for not abolishing the excise and bounty. I think I have said sufficient to prove to the Treasurer that their little game of making political capital out of this excise and bounty has fallen through. It did not accomplish what they intended it to accomplish, and at the present moment it is injuring hundreds of good hard-working farmers throughout the whole of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) With reference to "Tudorculosis" and the wages paid in the industry, everyone, I believe, thought equalisation would be considerably better for the farmer than abolition. I am one of those who believe that, in spite of all Acts of Parliament, the black man will get into the industry again. I am satisfied of that, and for that reason I prefer equalisation to abolition, and some people who talk so much about "Tudorculosis" will find out that "Tudorculosis" is not as bad a thing for the sugar farmer as free-tradeitis. I think it was the hon. member for Cambooya who uttered some plain home truths about the sugar industry when speaking the other night. We should agree to sink our political differences, and remember that this is a Queensland industry. Everyone must admit that it receives a large amount of protection, seeing it is protected to the extent of £6 per ton.

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Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: It is not as highly protected as it is in other countries.

Mr. McCORMACK: I know the hon. and gallant member for Burrum will not deny that that protection will pay for the whole cost of producing and harvesting his crop. Is any other industry in the State protected to the same extent? I am not complaining about the protection. I have said before in this House that, if the farmer cannot pay good wages, seeing this is a national question, and that we require the sugar industry continued to settle our Northern lands, we must be prepared to sacrifice a little. I would be prepared to give even more protection to the industry if it was found necessary. As I said the other night, after paying for the cane, the manufacturer of raw sugar, after allowing £2 for the cost of manufacturing, is making a profit of £4 7s. 6d. per ton. I have that on the word of the chairman of directors of one of the most successful central mills in Queensland. That was the difference between the price paid by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company to the central mill and the price the proprietary mills paid to the farmers for the cane sufficient to make a ton of sugar, allowing for cost of manufacture. The farmers and the owners of the land will be wholly to blame if we get freetrade in sugar. The rest of the Commonwealth is apparently in favour of continuing the present duty. Candidates on both sides at the recent elections declared themselves favourable to the continuance of the duty; but here we in Queensland are bickering among ourselves in connection with the industry like a lot of Kilkenny cats. The Commonwealth Government has said that it wants to make the industry a white industry. On both sides in this Chamber we have said that we want the Northern part of Queensland settled by white people, and we say to the rest of the people of the Commonwealth, "If we settle white people in the North, we expect you to make some sacrifice by paying a higher price for your sugar." They have performed their part of the contract, but here we find the Premier stating that there is no stability about the industry. He stated on the floor of the House that 90 per cent. of the growers of cane are preparing to get out of the industry—an industry with £6 a ton protection. I hope that both sides of the House will do their best to get the two Bills passed, and also the Bill which the hon. member for Burrum intends to introduce to establish sugar boards. We shall then place the industry on a sound footing. I wish now to say a word or two about railway construction. I am sorry the Secretary for Railways is not in his place, as I would have liked the information from him as to whether he is one of the partners in this lockout business. It looks, from the action taken simultaneously by the mining companies, and by the Government in the person of the Commissioner for Railways, as if there was some common understanding about introducing the system of contracting and piecework on our railways. If there is no understanding, it is a remarkable coincidence that just at the time the companies issued an ultimatum in regard to contracting the Government initiated the piecework system in that particular mining district and on the Mount Mulligan line. I have

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heard hon. members on the other side say that men working on the day-labour system do not do good work, and yet we have the engineers of the Railway Department saying that it is the best system and the cheapest. Piecework is admitted in the shearing industry because the shearing rate is nearly the same in all the States, because sheep are much the same everywhere, and a shearer knows that he can shear so many sheep in a day. That is not the case in contracting on a railway line. A party of men may take a cutting and they may start with muck, but a few yards further on they may get into rock. That is what is happening on the Mount Cuthbert line at the present moment. The first few days the men could make from 15s. to 18s. a day because they started in muck, but when they got into rock they made as little as 5s. a day. Men object to the piecework system because they cannot see ahead. Yet we have the Secretary for Railways saying that it is necessary to cheapen the cost of railway construction by introducing the piecework system. Apparently it is necessary to sweat this particular branch of the public service—if you can call these men public servants. We never hear of any attempt being made to sweat the highly-paid officials in Brisbane who knock off work at 12 o'clock on Saturday and who only work from 9 till half-past 4 on other days. We only hear about "speeding up" when we come to deal with the man who works with a pick and shovel. I have a great deal of sympathy with the pick and shovel man, who is just as useful a member of the community as any other public servant. Hon. members opposite are always talking about letting contracts and the speeding up on railway construction work, simply because they think that that class of people support the Labour party. They have no sympathy whatever with them.

Mr. KESSELL: Who said that?

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member for Port Curtis has not the slightest sympathy with the navy.

Mr. KESSELL: How do you know?

Mr. McCORMACK: I know by the hon. member's utterances in this House.

Mr. KESSELL: I never said a word against the working man.

Mr. McCORMACK: I do not think the hon. member has any sympathy for anybody outside the Port Curtis district. He has a long way to go before he becomes a Minister. The hon. member is apparently angry because I referred to him; but during his election campaign he promised several railways and waterworks, and things of that sort, and then, when he came here, he found that he was only one among seventy-two. The Government will be well advised if they concentrate their efforts on sections of railways until they become payable. There are several lines which have been started, and small staffs are employed on them, which, if they were continued until they became payable propositions, would be much better for the State than by having several small unconnected sections. I believe the North Coast line would pay better if the various sections were connected. Until that is done, I am certain that none of the sections will pay. The Plane Creek line might pay if the Plane Creek people sent all their sugar over the line to Mackay; but

I believe they are talking of continuing to send it over their own tramline to Louisa Creek, thereby depriving the Government of any revenue they might receive from the railway. The only possibility there is of the North Coast line paying is by connecting Rockhampton and Mackay. The passenger traffic from the North and the competition with the boats will help to make the line pay. If that method was adopted with regard to our railways it would be

[8.30 p.m.] much better for the State than the system which is now being pursued. I shall conclude my remarks by stating that I do not intend to deal now with the Sugar Bills, because they will be before the House later on, but I can assure the Government that I shall give them every support I can to pass those measures into law. If they can get Mr. Cook to issue the proclamation, so much the better for Queensland; and the sooner it is issued the better it will be for all concerned.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): In common with previous speakers I wish to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply. I think the House is to be congratulated upon the return of Mr. Bell, who will prove himself a worthy successor to the late member for Fassifern, Mr. Wienholt. I notice one sentence in the Governor's Speech which, to my mind, is one of the most important and truthful statements contained in the Speech. It reads as follows:—

"On the success of the primary producers depends the prosperity of the State."

There is no doubt that that is a correct statement, and the prosperity of the primary producers can be brought about by liberal land laws, reasonable railway freights, minimum taxation, and good seasons. I do not pretend to say that the Government can give the primary producers of Queensland good seasons, but I certainly think they can pass legislation which will promote the prosperity of the primary producers. I should like to see the prosperity of the primary producer so marked that people would flock away from the cities inland in order to share that prosperity. But what do we find in Australia to-day? We find that instead of people going out West, they are making for the seaboard and establishing themselves in the various capitals of the Commonwealth. The reason for that, in my opinion, is, that the primary producer is not as prosperous as he should be. Reference is made in the Speech to the establishment of abattoirs in and around Brisbane. The time is ripe for the establishment of abattoirs, not only in Brisbane, but also in other large towns of Queensland. But if we have abattoirs in Brisbane, they must be self-supporting, and must not be a tax on the rest of the State. The revenue from them should be sufficient for their upkeep, without having to tax those people who are not fortunate enough to have abattoirs in their district. There has been a considerable amount of discussion, not only in this House, but throughout the length and breadth of the country during the Federal election campaign, in connection with the meatworks which are being erected on the Brisbane River. We have been told by members opposite and by other speakers who took part in the Federal election that we are going to have here the American

meat trust, and that it will be the ruin of Queensland. I believe the opposite. We were also told that this particular company was driven out of another State—that owing to the fact that there was a Labour Government in New South Wales, the meat trust were not able to establish themselves in that State.

Mr. BOWMAN: That is quite true.

Mr. MORGAN: It is absolutely incorrect. They never made any application to establish themselves in any State of Australia. If they had wished to establish themselves in any other State than Queensland, they could have done so by complying with the laws of that State. They simply did what any ordinary sane business men would do—they sent a representative to the different States in order to ascertain which State was most suitable for their operations, and they discovered that there is the raw material in Queensland which no other State possesses. The figures show that Queensland has 5,715,251 head of cattle, or 43 per cent. of the cattle in Australia; New South Wales, 3,085,324 head, or 27·7 per cent. of the whole of the cattle in Australia; and Victoria, 1,647,127 head, or 15·2 per cent. of the whole of the cattle in Australia. Victoria produces 40·7 per cent. of the butter made in Australia, New South Wales 39 per cent., and Queensland 13 per cent. Those figures go to show that a great proportion of the cattle in Victoria and New South Wales are dairy cattle, and are not suitable for meat exportation works. The company, recognising that Queensland is the most suitable State in which to carry on their operations, decided to establish meatworks in Brisbane. The figures I have quoted go to show that they never wanted to establish themselves in Victoria or New South Wales. As a matter of fact, those two States would be glad to have them if they would go there. I have it from a member of the Victorian Parliament, that they never made application for permission to establish themselves in that State, and I have gone to the trouble to ascertain that they never made application to the Premier of Queensland, Mr. Denham.

Mr. BOWMAN: Wasn't there an agreement between them and the Government?

Mr. MORGAN: No. That company is spending £250,000 in erecting meatworks in Brisbane, and when the works are fully manned they will employ twice the number of men that are employed in any meatworks at present existing in Brisbane, and surely we ought all to be proud that they have come to Brisbane.

Mr. KIRWAN: Suppose they wipe out the other meatworks?

Mr. MORGAN: If we were always to suppose that kind of thing, we should never have any new firms engaging in any industry, whether it be the boot manufacturing industry or the clothing industry or any other industry, because there would be a fear that a new firm or company would wipe out the firms at present doing business in that particular line. The trouble is that members opposite do not want to see the grazier and the man on the land get fair prices for their beef. It is quite possible for the price of cattle to rise at least 50 per cent. in Brisbane without there being any

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necessity to charge the people any more for the beef than they are paying to-day. A letter recently appeared in a Brisbane newspaper, in which the writer proved by actual figures that the beef and products of a beast which cost £7 in Brisbane—that is, a 7-cwt. beast—were worth £14. Now, we know that cattle do not bring more than £1 per 100 lb.—and that is more than the average price during the last twelve months—and it goes to show that a 700-lb. beast was worth £14 when retailed, while the price paid for a beast at the meatworks here is only £7. That means a difference of 100 per cent. in the two prices. Is it reasonable to say that the expenses amount to 100 per cent. for placing the beast on the local market, or on the market in London?

Mr. BERTRAM: The hon. member for Enoggera is laughing at you.

Mr. MORGAN: I do not care whether he is laughing or not. I am stating facts, and if he can say anything about them, he is at liberty to get up and do so.

Mr. TROUT: Keep your hair on. (Laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: We have heard a lot about John Cooke, and we have here the spectacle of John Cooke joining with hon. members opposite in this matter. Everyone recognises who John Cooke is. He has a big monopoly himself, and is concerned in a trust or ring or combine, or whatever hon. members call it. He has meatworks all over Queensland and New South Wales and Victoria, and he is combining with hon. members opposite for the purpose of keeping out any other meat company. Is it not natural that John Cooke should object to any other meat company starting in Queensland? He has got the cream of the trade himself at present, and he objects to the competition, and the opposition which will come from the other meat company. It is only by competition and opposition in this trade that prices will eventually reach their proper level.

Mr. KIRWAN: You do not want competition in the pure seeds.

Mr. HUXHAM: Was not John Cooke squeezed out of the Argentine?

Mr. MORGAN: I don't know if John Cooke was squeezed out of the Argentine or not, but you heard the figures quoted by the hon. member for Drayton the other day. I do not want to repeat them, but it was shown that in the Argentine the graziers were paid £13 10s. to £14 for a 770-lb. beast, and we were told that if that meat were sold at 3½d. per lb. it would pay expenses, and if it were sold at 4d. per lb. it would show a profit.

Mr. TROUT: Was that price wholesale or retail?

Mr. MORGAN: I do not know; but I presume it was wholesale, as they deal with their transactions from a wholesale point of view. It goes to show that in the Argentine they get £13 10s. or £14 for a beast for which we would only get £7 in Queensland, and yet when they sell the meat at 3½d. or 4d. per lb. they make a profit out of it at that price.

Mr. TROUT: Meat of the same quality?

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Mr. MORGAN: I reckon as regards quality that the Queensland meat is difficult to beat. So far as grazing cattle are concerned, Queensland cattle cannot be beaten in any part of the world.

Mr. TROUT: Do you think artificial feeding is better?

Mr. MORGAN: Yes, it is, and it would put more weight on to the beast, but they would get the advantage, as the buying is done by weight. It has nothing to do with the sweetness of the meat, as the buying is done by weight.

Mr. TROUT: The people do not value quality, then?

Mr. MORGAN: They do not in Brisbane because you have got to pay just the same price for a bit of steak whether it is tough or not. (Laughter.) I intend to say something about the proposed amendment of the Elections Act. We must all admit that there is a necessity for an amendment of the Act. So far as the postal vote is concerned, I represent a country electorate, and in the interests of country voters who have sometimes to go 30 and 40 miles to a polling-booth, I consider that the postal vote is necessary. There is certainly a necessity for electoral reform in Queensland, and everything should be done to enable people to record their votes. Every democrat—and I claim that I am a democrat—should do his best to see that everyone is given an opportunity of recording his vote. In the Federal election laws provision was made for seamen who were at sea voting by post, but there was no such provision for the unfortunate old man and woman who have to go 100 miles to the polling-booth. The Federal Government did not extend the same privileges to these old people. Why was that? It was because they discovered that the postal votes always went against the Labour party.

Mr. HUXHAM: They found out more than that. They found out how it was done.

Mr. MORGAN: I think that with certain restrictions we should reintroduce the postal vote. So far as the Elections Tribunal is concerned, as a sitting member of that tribunal, and one who occupied a seat last year at the court, I can only say that the quicker that Act is wiped out the better. (Hear, hear!) I suggest that in future if any election disputes are to be dealt with, they should be heard by three judges only, and no advocates should be allowed to appear on either side. I consider that a great amount of time is wasted through advocates being allowed to appear, and a lot of money also. It would be far better to allow the question to be settled by three judges. With regard to marsupial boards, I think that they should be abolished altogether, as they have outlived their usefulness. In introducing a deputation to the Minister for Agriculture the other day, I was pleased to know that he was sympathetic with the suggestion to a certain extent, and he told us of two or three instances where the boards had already been wiped out. What does that mean? It means that when marsupials are caught in that area, the scalpers will take the scalps into another board's district and receive payment for the scalps.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Perfectly true.

Mr. MORGAN: If the hon. member for Carnarvon were here, he could tell us that the scalpers from New South Wales bring

scalps over the border into Queensland and receive payment for them by the Queensland marsupial boards. Owing to the high price of kangaroo and marsupial furs now it is sufficient inducement for scalpers to destroy the animals for their skins without receiving payment for the scalps as well. I know a man in my district who makes as much as £10 a week by the destruction of marsupials, and when a man makes that wage he does not want to receive payment for scalps in order to encourage the destruction of the marsupials.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Quite right.

Mr. MORGAN: The marsupial is like the blackfellow. He goes in front of the white man. It is different with the foxes, sparrows, and the other imported pests, which follow civilisation, and sleep under your houses and in your henroosts and thrive there quite contented. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: And prickly pear.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes, we have the prickly pear too. It is these pests that follow settlement that have to be dealt with, and the time is ripe not only for talk but also for action for the destruction of foxes and sparrows. I know what damage they have done in Victoria, and they will do the same here. The foxes have killed thousands of lambs in Victoria, and as soon as a bad time comes here and food becomes scarce, we will have the foxes killing off our lambs. In Victoria, in the Gippsland district, the farmers joined together and laid a trail 50 miles long, one connecting with the other, and they laid poison over the whole trail. The result was that 5,000 foxes were killed by that means. That shows to what extent the fox is becoming a pest in Victoria. We also have the sparrows in Brisbane and Toowoomba, certainly not to any very great extent, but the very moment we become an important wheat-growing centre, if we ever do, the sparrow will do exactly what it is doing in Victoria to-day—it will cause the loss of millions through the destruction of wheat. Every year in Victoria hundreds of acres of wheat are destroyed by the sparrow, and it is time action was taken here. It is no use waiting until the pest is as bad as the prickly pear. I have heard it said that Mr. Tyson advocated the destruction of the prickly-pear pest in its infancy, and he was laughed at. Perhaps if that gentleman's advice had been taken at the time, we would not now be here advocating the destruction of that pest, and some hundreds of thousands of acres would not now be absolutely lost to the State. I also wish to touch on prickly-pear destruction, and, as most members are aware, I introduced an important deputation recently to the Secretary for Public Lands, and I must say that I was very pleased, as also were the members of the deputation, with the results given to us by the Minister. In many respects he met our wishes straight away, without any demur, and in others he promised to place the matters before the Cabinet, and I feel sure, if those resolutions are gone into carefully by the Cabinet, that more of our wishes will be carried into effect. I happen to personally know Mr. Roberts, the gentleman who has taken up a large tract of country at Dulacca, and I also have had an opportunity of inspecting, on more than one occasion, the experiments car-

ried out by that gentleman. In fact, I take a very keen interest in the matter, and as a man who has spent a considerable amount of money in destroying pear, I can honestly say, as a layman, that, as far as my opinion goes, I think Mr. Roberts is on the right track. (Hear, hear!) So far, he has not demonstrated to the public that he can absolutely destroy the pear, but there is no doubt that Mr. Roberts has demonstrated to himself and to anyone who is behind him that he can destroy the pear.

Mr. HUNTER: Sir Rupert Clark.

Mr. MORGAN: It does not matter who is behind him. I have heard that Sir Rupert Clark is one man who has put money into it, but what do we care who has put money into the venture, so long as we get the 100,000 acres cleared. I know the country, and I know it is the densest pear in any part of Queensland. At the present time the whole of that area is vacant to the State.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Useless.

Mr. MORGAN: A great portion of it has been open to selection for the last five years at nil, and nobody would take it up. All you had to do was to come along and select any particular block, and the Government would give you the freehold absolutely for nothing, so long as you cleared the pear. That is the land that this gentleman has taken up, and if he destroys the pear on that area, must we not all admit that he is a benefactor so far as Queensland is concerned? My only regret is this: I do not think the Secretary for Public Lands has met him fairly and squarely. I think the Minister could have given him a better deal in the matter of disputes. If any dispute exists between the Lands Department and himself, under the agreement, it is practically left to the Lands Department to decide what is to happen. Mr. Roberts wanted it referred to the court—to leave it in the hands of a judge—and I think we must all admit that if a dispute exists between two contracting parties it is only a fair thing that a judge should be brought in to decide who is in the right, and who in the wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government would not be hard.*

Mr. MORGAN: I hope they won't, but we do not know who will be in power. I say Mr. Roberts should not be under the thumb of any Government or any man, and if there is a dispute between the two parties he should have the same right as anybody else.

Mr. GILLIES: He is in the same position as an ordinary selector.

Mr. MORGAN: In many instances he is not in the same position as an ordinary selector, and if you will read the agreement you will find he is under altogether different conditions. In common with other members, there are, so far as my electorate is concerned, one or two railways that I would like to mention. The hon. member for Dalby mentioned the Tara Railway, and I am certainly of opinion that that line should be carried on as quickly as the Government can possibly manage it. There are some hundreds of settlers living about 40 or 50 miles away from that particular extension, and unless the railway is

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carried on, as the member for Dalby stated, it will not be a payable proposition, and a great number of those men will have to leave their selections. They cannot carry on for a great time longer unless they get railway communication, and if the railway is extended to Surat, it will open up some of the finest land we have in South-western Queensland. A lot of that land is under lease, and will eventually be available for close settlement. The line from Miles to Taroom is now progressing, and very good work has been done up to the present time, but I do hope the Government will not allow it to stop at Juandah. When we tabled that line it was to be a railway from Miles to Taroom, and I hope another section will be tabled so that it will reach its objective. The line was meant to tap all the land in the Taroom district, and unless the line goes there within the next two or three years, I am quite sure the greater portion of that country will be as badly infested with pear as the land round Juandah and Rochedale is at the present time. The hon. member for Maryborough mentioned that wheat-growing was not progressing as well in Queensland as it might, and it is to be regretted that this is an absolute fact. We cannot deny that wheatgrowing in Queensland has not made any progress during the last seven or eight years, notwithstanding the fact that hundreds of settlers have come up from Victoria and New South Wales who are what we might call professional wheatgrowers—men who understand wheatgrowing in every phase—dry farming, and in every other respect they know it from A to Z. Why has the growing of wheat not increased in Queensland? Simply because these men are not prepared to carry on experimental farms. These men are not prepared to come to this country, with different climatic conditions to that existing in the wheatgrowing portions of the other States, to go in for experimental farming, and probably eventually lose whatever capital they have. They are devoting their attention now to dairying because they know that dairying will bring in a certain revenue. They are also devoting their attention to grazing, because they know that grazing to a certain extent pays. Wheatgrowing will not increase until the Government are prepared to establish demonstration farms—not experimental farms—let them take up a certain block of land like the farmers have to do—it might be a prickly-pear selection—and get practical men, not scientific men—real good practical farmers who have grown wheat in the other States, to take over the management of those demonstration farms, in order to show that wheatgrowing will pay. The farmer who is prepared to follow, very often is not prepared to take the lead, and if the Government set the example and showed by ocular demonstration that wheatgrowing can be made a financial success, then we will have hundreds of thousands of acres placed under wheat, but until that time comes wheatgrowing will only go on in small areas. Every farmer, more or less, in my district has planted small quantities of wheat—10 or 12 acres—and they are not going to the expense of putting

[9 p.m.] in 300 or 400 acres, which would be costly—as hon. members know,

the cost of the machinery alone amounts to some hundreds of pounds—they are not going to expend all that money on machin-

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ery unless they know that the climatic conditions here are going to be suitable. And I think it is the duty of the Government to establish these demonstration farms and show these men that wheatgrowing is going to be a financial success, and when that is done, in a very few years we will have large ships coming here as they have in the Southern States, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. I now want to say something in connection with education. As members know, we have a dentist and an oculist employed by the Department of Education—I do not know how many, but, at any rate, we have one dentist and one oculist going round the State, and they are doing good work, but unfortunately the country portions of the State—or a great number of the country portions of the State, where we are miles away from the nearest dentist or any doctor at the present time—are not getting the services of these men. In my electorate we have had one visit from the oculist, and he visited only the towns on the railway line, and did not, so to speak, go into the backblocks. The people in the country appreciate the action of the Government in appointing these men; they look on it as a step in the right direction, but they think that if no more men are to be appointed, they should devote themselves to the places where the parents have no opportunity for getting advice as those in the larger towns have. Take, for instance, Brisbane. The parents there have only to go a few yards, so to speak, and they get the attention they want at a very small cost. It is very different when they have to drive 60 or 70 miles to the nearest doctor. In my district there are people who are 100 miles from the nearest doctor, and it is only natural, if the Government are going on with this system—as I hope they will—that the people in places far removed from cities and towns will receive first attention. We also notice that agitation is started in various parts of Queensland for high schools. I have no objection to high schools; I think we should try to educate our children to as high a standard as possible, but I certainly think it is the first duty of the Government to see that every child has a State school education before they go in for high schools and a University, and so on. I think that they should educate all the children up to a certain standard, and then, if the money is available, it is time to talk about high schools in the country towns. We know that the people in the country towns say they have as much right to high schools as those in the larger towns, and so they have. In the city by means of technical colleges and so on, and grammar schools, the children can go right through from the State school to the University with very little expense to the parents, whereas in the country, if we want to take a child from the ordinary State school and send him to something higher, it costs us from £80 to £100 a year for each one if we send him to Brisbane or somewhere else. I maintain that it is the duty of the State to see that the children in the country get their education before it goes in for these technical colleges and high schools, and so on. There is another matter with which I wish to deal, and that is the tick boundaries. We read in the newspapers about the agitation for the shifting of the tick boundary on the south coast. In what is known as Schedule W—that is, taking

in the area between Goondiwindi and Dalby, and to a certain extent out West—we find that cattle shifting from Queensland to New South Wales have got to be dipped once. These cattle are living in an area that was never known to have a tick, yet we, who sell our stock to New South Wales, are compelled to lose a certain percentage in the price of each head simply because they have to be dipped, and we know that dipping means that a certain amount of condition is lost. The New South Wales buyers, during the last twelve months or so, have been operating in Schedule W, and they have bought up to 12,000, and they have sent them by road and train to Sydney, and they have given the graziers out there from 15s. to £1 per head more than they could have got if they had sent them to Brisbane and sold them in the yards here. These buyers were confined to Schedule W, because if they had gone outside it they would have had to dip the cattle twice and keep them a certain time before taking them over the border. So the people in the West were getting from 15s. to £1 a head more for their cattle than the meatworks would have given them for stock of equal quality and equal weight, simply because they were in what is called the tick-infested area. I hope the Minister will try to do away with the dipping in those districts. All we ask is that an inspection should be made—a crush inspection—on the border, and when the cattle are found to be clean by the inspector they should be allowed over the border into New South Wales without dipping.

Mr. GILLIES: New South Wales will not stand that.

Mr. MORGAN: Exactly; and I want to impress upon the Minister the necessity of doing away with that dipping, so that the people in New South Wales who buy our stock will not have them knocked about by the dipping. We have heard a great deal from hon. members opposite about the trams, and in my humble opinion they are pursuing a course of revenge. Simply because the manager of the company stood out against certain demands and a certain upheaval was caused, we find that at every opportunity something is said about that particular system. Now, I have been in the other cities of Australia, and have inspected and ridden in the trams there, and my opinion is that Brisbane has the best, or one of the best, systems that exist in Australia. There is no doubt about that, and they more than favourably compare with those in New South Wales, that are run by the State; and until every line into agricultural districts is completed, I should certainly oppose any move on the part of any Government to borrow money to buy those trams. If money is wanted for the construction of any railway into an agricultural district, I think it should be used in that way, before we spend it in buying up a tram system which is giving general satisfaction. Take our rates. We can ride for a penny here on different sections, whereas in Victoria, unless you buy one shilling's worth of tickets, it costs you 1½d., and if you only buy one ticket it costs you 3d. We get the same ride here for a penny. We certainly get a long ride for 3d., and the officials are all that can be expected from the point of view of civility. You will often see the conductors get off the trams to help an old lady or a child

on the trams. You will not see that in Sydney. You will hear them singing out and bustling you, asking you to get along up the high steps of the inconvenient trams, but here you have nothing but civility. As one who uses the trams to a certain extent, I say they are a credit to Queensland and a credit to the manager. I also wish to speak in connection with the Agricultural Bank, the management of which is, I think, a standing disgrace. I have had a great number of cases brought before me, and I certainly think that the whole of the management should be inquired into. The men who are managing that particular bank have proved themselves complete failures, and something should be done to place the bank on a much more substantial basis. I have one particular case here, which only came to hand a day or two ago, and this is only one of the number that I have handed to the Minister for Agriculture, and have made inquiries about at the bank myself. A man was allowed to borrow £150—£120 for the erection of a house and £30 towards the erection of a fence. It was all approved of, and everything satisfactorily fixed up. He built his house and received his £120. That left £30 outstanding for a fence. He wrote and said that, owing to the fact that he was going to run sheep on the property—that other neighbours were making a success of sheep—instead of a post and wire fence, he wanted to erect netting, which would cost £80. He asked if he would be allowed to use the £30 which the bank were holding for the erection of a fence towards the netting, and if he could after that receive a further advance of £50 to pay the £80 on the netting—that meant practically an advance altogether of £200. They wrote back to him and said, "Yes; you can give the order for the netting to Webster; get the netting and go on with the fence." The man got the £80 worth of netting sent up, and erected his fence. He wrote down to tell them that the fence was erected, and sent the order to Webster's to be paid. The bank paid over the £30 which they held, and sent the man back forms to apply for the extra £50, in order that he might get the loan, and everything was fixed up and sent back to the bank. Then he got a letter from the Agricultural Bank stating that, owing to the fact that he had bought the netting before the second £50 was agreed to, they could not advance him the £50 to pay for the netting. The man is in this position: that, while the bank have paid £30 to Webster's, the £50 is still due, and he does not know how to meet it.

Mr. HUNTER: Didn't you vote against an amendment of the Act that would have prevented that happening?

Mr. MORGAN: It would not have prevented this at all. This is an act of administration. I say that the Act itself is sufficient, and that the cause of the trouble is the paltry downright negligent administration on the part of the bank managers. The Act is quite good enough if it was only administered in a proper way. That is only one of scores of instances. Men are applying every day for an advance. They apply for £200; their security is not good enough for the £200, and they get a letter stating that they cannot get an advance because the security is not sufficient. They are not told that their

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security won't allow of an advance of £200, but that it will allow an advance of £100, and they have to go through the whole process again in applying for £100 which their security will entitle them to get. Surely, any ordinary business man, with common sense, would not conduct the business on those particular lines! It is useless for the bank to carry on under the present system of management. I wish to deal with one or two matters in connection with the Labour party's platform, as outlined by the leader of the Opposition, and I am quite sure when the farmer is asked to say which platform he prefers, he will naturally want to have a say in the construction of that particular platform before he is prepared to have it slung at him.

Mr. KIRWAN: Is he invited to join your party and have a say?

Mr. MORGAN: He is invited to join and have a say, but it would be interesting to know how many real farmers attended the different conferences where the Labour platform was drawn up—how many farmers assisted in drawing up the different planks which apply to agriculturists and farming generally.

Mr. HUNTER: It would give you a big shock if you did know.

Mr. MORGAN: We are told that this particular party believes in the further encouragement of co-operative principles in connection with butter and cheese making. We know that as far as Queensland is concerned, the co-operative principle is working admirably and most successfully, and that it has been gone into in all parts of Queensland. The deputy leader of the Opposition stated that in South Australia the State Export Company and the freezing works were the product of the Labour party, but that is absolutely incorrect. The Labour party were not responsible for the formation of the State Export Company in 1895. Mr. Kingston, the then Premier, was the man who introduced that particular measure in the House, and I am quite certain that no member opposite can say that Mr. Kingston was ever a member of the Labour party. Why was that measure introduced into South Australia? Simply because, at that particular time in Victoria, different firms established in the freezing industry were freezing the lambs for the farmers, and sending them home to the old country. There were not sufficient lambs in South Australia at that time to warrant any private individual going in for freezing works, and the Government, in order to encourage the industry, came forward and said, "Although we make a loss on the industry, for a few years we will encourage the farmer to go in for the lamb-raising industry." That was done, and for the first few years the industry was carried on at a loss. Eventually, it proved a great success.

Mr. HUNTER: Under the Price Government.

Mr. MORGAN: Under a Liberal Government. Why was it necessary to establish it there? Simply because there was not sufficient raw material at that time. Here in Queensland we have a co-operative company forming for the purpose of going in for the frozen lamb industry, and establishing freezing works on the Downs. It is the duty

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of the Government to help that co-operative company in every possible way—to try and assist them to bring about the establishment of the very much-needed industry in Queensland. I know what it means, coming as I do from a district in Victoria where lamb-raising was one of the main products, and if it is introduced into Queensland, it will prove one of the finest things ever introduced here. And what better system can be inaugurated than a co-operative system, without any control from the State officials, where the farmers and the growers have control and management? Is it not only natural, when these people are working under co-operative principles, that that particular industry is bound to do better and establish itself on a firmer footing than if it was run under State control? We also have a statement from the leader of the Opposition that State agencies for all farm produce, with the view of establishing standard prices, will be formed, provided the socialists get into power. If they fix a standard price for wheat—

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Don't they fix it now?

Mr. MORGAN: Is it not absolutely impossible to fix a standard price for anything that we export? If we were only growing enough for our own requirements, it might be possible to fix a standard price, but the moment we begin to export—as we export butter, cheese, and meat—then the price is fixed in the old country. It is not fixed in Australia at all, and it is ridiculous for anybody to talk about our fixing a standard price. One of the great facilities offered by the party opposite for land settlement is the perpetual lease system. Is it not extraordinary that the moment one of the socialists decides to leave the city and go on the land he always rushes for freehold conditions? It was amusing to me to listen to a speech delivered by Senator Stewart in Miles during the election campaign. He said that the people were wanting a railway from Miles to Taroom; that the people there took up land at 10s. an acre, and when the railway got to Taroom that land would be worth 30s. an acre, and the people who had taken it up at 10s an acre would get £1 an acre for which they had not done anything. Now, the people who had been struggling along at Taroom for years have not been making a living which is equivalent to decent wages, and, the moment they get a railway, the socialists want to deprive them of the increased value of their land, which only amounts in the long run to wages actually earned. It has been said before in this House that not 10 per cent. of the dairy farms in Queensland pay.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Are the rents too high?

Mr. MORGAN: No; the price of their product is too low. I have here a balance-sheet which has been sent to me by a dairy farmer, and I do not think anybody who pretends to know anything about farming will say that the figures are extravagantly high. During six months of the year this man's cheque for cream averages £70 per month. I think the hon. member for Drayton will say that the average cream cheque on the Downs does not exceed £50 per month. These are the wages and allowance for keep for this man and his family,

because he is entitled to reckon what they would earn if they were working for someone else—

	Wages Paid per Month.	Keep per Month.
Father	£8	£2
Mother	£4	£2
Son (18 years)	£4	£2
Daughter (16 years)	£3	£2
Son (14 years)	£2	£2
Son (12 years)	£2	£1/10
Son (8 years)	£1	£1/10
Man	£6	£2

The total for wages and keep amounts to £45 per month. He has 1,000 acres, the present value of which is £3 per acre. That means a capital of £3,000. He has 90 cows, which, at £4 each, are worth £360. Horses and vehicles to carry the cream and do the work of the farm are valued at £100, and separator and cans are valued at £40. That makes a total capital of £3,500. Interest on that, at 5 per cent., amounts to £15 per month, and the carriage of the cream to market runs away with another £10 a month. That makes his total outgoings £70 a month—the amount he actually makes during six months of the year.

Mr. BERTRAM: Is there no increase of stock?

Mr. MORGAN: Yes. He sets the increase of stock against depreciation and wear and tear. That is not an exceptional case. That man earns rather more from his cream than the average dairy farmer, and he does not employ more labour, because on the average those people would have to milk fifteen cows every night and morning, and I think hon. members will admit that is a fair average. I contend that the primary producers are not making as much money as they should, and the conditions of people in other walks of life are much better in every way. I certainly agree with the Governor's Speech that it is necessary that the primary producers should be put in a satisfactory condition in order that the prosperity of Queensland may continue, and it is necessary for this Government, or any other Government, to do all they possibly can to assist in making the man on the land as happy and contented as possible. We have heard a good deal from hon. members opposite about the country party. I do not happen to be in the "know," but I certainly think the time has arrived when the farmers should combine for their mutual protection. It is as necessary for the farmers to combine as it is for the wharf labourers or any other body of people to combine to protect themselves, and surely hon. members opposite will not begrudge the farmers the right to form a union when they belong to a union themselves. It is necessary that the farmers should have some organisation, but the leaders must be careful what they do, otherwise they may wreck the movement in its infancy. The present Labour party was not built up in a day. They were organising for years and years to bring themselves up to their present position of having twenty or twenty-one members in this House. Even if it takes the farmers as long, eventually they will get the representation in this Chamber to which they are entitled. The farmers' parliamentary party has done exceptionally good work for the farmers during the last three or four years, and, as hon. members opposite have said, evidently the party has had a

certain amount of influence, because the Governor's Speech shows that many of the measures that are to be introduced this session are measures dealing with the man on the land—measures which, we think, will be for his benefit and protection.

Mr. KIRWAN: Your official organ does not think so.

Mr. MORGAN: I do not know whether there is an official organ; but, as a farmers' representative, I welcome some organisation in order to bring the farmers together, to make them think alike, to make them vote alike, to make them combine so that they will get all the legislation they are entitled to, and will enable them to hold their own against any combination or organisation that may attempt to injure them.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): The report of the Commissioner for Railways with reference to the extension of the railway from Longreach to Stonehenge, which was tabled this afternoon, is to my mind misleading, as it states that such a line would be more expensive than a line from Blackall to Wellford. Last year, or the year

[9.30 p.m.] before, there were two rival railway routes in Central Queensland, one being the line from Longreach to Stonehenge, or towards the Cooper Waters, and the other the line from Blackall to Wellford. The late Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Thallon, in 1905 reported on the extension from Longreach to Windorah, a distance of 83 miles 61 chains, and he estimated the cost at £2,008 per mile. In 1908, there was a report made on a proposed line from Blackall to Wellford, distance 43 miles 65 chains, and the cost of that line was estimated at £3,339 per mile. I cannot, therefore, understand the present Commissioner (Mr. Evans) stating that the construction of a line from Longreach to Stonehenge would be more expensive than the construction of a line from Longreach to Windorah. Mr. Evans also says that the extension from Longreach to Stonehenge is not well watered. The previous Commissioner, Mr. Thallon, said that, with the exception of one place, where a tank would be required, there was water all the way; and anyone who knows the locality is aware of the fact that the proposed line runs along the Thomson River all the way, and that water can be got by pumping it a mile or two up to the line. Speaking now of the Governor's Speech, I think the leader of the Labour party fittingly described it when he said it was colourless, empty, and had no business in it. Even supporters of the Government have described it in disparaging terms. The hon. member for Pittsworth, Mr. Macintosh, said it was non-committal, which means that it is neither one thing nor another. The hon. member for Fitzroy (Mr. Grant) described it as a speech that might have come from a man like Mr. Cook, who did not know whether he would have a majority or not, and said he could not understand a Government with such a strong majority as the present Government of Queensland possess bringing down such a Speech. I agree with those hon. members; the Speech is really an empty affair. I presume His Excellency's advisers are responsible for the wording of the Speech, and if so, it only shows how woefully ignorant they

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are of the largest industry of Queensland—the pastoral industry. I find on the very first page of the Speech the following remarks:—

“During the recess I added considerably to my knowledge of Queensland and its people by travelling extensively in the Central, Western, and Northern portions of the State. Throughout the entire journey I observed with pleasure the surpassing richness of the grasses, and the splendid condition of the sheep and cattle. There is ample scope for further pastoral development, for no part of the spacious and magnificent grazing country I passed through is stocked to anything approaching its full capacity.”

The latter statement is misleading, and should not have been presented to any deliberative Assembly. Those who have a knowledge of the pastoral industry and have been out West, know that only last year we were on the eve of one of the greatest “busts” that was ever known in Queensland. If the rain had not come last winter, there would have been greater losses in Queensland than we have ever experienced. Queensland is fully stocked, but it is only natural that a man who is unacquainted with that particular industry should, when travelling over the country at the present time, and seeing the grass over the sheep’s backs, come to the conclusion that the country would carry more stock. The man who has succeeded in the pastoral industry in Central Queensland is the man who has not overstocked. The Speech informs us that we are, to have brought before us a Bill to amend the Elections Act, and I notice that it is intended to reintroduce the postal vote. I am not going to say very much about that at the present stage, and shall content myself with remarking that it will be interesting to observe what stand a number of Government supporters will take with reference to the proposal. I remember the time when a number of members who are now sitting over there and supporting the Government, described the postal vote as rotten. I notice also that we are going to have an amendment of the Elections Tribunal Act. I think an amendment of that Act is sadly needed. I regret that Parliament should have been dragged down in the way it was dragged down by the hon. member for Port Curtis the other night, when he deliberately stated on the floor of the House that the assessors who sat on his case voted party.

Mr. KESSELL: Yes; and I repeat it now.

Mr. PAYNE: What does the hon. member mean by voting party? Why was he not man enough to say whether it was the members from his own side or the members from this side who voted party? I was very pleased to see that the hon. member for Wide Bay resented such a statement, which is a reflection on the members of the House who were engaged in that case, and certainly a member who was a party to the case should not have made use of his privilege as a member of this House to make such a statement. I was one of the members who sat on that case, and I regard the statement as an insult. The Speaker appoints the panel of assessors. I had no idea at the time that I could have refused to act, or I think I should have done so. We go there and wait from 10 till 1 o’clock without a break. If a man wanted to go out to the

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back, the case would have to be adjourned. You had to be there the whole time. On one or two occasions we sat after 1 o’clock in order not to make the case too expensive for the parties and to save time. And this is the result! The hon. gentleman comes back here and says that we voted party.

Mr. KESSELL: Yes, and I repeat it again.

Mr. PAYNE: The hon gentleman is not man enough to say who voted party on that occasion.

Mr. KESSELL: Not all of you.

Mr. PAYNE: I think there should be a reply to this hon. gentleman. He also stated that he was very sorry, as it ran him into a lot of expense, and he lost a lot of money by it. I want to tell the hon. gentleman that if I had known as much when I was sitting on that tribunal as I do now, I would have objected very strongly to him settling the case as he did.

Mr. KESSELL: And if I had known as much I would have objected to you sitting as an assessor.

Mr. PAYNE: Anyone who has read that report must see that some of the rottenest things came out there that came out at any election. We had the case of a man who deliberately perjured himself. I refer to the man who signed an affidavit and called himself “Connors.” He swore that he voted at the Port Curtis election, and that he voted for Breslin, and that he had not been in the electorate for eighteen months. That was his affidavit. In the first instance he must have told a deliberate lie before he got the ballot-paper, and he must have told a deliberate lie as soon as he got the ballot-paper. That being so, it proved to me—and I told the judge so—and I tell this House so—it was sufficient proof to me that the man never voted at all. And this man comes here and howls about his expenses, although he was the first one to make overtures to settle the case.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must refer to the hon. member for Port Curtis by the name of his electorate.

Mr. PAYNE: If I understand the Standing Orders correctly the only persons entitled to “Honourable” are Ministers of the Crown and those to whom it has been granted by the King. I had no intention of bringing this matter up and would not have referred to it at all, but the hon. member for Port Curtis referred to it, and said that the members who sat on that tribunal voted party. Just fancy him saying that, and me knowing what I did.

Mr. KESSELL: And me knowing what I did.

Mr. PAYNE: It was the hon. member for Port Curtis who first made overtures, and he offered Breslin £400 to cry the case off, and make an appeal to the country again. And yet he rushes to this House and talks about the enormous amount of money it cost him. (Opposition laughter.) I think the hon. member for Port Curtis would have been wise if he had said nothing about it. The report is public property now, and I am divulging no secrets, but anyone reading the report will know that the keynote of the whole thing was that man’s vote and his affidavit. I told the judge and I told the barrister defending the case for the hon. member for Port Curtis that I

did not believe that that man voted at all, and that he was a perjurer. I say so now. After that the case never went an inch further. It should have gone on. That case should have gone on and that man should have been brought to justice. It was discovered that a man in Blackall named Connors voted and it was not the Rockhampton man who voted at all. And this man comes here and talks about us voting party.

Mr. KESSELL: You voted different every time.

Mr. PAYNE: I quite agree that an amendment of the Electoral Act is needed. I notice a paragraph in the Governor's Speech which is one of the most insulting paragraphs I have ever seen put into an opening Speech. I have never seen a more insulting paragraph put into a Governor's Speech in any British Parliament in the world. This is the paragraph—

"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."

This is the amusing part of it—

"My advisers are aware that under the Constitution all that pertains to Commonwealth elections is of purely Commonwealth concern; but the State, as a State, is vitally interested in amendments proposed in the Constitution, and has a right to expect that matters of such supreme importance to her are submitted only to those legally entitled to vote, and under conditions that will make fraudulent voting as difficult as possible, and, if resorted to, easily traceable."

We had an exhibition the other evening from the Treasurer.

The TREASURER: Don't be too hard.

Mr. PAYNE: The Treasurer waxed indignant at the action of the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank in asking his department for certain information. We all know that the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank is, like our Commissioner for Railways, above Parliament, and the chances are that the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank asked for that information without the Commonwealth Government knowing anything about it. He was just seeking information.

The TREASURER: You are doing a little special pleading for him.

Mr. PAYNE: The Treasurer told this House that it was like the impudence of the Commonwealth Government—

The TREASURER: Yes, certainly.

Mr. PAYNE: What about this insulting paragraph in the Governor's Speech? The Government were not game to say that plural voting took place, but they only surmised that it did take place. They just slurred at it. I would ask the Treasurer how he would take the Commonwealth Government dic-

tating to the State Government about some legislation which the State was going to bring on here. What a howl there would be in the House. I will just read here from an article which appeared in the "Daily Standard" of the 7th of June. We know that this paragraph in the Governor's Speech was made up wholly and solely from what appeared in the "Courier." We saw a lot of trash in the "Brisbane Courier," and this paragraph was taken from it. This is the article that appeared in the "Standard"—

"TORY DUPLICITY.

"UPSIDE DOWN 'ARGUMENTS.'

"Rival Electoral Rolls.

"The voting bungle at some of the polling booths in the metropolitan area has been productive of some extraordinary 'logic' in the columns of the ranting Tory sheet. In order to prove a statement that Mr. Robinson says he never made, to the effect that about a voter and a-half had voted for each name on the Oxley roll, "Granny" indulges in an orgy of muddled figures in a leading article, and also specialises on the matter in another column.

"The imbecility of the 'arguments' and comparisons put forth would disgrace the inmates of a lunatic asylum. It would almost appear as though the 'articles' on the matter were written by escapees. They are also tinged with self-evident commercial jealousy, such as one would not expect from a sheet which is ever screeching for the encouragement of the investment of capital in the State.

"As usual, 'Granny' knocks her own wicket down quite early in her 'arguments.' In order to prove that the Federal rolls are 'stuffed,' and that the iniquities of Labour are far-reaching, she gets right into a maze of contradictory numerals. For instance, she clings to her obsession that Mr. 'Wobbler' Hunter was defeated by the machinations of the Labourites in recording more votes than there are names on the rolls. Her own figures show that there are 40,893 names on the Oxley Federal roll, of which number 30,892 voted on Saturday last, or roughly 75 per cent. Unless 'Granny' can prove that 60,000 votes at least were recorded, her fatuous story about one and a-half to one is an even greater piece of foolish mendacity than she usually deals in. We invite 'Granny' to come on and make good her position, which is a shaky one at present."

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member may quote from an article, or any public document, but he will not be in order in reading the whole newspaper article.

Mr. PAYNE: This is a paragraph dealing with the paragraph in the Speech presented to us which insinuates that there was plural voting at the last Federal elections. I do not know whether I will be in order in reading it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will not be in order. He is at perfect liberty to take any document or any paper and quote from that paper in support of his argument, but it is manifestly absurd to allow any hon. member to read a long newspaper article.

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Mr. PAYNE: Then I will quote further from it. The paragraph in question further states—

“There are fifteen voters in the ‘Daily Standard’ alone who exercised the franchise on Saturday last, and they had not an opportunity of voting on the State rolls.”

That is in answer to the argument when you are comparing the State rolls with the Federal rolls. We all know there is as much difference between the Federal rolls and the State rolls as there is between day and night. We know very well that there are hundreds and hundreds of people in Queensland who are entitled to get on the Federal rolls but who are not entitled to get on the State rolls. For instance, you can get on the Federal rolls after one month's residence in any State if you have previously been six months in the Commonwealth, but you have to be twelve months in Queensland before you can get on the State roll. In other words, you have no more voice in the management of the country than a Chinaman or a black man until you have been here twelve months. How on earth can you compare the Federal rolls with the State rolls when there is such an enormous difference in the qualifications for getting on the roll? To my mind there is no argument at all in comparing the two rolls. The paragraph in the “Daily Standard” goes on to say that—

“Even after a person can apply to get on the State roll, after being here twelve months, he cannot get his name on the State roll for a further four months.”

I am glad the Home Secretary is back in his place, as I wish to say that I was surprised that a gentleman, holding the position he does as head of the Home Department, should speak in the way he spoke the other night. I do not know whether he was ignorant of what he was speaking of—

The HOME SECRETARY: No, he was not; that is the trouble.

Mr. PAYNE: Still, he was comparing the Federal rolls with the State rolls. We know very well that if the Tories had won we would not have heard one word about this plural voting. They are taking their licking very badly. They know very well, from the voting that took place on the 31st of May, that the writing is on the wall. I think the paragraph contained in this Speech was uncalled for. It is not going to do any good.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is.

Mr. PAYNE: What National party—even Joe Cook's—would be worth its salt if it was dictated to by a State Parliament? Just imagine a National Parliament being dictated to by any State Parliament. It would not be worth taking office for five minutes. I notice we are to have an amendment of the Tramway Act, and I hope, after all we have seen, that the good sense of the people of Queensland will prevail, and that when they are bringing in this amendment, they will take over the trams and nationalise them—either have municipal or State control. I think we have had an exhibition in Queensland in connection with our tramway system that should never be forgotten. I hope the Government will take over the tramways and nationalise them. I

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also notice that we are to have a Rabbit Bill. I think the dingoes and the blowflies among the sheep in Queensland are causing very much more damage at the present time than the rabbits. I travelled a good deal in the sheep centres of Queensland during the recess, and I never dreamed that it could be possible for the blowflies, or the small flies, to do the damage they are doing amongst the sheep flocks in the West. I understand there has been a loss of some 12 per cent., and the sheep that are saved are in a deplorable condition. I do not know what the Government are doing in the matter, but it is a serious matter, and really wants some attention. Of course, some people say the wool growers can very well afford to pay for it. They have done very well lately, but still, this is a national matter, and if the blowfly continues doing the damage it has done during the last season in the West, it will be a very serious thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I took immediate action.

Mr. PAYNE: I am sorry to see that the steps that were taken were to start somebody out West, but when he got a certain distance he was told to come back because

it had been said that all the

[10 p.m.] blowflies had been killed by

the frosts. If that is so, I think

it is to be regretted. If they started to investigate this matter, the least they should

have done was to get some official of the department to go out and see the damage

that had been done with his own eyes. As I said before, the Speech is a very empty

affair. It has been mentioned, and more particularly from this side of the House,

that some measures should have been included, and among them the hon. the leader

of the Opposition referred to the necessity for some amendment of the Water Conservation and Rights in Water Act. That is a

matter that all members know I spoke strongly against when it was introduced,

and I still stick to my remarks. I have seen it in operation, and it is a most

peculiar thing that while we have a Government in power that say they are trying

to settle people on the land, and are trying to make the people of Queensland

believe that, nearly every Act they introduce, and nearly every bit of legislation

they administer, has a tendency to keep them from going on the land. They bring

in a Bill that every Western man who knew the conditions that prevailed in the

artesian belt of Queensland—at least every member on this side of the House—opposed,

and the result is that where it cost a man £2,000 to put down a bore previously, now

it costs him over £4,000. And that is to settle people on the land! But if there is

any argument required to show that these bores should be constructed more substantially,

it is to be found in the fact that all these bores are practically on leasehold land.

It is not freehold land, and the longest lease that we have out there is, I think, about

twenty or twenty-one years, and if the Government wish to bring in legislation increasing

the cost of artesian bores, the least they could do was to meet the extra cost

themselves, because after all the bores belong to the people. The Act, more particularly

in its administration, is not having a tendency to settle people on our Western lands, and it is not going to do so. I do

not know what the Government are going to do, but unless they take steps to deal with the matter, our Western land is not going to be rushed as it used to be in the past. Some hon. member has mentioned the Liquor Bill. I am not a temperance man, and I am not a drinking man, and so far as I am concerned I would not give a brass farthing for all the liquor that is manufactured for my own use, but the Act as it stands is simply ridiculous. I have travelled out West, and it seems to me that it was framed only for Brisbane and the big cities, where if you cannot get into an hotel you can go to a boarding-house. Just imagine a man travelling out West, as I have done during the last few months, and trying to get accommodation on Sunday. The hotel-keepers look at you twice before they give it to you. I told them "I want something to eat, not something to drink," but they are afraid that you will get arrested. There are a lot of new policemen in my district, too, and they have given the publican to understand almost that no one can go in there or they can arrest him on the premises. In the place I stayed at the other Sunday I saw a man who had a drink or two on the veranda of the hotel. He had walked about a mile from where he was camped with his mate, and the police came along and asked the publican, "What do you mean by serving this man with drink?" I do not think that anybody should be responsible for every man who chooses to sit on his veranda unless he puts a barbed wire fence around it to keep them off. The whole Act is simply ridiculous. It is not going to bring about that great temperance that some people thought it would, and it is only making it difficult for those who travel about in the country. And I would like to see the Home Secretary out there in the West on a wet night. (Laughter.)

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He would get it.

Mr. PAYNE: I do not mean the Home Secretary particularly, but nearly every hon. member who was so drastic, if I may use the word, when the measure was before the House; I would like to see them travel all night through the slush and mud out there, and come to an hotel on Sunday morning. The whole thing is ridiculous, and I hope the Government will see their way to put it on a sound, reasonable footing. The whole thing, to my mind, is not in keeping with the man who has to travel about the bush. I also notice that hon. gentlemen on the other side will not let the late Brisbane strike die out. I do not know that any good will be done by referring to it at the present time, but I do know that it will be a black mark against the Denham Government so long as Queensland is Queensland. They may gloss it over as much as they like, but the people of this State are not going to forget the tyrannical methods that were adopted, and I think it would be wise for the Government and their supporters to say nothing about it. Something has been said about the late railway accident, and I suppose we all join in deploring it, particularly in the loss of those men which made so many widows and so many children fatherless. I quite agree with the hon. the Minister for Railways when he said that he went out of his way to ask the Commissioner not to discharge those two men who were disgraced. I would

agree with him if he would only make it applicable to the men on the lowest rung of the ladder, but they are not doing it. I can give the name, if necessary. It is a man who was out in the late strike on the railways. I think he had some twelve or fourteen years' service. Although the Minister for Railways and the Premier promised the House that there would be no victimisation, when that man was put back to work he was placed on a mark. Newchums who had just come into the country were put on a better mark, with the result that he stood it for three months, and finally left the service altogether. He could not humiliate himself to such an extent as to crawl and grovel to the men who had just come here. That man is now getting £5 a week. He was a practical clerk in the Railway Department, and yet that was how they treated him! I agree with the Minister in even treating these high officials as he has done. I care not how callous a man may be, the fact of a man feeling that he was directly or indirectly responsible for the loss of those men must hurt his own conscience, and I do not think it is any use victimising him any further. But the Railway Department are not doing the right thing with the men on the bottom rung of the ladder. There were two cases in which men who had been years and years in the service were victimised; when they were taken back they were taken back as you would throw a dog a bone—men who had just come into the country were put over them. They stood it for three months, and then left, and one is now getting £4 and the other £5 a week. There was one phase of the late railway accident that to my mind was not taken sufficient notice of. I have carefully read the whole of the report of the magisterial inquiry, but the one point to my mind that was not taken sufficient notice of is that the first accident was the cause of the second accident, because if the first had not taken place it would not have been possible for the second one to happen. The first accident was caused by a defective brake, or defective pumps in the Westinghouse brake. I find that the engine-driver was on the stand knocking it and trying to get it to work, with the result that the brake failed, and the train got a run on the down grade, and after going round a turn the trucks left the line. Whatever was the cause of the first accident, I say that indirectly that accident was the cause of the second accident.

Mr. HODGE: No.

Mr. PAYNE: If the first accident had not taken place, it would not have been possible for the second one to happen. I am making no charge against the Minister, but I would like him to ascertain whether notices were not posted up in the shed at Rockhampton some months ago that any engine-driver making a frivolous report of any breakages was to suffer some penalty. For instance, I understand that reports were given in of defective brakes, and when they pulled them to pieces the mechanics found there was nothing wrong, with the result that the engine-drivers got hauled over the coals for reporting the brakes to be defective. If there is such a system, and that an engine-driver is not free to report such cases, you will have more accidents happening. I hope that the Premier will

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remember the two cases I have mentioned, and if he is kind that he will be kind all round, and not only to the men at the top of the tree.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Maree*): 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 sixteen minutes past 10 o'clock.
