

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 1914**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER, 1914.

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

## PAPER.

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

Report of the Jubilee Sanatorium at Dalby for the year ended 30th June, 1914.

## QUESTIONS.

## RAILWAY CARS FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. BOOKER (*Wide Bay*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. What regulation, if any, governs the granting to members of Parliament of special cars attached to mail trains and trains on branch lines?”

“2. Is the regulation, if any, strictly adhered to?”

“3. Have special privileges in regard to the granting of special cars been conferred at any time upon members of any political party engaged on propaganda work?”

“4. Has he seen a paragraph in the ‘Wide Bay and Burnett News,’ of date 19th October, bearing upon this matter?”

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

“1. and 2. There is no regulation, but when special inducement offers, whether from the public or members of Parliament, special cars are provided.

“3. Yes, to all parties, both Federal and State.

“4. Yes; inquiries were made some time ago with a view of meeting the request, but it was found that the traffic was insufficient to warrant a sleeping-car being run from Brisbane to the Kilkivan branch. The Railway Department is anxious to provide facilities whenever the traffic is warranted; further inquiries will therefore be instituted.”

## COAL FOR LOCOMOTIVES IN WIDE BAY DISTRICT.

Mr. BOOKER asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Referring to his answer to my question on 21st October, is he not aware that a very large quantity of Bundamba coal sent to Gympie is burnt by the engines running on the lines Gympie to Nanango via Theebine to Gympie, Mundubbera via Mungar Junction, and Gympie to Maryborough?”

“2. Will he instruct the Chief Mechanical Engineer to call for a report from drivers of locomotives burning Bundamba coal in the Wide Bay district as to its effect on the locomotives and the extra labour it imposes on drivers and firemen?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

- "1. He is aware; but Bundamba coal is only supplied to those engines that are compelled to use Gympie as a coal-ing depot."  
 "2. Yes."

#### PARTICULARS RE CEMENT, RAILWAY STORES.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*), on behalf of Mr. Fihelly, asked the Secretary for Railways—

- "1. What quantity of cement is kept in the Railway Stores, Brisbane?  
 "2. Is this cement used exclusively for departmental purposes?  
 "3. If not, what quantities have been handed out to private persons or firms during the last three months, and what are the names of such persons?  
 "4. Is all cement tested before removal from the stores?  
 "5. Was a quantity of 6 tons, recently supplied to a private person, tested by Government officials?  
 "6. If so, why was it tested by the department, and where was it sent?  
 "7. Was it sold at the railway contractor's price, or at ruling market price?  
 "8. Were forty-eight bags returned from Mooloolah to the Stores Department?  
 "9. If so, was freight charged?  
 "10. Why were the forty-eight bags returned to the Department Stores, if they were simply an item between the contractor and a private person?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

- "1. to 10. The subject-matter can be more effectively dealt with when the department's Estimates are under review."

#### DESTRUCTION OF FISH AT MARKETS.

Mr. GRANT (*Fitzroy*) asked the Treasurer—

- "1. Will he inquire into the accuracy of the statement that 100 boxes of wholesome fish were destroyed at the markets on Friday because the prices were not satisfactory to the vendors?  
 "2. Will he state the number of boxes, if any, destroyed on Tuesday?"

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

- "1. I am informed that 40½ bushels (81 trays) were destroyed last Friday, owing to the fact that they were not fit for consumption.  
 "2. 31½ bushels (63 trays) were destroyed yesterday (Tuesday) for a similar reason."

#### REFERENDUM ON CENTRAL AND NORTHERN SEPARATION.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*) asked the Premier—

- "1. Seeing that he said—'If it could be proved that the people of Central and

Northern Queensland really wanted separation he thought they ought to have it,' will he arrange for the taking of a referendum of the people in the Centre and the North on that question at the next State elections?

"2. What would such a referendum cost the State?

"3. Has he received a communication from the Central Queensland New States League on this question?"

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

- "1. No.  
 "2. See answer No. 1.  
 "3. No."

#### DISTRICT COURTS BILL.

##### REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*South Brisbane*): I beg to present the report of the Select Committee on the District Courts Bill, and move that the paper be printed.

Question put and passed.

#### COMMITTAL.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*), the consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS LAID ON TABLE.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*): I ask leave of the House to lay on the table answers to certain questions asked by the hon. member for Bundaberg, and to make comments thereon—questions which I was not able to answer at the time in the form in which they were submitted.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Treasurer be allowed to lay on the table the answers to the questions by the hon. member for Bundaberg, and to comment thereon?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Bundaberg asked certain questions which I could not answer just in the form in which he desired them to be answered, and I requested him to give notice of motion for a return. When that motion came on I called "Not formal," with the view of obviating the necessity for the hon. member asking the questions again and of doing justice to the hon. member, I now lay the following answers on the table of the House:—

- "1. The dredge "Samson" was sold to the State of New South Wales. The price is £20,000, to be paid on any date before the 2nd September, 1915, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per centum (4 per cent.) per annum meanwhile.

"2. The "Samson" was included with other plant in one contract, therefore the

original cost of the dredge cannot be stated.

"3. From the 1st July, 1902, the date on which the dredge was laid up, to the date of sale, the expenditure on caretaker's wages, docking, cleaning, and painting amounted to £6,336.

"4. See answer to No. 2.

"5. No offers were received for the purchase or hire of the dredge prior to the purchase by the Government of New South Wales.

"6. See answer to No. 2. The purchase money when paid will be credited to the loan fund."

#### PROPOSED SELECT COMMITTEE ON LAND SETTLEMENT.

##### MOTION WITHDRAWN.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): As no further action can be taken this session with the motion standing in my name on the business-paper, I beg to withdraw it.

#### SUPPLY.

##### FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(*Mr. Sturt, Logan, in the chair.*)

Question stated—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1914-15, a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): While I congratulate the Government on being in a position to pay their way and to have a surplus at the end of the year, I regret that I am unable to congratulate them upon their methods of finance. In reviewing the Statement, I propose to show, firstly, that in the handling of several of the accounts there has not been due economy, and that in connection with one, at least, they have shown a disregard of an Act of Parliament; secondly, that certain cash receipts shown in the consolidated revenue account are not revenue in the truest sense of the word; thirdly, that the incidence of taxation is inequitable; and, fourthly, that expenditure is not under control in the manner that it should be. The Statement as delivered to us may be said to be a report on the transactions of the country during the last twelve months. That being so, there is no need to invest it with that air of supreme mystery which some members on the other side seem to desire to do, as if it were only a few of the chosen of the gods who were permitted to understand it. To anyone who understands anything about business it is a plain statement of the finances and the business transacted in the various departments. Any person possessing an ordinary amount of common sense and of business acumen should be able to deal with it, and the continual charge made by members opposite that members on this side have not referred to the Financial Statement at all is so much nonsense. It is absolutely impossible for any member on this or the other side of the House to refer to any act of administration in connection with affairs of the State that has not some relation to the Financial Statement. As every hon. member knows, our finances are divided up under three headings—consolidated revenue fund, trust funds, and loan funds. We all know that the consolidated revenue fund is composed of taxation and of fees received for services rendered by the State.

Hon. R. PHILP: They are all consolidated revenue.

Mr. HUNTER: Exactly; but they are divided up under three headings in our finances, and those are the headings under which the various moneys are appropriated by Parliament.

Hon. R. PHILP: Every child knows that.

Mr. HUNTER: Then why raise the question? Why all this talk about not referring to the Financial Statement? I believe that there are certain accounts that are not carefully looked after. What is more, I do not think the surplus submitted to this House is a true surplus; that it does not state the actual position of the Treasury at the end of the year. It does not correspond with the estimate, nor does it give the actual amount received. The actual revenue received by the Government was £6,973,259, and the estimated expenditure was £6,790,249, leaving a difference of £183,010. That is the actual surplus according to the Treasurer's estimate. It is true that, while we cannot command the revenue, we can at least control the expenditure. Assuming that that is so, the Treasurer should have controlled his expenditure to such an extent that he would have kept within the limits of his estimate. If he had succeeded in doing that, then, instead of coming to us with a surplus of £10,000, instead of his estimated surplus of £8,000, he would be able to show a surplus of £183,010.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Then you could not deal with any exigencies or any development that arises.

Mr. HUNTER: The Estimates submitted by the Treasurer should provide for anything of that description. The Treasurer probably did that. If he did, then the figures that we should have before us would be those I have quoted instead of those submitted by the Treasurer. The fact is that the Treasurer makes provision for a low estimate of expenditure, and then, if the necessity arises and he has a surplus, he can manipulate that surplus in such a way so that he would set at defiance an Act of Parliament which provides that any surplus shall be paid into the public debt reduction fund. That is where I contend that the Financial Statement does not show the actual position as it should do. With regard to territorial revenue, which I contend is not revenue at all and should not be classed as revenue, it is an asset that is sold, and cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as revenue. What would be said of a man who sold a property and included it as part of that year's revenue? That is what the Minister has done. He has sold by auction town allotments and other land by a system of time payment, to the value of £235,792 17s. 4d. The Treasurer also sold timber, for which he received royalties amounting to £60,437 14s. 3d., making a total of £296,130 11s. 7d. If it had been put in its proper place and dealt with as land that was sold as an asset for reinvestment—as any business firm would have done—then the Treasurer, if he had spent the extra sum set down, would have come out with a deficit approximating £290,000. His system of financing is altogether wrong. If the Treasurer used the sale of assets for revenue purposes, then he really had a deficit. On the other hand, if he spent money over and above that which was appropriated simply

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for the sake of setting at defiance an Act of Parliament, I contend that he did an illegal act. I am supported in a statement which I make regarding territorial revenue by "Knibbs," who says—

"Sale and rental of Crown lands frequently treated as consolidated revenue and applied meet current expenditure.

"While for rentals from pastoral and residential purposes this is justifiable, on the other hand rentals for mineral and timber lands, and in all cases the proceeds of sale of land, is essentially a disposal of capital in order to defray current expenses, and as a matter of financial procedure is open to criticism."

It is worth while noting what Queensland is doing in connection with the timber royalties.

Mr. FORSYTH: What about New South Wales?

Mr. HUNTER: I am just going to make a comparison showing how much we spent and how much is spent in New South Wales and the other States. The amount received by New South Wales for timber last year was £96,145. The New South Wales Government spent in connection with the same industry £42,154, so that they had a profit from their timber of £54,000. Victoria received £51,146 from its timber and spent £56,899 on reafforestation. As a matter of fact, Victoria spent £5,700 more on reafforestation than it received during the year. Compare Queensland with that. We find that Queensland received from timber royalties last year £63,467, and spent only £5,397. The Queensland Government realised a profit of £58,070 on its timber industry last year. South Australia received only £5,609 from timber last year and spent no less than £22,858. The South Australian Government actually invested in reafforestation for the year £17,249. I contend that the money received by the Treasurer for land sold, or timber sold, is the realisation of an asset, and should be invested in something of a reproductive nature. With the £300,000 which the Treasurer has received from these sources we might have constructed 50 miles of railway into an agricultural district. That would have been a better way of investing the money, and it would have been a more honest system of financing than the system followed by the Treasurer. If hon. members will look at Table D, page 14, they will find that so far as trust funds are concerned we began the year with a deficit of £1,883,437 3s. This amount during the whole year has not been replenished in any shape or form except by moneys received from various sources such as the meat and dairy boards, Brands Act, Agricultural Bank repayments for moneys advanced, etc. But the Savings Bank, which the Treasurer has told us is the means by which the fund is replenished and the fund from which advances are made for workers' dwellings and the Agricultural Bank, has not contributed one penny during the whole of the year towards the advances made to either of those institutions. The whole list from which revenues are received is clearly set forth on page 14 of the Treasurer's tables. This money, received during the year, amounted to £295,886 16s. 4d. These moneys were received from the advances to settlers fund, Agricultural Bank of Queensland fund, agriculture and stock special standing fund, brands fund, central sugar-mills fund, Harbour Dues Act fund,

Closer Settlement Acts fund, and so on, all totalling the amount I just gave. But the Savings Bank did not contribute one single penny. A great noise is always made by hon. gentlemen opposite about the inroads made on our Savings Bank by the Commonwealth Bank. We were told that the Savings Bank was the bulwark of the Workers' Dwellings Act and the Agricultural Bank Act, and that it would be a pity to interfere with it. I say also that it is a pity to interfere with either of these institutions, but it is just as well that the country should know that it is not the bulwark that it is represented to be, and so far as last year is concerned it did not contribute anything to the trust funds.

Mr. FORSYTH: Where does the money come from for the Agricultural Bank?

Mr. HUNTER: I am talking about last year. Turn to Table D, and you will find it for yourself.

Mr. FORSYTH: I am talking about last year, too. Where does the money come from?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: He does not know.

Mr. HUNTER: What nonsense to say I do not know. I have not the time, and the Chairman would not allow me to talk to hon. members across the floor of the House. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee had an opportunity of addressing this Chamber, and he did so in his usual style. He stated that the leader of the Opposition did not touch finance

at all, except to give his usual [4 p.m.] array of figures. How much finance did the hon. member for Murrumbidgee touch? He hardly mentioned it at all. All he dealt with was the rural workers' log and one or two other matters. During the year the trust fund account suffered to the extent of £525,902 15s., so that they closed the year with a gross debit balance of £2,409,339 18s.

Mr. FORSYTH: Where does that money come from?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member not to interject.

Mr. HUNTER: There is no money in the fund at all. It has not even a feather to fly with. There is no trust fund, as it is an overdrawn account to the extent of over £2,000,000. Now, if we turn to Table J, page 29 of the Treasurer's tables, we find that there is lodged in the Bank of England £1,962,872 16s. 3d. There is also at current account, to the credit of the Agent-General, an amount of £496,865 13s. It seems to me that on this current account there must be an interest lost to the Government, as the Treasurer has lying in the Bank of England bearing interest—small amount as it is—a fairly large sum which should make it possible for him to arrange an overdraft.

The TREASURER: The interest earnings have been exceedingly satisfactory—in many cases more than we are giving for it. Surely that is good business.

Mr. HUNTER: That may be so in cases of short-dated loans. But it seems to me to be unnecessary to keep a large current account to the credit of the Agent-General in London while the Government have a large credit balance with the Bank of England. Any business man, instead of keeping a current account of that magnitude, would arrange for an overdraft, and I am perfectly sure it would be very much cheaper. I quite understand that large sums of money have

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to be paid out by the Agent-General from time to time; and the Treasurer, in order to enable the Agent-General to meet the calls as they are made from time to time, does not wish the Agent-General to run short, but surely an arrangement could be made with the Bank of England so that the Agent-General could draw all requirements for State payments as they became due. I also notice that there is a sum of £982,083 19s. 3d. lying at current account with the Queensland National Bank in Brisbane and other places. That is a very nice current account, but it seems to me that it is an unnecessarily large current account. I understand that for the first £100,000 the Government get nothing, and after that they get 1 per cent. As against that the Government are paying the Savings Bank £90,000 a year interest, and the profits from the bank during the year was only £13,000. It seems to me that as far as that particular account is concerned, there is undoubtedly a carelessness exhibited that does not warrant in any shape or form the praise of the State finances which has been given by the Treasurer and his satellites on that side of the House. We were informed in the Treasurer's Statement that the Savings Bank operations in Queensland were in the highest degree satisfactory. The only way in which to judge that is by comparison. Other criticisms have been made, and I propose to make a comparison with the other States. In fact, it is only by comparison that we can judge. If we turn to New South Wales, what do we find? The number of depositors there is 619,224; the number in Victoria is 703,064; the number in Queensland, 168,438; in South Australia, 251,963; and in Western Australia, 121,201. Of course, we have to take into account the population of the various States, but I find, on doing that, that Queensland, with a population of one-third the population of New South Wales, is short of one-third of the number of depositors. Then, in South Australia, where the population is less than in Queensland, they have nearly double the number of depositors. Then we come to the deposits per head, and we find that in New South Wales they amount to £15 9s.; in Victoria to £15 19s. 10d.; in Queensland only £14 4s. 3d.; in South Australia to £20 4s. 3d.; Western Australia to £14 17s. 10d.

The TREASURER: What is the maximum amount of deposits allowed in each case?

Mr. HUNTER: That is another matter. That can be judged in this way: The number of depositors is less than in the other States, and consequently the maximum amounts must be less.

The TREASURER: No; we won't admit that.

Mr. HUNTER: If the hon. gentleman will only consider it for a moment, he will see that the figures I give not only prove that the amount at deposit is less, but that there are fewer depositors and the amount per head is less.

The TREASURER: You are stretching your argument.

Mr. HUNTER: There is no stretching about it, as a little mental arithmetic will convince the Treasurer if he cares to indulge in the exercise. Again, I contend that the incidence of taxation is not fair; that it falls on a section of the community, and that is borne out by a review of the freights charged on our railways. Fully 15 per cent. is added to the cost of living of rural residents compared with the city residents, and the

investments and enterprises of the State with regard to railways should not be borne by those who reside at long distances from the cities; and, if no other course can be adopted, then the zone system should be inaugurated. If the Government cannot see its way to reduce rates, then a zone system should be fixed, so that encouragement would be given to rural settlement rather than forcing people, on account of the high cost of living, to leave the country districts and come into the cities. That is what the tendency is, because the extra cost of living amounts to fully 15 per cent. in an area from Chinchilla west, as compared with the cost of living in the cities on the coast.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is not that argument knocked on the head by the fact that the greater proportion of our people reside in the country?

Mr. HUNTER: They cannot all be in the towns. There would soon be no towns at all if that were so. Let us see whether Queensland is in that favourable position that the Treasurer makes out, as compared with other cities in the Commonwealth. I admit that, on account of the splendid seasons we have experienced, Queensland has been singularly blessed, and in spite of bad government—(Government laughter)—we have had a period of prosperity; but I do not attribute the fact that we are in our present financial position to anything the Government has done to assist. We are told that the Government have financed matters in such a way that their loans have been a wonderful success; that they had taken advantage of the market at the right time; that they had seized the psychological moment for placing their loans and have obtained the very best possible terms. Now, let us see what is the actual position. Taking the loans of the various States of the Commonwealth and the interest payable on them, we find that taking them over the whole period New South Wales has been paying at the rate of £3 11s. 4d. per cent. for all her loans.

The TREASURER: For what period?

Mr. HUNTER: I am taking the whole.

The TREASURER: I think you should be fair, and quote from the more recent.

Mr. HUNTER: I want to give the figures for the whole period, because, when the hon. member talks, he talks about the Liberal party's period—any period of ten or fourteen years during the fifty years which the Tory-cum-Liberals have had the reins of power. Victoria paid £3 10s. 3d. per cent.; Queensland, £3 14s. 1d. per cent.; South Australia, £3 12s. 8d. per cent.; and Western Australia—this much tabooed and Labour-ridden State—£3 10s. 8d. per cent. That does not say too much in favour of the financial management of this State. Then we find that the Government have recently started a sinking fund, and they have a matter of a few thousand pounds to their credit, and, instead of its being vested in trustees, with instructions to invest it, as any other sinking fund is invested, they merely are authorised to buy Government debentures and hold them at a certain rate of interest. Not so in Western Australia or in some other States. In Western Australia, they have a fund which aggregates £3,309,346, and this fund is vested in trustees and invested in British, Indian, and colonial securities, and from time to time it is applied in redeeming the loans that are maturing.

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That is the object and the sound principle that should guide all Governments in handling a sinking fund. In Victoria they have a sinking fund of £1,226,667; in New South Wales, £381,893; South Australia, £299,567—all larger sums than we have here in Queensland. That, again, does not prove that our finances are being so well managed. Then we come to short-dated bills and public debentures, and we find that in New South Wales they have short-dated debentures amounting to £6,000,000; Victoria, £12,000,000; and Queensland, £14,000,000; and South Australia, £2,000,000. Then we find that Queensland also comes out disadvantageously in connection with Treasury bills in aid of revenue. They have none in New South Wales and Victoria, whilst in Queensland we have £1,087,050.

The TREASURER: Do you know that New South Wales is offering 5 per cent. in the city of Brisbane for money?

Mr. HUNTER: I am not talking about what they are doing to-day. We have heard a lot about what they are doing already during this debate. I am talking about things as up to the 30th June last. Now we come to the public debt, and we find that it amounts in New South Wales to £58 13s. 4d. per head of population, Victoria £45 3s., Queensland £31 15s. 4d., South Australia £68 18s. 5d., and Western Australia £96 8s.

The TREASURER: Do not forget that we have a greater mileage of railway and a smaller population.

Mr. HUNTER: And do not forget that our railways cost just about one-half what they cost in New South Wales to build. Then we come to some more of the financial management of the Treasurer. As I have already pointed out, the unforeseen expenditure last year increased very considerably. As a matter of fact, it has gone up in leaps and bounds. Not only that, but the expenditure has also gone up. If we go back for twenty years, we find that it was £7 14s. 8d., whilst to-day it is £10 10s. 11d. per head. The unforeseen expenditure ten years ago was £32,810 14s., and last year it amounted to £225,423 14s. 1d. That is a tremendously big jump, and it seems to me to be simply laying a foundation whereby the Treasurer may manipulate large surpluses into small surpluses, and thus set at defiance the Act which was passed to lead to a reduction of the public debt. We have also had a good deal said to the effect that for the last ten years there has been a continuation of surpluses, but that is not the history of the Liberal party. Let me tell this House, and the Treasurer too, that, taking the amount of surpluses and the amount of deficits during the whole period of Liberal and Tory Governments—which are synonymous in a sense—that the actual total of deficits exceeded the surpluses by £2,619,865 4s. 6d., so that, if we were to close up the reign of the Liberal party, we would find them ending up their period with the deficit I have just mentioned. Now, I ask what the Government have done in any way to bring about the wonderful prosperity we have experienced? They do not claim to have brought about the good seasons. Even the Treasurer does not profess that he is responsible for them. Then, I ask, what has he done to bring about the wonderful production in wool and stock which has occurred throughout the great West? What has he done to assist in the development of our industries, or to increase the area

of land under maize or potatoes? Have the Government assisted in any shape or form the secondary industries of the State? All I find in the Financial Statement is assertion after reassertion of the wonderful progress of Queensland; but what has been done by the Liberal party to assist in this progress? I say, absolutely nothing. What has been done is due to good seasons and not to the good management and super-excellent finance which is claimed for the party. We have at the present time an opportunity for the Government to step in and do something, not only for the woolgrowers, but also for the whole of the people of Australia; that is, in connection with our Ipswich Woollen Company, where, I think, the Government should offer to assist to duplicate the works and solicit orders from the Imperial Government, so that they might go on full shifts, turning out in a manufactured condition our raw wools. Then we have a cotton mill practically lying idle. These are things that the Government might do. Why are these factories lying practically idle?

Mr. MURPHY: The dropping of the bounty by the Commonwealth practically shut up the cotton-mills.

Mr. HUNTER: It is possible for this Government to move the Federal Government, but they have not done so. There is no reason why they should stand still. When the Government has any trouble about finance, they call a conference of Treasurers and Premiers, and they come to resolutions and fix matters up. Why should that not be done in connection with manufactures? Never was a better opportunity in the history of Australia for our secondary industries to be placed in a satisfactory position; never was a better opportunity to assist those engaged in trade and manufacture as well as primary production. To my mind, instead of this war causing such great alarm, it should give us the greatest confidence, because we have within ourselves everything that is necessary to make this great country. And now we are shut off from that severe competition from abroad and the cheap labour we have had to contend with in the past, there is an opportunity for the Government to urge a big step forward in the matter of our secondary industries. Not only in connection with the secondary industries have the Government failed, but also in connection with the primary industries. Last year, in connection with the selection of lands, there was a bad slump compared with even ten years ago. Comparing 1907 with last year, we find that there were 1,948 agricultural farms selected, and last year there were only 1,447, or a shortage of 471. In connection with agricultural home-steads, in 1907 there were 368 selected, as against twenty-four last year—another slump of 245; of unconditional selections there were ninety-one selectors, as against forty-one last year, or another slump of fifty, making a total shortage of 766 people in regard to those who took up agricultural selections last year as compared with seven years ago. That does not show much progress.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why do you not compare the year before last?

Mr. HUNTER: I am going back to show that we are not making progress; that there was more progress made seven years ago in that particular class of selection than was made last year. It might be more acceptable to the Hon. the Secretary for Public Lands to compare this year with last year, but I am

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not considering the Minister in the matter. I am considering the progress of the State, and there was less progress made in regard to selection last year; in fact, there was a shortage compared with seven years ago. The shortage in area was greater—a shortage of 245,764 acres. What have the Labour Government been doing in New South Wales, which has been accused of being a spend-thrift Government? They are not falling short; there land selection is increasing. Let us consider one branch of their system of settlement. They have to adopt the most extensive method of settlement because of the shortage of Crown land in that State. They have to buy lands and irrigate them. They have established large reservoirs to provide large bodies of water in the most extensive way, so that their lands can be fully utilised. The Murrumbidgee scheme will enable 250,000 acres to be irrigated as a consolidated block. In addition the Government have secured 1,000,000 acres of land for settlers for irrigated farms. The total cost of the works and lands is £5,500,000. When fully settled it will comprise 7,000 farms, and it is expected to have a population of 50,000 people. There you have an indication of what the New South Wales Labour Government are doing to settle people on the land, and in such a way that the smallest area of land will produce the greatest possible results. The first farm was granted in 1912, and last year they had 705 selections taken up, 622 of which are occupied. There are 147 miles of drains, 205 miles of roads, 260 miles of channels, and 4,000 people are settled there. I contend that we are not dealing with our Queensland lands as we should, and that in spite of the financial administration that is so much admired, not only by hon. members opposite but by the country party, the Government are not doing for Queensland the great work which might be done. Considering the vast amount of our territory and our wonderfully fertile lands, we are not taking advantage of our opportunities, and should a bad time come the Treasurer will be the first to feel the result, because we are living largely on good seasons and not good government. The hon. member for Burrum, with that parrot cry which has been heard from members opposite during the whole of this debate, said that the Financial Statement had not been touched by members on this side; that it was too good to touch. He said the leader of the Opposition got up and hardly ever referred to it. But the leader of the Opposition referred to all the big headings in connection with it. He referred to the stability of the note issue.

The TREASURER: The leader of the Opposition's address was very largely the same as given twelve months ago.

Mr. HUNTER: It was nothing of the sort. He referred to maturing loans, to the selling of assets; to the repurchase of estates; to the railway stores—a matter of £800,000; unforeseen expenditure; Renard trains, and McKean cars, which cost £40,000 and which are now on the scrap heap; the present need for a Royal Commission and public works committee; and he clinched each of the charges levelled by him against the Government by comments of the Auditor-General, thereby showing that it was not his opinion only that he was giving, but that he was backed up by the

opinion of the Auditor-General. The speech of the leader of the Opposition was masterful, if not exhaustive—(Government laughter)—dealing with the great question of finance as only a man of his outstanding ability might. No hon. member on the opposite side of the House has attempted to reply to him so far. What did the hon. member for Burrum say about finance? With that wild war whoop of his, which showed more lung-power than anything else, he went for the Holman Government and the Scaddan Government.

The TREASURER: He got home on them.

Mr. HUNTER: He quoted from certain speeches of Messrs. Holman and Scaddan, and extracts from the "Sun" and Sydney "Bulletin," without giving their context.

The TREASURER: Do you know a paper called the "Sydney Mail"?

Mr. HUNTER: Yes.

The TREASURER: I would suggest you have a look into that.

Mr. HUNTER: That has nothing to do with the Financial Statement. (Laughter.) The hon. gentleman can give us extracts from it when he replies if he wants to. I contend that the leader of the great country party fell very short of the position he holds when he said that the note issue was not responsible for the sense of solvency which existed in Australia to-day. Was it not found necessary for the Imperial Government to arrange for a note issue in connection with the Bank of England? Is not Canada in the same position? It is a well-known fact that money is short, but that it may be obtained if it is short is the great power that makes for solvency and security. The Treasurer himself said that if occasion arises, he himself will take advantage of the offer made by the Fisher Government in this connection. And yet he would deny that the financial security we are enjoying in Australia is due to that cause. Now, I want to refer to something else the hon. gentleman said. He said that the Labour party had a country policy and a town policy. So we have. (Government laughter.) Our policy is a universal policy, and, therefore, it must have both a town and country application, because it seeks to establish the rural, industrial, and commercial life of the State, and to place them on a sound economic basis. What is the hon. gentleman's policy? The policy of the corner party is to deceive the primary producer, to block the cane price board, to foster trusts and combines, who plunder the producers and consumers of the State; and if there was a third plank, to deprive the taxpayers of their political rights, and thereby save their own political skin. The hon. gentleman showed how insincere were his criticisms and how unworthy were his bluff and wild war whoop which he made, when he refused to accept the offer of the leader of the Opposition to have the Premier's speech and the speech of the leader of the Opposition printed and distributed on condition that the hon. member paid half the cost thereof. That is

evidence of how insincere the [4.30 p.m.] hon. member was. I notice that the Estimates for the Home Secretary's Department are £17,506 less than those for last year as far as hospitals and charitable institutions are concerned. That is the wrong place to start cutting down, and will probably be severely handled when

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the Estimates come up for discussion later. I notice the Estimates for the Agricultural Department for this year are £7,357 less than they were last year. That is how our agricultural industry is going to be fostered this year, though it is an industry which ought to be fostered above all other industries at the present time. Every effort should be made to promote and extend the agricultural industry, and so find foodstuffs for the defenders of the Empire. We have not heard a word from the corner party, who misrepresent the farmers, protesting against this cutting down of funds which were already too small. The Treasurer may go on cutting down the vote for the Agricultural industry, and yet not one single word of objection comes from hon. members opposite. I am not one of those who believe that we are going to have a very bad time; I believe that things will right themselves, and that the war will not affect us in the way some persons fear. I am confirmed in this belief by the fact that money is plentiful in Great Britain. On the 15th August the Imperial Government asked for a war loan of £15,000,000, and it was subscribed nearly three times over at £3 15s. 1d. per cent. On the 28th August they asked for another war loan of £15,000,000, which was also subscribed nearly three times over at £3 15s. 6d. per cent.; and on the 15th September they asked for a third war loan of £15,000,000, and that also was subscribed three times over at £2 15s. 6d. per cent. This shows that if money is needed it can be found. We find also that the money market in London is showing a decided tendency towards lower prices, three months' bills being  $3\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. as against  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for one month the week before. We further find that there is an increase in coin and bullion from £48,000,000 to £59,000,000 inside the month, and that during the same period the reserves have increased from £32,000,000 to £42,000,000. It seems to me that there is every reason to hope that money will be cheaper as well as more plentiful. When the war is over there is every prospect that we shall have good times in Australia, but much will depend upon whether we have the courage and enterprise to seize the opportunity offered and to make the best use of our resources and opportunities. The Treasurer has said a good deal about the fact that the amount of revenue now required for interest on the public debt is only 5 per cent. That fact does not imply anything, considering how our revenue is raised. As we get more railways and receive a larger revenue, the amount required for interest will grow less in proportion. That is only a natural consequence, so that the fact that the amount of revenue required for interest has been reduced from 10 per cent. some years ago to 5 per cent. now is unworthy of a place in the Financial Statement. Anybody who deals with the matter in a serious, not a flippant, manner must see that for himself. I trust that the great cloud which rests over the homeland will soon disappear, and that the Treasurer will realise the full amount of his estimates. Anything that I can do or that any member on this side of the House can do to assist in the realisation of that estimate will be done, and I shall be one of the first to congratulate the Treasurer on the realisation of his estimates if the opportunity offers. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. Hunter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. Tolmie, *Toowoomba*): I desire to say a few words before this debate terminates. I have listened with a great amount of interest and possibly some instruction to the remarks which have fallen from the hon. member for Maranoa in connection with the Financial Statement. Members on this side of the House have charged members on the Opposition side, from the leader downward, with having offered no true criticism of the Financial Statement, and evidently the hon. member for Maranoa has been charged with the task of dealing with the Financial Statement in order to remove from the Opposition the stigma that they are not able to handle the Statement submitted by the Treasurer. I quite sympathise with hon. members opposite who have not been able to handle that Statement for the reason that it is so sound, that it shows that great progress has been made, and that it demonstrates that the State of Queensland is in such a healthy condition that there is very little opportunity for adversely criticising the Financial Statement. I listened with a great deal of interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Maranoa, because I understood that he was going to bear the burden of dealing with the Financial Statement; but the hon. member simply treated us to a conglomeration of figures dealing with the public debts of this and the other States. It is not possible for me to say whether some of those figures represent the facts of to-day or not. The hon. member frankly admitted that in his comparison he was not dealing with the events of the last two years, so that a true estimate might be formed of the progress or otherwise made during that period.

The TREASURER: It would be very inconvenient for him to do that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, because he would have been forced to tell the Chamber that we have been progressing all along the line. Judging from the figures the hon. member quoted in connection with my own department, I should say that, if his figures dealing with other matters are equally correct, we have listened to a gross misrepresentation of the affairs of this State as compared with the affairs of other States in the Commonwealth. The hon. member started out to prove three propositions. Unfortunately, I did not catch his first proposition, but in his second proposition he said he was going to show that the incidence of taxation was inequitable. I ask hon. members opposite, who are willing to give an absolutely unbiased opinion on the matter, whether the hon. member dealt with the question of inequitable taxation? Certainly, the hon. member made some slight passing reference to freights and fares on railways, but that was the only instance in which he treated of taxation. Then he proceeded to tell us that the administration was not under proper control. I leave it to the judgment of the House to say whether the hon. gentleman has proved the third proposition, or even the second proposition, that he set out to prove. So far as the first proposition is concerned, the hon. gentleman did not seem to think it was of such great importance, because he never reiterated the proposition he laid down. I think the Treasurer of this State is to be congratulated by all who have the interests of Queensland at heart for the very excellent Financial Statement that he has been able to submit

at this juncture. In dealing with this Statement, we have to bring into comparison the Statements that have been submitted just about the same time by Treasurers of other States. Those hon. members who keep abreast of the current literature of the day—particularly the newspaper literature—will know that Queensland's position is a most enviable one amongst the whole of the States. (Hear, hear!) The Treasurer this time twelve months ago put a certain proposition before the House. He said that the revenue for the year would reach a certain amount, and that the expenditure would total a certain amount. The hon. member for Maranoa laid down a most amazing proposition this afternoon—that the Treasurer should be bound down absolutely £1 for £1 with the Statement that he then put forth, without any deviation to one side or the other.

Mr. HUNTER: Be fair. I said that he should make some reservation for that in his Estimate.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member said the Treasurer should make some reservation, but he should then be bound down £1 for £1 with the estimate he made.

Mr. HUNTER: He should get somewhere near it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is an absolute impossibility for a Treasurer to put himself in such a position. So long as he is able to make both ends meet at the end of the year, it is all right. If there is any increase in the revenue, then he has to see that the money is properly distributed, and that the amount has been absorbed in unforeseen expenditure that must arise in the course of the year in governing such an enormous State as Queensland.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is very large, amounting to £200,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: In a matter of millions £200,000 is not a large sum.

The PREMIER: All this expenditure has been largely in the direction of increasing the revenue of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is quite true, as the Premier points out. Is it not a fine thing to be able to say that we have that surplus revenue—that the administration has been such in all those departments that there is a surplus to meet such contingencies as may arise?

Mr. BOOKER: And general financial buoyancy.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, and general financial buoyancy. The Treasurer's position is the position of every merchant who lays out at the beginning of the year a certain plan that he desires to achieve before the termination of that year. If he can do it satisfactorily, he is well pleased, even if his expenditure is greater and his revenue has increased beyond that which he anticipated he was going to receive. The charge made that hon. members on the other side have not fairly dealt with this Financial Statement has been amply sustained by the statements they have made. They have departed altogether from the Financial Statement, with the exception of the hon. member for Maranoa. He is the only member on that side who set out to find something wrong with the Statement, but he had a

hard task, and he signally failed to do so. The first hon. gentleman to whom we naturally look for criticism of the Financial Statement is the leader of the Opposition. When I say "criticism of the Financial Statement," I mean a fair one, that is allowing credit where credit is due, and passing censure on the Government if censure should be given. I contend that, so far as this year's work is concerned, this Government are very largely free from censure. So far as the Financial Statement is concerned, the leader of the Opposition absolutely passed it over. He dealt with certain statements made by the Auditor-General, and then he essayed the task of putting the Labour party's platform into "Hansard." Having put the Labour platform into "Hansard," he thought he had done remarkably good work.

Mr. HARDACRE: So he did.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He may have done good work for his party, but he did not do good work for the country. With regard to the report of the Auditor-General, some of those statements had reference to the Department of Public Lands, and I intend to say just a word or two in connection with what was said by the leader of the Opposition. We do not find fault with the criticism of the Auditor-General. It is his business to examine the accounts of the State, and if he finds that the accounts of the State are incorrect, it is his business to lay those matters before this Chamber. (Hear, hear!) But it is not his business to deal with policy in any shape or form. That does not come within the province of his work. His work is merely that of an accountant. The hon. member for Maranoa made serious criticism of the Auditor-General in his speech, although he never mentioned the gentleman's name so far as I can recollect. Still, he could tell us this account was wrong, and the other account was wrong; that all the accounts right through, from the beginning to the end were absolutely wrong, but the hon. gentleman signally failed in the discharge of his duty in not putting the different accounts that were wrong before this House.

Mr. HUNTER: The leader of the Opposition told you them. There was no need for me to go over them again.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The leader of the Opposition said that the Auditor-General had stated that it was time that the Seaforth Estate was wiped out in the books, or wiped out in some way, because it was a bad account. There is only one way of wiping it out, and that is by taking £32,000 from the consolidated revenue to set against the money spent on that estate. I quite acknowledge that it would be an excellent thing to wipe that account out. At the present time it stands in the books of the department, and to a certain extent it occupies a little time in dealing with that account from year to year. It also occupies a little time for the auditors of the Auditor-General's Department, and he would prefer to see it wiped out. But to wipe it out we would have to set apart especially £32,000 from our revenue. Why should we, just for the sake merely of obliging the Auditor-General, or for a matter of sentiment, take £32,000 from the revenue for the purpose of dealing with that account? Why should we deprive ourselves of £32,000 of revenue, if we can apply it better to the advancement of Queensland than by wiping out that

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account? If we had created that debt, there might be some reason in saying that we were entitled to wipe it out. If the time arrives that we have more money in our consolidated revenue account than we know what to do with, then the strong probability is that we will follow the advice tendered by the Auditor-General. As a matter of fact, the proposition has been considered more than once. We might, perhaps, get some of the salvages of other accounts in connection with our closer settlement, and then we would come to this Chamber and ask hon. members to wipe them all off. I propose, before I sit down, to deal with the closer settlement account, and show that, in spite of the Seaforth Estate, we still have a large credit balance in the closer settlement account, and I will show that it is the most substantial account that we have in Queensland to-day. Then, the Auditor-General has called attention to the position of a selector on another estate. An arrangement—it was before my time of office—was made in connection with this particular estate; it was an arrangement considered by the officers of the department—by the Minister who was administering the affairs of the Lands Department—as being one absolutely in favour of the department. It meant a strong probability that we would be able to recover the whole of our indebtedness, rather than that we should lose, as would be the case if we were to follow the usual course of absolutely forfeiting the selections.

THE PREMIER: We are not here for the purpose of evicting anybody.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The policy of the Lands Department—and credit will be given by members on the other side although they may personally disagree with me—the continuous policy of the Lands Department has been always to endeavour to keep the man on the land once you get him there, and give him every latitude that is possible to enable him to recover his lost position. That is what has been done in this case. Had the financial crisis not have arisen last year, so far as this particular estate is concerned, the books of the department would have been absolutely clear, but just at that particular moment when the selector was in the position of being able to go to the private banks in Queensland to finance him, there came along the financial stringency, and he was unable to do so. This year he is in an equally bad position, but by making the arrangement that has been made with that selector, the State stands to get, and I believe in the long run will get, all that is due right down to the very last penny, and the policy of the department will be vindicated. That policy is to keep the man on the land if it is possible to do so. These two matters were mentioned by the leader of the Opposition. He also mentioned a third, which had passing reference by the Auditor-General, and that was that an investigation into the Survey Department last year had cost a considerable amount of money. That investigation was forced on by members sitting on that side of the House, who stonewalled the Estimates of the Survey Department for two nights, all with a view of bringing about that investigation. I told them at the time that the department had the matter fully in its grip; that we were inquiring into it, and that the safest and best way to make discovery was to allow the thing to go on as it had been

going. However, they sought a public inquiry and they got a public inquiry. There were two inquiries into the matter, and those inquiries were not conducted by the Survey Department at all. The matter was taken absolutely out of the hands of the department and passed over to the Justice Department, and after a full and searching inquiry was made it was found that somebody, apparently, had strings attached to hon. members on the other side and was pulling their legs—they struck a mare's nest. That inquiry made no discovery in any way, and it only elicited the fact that some half-dozen individual members of the public service had been doing a little private work and they were punished; and that was the whole result that was proved so far as the inquiry was concerned. It was found that the work was absolutely well done by the surveyors, and it was found that there was no material discrepancy so far as the department was concerned.

MR. HAMILTON: There were falsifications in the descriptions of land.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I told the House that the department would send a competent man over the surveys and see whether there were any discrepancies, and the result has been that the descriptions, as laid down in the field books have been—I won't say absolutely accurate, but they have been found accurate so far as one man's judgment as compared with another's can make them accurate.

MR. FOLEY: What was the officer punished for?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: For breaking a rule of the public service which says that officers of the public service must not come into competition with outside members of the community. I have dealt with the statements of the leader of the Opposition so far as extracts from the Auditor-General's report are concerned; not involving anything against the department, but involving the policy of the department in connection with certain accounts, and that policy has been followed to the advantage of the tenants of the Crown, as it ought to be in every case, so that they might reap their full reward. I am not going to say very much about the platform of the Labour party. That seems to have been the great point the leader of the Opposition desired to make—to secure in "Hansard" a copy of the platform of the Labour party. That platform is a long worn-out platform, and it is becoming worm-eaten. All that has been good in that platform has been taken over by the Liberal party and has already been passed into law. Very little of it remains of service, and all it needs is a firestick putting into it. The leader of the Opposition did not make any criticism of the Statement. Possibly he might have done so, as he has the ability, but in this case the Opposition are like *Æsop's fable*—the Athenians on the other side as compared with the Lacedæmonians on this side. The Athenians understand what is good, but it is the Lacedæmonians who put the virtue into practice. We give the Athenians on the other side full credit of understanding what is good, and I hope they will also give us, as the Lacedæmonians, the full credit of putting all those good things into practice. Criticism is not merely finding fault. In any true criticism credit should also be given for the good work that

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has been done. Has there been any such criticism on the other side so far as the work of the Treasurer is concerned? There has not been a single point to which they have directed their attention to show that the Treasurer has not been working in the interests of the State. Something might have been said about what the Liberals have done, and hon. members on the other side might have pointed out that during the last twelve months there was an increased revenue for the State. Is that not something that is to our advantage?

Mr. FOLEY: Is that due to the Government?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Certainly, due to the Government and to the administration. Where there is bad administration the affairs of the State cannot progress. There must be confusion, and with confusion in our industries there cannot be that accumulation of wealth which is very desirable, and which we all like to see. During the last twelve months, under the administration of the Liberal Government, there has been an increase of revenue all along the line. Then, hon. members might have pointed out that the expenditure has been kept within bounds in almost every department; in most of the departments the expenditure has been less than the Treasurer stated he thought it would be when he delivered his Financial Statement last year. Not much less, but enough. There has been a careful administration, a careful exercise of oversight over the funds of the State. In two or three departments, where necessary, where there has been an expanding work, where development was taking place—perhaps rapid development and unforeseen development, it became neces-

[5 p.m.] sary that, in order to sustain that development—to keep it in a condition of movement; progressing—it was necessary to spend money that had not been voted in the Estimates. But that is done every year in the State. It is done every year wherever there is a Government such as we have here in the State of Queensland—throughout the whole of the British dominions. Every Treasurer or every Government exercise the same power as was exercised by the present Administration, and where they found it was necessary to overspend the amount that had been voted, they had the courage to do so, knowing at the same time that they were making Queensland progress, and realising that, when they came to this Chamber and submitted the extra expenditure to members, then the House had the opportunity of criticising them for that over-expenditure, if they were so disposed; but realising, too, that, as is universally done, the House would congratulate the Government on having had the foresight to keep the country going ahead as they did. If hon. members had any desire to be fair to the Treasurer, they might have directed attention to the fact that he was able to make his loan balances revenue-producing. Hon. members on the other side gave us a dissertation on the fact that some of them were extraordinarily large. But throughout the whole of last year we did not allow it to rust in the coffers of any bank. We put it out in short loans. The money in London was at times put out for a few days—in all cases it was revenue-producing—and the Treasurer last year was able

to obtain from the various loans in the banks sufficient interest to augment the figures given in the statement to a considerable extent.

The TREASURER: In some cases up to 4½ per cent.

Mr. KIRWAN: Do you think this should be a mutual admiration society?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member has asked me whether I think this ought to be a mutual admiration society. I say that where we find excellence, where we find merit—in those cases it is a fit subject for admiration all round. If hon. members on the other side had a desire to be fair to the Government they might have directed attention to the fact that the percentage charged to revenue account of interest was the lowest in the history of the State. Never before in the history of Queensland was the percentage charged to revenue on that account so low as it was during the past year. Is that not something of which we have reason to be proud? Then, hon. members have been talking a great deal about the Savings Bank, and yet the very fact that one person in every four in Queensland has an account in the Savings Bank is something that will stand to the credit of the State. I am not going to deal with the amounts that may have been deposited in other States, where large sums may be put in the bank so as to swell the amount deposited. Al! I want to deal with is this one fact—that one person in every four has an account, and that means that a very considerable proportion of the young people—those who are under the age of twenty-one years—are saving, and securing to themselves capital for investment in any business they may like to take up subsequently. Why can we show such a grand result as that? It means that the industry of Queensland has been carried on in a steady way throughout the whole year, that work for the working men and working women of Queensland has been of a constant nature. They have been able to save, they have been able to accumulate, and the result is shown in the Savings Bank of the State. That is something that may be said to the credit of the Government or to the credit of the Treasurer when criticism is directed at the Financial Statement. The hon. member for Maranoa seems to be under the impression that all the money advanced should come in proportionately. He knows very well, if he cared to put it before the House, that all this money that is taken and distributed year by year must be greater than that which is coming in, because it is only coming in in very small quantities. A loan under the Agricultural Bank Act is not going to mature for twenty-five years; only one twenty-fifth of that loan is coming back each year. The same applies to the loans regarding workers' dwellings, and the same to the advances from the public estate improvement fund. In Queensland the sum of £250,000 has been advanced for the purpose of improving the public estate, but that is only coming back at the rate of one-twentieth each year, and that is the reason why the income appears to be so much less than the outgo—it is distributed over such a great number of years. The hon. the leader of the Opposition was good enough to say that he desired to put in "Hansard" the Labour platform, but I have been showing what the Liberal party have been

actually doing, the work that they have been accomplishing, and that has been generally directed to improving the conditions of the people. That is the work of the Liberals of the past; that is the work of the Liberals to-day; and it will be the work of the Liberals for all time. Liberalism, as members opposite know, stands for the home and for humanity every time. (Opposition laughter.) The Liberal policy is a policy that produces work for the worker, and has been doing it for the last ten years, during which the Liberal party have been in power—keeping people in constant employment. I dare say that there may be a case, such as the present, when people are out of employment, but where that is so it is not due to a general decay in the administration of the departments by the Liberal party, but it is due to factors over which even the Labour party have no power, against which they could not stand—factors, too, that may be removed at any time. It is quite true that the hon. member for Gregory may have some cause to feel that in his district men are not earning. We all feel that it is sad that it should be the case, but the fact is that the work is to go on, and the Government have the money to keep them employed, but we have not the rails. In a very short while the Minister for Railways, in all probability, will have his rails ready to go on with that work, and I hope that these individuals will be in constant employment before many days have gone by. I say that the policy of the Liberal party is one that produces work for the worker. I go further, and say it is a policy that gives encouragement to the producer; and in dealing with the Financial Statement I shall show, before my time has expired, that is the case. Further than that, I want to emphasise that the policy of the Liberal party is a policy that gives assistance to the sick and the incapacitated. (Hear, hear!) I say further that it is a policy that supplies a mental equipment to the young people of the State. I would further say that it is the policy that secures development for the country's resources; and if that is not the policy that stands for the whole of the people—if it is not the policy that stands for humanity as we find it here in Queensland—then I know no other policy that has ever been put forward which is comparable to it. We have been improving the social condition of the people of the State. We have been endeavouring to assist the working men to homes of their own, so that they will not be paying rent to some landlord. I would like to show what has been done in the departments under the control of the Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Works during the last twelve months. On the 30th June last, the close of the financial year, there were 3,483 workers' dwellings erected in Queensland, at a total cost of £894,244. Does not the Liberal policy stand for the home when it can point to a record like that? At the close of the previous financial year the number of such homes was 1,918. The increase in the year was 1,565. That is, we erected five workmen's cottages for every working day in the last financial year. Is that not something for which this State should take credit, and of which we should be proud? To show that we are on safe ground, I may mention that the balance to the credit of the profit and loss account in connection with workers' dwellings stands at the present time at £13,650 11s. 5d.

Mr. GILDAY: That is only the duty of the Government.

[Hon. J. Tolmie.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is a good Government that will do its duty, and I am glad that hon. members realise that it is the duty of the Government to do this. Having reached that pitch, I think the next step to realise is that some credit is due to the Government which will do its duty, as this Government certainly has been doing.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You are making a profit out of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Surely you do not expect us to make a loss out of it? You do not expect us to "Holmanise" this State, do you? This Government has been exercising a control over the homes of the people in regard to sanitation. The Health Department has been doing its duty throughout the year, as the report of the department shows; and there has been a strict supervision with regard to the food supplies, which has made the condition of the working man and of everybody in the State much better from that point of view. We know that the food we are consuming at the present time is all of the very highest standard of quality. The Financial Statement discloses that we have been finding work for the worker all along, and that this Government has always had the interest of the worker at heart. When you talk about the Labour platform, I say that the Liberal party possesses the virtue of having put into effect all that is good for the working men of Queensland. All the measures that are to be found on the statute-book for the good of the workers are the work of the Liberal party. The first Factories and Shops Act was passed when the hon. member for Townsville was Premier, and from that day right on there have been improvements in our legislation, always with the object of bringing it right up to date and always with the intention of making the condition of the worker better than it was before. It was this party which passed the Workmen's Lien Act, the Machinery and Scaffolding Act, and the Wages Boards Act, which gives the workers of Queensland an opportunity to obtain the highest amount that it is possible to get out of the industries in which they are engaged. When you talk about the Labour platform, look at the practical effects of the Liberal platform, and at all that this party is doing in the direction of bettering the condition of the workers. Then, it was the present Secretary for Public Instruction who passed the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. HAMILTON. Which side of the House were you sitting on when he passed it?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I was on the side of the House that I am on now. (Government laughter.) Last of all, we gave the workers of Queensland the best piece of legislation that it was possible to give them—the Industrial Peace Act. We gave them an opportunity of saying whether they wanted to work, or whether they did not want to work. We restored to them the freedom that had been filched away from them, and put them in a position of absolutely independent men. We did a great thing for the working men and the working women of Queensland, and something for which the workers of the State have given us credit, and for which, I believe, they will continue to give us credit. But I want to pass on to the work that we are doing for the producer. Look at what we have done in the direction of railway construction during the year that is passed.

Mr. FIDELLY: The Drayton deviation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Drayton deviation is going on, and will soon be completed, too. Railway construction was carried on last year with an expedition unexampled in the history of this State or in the history of any State of Australia. Work was carried on on twenty-five extensions. Was not that a practical providing of work for the working men of Queensland? And other extensions are going on this year. I do not want to anticipate, but I believe that the Secretary for Railways will bring down a programme of railway works that will continue to give employment to the working men of this State for some years to come. All these factors that I am now enumerating show as clearly as it is possible for anything to show the steady work that has been done during the past year, and the interest that has been exhibited by the Government in the working people of this State, and how pleased we are to see them always employed; and the anticipations in that direction, I am glad to say, are bright. Then, for the man on the land, we passed the Closer Settlement Act, by which we repurchased large estates for the benefit of those who wished to settle on that land. That has been a good investment for this State. Some exception has been taken on the other side to the want of selection on the Seaforth Estate, which is still in the hands of the Government. But during the time the Closer Settlement Act has been in operation, land has been purchased to the extent of £1,713,165, and the land that has been sold has realised £1,826,781. The land unsold and reserved at the present is valued at £228,118, the tentative value of land available for sale is £60,853, and the total amounts to £2,115,754. That is now the value of the estates that we repurchased. Deducting from that the purchase price of £1,732,165, we have a credit balance of £402,589, and if we take out of that the arrears on the Seaforth Estate, and arrears on other estates, we have yet a profit or credit balance of £345,789. Have I not proved conclusively that, so far as the relations of the Government are concerned with closer settlement, that account stands in as firm a condition as any account in the State of Queensland or the Commonwealth? The fact that we have not wiped out the Seaforth Estate does not affect the stability of the closer settlement account in the slightest. Then, in regard to the work we have been doing for the producer, we have been making land available for him all along the line. The hon. member for Maranoa quoted some figures, and he was distinctly unfair in his quotation. He took the very best year in the history of Queensland, so far as small settlers are concerned, and then he said that the amount of land settled now was not as great as it was in the past; that there was a decadence. I asked him to take into consideration the last two years, 1912 and 1913, and to contrast them. If he had done so, the story he would have had to tell would have been quite a different one. He could have gone to the Lands Department and got the requisite figures, but instead of that he goes to "Knibbs" and quotes a document that is two years behind the times. Is that done with the desire of showing what are the true conditions of the State of Queensland? Is it not more with a desire of, perhaps, being able to work a point and to say that in 1907 the number of small settlers constituted a record? I believe that the year

on which we have now entered, and which will terminate, so far as the Lands Department is concerned, on the 30th December, will be the record with regard to the number of small settlers. Taking the land settled last year, we then made available 11,151,101 acres, and that was a record for Queensland. That cannot be controverted by the hon. member. The area selected was 9,035,315 acres, and that, too, was a record which cannot be controverted by the hon. member. The increase in agricultural farms in 1913, and also in 1912, was 166, showing that up to the 30th June this year we have made an increase so far as the small settler is concerned. The total increase in the number of selections of all kinds taken up was 291, or nearly an additional selection for every working day in last year. If the hon. member had had a desire to be fair to Queensland, he would have gone to the Lands Department and obtained those figures, and he would have been in a position then to say whether we were making progress in land settlement or not. Then, in regard to assistance to the producer, have we not done good work in connection with our Agricultural Bank, as was exhibited in our Statement last year? Not only did the bank do good work last year, but we were also in the position that we were able to come down with an amending Bill to give greater facilities to the man on the land, and making his condition as far as the Agricultural Bank is concerned better than the condition of the settlers in any other State of Australia. Last year good work was done, and it is embodied in the figures for the year. As far as this institution is concerned, the total advances have been £1,253,546, and the total number of accounts to the 30th June, 1914, were 5,111. Has it not been very beneficial to the State of Queensland? Have not our settlers derived much advantage from the institution? I would like to quote something from those persons who have had beneficial relations with the bank, but I find my time is getting short, and I will not be able to get the matter in, which I regret very much, but, perhaps, I will be able to do it on the Estimates.

Mr. KIRWAN: It will be very interesting.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will be instructive, which is better than interesting. It has been alleged that the bank is not sympathetic towards the settler, but here are the documents written by persons who have themselves applied to the bank, all showing that they have derived advantage from it, and praising the work being done in the management of it. That gives an indication that the work has not been inefficient. I said that 5,111 persons had utilised the bank up to last year. 1,599 new accounts were opened during the year, as against 1,417 in the previous year, and 514 advances were repaid, indicating that people were getting on their feet. The credit balance at profit and loss account on 30th June was shown to be £18,206 1s. 1d. We thus see that these trust accounts associated with the administration of the Government are in a sound condition. I would like to dilate upon the work which has been done in connection with the public estate improvement fund, but I will, perhaps, have an opportunity to deal with that on the Estimates. I want the Committee to know that £250,000 has been expended in improving roads and making approaches in places where land has been taken

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up for settlement. That money has relieved the strain upon local authorities and given the settlers the means of getting to the nearest market. Then, I would like to point out that as far as the settler is concerned, we have also been assisting him by giving him marsupial netting on easy and protracted terms. Everything that is possible to do for the producer the Government has been doing. I have shown what we have been doing so far as the working men's homes are concerned, and what we have been doing for the worker himself and for the producer; but we do not stop there. We go right down to deal with the very children of the community, and some of the legislation that has been passed by this Government through the instrumentality of the present Minister for Public Instruction and his predecessor has been amongst the most humanitarian in the whole of the civilised world. (Hear, hear!) The child in Queensland can go from the State school right to the University without costing his parents a single penny. We care for the welfare of the child in the schools; we give the best sanitary and hygienic conditions. We send special medical officers around to see that the health of the child is being maintained while he is at school. Is not that a great work which is being done all over Queensland by the Liberal party? Am I not justified in saying that we are putting into practical effect all that is good so far as the Labour platform is concerned? It is on the statute-book now, and it is being done by way of administration, and all that is left of the Labour platform is nothing but the worn-out husk of a policy that has become effete. Let me speak with regard to what has been done for the general community. The hon. member for Maranoa was going to tell you that the incidence of taxation was uneven, but he never got beyond making the statement, because he found he was not justified in making it and that he could not substantiate what he was going to say. He let it pass over after having made a statement that would get into "Hansard." There has been no additional taxation, so far as this Government is concerned, while it has been in office. I might point out with pardonable pride that there has been some remission of taxation. It may not be of large amounts, but that remission of taxation removes some of the burdens which lay upon the man on the land. The Government have been endeavouring to adjust the taxation to those best able to bear it. Even with regard to our railway taxation, is it not the goods which are of the greatest value which are rated the highest so far as freights are concerned? The produce of the pastoralists, such as wool, hides, and tallow, pay a greater rate of freight than do chaff, and lucerne, and agricultural produce, or cream and milk. I say there has been a just appreciation of the conditions of the people, and that there has been a discrimination in

[5.30 p.m.] taxation so as to put the burden on those best able to bear it. As

far as the income tax is concerned, we have not said that, in order to face the trouble that may be before us, we shall have to remove the exemption under the Income Tax Act. No. We are keeping the working man as free from taxation as we can. Some persons may say that it might have been wise had we come down and said that we were going to increase the income tax in view of the difficulty which may face us in the future; but we have not done that. We think that, by the careful administration

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which has characterised this Government in the past, we shall be able to do all that we are called upon as a Government to do during the present crisis, and at the same time be able to make both ends meet. If we find that we are not in that position, I am certain that we shall have the courage to face the situation and do what is right in the interest of the whole community and in the interest of the Empire as well. (Hear, hear!) I may also point out that good work has been done through the hospitals for the sick and suffering. The hon. member for Maranoa stated that the appropriation for hospitals and charitable institutions is £17,000 less this year than it was last year; but I would remind the Committee that we are still going to pay £2 for every £1 subscribed locally. We have fulfilled our obligations in that respect in the past, and we shall do so in the future. There is no country in the world, perhaps, that has done more in that connection than Queensland has done. Now, let me say something with regard to what we stand for so far as the liberty of the individual is concerned. We are not a Government who are giving preference to unionists. No; we do not believe in preference to any persons. If we wished to put into practice the policy enunciated by members opposite, and say that a workman has no right to work, no right to earn a living, unless he conforms to certain political opinions, could we not with the majority behind us carry out such a policy? We do not do anything of that kind; such an idea is unthinkable to the Liberal party. But the Labour party say that no matter how difficult the position of a man may be, no matter how great his needs, he must not get work unless he belongs to a union. Is that in conformity with the principles of humanity or of the British idea of what is fair and honest? Is it a fair thing to say to any man that, unless he conforms to certain cast-iron regulations, he has no right to live and no right to earn bread for himself, his wife, and family? Our policy is to give equal opportunity to every person, so that he may be able to earn a living for himself—so that he may be able to use those faculties with which God has endowed him for the advantage of himself and of those dependent upon him. That is the essence of Liberalism in the past; it is the essence of Liberalism to-day; and I believe it will be the essence of Liberalism for all time.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): Queensland has every cause to be gratified with the Statement presented by the Treasurer. This is the fourth time that the hon. gentleman has given us ground for pleasure in connection with his Financial Statement. The facts disclosed in the Statement as regards administration are in accordance with the Liberal policy, and indicate a vigorous development of our natural resources and a general improvement in our social conditions. I find that the Treasurer was most careful, I may say most exact, in his estimate of the revenue for last year. The amount received over the estimate was £174,530, which is less than 3 per cent. of the total revenue. Any Treasurer who can estimate within 3 per cent. the revenue from a State like Queensland possesses most valuable qualifications for the position he holds. Some hon. members have criticised the Treasurer, not because he was so far out in his estimate of

revenue, but because he was out in his estimate of expenditure. What sort of a business man would the Treasurer be if when he found that money was coming into the Treasury he locked it up? The hon. member for Maranoa, who was the first speaker on the Opposition side of the House who really dealt with the Financial Statement, would not, I think, follow such a principle in his own business. I notice that the Department of Railways expended £141,051 more than it was estimated the department would spend during the year. But it must be remembered that this department used it to meet public requirements—to provide more trains as the traffic increased, so expenditure in any year may usefully increase beyond what is expected. It is good management to expend it in money-earning additions, and no business man would lock up that revenue when it was needed to provide extra trains and additional station and traffic accommodation. In the same way, I notice that the Treasury Department expended £33,301 more than was anticipated in the estimate, and that that sum was largely spent in making the Government Printing Office more up to date, putting in more machines in order that they might be able better to cope with the increasing business. Again, I notice that in this exposition of financial misdeeds entered upon by members opposite, there is the astounding statement that no money belonging to the Savings Bank has been used to assist the Agricultural Bank, or in the erection of workers' dwellings. When the hon. member for Maranoa said that he must have known that the statement was directly contrary to fact, and possibly he hoped that it would pass without correction. What are the figures in connection with this matter? According to the credit balances in the Auditor-General's report, page 11, the Government Savings Bank funds of £9,401,875 have placed against them £2,412,397 as a debit balance on account of the general trust funds. We can trace that debit balance, and ascertain that money was used directly for assisting the Agricultural Bank, and for similar purposes. I have here the Treasurer's tables, and I find by Table I, page 29, that only £91,027 was paid to the public balances in the Queensland National Bank. But we find in trust accounts, page 14, Table D, the advances to settlers fund benefited to the extent of £629 during the year, and the Agricultural Bank fund benefited to the extent of £256,783 altogether. The amounts used for the advances to settlers fund, Agricultural Bank fund, agriculture and stock special standing fund, brands fund, meat fund, public estates fund, sugar fund, closer settlement, and so on, totalling during the year £1,422,709, all from trust account. Yet hon. gentlemen opposite said that nothing of the kind was done. I think you can take that as a fair sample of the criticism of the Financial Statement from the other side. The leader of the Opposition did not criticise the Statement at all. He began to talk about the Commonwealth Bank and other things quite foreign to it. The hon. member for Maranoa is the only member opposite who dealt with the Financial Statement. That is part of his criticism which I have just referred to, and it shows that it is utterly untrustworthy. I find that, as usual, in railway building Queensland occupies the premier position in Australia. There were 139 miles of railway built during the

financial year, and since the 1st of July a further 56 miles have been opened. It shows that the loan money borrowed by this State has been well handled and well managed when we find that the interest charged represents only little more than 5 per cent. of the general revenue. A few years ago the interest charged amounted to considerably over 20 per cent. To show the expansion that has taken place in our trade and production during the last five years of Liberal administration, we find, on page 17 of the Treasurer's Statement, that outward shipping has increased by 619,000 tons. We find also that land settlement during that time has increased by 50 per cent. Last year no less than 11,151,000 acres were taken up for settlement. All this has been done during the regime of the Liberal Administration. Those two items—land settlement, and increase of outward shipping—are sufficient to show the advance that has been made. Coming now to loan matters, I think that in a State such as this—in fact, in all Australian States—it is necessary to have a loan policy for the construction of railways and doing development work. I think I am right in saying that in Queensland we stand in a position unequalled by any State in Australia. We were the only State in Australia to commence the year with a credit balance of over £3,000,000 in the loan fund. It is just as well to emphasise that in order to show the good position which Queensland occupies in comparison with the other States. It is perfectly fair to mention what other States have done in connection with loan matters in order to emphasise the position in which Queensland stands to-day. During the last three years Western Australia, under socialistic control, increased its indebtedness by £10,000,000, and during that period we only increased our indebtedness by £5,000,000, while our interest charge per head is a great deal less than that of Western Australia. In New South Wales they state that they had a surplus last year, but how was it brought about? During the year additional taxation was put on to the extent of £1,813,000: without it there would have been a deficit. Some of it was additional income tax, and the rest stamp duties. I might point out in regard to stamp duty that the additional taxation will fall on the consumer—will be passed on by the business people. In fact, it will fall on the small man more or less as they will all have to pay their share. Western Australia is in much the same position. That is how they bring about their surplus in a socialistic-governed State. They put on fresh taxation. In the Statement which we have before us a surplus is again anticipated, but there is nothing mentioned in the shape of additional taxation. Queensland has a surplus year after year, and although we are spending large sums of money, it is all done without additional taxation. Then, again, to show the excellent position we stand in in Queensland I find from the tables published by the Government Statistician that living expenses and house rent costing 19s. 6d in Queensland, costs £1 2s. 5d. in Perth, and £1 3s. 6d. in Sydney, while the general average throughout the Commonwealth is £1 1s. 11d., so that the worker in Queensland is 2s. 6d. better off in every £1 than the worker in Perth and 3s. 6d. better off than the worker in Sydney. These figures are taken from "Knibbs," and the same authority states that, so far as the effective wage is

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concerned, Queensland stands highest in the list. That is the satisfactory result that accrues through having a Liberal Administration at the head of affairs. It goes without saying that the position of the farmer particularly appeals to me, because I am a farmer myself. One of the first things that we need to look at is railway construction, because one of the farmer's first requirements is the facilities for getting his produce to market. While we opened 190 miles of new railways last financial year, New South Wales only opened 37 miles and Western Australia 113 miles—150 miles altogether against our 190. We find that the total amount spent in connection with the Agricultural Bank, Workers' Dwellings Board, charges under the closer settlement fund, co-operative production at central sugar-mills, and so on, amounted to £4,147,000 altogether. That is a very considerable amount to spend on these different undertakings, and means cheap money for the producer. They all tend towards the development of the country and all are reproductive. I notice that there were over 2,000,000 tons of cane produced last year. I will show how that production has been for the benefit of the whole community. I think I am well within the mark when I say that the production of 1 ton of cane represents the expenditure of 18s. in wages. In that case, over £1,800,000 has been spent on labour in producing the 2,000,000 tons of cane that the Treasurer speaks of in his report. Recent happenings have opened the farmers' eyes in regard to one prominent plank in the Labour party's platform—that is, the regulation of prices. I notice in a little pamphlet, published in the name of Mr. Fisher during the last Federal campaign, he said that the first matter to be attended to was the regulation of prices. I do not think, after what has happened lately, that it will be of any use for a candidate to go into farming districts and talk about legislative regulation of prices. I also noticed that when the Premier spoke about the board increasing the unduly low price of sugar now prevailing, it immediately called forth interjections from the other side, who accused us of desiring to increase the price of primary products. What do hon. members want? Do they really intend the sugar-grower to work without any profit to himself? I mention this to show what is likely to happen to the primary producers through the regulation of prices. At the time the Prices Board had decided that the wholesale price of refined sugar should be £20 15s. per ton. I find that such a price would be equal to £14 14s. per ton for raw sugar, and after deducting the cost of manufacture, as disclosed by the Auditor-General's report, all that was left to the grower was £1 3s. 3d. per ton for his cane. It is generally accepted by those engaged in the sugar industry that you cannot profitably produce cane for less than £1 5s. per ton; some say from £1 5s. to £1 10s. a ton; but, at any rate, it cannot be produced profitably at less than £1 5s. a ton. Therefore, the price fixed for refined sugar by the Prices Board leaves nothing for the producer, and yet hon. members opposite are getting anxious because an increase in that price is mentioned. Further, the above cost of milling was abnormally low. £5 is the lowest we can hope for in the future, equivalent to £1 1s. per ton for cane at the corresponding price for refined sugar favoured by the Opposition. Again, I find that in New

South Wales the price of wheat has been fixed at 4s. 2d. per bushel. According to the report of the Agricultural Department in New South Wales, wheat can be grown profitably at 3s. 9d. per bushel, but it did not allow for interest; but the latest figures available by a practical man, and taking the average crop at 12 bushels an acre, show that the lowest price at which wheat can be produced at a profit is 4s. 6d. per bushel. Under such circumstances as that, I do not think the legislative fixing of prices is likely to appeal to the farmers. Referring again to the cost of manufacturing sugar, I would like to point out that the Labour party advocate the establishment of State refineries, and some seem to think that in that lies the solution of the difficulty as regards the sugar industry. In this connection, I would point out that the Auditor-General's report—taking two mills where conditions are favourable for comparison—shows that in the mill run by the farmers on co-operative lines the cost of manufacture was 1s. 6d. per ton of cane less than in the other mill under State control; the mills under their own control could, out of lesser working costs, pay the farmers 1s. 3d. a ton more for their cane than what was paid by the mills under Government control. With those figures in view, I do not think you are likely to win the support of the farmers to any suggestion of a State refinery. Again, in comparing the policy of the two parties from the farmer's point of view, I find that New South Wales is worth referring to. The New South Wales Government have gone in for the expenditure of loan money on a large scale in establishing factories, and so on, and it is rather interesting to take the results of such enterprises, as, perhaps, they contain a lesson to us, so I make no apology in putting the matter before the Committee. I find that the New South Wales Government have expended more than £7,000,000 of loan money in industrial enterprises, such as the Dacey Garden suburb, State brickworks, State lime works, State stone quarry, State clothing factory, State buildings, State bakery, and so on. And then there are State tramlines. Some of these enterprises show a profit and some show a loss, but taking them altogether the total loss on all these undertakings is £48,000 a year. That may not be a very large loss on an expenditure of over £7,000,000, but that money could have been far better spent in building railways to country districts, instead of spending it on enterprises which are likely to further add to the already congested population in the cities. Again, take the shipping enterprises of the Western Australian Government, the State sawmills and State implement work, and see what happened. The last figures that have been supplied show a loss in connection with all those enterprises. I cannot see any good for the country in the expenditure of loan money in those directions. Far better use it in primary development. I noticed, the other day, a paragraph in the papers stating that an attempt has been made in connection with our printing works, to bring about "compulsory preference to unionists"—the plank of the socialistic platform. It is needless for me to say to the

Treasurer that I trust nothing [7 p.m.] will be done in that direction.

So far as I could get at the meaning of it, it was a deputation from the Typographical Society to Mr. Fisher, and they referred to the large amount of printing that

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was done in the State Printing Offices. So I took it that they were urging that some steps should be taken for that purpose, and influence in that direction would be brought to bear. Let me say that I do not think there is the slightest probability of the success of their efforts as long as we have the present Treasurer or any other Liberal Treasurer in office. At the same time, I think it is a most unjust thing to give preference to unionists, especially in Government work. It is most unjust to demand that the taxes that are contributed by all the community should be expended for the benefit of one section only, for that is what compulsory preference on the part of the Government as an employer means. Why one section of the community should claim that everything in the shape of expenditure of money gained through taxation should be allotted to them I certainly fail to see. We know very well that it has been before the Federal Parliament for some time now, and whenever the socialist party have held office they have brought the principle into effect. Is it a fair or just thing that it should be claimed that a man's ability to earn a living, his freedom to take employment, should depend on his subscribing to some particular set of political doctrines, quite apart from his fitness for employment or otherwise? Trade unions in the first instance were formed legitimately, most praiseworthy, for the protection of the different employees in the various trades, but they have been simply turned into political machines.

Mr. KIRWAN: On the advice of your party, after the maritime strike.

Mr. SWAYNE: I do not care whose advice it was; it was wrong. We find that as far back as 1902 registration was refused to a union in Sydney because it sought to impose conditions on its members, compelling them to subscribe to certain newspapers and towards the expenses of certain candidates to whose views they might be diametrically opposed. The socialists have legislated to legalise such registrations now. Coming down to recent occurrences, I find that in 1913 three members of the Federated House and Ship Painters and Decorators' Association were sued for not paying levies in furtherance of certain political newspapers. And all the way between those two incidents you can find similar cases. Is it fair to say to any man, "Before you are allowed to earn your living you must subscribe to certain newspapers and parliamentary candidates, no matter whether you believe in their objects or not?" I do not think that anybody can contend it is a fair thing. Again, only during this month we find that in Sydney men were sued for levies. They stated their inability to pay, but they were convicted, with a penalty of imprisonment. It is coming to a nice pass in what is called a free country when men are not to be allowed to earn their living unless they subject themselves to such tyranny as that.

Mr. RYAN: They must have been prosecuted in pursuance of an agreement they made.

Mr. SWAYNE: The last case which I have quoted, so far as I know, was in connection with the ordinary levies, but the case I quoted before arose because they did not subscribe to certain newspapers, and it is tyrannical to compel them to enter into such

agreements as the price of obtaining employment. And my point is that it is most unfair and unjust to say to men that, unless they subscribe to certain newspapers or candidates, in whose political objective they do not believe, they shall not earn their living—that they shall starve. No matter what good has been done by these bodies in the past, nothing can justify conduct of that kind. I can speak with some feeling, because I have been secretary of a farmers' organisation and have sometimes felt that it was very hard that men who had not contributed to our expenses should share in the advantages we gained, but I should be very sorry to say that the others were not to be allowed to live unless they joined. And when you take a political objective, and say, "You must belong to this political organisation or not work," I think it is still more unjust. We know very well that registration was refused to the Australian Workers' Association because it had amongst its objectives the nationalisation of all means of production, exchange, and distribution.

Mr. THEODORE: Does that association exist in Queensland?

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. member knows how often he has contended that the membership of that association should be made compulsory on all workers—that they should be compelled to join an association which aims at the nationalisation of all means of production, distribution, and exchange; in other words, the abolition of everything in the way of private ownership. Can anybody justify a measure of that kind? I am glad that this matter has come up, and although members may ask what it has to do with the Financial Statement, it has been brought up several times before and has been mentioned during this debate. Now, before I finish I should like to refer to a matter to which I have drawn attention on several occasions. I think I generally do during this debate refer to the very narrow margin that exists in Australia between the exports and the imports. Taking the last Commonwealth "Year Book," No. 7, I find that the margin is getting narrower. That book gives the exports as worth £79,000,000 in round figures, and the imports as worth £78,000,000; the difference between the two is less than £1,000,000—£927,049 for the whole year. I have always contended that that is the sort of thing that must bring about disaster, because we are not selling enough to pay our way; we are producing scarcely sufficient to pay for what we buy, and I think we are spending, in addition, something like £15,000,000 out of the country every year to pay interest on the money we have borrowed for public works and private development. It is alarming that the position is getting worse in this respect. At the same time it was rather amusing that, during this debate, hon. members on the other side have blamed this Government because they are not doing more in that direction. But we are a bright and shining example to the rest of the Commonwealth. Whereas there is only a margin of less than £1,000,000 for the whole of the Commonwealth, in Queensland there is a difference of nearly £6,000,000. The last "A.B.C." issued by Mr. Weedon, the Government Statistician, shows that our exports are worth £12,000,000 in round figures and our imports £6,000,000, the difference between

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them being £5,637,000. In other words, while the whole Commonwealth, with a total trade of nearly £80,000,000 is not selling £1,000,000 more than it buys, Queensland alone is selling nearly £6,000,000 more than it buys. I cannot see that it is fair to solely blame the State Governments, seeing that protective duties have a very large influence upon the matter, and that they do not lie in our hands. At the same time, if anything is being done by any Government in Australia in this most important direction, it is being done by the Queensland Government. We have every reason to congratulate ourselves upon our position in this matter. In war time we all know that foodstuffs are of the utmost consequence. We also know that the exigencies of the position require a certain extra amount of paper money to be put into circulation, and that the gold backing will be smaller in comparison. I do not think any backing is an efficient substitute for gold, but food products, such as wheat, make a very good substitute for gold, as they are so readily convertible into money. In the early days of the United States, when they dealt largely in paper money, we know that what was called the "greenback" deteriorated in value to a serious extent, but we also know that documents which represented agricultural products—tobacco, for instance—retained their face value, because they had a backing that could be turned into money at any moment. In view of the present position, it is essentially desirable that we should have a backing of that kind if we cannot have one of gold; and Queensland, under her Liberal administration, is doing more to meet the bill in that case than any other State in Australia. The hon. member for Herbert complained that we had no proper sinking fund. In various ways Queensland has what is equivalent to a sinking fund, at any rate, to the extent of about £1,300,000. But when our surpluses are put to such uses as the construction of railways, the need for a sinking fund to a great extent vanishes. The work done with the money increases in value every year. A railway built into a district containing only 10,000 people is worth twice as much when there are 20,000 inhabitants in the district, and that is the sort of thing that is coming about in Queensland. To put money into a sinking fund and leave it there would be simply locking up money that we can very well spend in reproductive works. The hon. member for Herbert computed that something like £270,000 per annum would be required for the purpose he had in view. That amounts to nearly 10s. per head on every inhabitant in Queensland, and I do not see why we should sacrifice such an amount for the purpose that was suggested. In Western Australia they have a sinking fund, but, as I have said before when dealing with this question, the money they have put away into their sinking fund would build hundreds of miles of railway. They would be in a much better financial position in that State if they devoted the money to building railways or other development work. A policy of that kind is not likely to be for the benefit of the country. It has been said on the other side, in a very flippant and off-hand manner, that our railways are shockingly mismanaged; but I have not heard anything advanced in proof of that statement. I notice that Mr. Kidman, who is one of the largest owners of cattle in the world, and who speaks with a world-wide knowledge of the subject, spoke of the Queensland railways as being some of the best managed railways for the transport of cattle that he knew of; and all

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round I think that the Traffic Department is deserving of every praise. One charge that has been hurled across the Chamber is that the department is not providing railway sidings in the sugar districts. Now, I represent one of the largest sugar districts in the State, and I am pleased to say that we have been very well served in the matter of railway sidings recently. So far as I know, in every case that has come within my cognisance, where a good case could be made out for a siding we have got it. That charge therefore, falls to the ground, like many others from the same source. Coming back to the question of exports and imports—than which no more important question could be discussed at the present time—it has been urged that this class and that class of the community should do more—that the farmer should do more, and that the mercantile man should do more, and so on. But I think it is the duty of all of us to bring about a better state of things regarding the productiveness of the country; and on this subject I shall read an extract from an article which appeared in the Sydney "Bulletin"—

"Here or thereabouts the question of the seven months' trade returns comes in. From 1st January to 31st July the six federated States imported goods to the value of £47,106,210, and exported goods to the value of £43,087,839. In other words, they failed, by a trifle of £4,018,371, to pay for the goods which they imported, and they did this in order that they might lead the comparatively luxurious life of short hours, high wages, good food, and abundance of holidays and football. As for the seven months' interest—roughly estimated, in view of all the recent borrowings, at £9,500,000—upon old debts, not one copper of it was liquidated out of the country's own resources. To the extent of about £13,500,000—or nearly £2,000,000 per month—Australia's alleged prosperity this year has depended on the acquisition of new loans and on the country's luck in the renewal of old loans. If a serious difficulty arises—and it is hard to see how it can avoid arising, unless the war, by some amazing accident, collapses next week—the bottom must fall out of our shocking and optimistic finance."

That extract from the "Bulletin" is very apropos to the question that I have been discussing with regard to exports and imports. On the question of compulsory preference, it has been urged that a great deal of good has been done by the unions in the past, and I am not gainsaying that for one moment, but I would like to point out that the policy of those who control the unions has been to largely counterbalance the good they have done. In connection with the strike we had two or three years ago in the tramways, the final phase of which has only just been dealt with by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, I remember that in February that year the coal trade fell off to the tune of £20,000; as compared with the corresponding month of the previous year there was £20,000 lost to the workers of Queensland. Here, again, I have a paragraph which recently appeared in one of the Southern papers, and which is taken from the figures supplied by Mr. Knibbs. I am just point-

ing out that, although a great deal has been said about the good which has been brought about by industrial bodies, a good deal can be said about the harm which may be laid at their door. The extract reads—

“DOWN TOOLS!

“COST OF AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES.

“Melbourne, Friday.—The Labour ‘Bulletin’ for the second quarter of 1914, issued under the authority of Mr. Archibald by the Commonwealth Statistician, states that the number of industrial disputes beginning during the second quarter of the year was eighty-three, involving directly and indirectly a total of 16,859 persons. New and old disputes during the quarter together accounted for an estimated loss in wages of £156,415. The number of disputes which occurred during the first quarter of the year was thirteen. The loss in working days amounted to 260,151, and the loss in wages to £130,392.”

While the unions may have done good in the past, they have most certainly taken money out of the pockets of the workers recently through unnecessary strikes. Whilst admitting they have done good in the past, I should like to point out that in these days of industrial tribunals, which are established to deal with all disputes that may arise between employer and employees, that, to a considerable extent, the purpose for which these large, expensive, and costly organisations were established no longer exists. If you can get a tribunal to deal with disputes, the occasion for large monetary contributions for the purpose of industrial organisation on the part of the employees to a great extent disappears, as their claims can be dealt with by the courts. I have spoken of the good management, and so on, in connection with our State railways. But I have often urged that it would be in the interests of the settlers, who have to find the greater part of the money and make good the deficiencies, if the system of contract work in construction was given a fair trial as against day work.

Mr. HAMILTON: That was shown years ago.

Mr. SWAYNE: Yes, I know all about what has happened in the past, but I think the time has now arrived for another trial. I do not see what hon. members who pose as the advocates of day work have to be alarmed at in the request for a fair trial. Some occurrences which have come under my notice during the last few months have strengthened my opinion in this respect. In connection with the incident to which I am going to allude, there is a different engineer in charge now. The engineer who was in charge at the time this incident occurred is not there now, and what I have to say is not with any idea of reflecting upon those who are in charge at present. This is the sort of thing which sometimes happens under the day-work system, and which I do not think will happen under the contract system. This particular instance was the construction of a bridge across a creek on the North Coast line. The bridge was started during the dry season, and if the work had been pushed on at the right time there was ample opportunity to have got the most important part of the concrete piers that would be affected by flood waters built when there was scarcely any water running. Further,

there was a large sugar-mill working a few hundred yards up the creek, which was willing to supply a 1,500 candle-power electric light for the use of those who were working, and it was also absorbing at the time a good deal of the water for its own requirements. If a contractor had had the building of that bridge, I think he would have put on three shifts of men and pushed the work on to a completion while the conditions were so propitious. It was admitted that the work was urgent, because two shifts were put on for a short time; but three shifts should have been put on for all the time, so that the work could have been completed while there was a very small flow of water to cope with, and it could have been done at a smaller cost. The opportunity was not availed of, however, and the wet season came on. It is only quite recently that the work has been completed, and delay has been caused on the whole section. It is such occurrences as that which strengthens me in the opinion that, in the interests of the general public, and more particularly that section which has to stand the liability in connection with these loans, a fair trial should be made of the system of contract work as compared with day work.

Mr. FOLEY: That has already been proved.

Mr. SWAYNE: It has not been proved, and it is now about time that another trial was given. The Financial Statement is, I think, one that discloses a very good state of affairs as far as Queensland is concerned, and one which is calculated to give the people of Queensland every confidence in the Government which has contributed towards the satisfactory state of affairs which exist, and I feel sure that, when the opportunity arises, the people will repeat the confidence which they have reposed in this party in the past.

Mr. FIELLY (*Paddington*): It is rather amusing to hear member after member on the other side stating that nothing has been offered in genuine criticism of the Government financial proposals. I fancy the people of Queensland gave a definite decision on 5th September last, and are prepared to give a definite decision on it again. The people of Australia gave a decision on 5th September, and very shortly, I think, they will give another decision quite as emphatic and push out the present Tory Government. The Minister for Lands has treated us this afternoon to an explanation of what *Liberalism* means. He went to some trouble to tell us how it was formed, in what shape it was conceived, and how it grew to manhood. I prefer to take the word of the Minister for Public Instruction on this particular matter. He has given a definition of *Liberalism*, and he has also described the present party with whom he is associated. On referring to “*Hansard*” for 1909, page 154, it will be seen that the hon. gentleman spoke as follows:—

“Mr. BLAIR: The old party led by the senior member for Townsville has at various times in its career adopted various devices in order to recapture the favour that it has lost. It has masqueraded under the name of ‘*Liberal*,’ but the disguise has been seen through.

“Hon. R. Philp: You were very glad to come to them to get a billet.

“Mr. BLAIR: I did not go to you. You know yourself what I refer to, and you know exactly the reason of it.

*Mr. Fihelly.]*

"Hon. R. Philp: You were glad to get a job.

"Mr. BLAIR: I will allude to that matter in a moment if the hon. member persists in his interjections. The hon. member's party masqueraded for many years as Liberals, but the disguise was too thin and it was seen through. Then the party tried to become known as the 'People's Progressives,' and they endeavoured to form progressive leagues in various centres in Queensland, and their efforts are proving dismally abortive. (Hear, hear!)

"Hon. R. Philp: Quite wrong again.

"Mr. BLAIR: They are proving dismally abortive, and no wonder, because it is hard to cover wolfish appearances with sheep's clothing."

I prefer to take the description of the Minister for Public Instruction, and I am sure that the people of Queensland will prefer to do so. This Government, since it was returned to power in 1912, has simply aimed at interfering with the liberties of the people. The first measure was the Industrial Peace Bill, to curtail the power of and inflict hardship on the unions. That was not satisfactory; and at the Federal elections in 1913 the Queensland people gathered around the Labour banner, after an Elections Act had been introduced to further tamper with the exercise of their voting rights. That was unavailing, because this year the people have also pronounced themselves in favour of Labour; and more tampering in the shape of another Elections Bill is forecasted.

Mr. FORSYTH: How do you know?

Mr. FIEHELLY: From the words of the Premier, who announced that he had an Elections Act Amendment Bill to introduce this session. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee is the only member who [7.30 p.m.] knows everything; he imagines that he is the one financial expert in the world, but in that he is altogether mistaken; everybody laughs at him and takes him as a joke.

Mr. FORSYTH: No, they don't.

Mr. FIEHELLY: My heart goes out in sympathy to the "Hansard" staff who have to report his stuff. The hon. member unloaded himself of his figures, and I hope he will allow me to unload myself of my stuff without interruption. As I said, the Government are again going to tamper with the franchise, and I am satisfied that the description of their efforts in this direction, as given by the present Secretary for Education, is preferable to the description we have had from the Secretary for Public Lands. In "Hansard" of 1909, page 159, Mr. Blair, the member for Ipswich, said—

"Fancy a democratic policy emanating from the reactionaries sitting behind the Premier, the representatives over there of companies, vested interests, monopolies, and money—fancy a democratic policy from them!

"Mr. Denham: Progress and development.

"Mr. BLAIR: The hon. member is one of the most liberal members in the party, and one of the most socialistic, and if he was in his right place he would be on this side now. With every monopoly behind them, and yet, forsooth, we are told to expect a democratic policy. It

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is an insult to intelligence to labour the matter any further. I am reminded by the hon. member for South Brisbane that it was the Premier who described the party over there as 'conservative reactionaries'—the Premier's own term. I hope they feel proud of that description."

That is entirely different from the description given by the Secretary for Public Lands. On the 5th September last we had the unseemly spectacle of the Union Jack being used as a party symbol by the Liberals of Queensland. The dear old flag of Britain was trampled in the mire and in the sewer of party politics. Personally, I felt ashamed of the people opposite as Queenslanders. I knew that in their political methods they would stop at nothing, but to damage the ideas of the young people growing up by using the Union Jack for party political purposes was a standing disgrace to all those concerned. I hope it will never happen again. The people gave a reply to such tactics, and refused to believe that the party opposite were associated in any form with the Union Jack: they regarded them as mere political adventurers just out for the one purpose of looking after their own interests and the interests of their commercial and squatting friends. I think nearly every member opposite who has addressed the Committee has spoken about his own private affairs, and of the axe he had to grind. The hon. member for Enoggera gave us a biographical history, a sort of story of "From Log Cabin to White House," which was magnificent but was not politics. The hon. member stands well with those associated with him in business, but from his remarks one would imagine that he was the only member on that side of the House who had a character to lose. I disagree with him on that point, because I believe there are other members on that side who had characters. Then, we have the hon. member for Maryborough ventilating his little grievances about railways, coalfields, and ports in his district. The hon. member was not concerned about the people who had to pay the taxes to meet the interest on the money expended, but thought only of the interests of chambers of commerce, meat companies, shipping combines, and land monopolists. Those are the matters which concern the hon. member as a legislator of this State. We have heard from hon. members opposite of the imposition of a levy on unionists for a daily newspaper. I am replying now particularly to the hon. member for Mirani, and I ask him does he think of the imposition that is placed on the unionists or other individuals in Queensland who have to pay such exorbitant prices for meat? The price of meat has risen 3d. per lb. during the last two or three years, and in one year that tax in Queensland alone amounted to £2,250,000. Multiply that by seven, and you have the tax which the squatters are imposing on the people of Australia. That is what the squatters are doing for the people of Australia, and then they give a few shillings to the patriotic fund.

Mr. FORSYTH: What have you given?

Mr. FIEHELLY: I guarantee that relatively I have given £1 for every £100 the hon. gentleman and his firm have given. The squatters have done very well out of the country. They have exploited the people and got concessions from the Government,

and they can afford to be generous. They have the use of our best lands for a song, and they have got them under false pretences.

Mr. FORSYTH: That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. FIELLY: It is not untrue.

Mr. BOWMAN: What did he give?

Mr. FIELLY: I did not see his name in the newspapers, but I suppose he gave a mite.

Mr. FORSYTH: My mite is bigger than yours.

Mr. FIELLY: I am quite prepared to give my mite, and I give of what I have earned. The Minister for Lands expressed himself as very pleased with the operations of the Agricultural Bank. In Toowoomba, there is a Liberal paper called "The Toowoomba Chronicle." On 3rd October, that paper, speaking of the Agricultural Bank, said—

"The institution has been a failure and a disgrace to the State. Instead of fostering farming it has frustrated it."

And that is the opinion of every person who has had any transactions with the Agricultural Bank. It is a dismal failure. In Western Australia, the Labour Government, under Mr. Scaddan, in three years advanced £1,500,000 to settlers, while in six years the Government of Queensland advanced only £632,000. I ask the hon. member for Cunningham to mark and inwardly digest that fact. Now, the Minister for Lands may unload his rhetoric also upon the Chamber, but he cannot interfere with facts. The facts are here. In connection with the Workers' Dwellings Act, we have his colleague, the Secretary for Public Instruction, saying that he regarded it as the greatest sham and fraud ever perpetrated upon the people of Queensland. I will not quote that now. I quoted it on the Address in Reply, and the Minister for Lands can see it there if he wishes to. For the benefit of the hon. member for Cunningham, I might point out that the Scaddan Government spent £664,000 from loan for the further development of agriculture. They also spent £127,000 for the purchase of seed wheat and in buying stock, and a further £180,000 for the construction of abattoirs. In addition, the Scaddan Government gave £150,000 for land surveys, and £240,000 for the purchase of estate\* for irrigation purposes. In addition to that—to come back to meat—Western Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth where meat has actually been reduced in price during the last three years. (Hear, hear!) We may talk about generalities. We may talk about surpluses and deficits, and about the magnificent seasons we have had which have been for the benefit of the State of Queensland. Ministers may pay each other compliments—although I am sorry to see that the Treasurer, in his report, referred to the Minister for Lands in a patronising way. We may pay compliments across the floor of the House, and pass legislation here, but the people outside want to know why it is that meat is so dear. They want to know something about flour also. They can deal with the grocer and draper themselves, but what they want to know about is the cost of bread and meat. We have 5,000,000 cattle in Queensland and 20,000,000 sheep, and we have only 600,000 people. Yet meat is sold at such

an enormous price. There is something wrong there. If it is the old law of supply and demand, then let us wipe it out, and wipe it out for ever. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee smiles. Some method will have to be devised for giving the people cheaper meat. It is an outrage. If this is not done there will be something approaching an earthquake in this State. The increase in the price of meat has been a tax upon the people during the last three years to the extent of, approximately, £2,250,000. That is the amount which the increase in the price of meat amounts to. It is an outrage! From the point of view of the man getting 8s. or 9s. a day, it is an outrage. What sympathy have members opposite got for the man getting 8s. or 9s. a day? What sympathy has the deputy hon. Treasurer got for that man? The hon. member will only snap his fingers at the man getting 8s. a day, or his wife, whose daily routine is washing, sewing, cleaning, and scrubbing. What does the hon. member think about the working man's wife, who probably works her fingers off every day? What does the hon. member care about these women, whose horizon is their back yard or their neighbour's back yard? Hon. members opposite talk about the Savings Bank statistics. What is the use of talking about the Savings Bank statistics to the working man and his wife? The working man's wife never gets a holiday from one year's end to the other, but has to keep working all the time. We members of this House can afford to send our wives for a holiday every year, but there is no chance for a holiday for the working man or his wife. There may be some satisfaction in knowing that the hon. member for Murrumbidgee has got a good deal of wealth, and that he has the maximum amount of money in the Savings Bank. There may be some satisfaction in knowing that the Treasurer is similarly situated; but the man getting 8s. or 9s. a day has no outlook at all. He knows that he has to keep on working all the time, and his wife has to keep on working all the time. They are always working, and they will always have to work, because the party opposite have sentenced them to work perpetually. The party opposite are going to see that they keep the working man and his wife at work, because they cannot have such an easy time and they cannot play jokes unless they keep the working man at work. There is another aspect of the position. The present war in Europe has been referred to by the hon. member for Bundaberg, and he stated that we should do something in the way of starting local manufactures. We have now got a splendid opportunity in the way of doing something to stimulate our local manufactures. In bad times we cannot do a thing to help along local manufactures, but in good times we have magnificent opportunities if we would only take advantage of them. If we only took the subsidy of £20,000 or £30,000 which we give to the British-India Steamship Navigation Company and expended it here on some manufacturing operation, it would give a better return. It is absurd to think that we cannot build a ship in Queensland. Just fancy, if you go down the Brisbane River you cannot see one boat that was built locally. It is ridiculous to think that we have to send our wool across the water to be manufactured, and that we have to buy it back, paying freight, carriage, wharf labourers' wages, and wharfage dues. And

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that we have to pay for rent and the depreciation of shipping, and also pay commission agents in England. It is ridiculous to think that we have to go through the same old law of supply and demand process to get it back. What an absurd thing it is to send the raw ore from Australia, instead of having an iron manufacturing industry here. We have got all the necessary materials for having a manufacturing process established in Queensland. Iron is a necessity. Steel rails are a necessity here. We hear the Government growling about steel rails. Yet we know that this Government winked its eye at the steel trust when it demanded its pound of flesh two years ago. I refer to the time when King O'Malley was Minister for Home Affairs in the Commonwealth, and he exposed the tactics of the steel trust, but this Government allowed itself to be bled by the steel trust. The Government know well that sooner or later we must manufacture our own iron. The Government should go in for a policy of manufacturing iron instead of picking at the little salaries. The Government prefer to carry on a soulless, cheeseparing policy, and pick away at the little salaries of the public servants. They pick out the teachers, and the junior teachers at that, and refuse to give them their automatic increases. The Government prefer to have a picking policy, exactly in the same way as the stamp tax picks at the commercial community. If we wait until bad times come, then we cannot establish our manufactures. We have been having good seasons, and now is the time to start these manufactures. If we go on as we are doing we will become a bankrupt nation. We are spending all we are getting. We are spending a large amount of loan money. We hear a lot about the Scaddan Government and the Holman Government, and the amount of loan money they are spending, but we are spending per head quite as much loan money as the Holman Government are spending, and I doubt if we are spending to the same advantage. I doubt whether we are getting the same use of our loan money, or whether we are having as good an investment of it as they have in New South Wales. However, that is beside the question. During good years, we should endeavour to do something to accelerate manufacturing industries in this State. We could bring our tanning, wool, and iron industries into existence. Not one-tenth of the manufactured articles we use in this State are made here. There seems to be something wrong there. The Government do not realise that we are going through a process of evolution—an evolution of men and an evolution of matters. Men and matters are changing. New industries are springing up, and we find that the requirements of ten years ago are not the requirements of to-morrow. We want a bold policy, not a counting-house policy. We do not want any Pecksniffian rulers. We want something bigger and something broader to help along our national ideas and national existence. We cannot do these things in bad seasons. If the Labour party got into power to-morrow and bad seasons came along, we could simply make it easier for the working man by seeing that the taxation was so distributed that it would fall on the right people. We could make it easier for the man who has to work, work, work all his life. But if we were over on the opposite side of the House, we could not go in for a big, bold policy if we had bad seasons. We could not carry out our

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nationalisation policy. We could not go in for furniture-making, and brick-making, and sawmilling if the seasons were bad. Mr. Scaddan was laughed at for starting a steamship service in Western Australia. It was one of the finest things that ever happened in Australia. Even though there has been a loss at the start, it has been a splendid thing for Western Australia. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee again comes in with his loud laugh which betrays the vacant mind. The hon. member well knows that in all big undertakings there must be a loss at first. The hon. member knows that the American Meat Company will lose £500,000 before they start to make a profit of 6d. We know that the hon. member for Murrumbidgee, and the other conspirators associated with him in the squatting industry, have bled the people of Queensland to the extent of £2,250,000.

Mr. FORSYTH: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in calling me a conspirator? The statement is a deliberate falsehood, and I hope you will ask him to withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think there is any point of order. I did not understand the hon. member to call the hon. member for Murrumbidgee a conspirator. What he said was that the hon. member was associated with conspirators. If he had called the hon. member a conspirator I should certainly have called him to order.

Mr. FIELLY: Hon members get very thin-skinned when they are attacked in this Chamber. Insults can be hurled at members on our side by every Tom, Dick, and Harry, and personal insults, too, but no notice is taken of them. The hon. member for Herbert can be twitted about the co-operative store with which he has practically no association except that which is honourable. The hon. member for Burrum, who should be the last man in this Chamber to attack members on this side, can hurl most insulting epithets to every individual over here, but the moment hon. members opposite are touched they rise to a point of order; they imagine that one of their clerks is insulting them. As I was saying when this absurd and childish interjection interrupted me, the Labour party could not do these things in bad seasons. They could only do them in good seasons. I am complaining that during the last seven or eight years—during several years that the Treasurer has had a surplus, he has done nothing but receive the money and spend it. He has certainly subsidised the German Empire to some extent. Openly and brazenly and without excuse he has brought boats to our river and to the Northern ports of Australia that may be laying mines now for all we know. There may be British machinery in those German hulks, but the Government are doing nothing to encourage manufactures, on which the British Empire depends. If our trade routes were in danger to-morrow, we would be in a helpless condition except so far as foodstuffs are concerned. We would not be able to employ men because we could not get our absurd steel rails from thousands of miles away. We could not make them; we could do nothing. We are helpless, like a baby. During all these good seasons the Treasurer merely boasts about his surplus, and does not say one word about what he has done for the actual advancement of Queensland. Mr. Scaddan with his steam-

ship company did do something. I notice a remark of the Treasurer's in his Statement in regard to railways. He said—

"Notwithstanding the foregoing reference, it is surprising that what is after all only a handful of people should have contributed to the railways for the year 1913-14 the large sum of £3,675,562, an amount which has not been helped in the earning thereof by increased railway rates or by placing upon the users of the railways increased charges, which in turn would have, if so placed, been borne directly or indirectly by the primary producer and citizens of the State."

There is some sanity about that. The railways have not put up the rates, and the railways have not put up the charges, but the shipping companies have put up their charges to a very large extent.

Mr. HUNTER: The railway charges are 100 per cent. over the New South Wales charges.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I admit that with a Labour Government managing the affairs of the State they could lighten railway taxation, but the present Government, all things considered, are not doing badly with their railways. The point I wish to make is that the steamship companies, which have a monopoly, have stuck up passenger charges and also goods freights; they are sticking them up everywhere in Australia. The meat companies are sticking up their prices to the extent of £2,250,000 per annum in Queensland alone. If the policy followed in regard to our railways were followed in regard to the shipping companies, it would be the acme of sanity; there would be all-round sanity in the proposition, and I commend to the favourable consideration of the Government that, while they have good years, they should spend some money in encouraging the shipbuilding industry and the ownership of a State line of steamships by the people. The deficits from 1859 to 1914 have amounted to £4,219,708, and the surpluses to only £2,600,845. Taking the State from its inception, we have a deficit, which has, of course, gone to the public debt, of £1,618,865, which has been incurred by the Liberal Administration—incurred by this Administration which is barking like so many jackals at Scaddan and Holman, whatever Scaddan and Holman may have to do with Queensland. Even taking the present Government's record from 1900 till 1914, they have had deficits amounting to £1,163,893, and surpluses only to the amount of £714,623. The surplus for the last ten years does not cover the deficit for the previous four years. I admit they were bad years, but this Government, which the hon. member for Murrumbidgee adorns in a subordinate capacity, is responsible for this deficit. It was the Morgan Administration that had to look to the finances for about three years. It was the Morgan Administration, associated with the Labour party, who piled up the surpluses, small as they were. Since then they have been dwindling away, and we expect them to disappear at any time. Some talk has emanated from members opposite with regard to the sinking fund and the Queensland method in so far as loans are concerned. Just to interest myself in the loan business of Queensland, I took the trouble to look up the first seven loans—that is, the loan moneys comprising the £11,000,000 odd that fall due next year. I find the actual amount received by the people

of Queensland totalled £10,912,514. In interest we have already paid £16,529,224, and we still owe £11,728,800. These figures must really interest the young Queenslanders. We do not permit a local authority to go along in that haphazard way; we make them provide interest and redemption. I have a little table prepared, which I will read in order to get it into "Hansard." It is a very small one, and is as follows:—

|            | Net Amount Received. | Amount Paid in Interest. | Amount Owed in Principal |
|------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|            | £                    | £                        | £                        |
| 1875 ...   | 1,549,630            | 2,644,668                | 1,695,303                |
| 1876 ...   | 668,034              | 1,125,864                | 749,700                  |
| 1877 ...   | 1,212,537            | 1,956,560                | 1,322,000                |
| 1878 ...   | 1,045,737            | 1,706,112                | 1,184,800                |
| 1879 ...   | 2,841,929            | 4,274,200                | 3,053,000                |
| 1881 ...   | 1,042,514            | 1,438,140                | 1,089,500                |
| 1882 ...   | 2,552,733            | 3,384,680                | 2,643,500                |
| Totals ... | 10,912,514           | 16,529,224               | 11,728,800               |

The methods followed here are bad. There is something wrong about them—something impossible about them. It does not seem good finance. It is the sort of finance that the hon. member for Murrumbidgee stands for. He is associated in that sort of finance with the member for Drayton, the deputy leader of the farmers' party.

Mr. FORSYTH: How would you propose to deal with them?

Mr. FIEHELLY: When we get over there we will come forward with a good proposition as to how these things are to be done. The hon. member seems to think there is something bad about it. Does he think it ridiculous that, after having got only £19,000,000 and after having paid over £16,000,000 in interest, we should still owe over £11,000,000?

Mr. FORSYTH: Those figures have been quoted before.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I am not like the hon. member. When I quote a few figures I do not invent them. I know they may have been used before. I know that the hon. member thinks he has a monopoly of [8 p.m.] finance; that he has got a copy-right. I know I am not a new Columbus discovering a new America. I am simply giving some information to the House which I hope hon. members, notwithstanding that they have been reminded of it previously, will take notice of and use for the benefit of the State.

Mr. FORSYTH interjected.

Mr. FIEHELLY: The hon. member is hopeless. I am surprised that a man who has risen to such a high position in the commercial world should descend to these petty childish and peevish interjections, and adopt the spoilt-boy tone he is taking to-night. I hope the hon. member will excuse me for introducing a few figures.

Mr. FORSYTH: I won't excuse you for anything. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. FIEHELLY: I know that there is a tradition in this House that nobody must touch upon the hon. member's preserves, that he is the high and mighty in finance, but, in my temerity, I have had sufficient courage to draft out these figures, and I am going to hand them along to "Hansard" later on. In regard to meat, I just wish to get into

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"Hansard" also the figures of the Agricultural Department appearing in the Under Secretary's report for this year. He points out that each individual consumes 263.69 lb. of meat per year, and, as meat has increased by 3d. per lb. during the last three years, on a population of 631,577, it means that the people have to pay £2,127,000 as increased taxation in consequence of the rise in meat. I am giving these figures so that they can be thoroughly authenticated, so that hon. members may not say that they are figments of the imagination. They can check them with Mr. Knibbs's or Mr. Weedon's statistics and also with the Agricultural Department's report, and they will find, if they work the small sum out for Australia, that the tax in Australia amounts to about £14,000,000, which the hon. member for Murrumba and his friends in the squattering have been collecting. I think that the party opposite is not only the low wages and dear meat party, I think eventually they will arrive at that stage when they will force the working man into a position where he will be able to have only one meal per week. You cannot obtain from any member who has been speaking what is a fair price for meat. The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture was candid enough, he was frank for a moment, and he said that he hoped that it would go to 1s. per lb. and over that. The Treasurer hopes the same thing, but he does not say so, because he represents a metropolitan constituency. He is in the Chamber now, and he does not contradict it. Other hon. members opposite—the hon. member for Murrumba and the hon. member for Cunningham—all these hope that it will go up, but they do not want to discredit the old Tory party, for the simple reason that it might do them some damage at the next election. I should like to tell the Committee a little French story. We were taken right back to Greek mythology by the Minister for Lands this afternoon, so that I do not think it matters if I go back to the time of the French revolution. The Queen, Marie Antoinette, was informed that the people had no bread. And she said in surprise, "Why do they not eat cake?" That is the position that is coming about in Queensland. People will have no meat, and hon. members opposite will want to know why they do not eat grass or something similar. (Laughter.) The low wages and dear meat party are there because their interests are wrapped up in those things. If they do not keep meat at a substantial price it will mean that their political funds will suffer, because the squatters will not pay into them, as the hon. member for Murrumba—his firm—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is too personal altogether in his remarks, and I must ask him to abstain from continuing them.

Mr. FIEHELLY: When I rose to my feet this evening I made up my mind that I was not going to mention any hon. member's name, but it is the impertinent interjections that the hon. member made and his reflections on me—the suggestion that my figures are not authentic and correct—which have made me personal. And the hon. member also said that at one time he gave me a tongue-thrashing and he might have to do it again; I am only adopting an attitude of self-defence. Coming back to this dear meat question, the point is that if the price were not raised there would be no £2,000 from the hon. member for Toowoong to help Liberalism. Where did it come from? The Premier gave sworn evidence that he did not know, but, if in my capacity as secre-

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tary of the Labour party, I received an anonymous donation of £2,000, I would be very curious as to its origin. Cheques for that amount are not flying around every day. They are not given to the patriotic fund very much. They are not given to the hospitals, nor to the universities. That sum was given to the Liberal party just as a business investment, to get a return for it. It will pay dividends, not fourfold but a hundredfold. It is like the bread that is cast upon the waters—it will come back after many days; and the little jobs that are occurring every day in the various departments are evidence of the advantage derived from the distribution of that £2,000. Even if we take the department of the Minister for Railways and the cement matter, we have the fact that he got a quantity of cement out of the railway stores, and evaded a question on the matter. It may have been a most honourable transaction, but the cement came out of the railway stores, it went to his place at Mooloolah, and some of it came back without any freight being paid. I make that charge deliberately. It went back into the stores, and between the Speaker and the Minister for Railways I cannot get a reply to a fair question. That is an instance of the Tammany methods of the dear meat party. They want to conceal everything. The Stores Department, as outlined by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, is in an extraordinary state of chaos. The Minister takes advantage of that to buy some cement for his own purposes, to have it tested by the department, and then sends it back from his place at Mooloolah free of charge. We are simply reverting to the old days when the hon. member for Murrumba represented a Northern constituency; when we had the brother-in-law policy, the tank-engine affair, and the Seaforth Estate business; when we had an inspector of totalisators; when we had, as a matter of fact, a small paper called "The Street" run just for the benefit of the party. We see something of the same thing to-day. Another small paper has sprung up mushroom-like in a night to obey the behests apparently of the Liberal party, and in its way it is exactly as the old "Street" was. We all remember the old "Street" in its heyday. Even in those days there was a cement scandal connected with a leading firm in Brisbane, the principals of which are related in some way with the hon. member for Townsville. I remember it very well. I think the hon. member knows exactly to what I am alluding.

Mr. FORSYTH: I have not the slightest conception of what you are talking about. (Laughter.)

Mr. FIEHELLY: It was in the brief time when he had no seat, when he left the North and came to the South and had to wait until something turned up, like Micawber. In discussing details like the cement or introducing them into a debate on the Financial Statement I must offer the Committee a word of apology. It is because I have been prevented by the tactics pursued by the Liberal officials of this House, by the Secretary for Railways and the Speaker, from ventilating the matter. It is a matter of public importance. Later on I may make an effort to find out whether the Standing Orders do not give me liberty to ventilate the question in the ordinary routine way. When the Treasurer comes along in his soulless way—in his cheeseparing way—the first thing he prunes is the contribution to hospitals. If he did it openly, frankly, and honestly, I would

have no objection, but he sneaks behind the skirts of someone else and attempts to explain it away. There is no explanation possible. Seventeen thousand pounds is taken away from the hospitals, and hon. members on the other side who try to explain it away need only look at the footnote to the Estimates to see that the sum appearing on the Estimates must not be exceeded under any circumstances. If they look further, they will find that last year more than £17,000 in excess of the vote of £137,000 was paid out to the hospitals. The very first way of starting to economise is by coming at the injured, the sick, the halt, the lame, and the blind. That is our courageous way of dealing with a great national crisis. That is our way of getting a surplus to juggle with, instead of coming at members like those to whom I have referred previously—members who are squatters. We could put a tax on every sheep or on every ox. We could put an export tax of 1d. per lb. on wool. We could impose some super-tax which would meet the present case, and which would pay our expenses and tide us over the present crisis, without tinkering with the allowance given to hospitals that are already hard up. The average man in the street does not want to take a red cent from the hospitals; he would give more; almost unanimously he is in favour of nationalising the hospitals. This mean-spirited Government can think of nothing more original than to cut off the allowance to charity—charity which cannot hit back and is a fair mark. The squatters and the commercial community can hit back, and the worker showed in the old poll-tax days that he also could hit back. We find also that in matters affecting the health of the people the Government are most callous. Mr. Scaddan, in Western Australia, provided about £90,000 for health purposes, especially in the agricultural districts. Mr. Holman, with that humanitarian spirit for which he is famed throughout the length and breadth of this continent, has also provided very liberally, although he is a Labour man, for health purposes. He has provided resident doctors in most country districts. What is the situation in Queensland? What is the situation in the districts represented by the hon. member for Burnett or the hon. member for Fassifern? The little farmer out there whose wife or child is taken ill is in a hopeless position. A sulky or a trap of some kind has to be despatched miles and miles to bring a doctor, because our careless, our callous Government do not look after what should be their first consideration, the health of the people. Mr. Fisher's maternity grant was not only an innovation but it was a revelation in the way of looking after the people's health. It gave us the first inkling that the health of the people was an important matter—that the child was worth looking after—that the native-born is a better asset than the immigrant coming from across the seas, because he is handy, because he is more adaptable. Even in this bad year we are bringing in immigrants and paying £26 or £30 for their passage money: we are giving them a free doctor in England; we are giving them free doctors and free medicine for six or seven weeks on the voyage out; and we are giving them a free doctor here, and probably a week's board on their arrival. But we do not see that the mother of every native-born baby is attended by a skilled

medical man and is supplied with the best medicines. We do not bother about that. If my own baby gets sick at any time, I have my telephone and can ring up a doctor, and I do not mind the expense. But the poor man has no telephone. He has to rush out in the early hours of the morning to get a doctor, leaving his wife frightened and lonely at home, and probably he has to starve himself for weeks before he can pay the doctor. These are undeniable facts, but facts that may be news to most hon. members here, because their circumstances are just a shade above those of the ordinary working man—only a shade, for we are not well paid, but paid just sufficient to keep body and soul together. While the Treasurer is dabbling with money-boxes and rulers—while he has these wonderful schemes originating in his brain—surely he can think of coughs and colds, of diphtheria and influenza, and of the children. "Suffer the little children to come unto me." He is great at Biblical texts. Surely he can think of these things and extend some help to the children and to the mothers of children who are starving from one year's end to another. The Government now have a splendid opportunity of remodelling taxation. I am not going to suggest on what broad lines they should go; but it is obvious that our present taxation system is obsolete. It might have been very good for a decade or twenty years ago, but to-day it has outlived its usefulness. No doubt the man who is getting dividends is getting better dividends than ever, notwithstanding that the working man can hardly make ends meet owing to the extra cost of living, and notwithstanding that the hon. member for Mirani sordid-mindedly objects to day labour. Dividends were never bigger in any period in our history, and we should immediately endeavour to do something in the way of remodelling our whole taxation scheme. The Government are not doing their duty in simply collecting and disbursing money—by using the State as a big cash register or a calculating machine. We must strike out: we must develop manufactures, and do something to make the country a real and genuine country, and, incidentally, we must make the people who can best afford it bear the burden. I pointed out our laxity in regard to our own State loans and our firmness in regard to the loans that we hand out to our local authorities. But there is one thing that the Treasurer, the next time he is Acting Premier, should assent to, and that is a Greater Brisbane scheme. Brisbane is in a hopeless position through having a lot of tinpot, warring municipalities and shires. The moment people prefix the word "alderman" to their names, they assume such an importance that they imagine they are the city itself, and they wish to run the city. We have a dozen little municipalities about here. One has low valuations and high ratings; another has high valuations and low ratings; others have both low; others have both high. We have no uniformity, no system: when it comes to a matter of municipal trading or enterprise we are in the mud, because the aldermen lack initiative through having too circumscribed an area. We want to broaden the franchise, give each individual a vote, and have a greater Brisbane scheme, with extended powers in the way of establishing manufactures, brickworks, and furniture establishments. We have a Workers' Dwellings Act, but what a hopeless thing

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that is unless we provide land and furniture. The furniture thieves in Brisbane do not give the working man a fair deal for the stuff sold to him. We import too much furniture. It is astounding to look at "Knibbs," and see the value of the furniture we import annually. We should improve in these matters, and perhaps by extending the municipal franchise, this decrepit Government could rid itself of the responsibility and pass it on. If we have a Greater Brisbane, we might also have a greater tramway scheme, which the Premier promised to bring forward this session, but which, I suppose, cannot be thought of now. We shall be able to deal with gas and electric light, and most public utilities. If any Minister wishes to make a name for himself, and rise above the mediocrity of those with whom he is associating, he could construct such a scheme, and launch it, and I am sure it would be very popular right throughout the State. I had intended to deal with a few other items, but my throat is not quite as good as it could be to-night, and I am afraid I shall have to let something go until a more suitable opportunity arises. I trust that the Treasurer will read my remarks in connection with the loan item, and that he will do something to abolish the preposterous schemes that are followed at present. I hope also that he will do a little in the way of making this country a manufacturing country and helping the people to become self contained, that he will look after or even appoint a commission to make inquiries with regard to the iron, tanning, wool, and half a dozen other industries which could be started here. I trust that, last but not least, he will attend more than he has done in the past to the health of the people, and see to it that our working men's wives have better medical attention, and that the children who are born into Queensland have at least as fair a deal as the immigrants we bring from across the sea.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CRAWFORD (*Mount Morgan*): Seeing that almost every member has felt called upon to address a few remarks to his constituents, I do not know of any reason why I should remain outside the charmed circle of those who will be heard by their constituents. The speeches which have been made on this question have been delivered less to the House than to the larger circle of the constituents, and I do not find fault with that. I think it is quite right that members who speak in this House should address not merely those who hear them, because, after all, it happens now and then, through circumstances over which members have no control, perhaps through business arising in the course of the debate, that they may be called out of the Chamber, and are not able to listen to every member. Therefore it is that when a man rises to speak he feels that he is addressing not only the members of the House who happen to be present but the members of the public who will read his remarks. In reading over the Financial Statement, I can come to no other conclusion than that it is a remarkably clear exposition of the financial position of the country at the present time; and that is precisely what we require. Yet I had the peculiar unhappiness the other night of hearing an hon. member on the opposite side say that the very clearness of the Treasurer's Statement was a cause of

annoyance. The hon. member for Cairns—who I am sorry is not in his place to-night—regarded it as a peculiar piece of unhappiness that the Statement should be so clear. He said that so many things were so wrapped up in it that should be taken for granted. But that is not what we expect. We expect from a Treasurer's Statement each year a clear exposition of the position of the country, and no man has anything to complain of in regard to the exposition which has been placed before us by the Treasurer. I just now said that I did not see the hon. member for Cairns in the House. I now see him—he is quite conspicuous—and I am sure he will not go back on what he said last night: that he complained, and said that it seemed to him a source of annoyance that the Treasurer should put in so many statements which were available from other sources. The statements in the Treasurer's Financial Statement show us that, as a result of the manner in which this country has been governed by a Liberal Administration, the country is in a splendid way—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CRAWFORD: That nothing can be said in regard to obstacles placed in the way of progress, and that every opportunity has been availed of by the Ministry in order to help the country forward. In some respects, the Financial Statement is a war budget. It does not ask us to go the length of imposing war taxation—as some of the other States are doing—but it does call upon us to exercise a greater amount of economy than this State has ever been previously called upon to exercise, and in that respect I think I am justified in terming the Statement a war budget. I do not feel called upon to go lengthily into a criticism of the Statement. Indeed, speaking from this side of the House, I feel that the principle which animates me is the principle which animates all other members on this side: that we should confine our criticism to that which has been brought forward from the other side. And what sort of criticism has members of the Opposition brought forward in regard to the Financial Statement? I would like to point out before going further that we have, as usual, as we expect, and as always will happen while a Liberal Administration is in power, a surplus, and that surplus has been utilised in the usual way; but I would rather have seen it utilised by being sent to those who have withstood the tremendous attack in Europe of those who are the enemies of the British Empire. I would rather have seen the £10,000 odd sent to the brave Belgians as some portion of a reward for them in the fight which they have put up in the interests of Australia; for, after all, we as Australians have not yet struck a blow in the interests of our own freedom. The Belgians have fought for us up to the present time, and the least we can do is to see that if we have any surplus arising from our administration it shall go to those who are our friends in this great and tremendous war which threatens our liberty. It appears to me, from the attention which I devoted to the speeches delivered in the House, that very few members have borne in mind the danger in which we have been placed during the last few weeks. Had it not been for the great fight put up by the Belgians we to-day would have been speaking here with rather a bated voice. We should not have known where we were had those who are our enemies and the

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enemies of the British race been able to walk quietly across Belgian territory and reach the seashore. Had that happened, I think we should not have been able to talk in such a free strain as we are doing to-night. Therefore, we should only be doing justice—only fulfilling a contract which is implied—if we devoted the surplus of our revenue to those who are fighting in our interests in Europe to-day, to-night, every hour, and all through, and who are losing some of their best citizens. I scarcely know in what strain I can continue to address this Committee. Every morning when I rise, my anxiety is to find the paper and ascertain whether we stand a free nation or whether we have been crushed. We must recognise that the battle is to anyone—that it is to the strongest side—and that we cannot yet tell which is the strongest side. We are not distinguished from other people in having no emotions. If a great disaster happened to us, I feel certain that we in this

Parliament would reflect the [8.30 p.m.] feelings of the people, and I believe that the feeling of the generality of people is that we ought to do something more than we have done to show that we recognise what has been done and is being done by those who have turned out to be our greatest friends in the moment of our adversity. If we had any surplus—indeed, if we had any money at all—we ought to send it to those in the small field of Belgium who have fought and suffered, and who are still fighting and suffering, in order that they may be encouraged in the fight by knowing that the great British Empire is not wanting in gratitude to those who have stood up bravely, and are still standing in the battle of liberty and for everything that stands for civilisation. I have not heard one word from hon. members opposite in regard to what we ought to do with respect to the big things of the Empire of which we form a very important part. Why is that? Why is it that they have not risen to the occasion? Why is it that they have pulled themselves down to a consideration of small and petty details? Does any member of this House imagine that we can go on considering platforms and domestic programmes while our fate as a nation—as part of the great British Empire—is at stake? Yet that is what we have been asked to do during this debate. Not one member on the other side has, in my opinion, risen to the occasion and told us that we ought to consider ourselves as part of the British Empire, and that those things which we should naturally wish to see carried out in times of peace must now be postponed until we know where we stand in the comity of nations—whether we continue to stand at the top of the great civilised nations, as the leader of the great civilised nations, or whether we are to take second place. During the whole course of this debate members opposite have talked as if we were in a time of peace, as if we could go on talking and talking and carrying out platforms and programmes without any regard to other parts of the world. If there is one thing that this war should teach us more than another, it is that we are a very small part of the great world, and that unless the great world is at peace the programmes that we put forward cannot be carried out. Why have members opposite not recognised this fact? I should not like to say that they are lacking in loyalty or that they are lacking in understanding; but

I really feel called upon to say that they are compelled to pay a greater regard to the people who control their elections and the possibility of their being returned here than to the great necessities of the situation in which the Empire is placed. (Hear, hear!) A great empire and little minds are ill-placed, and that is what we find to-day as far as members opposite are concerned. They consider that the interests of those who elect them and who are writing to them from day to day with regard to employment and small affairs are of greater moment than the freedom of the Empire of which Australia forms a part. We are called upon to consider a very important Financial Statement. As a member of the Liberal party, I do not feel that I am called upon to go into a very extensive criticism of that Statement. I regard it as my duty rather to criticise the criticisms of it than to criticise the Statement itself. And what is the criticism of the Statement? What does it amount to? When we take the criticism offered by the hon. member who leads the Opposition, we cannot but come to the melancholy conclusion that either he is unable to criticise any Financial Statement or is too indolent to do so. To-day we might feel inclined to think that out of regard to the important issues at stake in the Empire he had withheld his criticism, and if that were so we would give him credit for withholding severe criticism which might at times be possible. But when we look back to last year and recollect what his criticism was then, at a time when no war was threatened, as far as we were aware, when no disturbance of the peace was within the horizon, and when we find that his criticism of the Financial Statement then was so weak that even the members of his own party scorned it, we can come to no other conclusion than that there is an utter incapacity on his part to criticise a Financial Statement. Knowing that he was unable to find fault with the Statement, opportunity was given to him by the Premier, in a moment of chivalry, which has never been reciprocated from the other side. A week was given to the hon. gentleman in order that he could prepare some criticism of the Statement. What was the result? There was no result at all. The hon. gentleman came forward, and after a few attempts to find something in the Statement worthy of criticism, fell back on the criticism levelled, not by himself, not by any member of his party, but by a member of the public service—by the Auditor-General. Most providentially for the hon. gentleman who is the leader of the Opposition, the Auditor-General came forward with his annual report, and in that report there appeared a number of criticisms in regard to some details of the Government work. And upon these the leader of the Opposition seized as a famished wolf, and brought them before the House as his own legitimate criticism. There are times when we can think of public servants pursuing the right road to attain popularity. We come to this conclusion with regard to the Auditor-General: That if he wished to attain popularity at the present moment on one side of the House, he pursued the right road. He issued a statement which came in most handy, most opportunely for the leader of the Opposition, and it was used by that hon. gentleman to make up for his own deficiencies in intelligent criticism of the Financial Statement. What would have been said if the Auditor-General, or any other member of

the public service, had said in regard to the Financial Statement, or in regard to any other part of the work of the Government, some words of praise? If they had stood up, as they frequently have to, for the integrity of the Government, for the carrying out of strict routine, what would hon. gentlemen opposite have said? Hon. gentlemen opposite would have been anxious for their immediate dismissal from the service of the State. It is well known to hon. gentlemen opposite that because the Registrar of the Industrial Court stood upon his position, as knowing the work of that court, he was threatened with dismissal by members opposite. He did not pursue a course that led to popularity. The Auditor-General pursued a different course to the registrar. The Auditor-General had the audacity to criticise some action of the present Government, and for that reason he is regarded as a very popular official. These are the gentlemen who have been claiming for public servants full freedom, full political rights, and full rights to discuss everything. Yet, let the public servants beware. If they venture to discuss things, and venture to express things which are opposite to those opinions which are held by the Labour people, they will be marked down and be dismissed. Only during this session I was unable to avail myself of the opportunity to take part in one debate, but it was a debate of some importance, and the thought that occurred to me was this: A cartoon appeared in the Brisbane "Worker" during the last general strike which showed how the members of the Labour party are in their attitude towards public servants who happen to have political opinions, or who happen to have backbone of any description whatever in opposition to their own. A cartoon appeared showing the ex-leader of the Labour party, Mr. Bowman, with his watch in his hand. It was during the time of the general strike, and Mr. Bowman had his watch in his hand and was looking at it. He was talking to Major Cahill, who happens to be the head scrag of the police in this district, and was giving him four minutes' notice to get out of office. Why? Simply because Major Cahill happened to have opinions of his own, and acted upon those opinions in regard to preserving the peace of the city. That is what happened in this State. Hon. members opposite, in all the claims they are making for public servants, are claiming that they should only have an opportunity to speak on behalf of their own political ideals, not that they should have free and full political liberty, but that they shall only speak on behalf of the Labour side of politics.

At 3.46 p.m.,

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

Mr. HARDACRE took the chair accordingly.

Mr. CRAWFORD: Mr. Hardacre, I am pleased to address you as the occupant of the position which, except for unfortunate circumstances, you would have occupied many years ago. (Laughter.) I think there is no man who has so studied the forms of this House, and has so fitted himself to the intelligent carrying on of the business of Parliament as you have yourself. (Hear, hear!) I, therefore, have pleasure in addressing you as occupant of the chair. We have frequently heard the statement that is

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alleged against members of the legal profession that, when they have no case, they usually abuse the other side. But a different interpretation has been placed upon that idea just now in this House. It happened during this debate. It is that, when you have a bad case, you must quote the platform. When members of the Labour party have no case—and that happens almost invariably—they quote the platform. Hon. members opposite, during the course of this debate, have very frequently quoted from the platform. It is a blessed word—something like "Mesopotamia." They often quote the platform and show that some little difference exists between what has been proposed by the Liberal party and what exists in the platform put forward by the Labour party. The platform, pushed as it has been on our notice during this session, is certainly deserving of attention. It is a platform that ought to be very seriously considered, and I am doubtful whether any large percentage of hon. members opposite have given serious consideration to what that platform means, and how far it will go in logical elation. It is very easy to sign a platform, and I know hon. members opposite must sign that platform whether they believe in it or not; whether they thoroughly understand it or not they must at least express their belief in it by writing their names at the foot of it. I would like to know whether hon. members opposite, who put themselves forward as being interested in the workers, thoroughly understand what that platform means. If you, Mr. Hardacre, will permit me to avail myself of the latitude which has been allowed to almost every hon. member who has previously spoken, I will address myself to that platform in order to arrive at some conclusion as to what it really means. I do it, not with any view of putting myself forward as an authority, but in order to bring it within the purview of the statement which has been put before the House by the Treasurer, and in order to find out whether the policy put forward by members on the opposite side of the House is better than the policy which has been carried into operation by members on this side of the House—members who will continue to be on this side of the House. I intend to deal only with the fighting platform in order to ask the people who read the records of this House whether they have not more to gain by continuing in office the Liberal party than by changing that party for the party opposite. The first plank of the fighting platform of the Labour party is the abolition of the Legislative Council. We have had that matter debated. Supposing we carried that plank and abolished the other Chamber, what would it mean in hard cash to the people? Will the people gain one penny? I think not. And there is a sequence to that plank that, having abolished the Legislative Council, we should carry out the initiative and referendum—a new idea which has been talked of in various parts of the parliamentary-government world, but it has not been put into full exercise except in Switzerland, and those who have studied the legislative work of Switzerland must come to the conclusion that the initiative and referendum have, in their operation, done very little good, if any good at all, for the workers; and I presume that hon. members opposite contemplate the workers only. I feel called upon to consider this question because I want to know, and every member of this House is called upon to know, which is the

best policy for the people of the State—that is, which policy will advance the financial interests of the State most? Then we go on to the next plank, which is financial and taxation reform. What has been shown during the course of this debate to be wrong with the present financial system of this State? Hon. members opposite have complained that we are not going in for more taxation. The whole of their platform means more taxation, more taxation. If we have been able to carry on for many years, and we are still able to carry on without imposing further taxation, why should the people be threatened with more taxation? And yet that is what hon. members opposite threaten this country with in regard to financial reform. They give nothing in any way concrete, but simply a general statement: “Taxation and reform of financial methods in carrying out the government of the State,” a statement which carries no intelligence to the people who are called upon to exercise their votes. The people who exercise their votes from time to time understand that certain taxation is necessary in order to derive revenue for the carrying on of the government, and all hon. members opposite say is that there should be some change in our financial system. What is it? What particular change do they refer to? Perhaps some bookkeeping, or some little accountancy problems that arise from time to time in regard to the revenue from land. I do not know whether it is of any importance whether we regard the amount received from the sale of land as mere revenue or as parting with our capital. I would rather regard it in this light, that, when parting with the land, we are placing people upon that land who are taxable, and who will exercise their energies in making the land more productive. So that, so far as this plank of the Labour platform is concerned, there appears to be very little in it for the advantage of the people. Then, going further, we find in the platform mention of a trades dispute Bill. What more do we want in regard to trades disputes than the Industrial Peace Act, which this Government passed, and which has been instrumental in preventing a great amount of industrial trouble in this State. Those who understand it, and those who are endeavouring to understand it, feel more and more that this Industrial Peace Act is in the interests of the workers of Queens-

[9 p.m.] land, and the more they study it, the more they put it into operation, the less inclined are they to call for any amendments as are indicated in this plank of the Labour party. Then we have another plank—“conciliation and arbitration.” Have we not enough of it in our Industrial Peace Act, in the Federal Arbitration Act, and in various other methods, without having it here, without having it put before the people in order to deceive them? I think there is no necessity whatever for a plank of this description to be placed before the people. But we pass on. We come to something, a little thing which was useful at the last Federal election, that is, “pensions for widows and orphans.” Now, so far as I have been able to understand, the Liberal party has already dealt with orphans and widows, has arranged for consideration to be extended to them in order that they may live comfortably, in order that they may not be dragged down to absolute necessity and destitution. We have done already for widows and for orphans what the Labour party tell the people they are anxious

to do, and I am certain they cannot go any further in doing for widows and for orphans more than the Liberal party have done in preparing a liberal scheme of remuneration for those who have the misfortune to become widows and orphans. But the Liberal party go further than that, that is, they endeavour, by their legislation, not only to provide widows and orphans with proper care and attention, but they try to prevent wives from becoming widows, and children from becoming orphans. They provide in connection with their supervision of machinery that the work shall be carried out in such a manner that the greatest care will be exercised by employers, so that those who are working will not be exposed to great risks, will not be exposed to those risks which will carry them out of existence and make their wives and children widows and orphans. Then we come to the plank of “State refineries” in this precious platform, and I find that the Liberals already have advanced a very great degree in that direction. Naturally, they follow usual business methods. They want to know where they are, they want to know whether they are on solid ground, and whether, when they advance large amounts of money, there will be a proper return. They do not wish to do as other States have done, advance money recklessly in the building up of industries and setting up State industries over which the State has no proper control, and which will require from the State a degree of control which the State is not in a position to exercise. Before I pass away from that plank I would like to refer to what the late Premier of New South Wales has said. He regards State industries as having been practically failures, and he tells the people that they must look forward to these enterprises as likely to be failures for a considerable time. Then we come to pure foods. What can hon. members opposite offer to do more than the Liberal party have done in regard to pure foods? I have not heard one idea put forward by them which would show that they have a better idea of pure food administration than that which is carried out by the Liberal Administration. Then we come to a very important plank of their platform, the stoppage of land sales. It appears to me that this is a very very old plank, very antiquated. It starts almost with the beginnings of politics in Australia, and yet nothing has been done. In New South Wales one Minister had to be sacrificed because he believed that it should be carried out. No further sales of Crown land, but the building up of the leasehold system, which runs absolutely contrarily to human nature, to the human instinct, contrary to the desires of those who require that when they have land that land should be their own, and that they shall not pay, year after year, rent, without any idea of ever becoming their own landlords! The idea of the Liberal party is that men, when they start out to acquire land, shall have before them the prospect of becoming their own landlords. Then, there is something in the Labour platform with regard to the Workers’ Compensation Act. The Liberal party has already passed a number of amendments which have brought the Compensation Act up as far as it ought to go in regard to doing justice to those who are engaged in industrial employment which involves danger, and we do not hear from those who are engaged in these works any great complaint of its operation. And I am certain of this: that if any complaints were put forward by the people who are immediately

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concerned, the Liberal Government would immediately attend to it. Coming further in their planks, we find the "nationalisation of hospitals"—certainly a very good idea, and one which will be brought about, one which will be considered, I believe, next year when the Liberal party are returned to power—the consideration of all that regards hospitals, placing them upon a different basis in regard to sustentation, in regard to subsidy, in regard to the general ground work. Hon. members opposite have that upon their own platform as if it were a monopoly of their own. I would like to ask them, I would like them to consider—and probably I will ask them to consider when we come into details—how they will deal with the large and useful institution upon the other side of the river, whether they will nationalise that, and upon what basis? Then we have the plank dealing with "local government reform." I presume this is for the purpose of getting rid of those people whom the hon. member for Herbert regarded as old fossils. So far as the last and twelfth plank of that platform is concerned, "State insurance," I feel sure that the Liberal party is advancing in the proper direction. It is advancing cautiously, it is advancing as a Government should advance in considering so great a problem, which caused so much trouble in the old country before they put before the House a scheme dealing with it. Now, with regard to unemployment. At the beginning of the war I was considerably exercised in my mind as to what would happen at Mount Morgan, knowing that the market for copper was being shut off; and I asked some questions in the House and made inquiries privately to ascertain what could be done to save Mount Morgan from absolute disaster. Although the people of Mount Morgan do not yet know what has been done, and although at the last Federal election they did not take my advice, yet the great number of them were very pleased to benefit by the results of the influence which the Liberal party now in power were able to exercise on their behalf, so that the mine was not stopped, but their occupation was continued and their wages were regularly received, and a great disaster was averted. I know that the Liberal Government has dealt very practically with other parts of this State with regard to unemployment. However much people may say the Government has done nothing, this Government is not in the habit of advertising what it does, but it has at all times had in mind what was required in the various parts of the State in regard to unemployment, and has exercised itself to the utmost to prevent the results of that unemployment becoming serious. In New South Wales Mr. Holman assured the people of sympathetic consideration. "Sympathetic consideration" is a very fine phrase, but what the people want is something more practical, and what have they got more practical than sympathetic consideration? Previous speakers have said, "£1 7s. a week." The leader of the Opposition said that that meant 9s. a day. Well, you can spread it out, if you like, and explain it away, but it simply means £1 7s. a week. And that is what is being offered by a Labour Government. You do not find any such offer being made by our Liberal Government. They are able to carry on, and are more conspicuously successful than any other Government in Australia. The war is not wholly at the root of the trouble in New South Wales and the other States.

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Before the war was rumoured, industrial trouble—unemployed trouble—was threatening in New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania; and they are reaping the benefit of their Labour Governments in those States, whilst the people of Queensland are deriving real concrete benefits from the fact that they are governed by a Liberal Ministry. One thing has been shown by the present progress of affairs, and that is that Labour Ministries are not altogether above the possibilities of committing mistakes. In Western Australia it has been shown that they are not so gifted in carrying on administration—that the moment they get into power all troubles cease and all worries are ended. It appears to me that so soon as Labour took the helm of affairs in Western Australia employment began to be in trouble, and that trouble has continued until the present time, and will continue until the Ministry goes out of office again and a Liberal Ministry is returned to power which knows how to carry on the government of the country. The people of Western Australia are already looking in that direction. And when we come to Broken Hill—the most anarchical place in Australia—we find that a resolution has been carried calling—not upon a Labour Government to do things—but calling upon a Labour Government to get out of the way so that a Liberal Government can do something for the benefit of that important part of New South Wales. And in Tasmania, what is before the people? Nothing very prosperous, unless you regard taxation as prosperity. Taxation is threatened in every State that is under the dominance of a Labour Government, and, were we in Queensland under the dominance of a Labour Government, nothing would be more certain than that the taxation, which we already feel to be quite severe enough, would be increased in intensity. It has been demonstrated in every part of the Commonwealth that Labour Governments are not beyond the possibility of making mistakes, and the people are beginning to realise it. The people—if I may use the term—are "taking a tumble" to the fact that Labour Governments are not so wise as they were expected to be—not so wise as they were thought to be—and that disasters can happen under a Labour Government just as they may happen—but infrequently happen—under a Liberal Government. I note that the present head of the Commonwealth Government, Mr. Fisher, is calling all the Premiers together before he delivers his Financial Statement. Why? In order that he may gain from them good ideas, and he will be able to put those ideas before the Federal Parliament; and, if those ideas eventuate in prosperity, he will claim all the benefit, and all the benefit will be credited to him. But, if anything otherwise should eventuate, then all the blame will be placed on those who were in conference with him. It is worth while considering, too, that during the last three years—dismissing for the moment the time in which Mr. Cook was in possession of the reins of office—Mr. Fisher was the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. Can any hon. member opposite say that the cost of living has in any way decreased? Can he say that the workers in any way received an advantage? From the information which has come to me, it would be very difficult for hon. members opposite, who are the supporters of the Commonwealth Labour Government, to prove that the workers of the State have derived any advantage from the possession of Commonwealth

office by a Labour Ministry. This fact has to be recognised, and we might as well accommodate ourselves to it: that the Federal Labour party, as a party, has ended. The Federal Labour party got into office by means of the influence exerted by the greatest capitalistic organ in Australia—the Melbourne "Age." (Hear, hear!) The Federal Labour party consists, not of direct workers, or of persons who have come straight out from manual toil, but of squatters and of large shareholders in various concerns—probably in the Tramways Company here in Brisbane—and in various other ways possessors of dividends, so that no longer can the Federal Commonwealth Labour party claim to be a real direct Labour party.

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

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I had not intended speaking in this debate until I heard some of the speeches delivered by members on the other side, notably that of the Hon. the Secretary for Public Lands and one or two others. As far as the last speaker is concerned, he has tried to belittle the Labour platform and the Labour party in particular, but that may be discounted when we remember that he once was, or professed to be, a Labour member himself, and got into Parliament on the shoulders of Labour. He said that members on this side were paying more attention to those who sent them here than they were to the dangers which threatened the Empire, and he questioned the loyalty of members on this side. I think that members on this side are just as loyal as members on the other side. I do not accuse any member of this House on either side of being disloyal. I think that all members are with the Empire in the present trouble, and I dare say that every member is quite willing to do his part as far as finances will allow, and otherwise if it becomes necessary. With these few words I shall dismiss the last speaker. Just before the Minister for Lands sat down, the perspiration fairly rolled off him when he was informing the House of the Liberal measures that had been brought in by the Liberal Government; in fact, he took all the credit for the good legislation which was on the statute-book as having been brought in by the present Liberal Government, and himself in particular. He quoted the Workers' Compensation Act, and I interjected: "What side of the House were you on when that Act was brought in?" He said, "I was sitting on this side." I want to inform the House that he was in Opposition at the time it was introduced by the hon. member for Ipswich. The members on that side were trying to emasculate the measure.

Hon. R. PHILP: The measure was brought in on this side of the House.

Mr. HAMILTON: The measure was first introduced in this House by Mr. Fisher, who is now the Prime Minister of Australia, the year before he went into the Federal Parliament. When he went into the Federal House, the matter was taken up by Mr. Ryland, and the following year the then Attorney-General, Sir Arthur Rutledge, promised to introduce a measure. It was not a very up-to-date measure, and it was one of those measures which, when the coalition Government came into power, the Labour party who then supported the coalition asked for as the price of their support of the Government, and the Act was introduced by the

present Minister for Education, the hon. member for Ipswich. During the passage of the measure, the hon. member for Cunningham brought in an amendment to prevent the application of the measure to anyone who was engaged in agriculture, horticulture, or pastoral pursuits. He wanted it confined to a limited few, but I am pleased to say his amendment was defeated, and that it applies pretty well to all workers. The Minister for Lands said he was sitting on the Government side of the House.

Hon. R. PHILP: So he was.

Mr. HAMILTON: Not at the time when the Bill was brought in by the member for Ipswich. He was a supporter of the hon. member. The hon. member for Cunningham moved his amendment, and those who voted for it were—Mr. Cameron, Mr. Cribb, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Fox, Mr. Grayson, Mr. Keogh, Mr. P. J. Leahy, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Stodart, and Mr. Tolmie. Those were the members who wanted to exempt all the employees in agricultural, horticultural, and pastoral industries from the measure. I do not think that the Secretary for Public Lands is entitled to take any credit for the assistance which he gave to the passage of the measure through the House. Further on, the hon. member for Cunningham introduced another amendment reducing the amount to £150. It was moved on a previous amendment introduced by Mr. Ryland that the amount be increased to £200, and those who voted against Mr. Ryland's amendment were—Messrs. Barnes, Cameron, Cribb, Forsyth, Fox, Hanran, O'Keefe, Paget, Paul, Petrie, Philp, Somerset, Stodart, and Mr. Tolmie again. We hear the Secretary for Public Lands trying to take a lot of credit to himself for the assistance which he gave to the Liberal Government for the passage of that measure through the House, but he is trying to take credit for something which he is not entitled to. The hon. member for Mirani, when he gets up, generally has a tilt at preference for unionists, the rural workers' log, the marriage tie, or something of that sort. He made reference again to preference to unionists. The Liberals at the last Federal election made that one of the issues of the election, and they were badly beaten on it, and the Fisher Government was returned on that issue, and yet the Liberals keep on resurrecting the matter on every occasion. The hon. member for Mirani said that members of the Labour party were slaves, because they had to submit to a levy to support a newspaper. The Liberals have a good many newspapers circulating, not only in the metropolitan area but throughout the country, and it was getting time that the Labour party had a daily paper for themselves. The effort has been successful, and that was evidently what hon. members opposite do not like. I remember two or three newspapers in Brisbane which are now extinct, which would have died at their birth had it not been for the support given to them by the Government of the day. The "Street" newspaper had a large subsidy from the then Government. When I went out to Birdsville, there were copies forwarded on to every station, and bundles spread broadcast. Whatever newspapers we have to subscribe to we have to pay for, and we are quite willing to subscribe our mite to have our case represented fairly and squarely before the public, which we never had before. The Secretary for

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Public Lands tried to get a good deal of credit for the Liberal party for what they are doing for the children in the [9.30 p.m.] bush. He says they are now sending out medical inspectors and are putting gauze netting round the openings in the schools, but I do not think the Liberal Government are entitled to any credit for that, because it took months and months of agitation in this House and several deputations to the Minister to get them to take action. I think I was the first to move in the matter, and I did so at the request of the Winton hospital committee, but could not get the Government to act for a long time. The shire council at Winton got tired of waiting for the Government to move in the matter and they put gauze netting round the school openings at their own expense. Later on the Government sent out Dr. Taylor to visit the schools in the West, and that gentleman made a report to the Government, but several of his recommendations were not acted upon, so that altogether the Government are not entitled to much credit for the work they have done in this connection. Public opinion forced them to do what they did. The Secretary for Public Lands, when speaking on preference to unionists, said that the Liberals stood for British liberty, for the liberty of each individual to do as he liked. We know what British liberty means, and we see the effect of it in England to-day. England is engaged in a war with a big continental nation, and there are somewhere about 200,000 subjects of that nation in England at the present time. What brought them there? The ordinary love of capitalists for cheap labour. Those men are not unionists and do not want to join unions. English workmen were hunted abroad simply because 200,000 Germans were willing to work for lower wages in England than they could, and that is the reason that there is such a large number of German subjects in England at the present time. I have been told by a person who travels a good deal that they have an association in Germany which sends those men to England and other countries to take up the positions of clerks and engage in other occupations for a small wage, and that the association, which is formed of capitalists in Germany, subsidises the men who work for those low wages. All the information those men can get, not only about military operations, but about commercial enterprise, fresh inventions in the getting up of foodstuffs, and so on, they are expected to send to the association which subsidises them. We know that a number of Germans are employed as waiters in different parts of England, because they are cheaper than Englishmen.

Hon. R. PHILP: Waiters do not get wages at all; they only get tips.

Mr. HAMILTON: Their wages are made up by the association in Germany.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: What is the name of the association?

Mr. HAMILTON: It is a big association of capitalists.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: What do they call it?

Mr. HAMILTON: I am unable to speak German, and I cannot tell the hon. member what they call it. It has been said by various speakers that there has been no criticism of the Financial Statement from this side of the House, and a good deal of laudation has been given to the Government for the Statement which has been presented to the Committee. I am not going to blame the Government in connection with that State-

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ment, but will give them a good deal of credit for presenting the Statement that has been laid before the Committee. But when we come to compare the action of the Queensland Government with the action of the Governments of other States, we find that the comparison is not favourable to Queensland. We have had good seasons in Queensland for a number of years. Though in some districts it has been pretty dry, yet, speaking broadly, over the whole of Queensland we have had good seasons. In New South Wales and South Australia there has been a terrible drought recently. I had a letter a short time ago from my brother in New South Wales, in which he says they have never had such a drought in the far western part of that State as has been raging there this year. Some of the flocks and herds have been wiped right out, and yet the Government have a credit balance. We were told that they had a deficit, but I see by the statement made by the Treasurer of New South Wales the other day that they have a surplus of some £200,000 or £300,000. A drought is also raging in South Australia. We read in the newspapers that Mr. Kidman has taken the stock of farmers and put them on his runs in order to enable them to tide over the drought. The Labour Government in New South Wales are trying to meet the present situation by finding work for the unemployed. They have some thousands of unemployed in that State, and the Government are doing all they possibly can for them. They are also finding seed wheat for farmers, and encouraging them to put in as large crops as possible, and at the same time the Government themselves are putting 40,000 acres under crops in order to enable the country to tide over the bad times. Comparing what they are doing with what the Government of Queensland are doing, I contend that our Government can claim very little credit for their action. What are they doing for the unemployed in Queensland? Nothing at all. The Treasurer asked the council of the unions to send him any information they could supply about the unemployed, and they sent him a list the other day showing that there was over 1,000 unemployed in various trades and industries, and I believe they have not even received an acknowledgment of their communication. I have a big petition from Winton, signed by over 100 business people and others, asking the Government to carry out their promise and start the railway there in order to give employment to the unemployed. Some little time ago I asked a question on this subject in the House, and the answer I received was that the Government were going to start the work as soon as possible, and were marshalling the plant there. If the Government really desire to assist the unemployed, what they ought to do is to start some of the railways that have been passed by Parliament, and the one I speak of in particular. It is one of the railways which was passed under the Act of 1910, and it was passed with a great flourish of trumpets as part of the great railway policy of the Kidston Government, whom members opposite then supported. We were told that they were going to start these different lines simultaneously from Charleville, Winton, Blackall, and Cloncurry. They started the branch from Charleville, but though four years have elapsed since then, not one shovelful of earth has been removed on the line from Winton to Springvale. We are told that they have not steel rails for

that railway. How is it, then, that they have rails for railways in other districts which have been passed since that railway? We are told that the Government are going to come down with another railway policy. Why? Because there is another election looming. Within a few months after Christmas we will be in the throes of an election in Queensland. The Government are introducing a railway policy so that they will be able to say, "Look at the railway programme of the Government." Before another railway is passed by this House they ought to build the railways that were passed in 1910. Let the Government construct the railways that have been passed by this House and open up the interior of the State. If they want to develop the country and make the land available for people who want land, they should run railways out there. How many people will be settled on the land by the construction of the Drayton deviation? Not one additional person. How many people will be settled on the land by the construction of the *via recta*? The money that it will cost to build the *via recta* would build railways into the Western districts and open up hundreds of thousands of acres of land, on which a large number of people could settle. The *via recta* is going to give an additional railway to the people who have now got railways. I do not say that the *via recta* will not come in time, but the present time is not opportune. If the Warwick district did not have a railway, I would willingly say that we should give them a railway. But they have got a railway. We have got districts in Queensland which have not got a railway at all, and it is only right that we should give them a railway, especially when that railway has been passed by this House, before we build the *via recta*. The Treasurer says in his Statement—

"It will be noticed that under all the heads of revenue with the exception of mining the estimate was exceeded. The railway receipts, which for the year 1912-13 showed an increase over the estimate of £98,752, this year show an increase over the estimate of £50,562."

This is the part which I wish to draw attention to—

"This will again impress the Committee of the immense value the railways are to the State, and lead to the inevitable conclusion that the policy of the Liberal party in pushing on with railways in Queensland, in a way never before attempted. . . ."

I think that they are quite right in saying that they are pushing on with the railways in a way never before attempted. There are ten men on the Duchess extension, fifteen to twenty men on the Blackall line, and none at all on the Winton-Springvale extension; and I doubt if they have any at all on the North Coast line. The Government said at the beginning of the session that they were going to push ahead with a big public works policy, including railways and other things, in order to give employment to a number of men and to keep the wheels of industry going. It was said that it was better to give the men work than to dole out charity, and I quite agree that it is better to do that. But the Government have a right to start with the railways which have already been passed. Every one of these railways in the Western districts should be pushed on. It is the railways that carry the wool and stock which pay the best. If it were not for

the excellent returns the railways receive from the pastoral districts, the agricultural districts would have to pay higher fares and freights. If the Government want the railways to pay as they are doing at the present time they should complete the railways in hand. I have a petition here from the people in the Winton district, asking for the railway to be constructed to Springvale. There are 100 men in Winton waiting for this railway to start, and they do not know where to go to look for work. On account of the stringency of the money market many of the stations are employing less men and the shearing season is drawing to a close. Before long there is going to be great distress amongst the unemployed if we do not push on with some of these railways. The Government should not enter into fresh railway arrangements until they complete the arrangements they entered into in 1910. The Minister for Lands says he is opening up land in the Boulia district. I know he is opening up land out there, but what is the good of that land to people for sheep-raising when it is 200 miles from a railway. If the Government pushed out with the line from Winton, it would open hundreds of square miles of good grazing country. There would be plenty of land available for grazing farm settlement in 20,000-acre blocks, or even up to 60,000. There is a lot of land resumable there, and it only wants railway communication to be taken up and selected. After four years the Government have done nothing to extend the railway west from Winton. My opponent brought it up against me during the election campaign that I voted against that railway. I did vote against it, because the people in that district did not have an opportunity of saying whether they approved of the railway or not. They were not allowed to vote on the question the same as the people in other districts are where they have to guarantee the line, and I consider they should have had that right. The shire council in Boulia are waiting to find out where the terminus of that line is going to be. They are not coming to the Treasurer for a loan, because they have got the money themselves, but they want to know where the terminus is going to be, so that they can sink sub-artesian bores, and open up the road to the railway terminus. I have asked the Minister for Railways, and he does not know. He says that he has got a surveyor out there, and he has not received any information from the surveyor as to where the terminus of the line is going to be. I hope it is not going to be at Sulie-man. If that line is built into the pastoral districts it will return a good revenue to the Government. The Treasurer predicts that there will be a small surplus of £1,000, and he states that he has not got to arrive at that surplus by imposing fresh taxation, as Mr. Holman has done.

The TREASURER: I did not say any such thing.

Mr. HAMILTON: Well, a number of hon. members on that side have said so. In fact, it has been more of a criticism of Mr. Holman than a criticism of the hon. gentleman. Whatever Mr. Holman did in the matter of putting a tax on the public servants, he did it openly, but the Treasurer and this Government put a tax on the public servants here under cover. They say that they are not going to give the public servants the automatic increases they are entitled to under the agreement they entered into when

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they joined the service. So far as the public servants in the higher grade are concerned, I am with the Government all the time. The time is not opportune for increasing their salaries at all. But it is different with the lower paid public servants, who have been looking forward to their automatic increase at the end of the year. I know one young girl who has been a teacher for twelve months. She is getting 9s. 6d. a week, and she was looking forward to her automatic increase, which would bring her up to 15s. a week. But all these increases are denied the teachers. Is not refusing them their automatic increases putting a special tax on them to the same amount? We find that in many instances the highly paid public servants are getting increases in their salaries. The Treasurer wants to make out that that is not the case; but I have been looking through the Estimates, and I can pick out quite a number of men getting £500 and £600 a year who are getting increases of £50 each.

The PREMIER: Not since July.

Mr. HAMILTON: These increases were not provided on the last year's Estimates. The Government is granting these increases by Executive minute, and that is wrong. It is taking away one of the functions of this House. The increases should be granted here, and not by the Government by Executive minute. The Surveyor-General is down for an increase of £50 over what he got last year.

The PREMIER: That is, since the 1st January.

Mr. HAMILTON: Then it should not have been done by Executive minute. We find that the police magistrate, the visiting justice to St. Helena, and the Comptroller of Prisons have all received large increases; and most of them are already getting above £600 a year. If there is anyone who should receive the automatic increases they are entitled to it is the poor unfortunate devils in the service who are getting under £100 a year, and some of the pupil-teachers getting 9s. or 10s. a week. Yet the Government, in order to give increases to the highly paid servants, are refusing the automatic increases to the lower grades in the service. That is not a fair thing at all, and if members are sympathetic with the public service they should demand that those in the lower grades should receive their automatic increases, and they should also say that those who are already receiving £300 a year and over should wait a further twelve months before getting an increase in their salaries. Then, again, the Treasurer says he is not cutting down the hospital vote. I say he has arranged to get a surplus by cutting down the hospital vote. The Treasurer says he intends to give the hospitals £2 for every £1 subscribed, but we know the Government are cutting down the subsidy to the unfortunate Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Institution to 15s. in the £1 and they are also cutting down the ambulance subsidy.

The PREMIER: The ambulances are in affluent circumstances.

Mr. HAMILTON: Many country ambulance brigades are not in affluent circumstances, and it is wrong to reduce the subsidy. That is the way the Government intend financing the State instead of coming down and saying, "We require additional revenue, we are not going to take the automatic increases from the public servants who are only getting small salaries, we are not

going to cut down the hospital vote or the vote for the blind, deaf, and dumb and the vote for ambulance brigades, but we are going to put fresh taxation on those shoulders best able to bear it." There are any amount of sources of taxation without going in for retrenchment of this kind. A retrenchment scheme in times of drought may be justified if other sources of taxation were exhausted, but it is not justified at the present time. If the Government rose to the occasion, as they are doing in the other States, they would put on a special tax in order to meet the situation that is likely to arise, through no fault of the Government, but through the war. If they came down and put a special tax on those who are best able to bear it they would be showing far more statesmanship. Does the hon. gentleman deny that he is increasing the salaries of already highly paid officials in the service?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. HAMILTON: Then why on earth are increases provided in the Estimates?

The PREMIER: We did that last year.

Mr. HAMILTON: By Executive minute. The House is the proper authority to increase those salaries, and, if the House did its duty, it would refuse to give those increases at the present time. If the Government want to give increases to public servants, let them put those increases on the Estimates and not do it by Executive minute.

The PREMIER: That has been done from time immemorial.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is not a proper thing to do, and I have never known it to be done. It might be that when there are readjustments, like there was in the Lands Department, one or two individuals might receive a higher salary because a member of the service has passed out through death, but in connection with many of these increases there was nothing of that kind at all. The Government have done an irregular thing and a wrong thing in raising the salaries of public servants by Executive minute.

The PREMIER: The House need not pass them.

Mr. HAMILTON: The House is asked to pass them now, but they have been drawing the increases for some time. Suppose the House refuses to pass those increases now, what would be the consequences?

The PREMIER: They would get the lesser amount.

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. gentleman knows it is not a proper thing to do. When the drought was on, the hon. gentleman himself came down with a retrenchment scheme and the House passed it. There was something straightforward in that, but the way this Government intend to finance the State for the next twelve months, in order to show a surplus, does not show statesmanship at all. There has been a good deal of criticism by the hon. member for Bowen and the hon. member for Murrumba about the Labour party's policy on the land question. They have stated that the Labour party want to tax the farmer by means of a land tax, and when it was pointed out that provision was made that if a farmer pays the land tax or income tax, the lesser was deducted from the greater, we were met with the answer that the farmers do not pay income tax. All I can say is that they are very lucky individuals, and they must be very

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good bookkeepers if they do not pay income tax. Then they say that the policy of leasehold has not been endorsed. When they say that the leasehold policy of the Labour party has not been endorsed, or is not popular, all I can say is that all our pastoral lands and all our grazing farms are held under leasehold, and we know that there is just as much money spent on grazing farms under leasehold tenure—with perhaps a lease of not more than twenty years or twenty-eight years—as there is spent on improvements when the land is held as freehold. We know very well that in the past, what has been the ruin of many pastoralists in Queensland has been the land hunger, and trying to make freehold instead of spending the money they had in developing the leasehold portion of their holdings. That land hunger brought many of them to the wall. We know that under the leasehold tenure, whatever capital a man has, it can be used in making improvements and developing the land. Another thing is this: Why should not the State get back in a land tax the value that the State creates? Take a freehold of 20,000 acres 150 miles from a railway: it would be worth very little without railway communication, but immediately the Government build a railway or other public works, such as irrigation works, in close proximity to that property, that land goes up two or three times in value. Is it not right that the Government should get back some of that unearned increment brought about by the expenditure of public money? It is a principle that this party believes in. It is a principle that this party, if ever they get on the Treasury benches, will try and bring about. Although provision is made in our land laws for it, the Government have never given the leasehold tenure a chance. I took up the Directory of Lands to-day and I find that only one piece right away out—a useless piece of country—has been offered to selection with the option of perpetual lease or freehold. They never attempted to see whether the people would take up land under the perpetual lease system. If the grazing farmers in Queensland had to buy that land as freehold for grazing farms very few of them would have any grazing farm, and I venture to say that not one of them, if he gets a good leasehold, is anxious to turn it into freehold.

The PREMIER: Would you advocate perpetual leases in connection with grazing farms?

Mr. HAMILTON: No, I would not, because what is a small grazing farm to-day might be a very large portion twenty-five or thirty years hence. The hon. member knows the difficulty his Government [10 p.m.] have had in getting land available, simply because the Act of 1902 tied up the land for forty years. I am not blaming the Government so much as I blame the Act of 1902. I and other hon. members pointed out the danger at that time, and we showed what was likely to occur, and it has all come true.

Hon. R. PHILP: It saved the industry.

Mr. HAMILTON: It did not save the industry. The good seasons came immediately afterwards, and the industry would have been saved whether they got those leases or not. I am not one of those who think that you should not give a man a fair tenure when he is going on grazing land; but I say that when you give a lease of forty years

in a young country like Queensland, where we are building our railways, you are doing the country an injury, and I say that we did the country an injury by passing that Act. The Minister for Lands has said that more land has been opened for selection this year than in the previous year, and he has said time after time in this House, last year as well as this year, that the Government are opening every bit of land available. Now, I called for a return this session, and it was printed and circulated, and if hon. members will look at it they will find that notice of resumptions which were due in 1903 are only being given at the present time. Some of the notices have been given this year, and some were given last year, but they have been due, many of them, since 1903 and 1904. And yet the demand is, and has been, such for a grazing farm that when any land that is any good is thrown open in the West, there are as many as 150 or 160 applicants for it. The Government have had power to resume that land, and they have not done so.

Hon. R. PHILP: Why did not your Government do it?

Mr. HAMILTON: We were not the Government. The hon. member knows that very well. We had to keep a half-and-half party in power in order to keep the hon. member out. (Laughter.)

Hon. R. PHILP: You cut off your nose to spite your face.

Mr. HAMILTON: We got all we could. We got what we never got before. We got universal franchise, and we got what we had been advocating for years—old age pensions. We could never get the Government of the hon. member, or any other Government, to introduce that until the Commonwealth Government came along and were going to introduce it, and then they brought it in. We were not going to sit behind that crowd and keep them in power without getting something in return, and, therefore, certain measures were demanded and obtained, and yet the hon. members opposite wants to take all the credit, just as the hon. member wants to take all the credit for the passing of the Workers' Compensation Act, whereas "Hansard" shows that they opposed it for all they were worth, and tried to emasculate it. So far as mining is concerned, an impression has been created that the State Government are financing the Hampden-Cloncurry Company. I was under the impression that the Government had done that in order to keep the wheels of industry going round; but now I find that it is the Commonwealth Bank.

The PREMIER: It is a joint affair.

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. member knows very well that the bank has been advancing money against their ore, but we also know very well that very few hon. members opposite have even a good word to say for the bank at all. The bank, in the present crisis, has done a lot of good. It is keeping about 1,000 men employed in that district, whereas, if you had left them to the State Government, they would probably be out of work altogether. We know that there are many men on small shows to whom the Government could have advanced money to keep them going. But they say, "No, we will let you off the necessity of having a miner's right, or we will give you rations." I say that it would be better to give them even a very little for their ore to keep them in work than dole out charity. This Government are doing very little, and if they do

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not bestir themselves they are going to have a large number of unemployed in Queensland. It is all very well for the Treasurer to say that they are doing everything they can to keep the wheels of industry going round; it is all very well for the Treasurer to ask the secretaries of the unions to let him know exactly how many men are out of work.

The TREASURER: I did not do that.

Mr. HAMILTON: The suggestion was made and the hon. member accepted it. Why does he not try to ameliorate these conditions? I know that there are 100 men unemployed in one little town in my district alone, and it is nearly time for the Government to bestir themselves and do something to prevent the unemployed from getting more numerous than they are. If this House does its duty, it will insist on the Government giving these unfortunate lower paid public servants their increases, and if further revenue is required to keep the machine going, let them have the courage to come down and tell the people of the State, "We will have to put on more taxation," and put it on those who can bear it.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): At this late hour I will not detain the House very long, but I want to say something about the Financial Statement. I am not going into detail and extract millions in figures from it. As far as I can see, it is a very decent Statement. It shows that last year we managed to carry on the business of the country and leave a small surplus. When that is done by any Government, the Government and the country are to be congratulated on making both ends meet. Certainly, we have had very good seasons. Certainly, I think that last year, up to July, Queensland was never more prosperous. Wages were good, work was plentiful, and the price of land was very good indeed. I notice that the Government say they will try to have a surplus next year; but there is only one side in the sheet that they can guarantee, and that is the expenditure. They can say, "We will not spend more than a certain amount of money," but no one—the wisest man cannot say what the revenue will be. It is not possible to tell. A number of things that have come into operation since last July will militate against the large revenue we had last year. I think the Treasurer has done well to put the best face possible on it. We believe in the country, and the Government think it well to believe in the country, and they have shown their faith by saying that the country will come out all right next year. A good deal has been said about unemployment in Queensland. I do not know that the Government are to blame, or that they should provide employment for everybody in Queensland. I understand they have about twenty railways now under construction. I notice that our loan expenditure for the first quarter of this year was equal to the expenditure of any quarter of last year. The Government are keeping up the loan expenditure in a wonderful way, and I only hope they will be able to continue. They have a large amount of loan money in hand at present, but I question if they will be able to maintain their present rate of expenditure. But, whatever happens, I think that Queensland will always be able to pay whatever money she owes and carry on successfully. I am perfectly satisfied with the Treasurer's Statement, but I would warn the hon. gentleman to be careful in regard to expenditure. Certainly, last year he had

to spend more than his estimate on the railways because they were earning more money than he anticipated. If you are getting more goods carried on the railways, you have to employ more men, and surely it is worth while spending £150,000 to earn £200,000, and that is what the Treasurer did; and I hope he will need to do the same this year.

Mr. HAMILTON: Don't you think it would be better to finish some of the railways that have been commenced than to begin others?

HON. R. PHILP: There is something to be said in favour of that. The Government would have started the line the hon. member has particularly in view last year, but they had to wait until the survey was made, and then they found they could not carry it out within the 25-mile limit fixed by the Act. I was at Winton three or four months ago, and I saw a large quantity of timber and other railway material there; and I understand that, as soon as the department gets the rails, they will commence work. Not even the hon. member for Gregory believes more in that railway than I do. The line would have been started before now, but the hon. member knows the demand there is for railways all over Queensland, and nobody has been satisfied. It would have been far better to start 6 or 8 lines and complete them and be getting some return from them, instead of commencing about twenty lines and having them all unfinished. However, that has not been done. I have heard some talk about what the Commonwealth Bank has done. Now, I believe in a State bank, but I think this bank was started on a wrong basis. What the Commonwealth Government should have done was, borrow £5,000,000 and give it to the Commonwealth Bank as capital. The bank has no capital. It has only the money deposited in it by the people of Australia. The hon. member for Gregory talked of the Commonwealth Bank having come to the assistance of the Hampden Mine, but the Queensland Government have helped the Hampden Company more than the Commonwealth Bank has done.

Mr. HAMILTON: Only in freights.

HON. R. PHILP: I think the freights will come to more than the bank is likely to advance.

Mr. HAMILTON: The Government are not helping any of the other mines.

HON. R. PHILP: They are helping the Mount Morgan Mine, and the freights from that mine amount to about £10,000 a month.

Mr. HAMILTON: They are only helping wealthy companies.

HON. R. PHILP: That shows how inconsistent the hon. member is. He blames the Government for not helping the Hampden Mine and commends the Commonwealth Bank for helping the same mine. That is neither logical nor fair.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is more the duty of the State Government than of the Commonwealth Bank.

HON. R. PHILP: I do not think it is. According to the "Insurance and Banking Record," the Commonwealth Bank has received in Queensland £1,332,000, made up principally of £271,000 deposits not bearing interest, £185,000 deposits bearing interest, and £866,000 Savings Bank deposits. Personally, I would rather see the Treasurer of Queensland get that Savings Bank money, because he would spend two-thirds of it in the State. Now, what has the Commonwealth Bank done with the money it has received

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in Queensland? Its assets in this State are—coin, £3,492; Australian notes, £12,361; Government and municipal securities, £105,608; notes and bills of other banks, £305,000; balances due from other banks, £228,523; and bills discounted, loans, and advances to customers, and other sums due to the bank, £58,524—making a total of £744,663. I think any local bank would have done much better than that. They have only collected the savings of the people of Australia and lent some back to them.

MR. LENNON: That is all that the other banks do.

HON. R. PHILP: Some of the other banks have a little capital as well.

MR. LENNON: Not one bank advances even to the extent of its deposits.

HON. R. PHILP: Well, the Union Bank has a paid-up capital of £2,000,000 and a reserve fund of £2,005,510. That is nearly £4,000,000 that they have to lend. The Bank of Australasia has a paid-up capital of £2,000,000 and a reserve fund of £2,720,168. They lend some of that money.

MR. LENNON: You will see that the deposits exceed the advances in every case.

HON. R. PHILP: Not in every case. As I have said, the Commonwealth Bank has no capital. I am sorry it has not. If it had a capital of £5,000,000, it could be made a real help to the people of Australia, because we are always wanting money in Australia. If the Commonwealth Bank had left the Savings Bank business alone, and had got the accounts of the various State Governments and been a national bank like the Bank of England, it would have been a real help in time of trouble.

MR. LENNON: The Queensland Government never showed any friendliness to the bank.

HON. R. PHILP: Because from the very first the bank attacked all the States and tried to get their Savings Bank deposits. Even the hon. member will admit that Savings Bank money is much better in the hands of the States, and should be spent in the States. It would have been much better if the Commonwealth Government had borrowed money to give the bank some capital to start with, as that capital could have been used to develop the various States. The cry of the hon. member for Gregory is that the Government should push on with railways, but he knows that the money must be borrowed from somewhere.

MR. FOLEY: "Borrow, boom, and burst."

MR. HAMILTON: I am not growling about borrowing money.

HON. R. PHILP: Well, the hon. member's friend is growling about "Borrow, boom, and burst." (Laughter.) I have the greatest sympathy for New South Wales and Western Australia, which are in real trouble, and I have a high regard for Mr. Holman because he is exploding so many Labour fallacies now. Mr. Holman does not believe in paper money, and, in Western Australia, Mr. Scaddan does not believe in paper money; it is no use to him—he wants sovereigns. A good deal of our Queensland money is going to New South Wales and Western Australia from the Commonwealth Bank to help them in their trouble. £300,000 of the deposits in Queensland has gone to New South Wales and £300,000 to Western Australia. I do not regret that at all. We are helping the people in New South Wales and Western Australia.

MR. LENNON: I am glad to see that you have that spirit.

HON. R. PHILP: We have all that spirit. We are not narrow and provincial, like some hon. members opposite. The Commonwealth Bank is no use to us in Queensland at all. I hope they will get more liberal as time goes on, because we shall want money. I would like to see the bank get about £5,000,000 sterling of solid capital behind it, as it will then be in a position to help the whole of Australia. Mr. Fisher has about £6,000,000 of gold, and if he handed that over to the bank they would be in a strong position. A good deal of nonsense has been talked about selling land. It has always been a plank of the party on the opposite side that we had no right to sell land; that money derived from land sold to farmers should not go into revenue. When the hon. member for Herbert and the hon. member for Gregory were on this side of the House, in the first two years their Government was in office they sold more land by public auction than I sold in four. What is a sin on this side is a virtue on that side.

MR. HAMILTON: They passed a Bill that no more should be sold.

HON. R. PHILP: After they had sold so much of it.

MR. HAMILTON: We did not know that they were selling it.

HON. R. PHILP: It is no use saying you did not know, because everybody in the street knew it was being sold. When hon. members opposite come over to this side, they will do what the Government are doing now. No man denounced the then Government more than Mr. Kidston about selling land. If a person was getting £52 a year he reduced that by 10s. a year, with the support of the hon. member for Gregory.

MR. HAMILTON: I told you we had to stand a lot. (Government laughter.)

MR. FOLEY: You did not tell us who abolished the poll tax.

At 10.25 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

HON. R. PHILP: I think the tax was a very good one; it was no hardship to anybody. We never sued a single person who was not paying the 10s., but the hon. member for Gregory's Government issued summonses all over Clermont. I remember the hon. member for Clermont getting up with righteous indignation about being sued by a Government supported by the hon. member for Gregory. (Government laughter.) At one time there were thirty-five Labour members sitting on this side of the House supporting that Government, and they now complain of what they did. They are only giving their own show away. With regard to the Seaforth Estate, not a single member of this Government had anything to do with that matter. I was a member of the Government which bought that estate, and it was bought exactly in the same way as any other estate which was bought by the Government. We had to go through a certain formula in buying estates. We had to get a recommendation from the members of the Land Board. Mr. Hume went up to report on the estate, and the first time it came before the Cabinet it was sent back for further information. It was an unfortunate purchase, but I would ask any man who has had dealings in land if he has not made bad purchases? I say that, taking it all-in-all, the passing of the

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Agricultural Lands Purchase Act and the land bought under that Act was a splendid thing for the people of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) The Government bought over £1,000,000 worth of land altogether, and a big profit was made on the land they bought. I think, when it comes to be worked out, there will be less money lost on the Seaforth Estate than on the Jimbour Estate. In looking up the Treasurer's Statement, I find that the total purchase money of the estates bought was £1,720,000. The sales have been £1,790,000, and the value of the land unsold is £288,000. That is a handsome profit, but outside the profit it has been a splendid thing for the railways and the people settled on the land. Some people on the land have not done much good, but most of the people who bought in the Seaforth Estate have done exceedingly well out of it. I can tell the Government how they can get the money back for the Seaforth Estate. I think, if they spent £50,000 or £60,000 on Port Newry, and built a railway from Port Newry to Mackay, every shilling in connection with the Seaforth Estate would come back to them. The Seaforth Estate is near Port Newry, where there is a good harbour with deep water, but the Mackay people—like the people of Rockhampton—are afraid that if the port is at some place away from Mackay they will lose the trade. The Rockhampton people were afraid of Broadmount, and they went to Port Alma. I ought to apologise for talking about these things to-night. I think we should do something for our country, which is now at war. To my mind, Queensland has done nothing so far. Australia has not done much, but she has done something. We are sending men, though they are taking a long time to get away, and the Commonwealth Government have sent £100,000 to Belgium. I am very pleased that they have done so, and I [10.30 p.m.] say the State also ought to do something in the same direction. We have one-seventh of the population of Australia, and we should send one-seventh of the amount despatched by the Federal Government—or, say, £15,000—to the Belgians. (Hear, hear!) What people have done so much for us as the Belgians are doing now? I think that every reasonable man and woman in Queensland will admit that if it had not been for the Belgians, the chances are that the Germans would be in Paris to-day. What is a paltry £15,000 to us, even if we have a deficit next year? (Hear, hear!) I think the Premier should take the consensus of opinion in this House and act on it, and send £15,000 to the Belgians to-morrow. We are not doing enough in this matter. Here we are living as if there was no war going on. I feel ashamed sometimes when going home at night to see so many people coming out of the theatres and picture shows, when their flesh and blood are fighting and dying for us and our freedom. We are also making a mistake in not offering a premium to farmers to grow grain in Queensland. The people in Europe are fighting, and what time have they to grow crops of grain? I see it is reported that we are not likely to have sufficient wheat in Australia this year for our own consumption. Well, we can grow maize, and we can offer opportunities to people who are prepared to plant maize to get a market for their produce. We have not done much for farmers in times past, and that would be doing something to help them, and at the same time help those who are fighting for freedom in the old

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country. The maizegrowing countries of the world are the United States, the Argentine and Hungary. What chance has Hungary to grow maize this year? Is there any possibility of grain being grown in Europe this year, when there are so many millions of men engaged in fighting? I do not think so. How long the war will last God only knows, but I think it will last a long time; and, as a country, we have done comparatively nothing yet to help those engaged in the war. We have started to send some 20,000 troops, and have been about three months getting them away. We might send them away much quicker by passenger vessels, and get them to the old country where they could be trained. I am sure that if Major Reid, Major Tunbridge, and Major Toll went to the war they would get thousands to go with them.

Mr. LENNON: Major Tunbridge is going.

HON. R. PHILP: Yes, and though he is one of our best fighting men, he is in charge of the ammunition, while men who have never seen any fighting are in the fighting force. That is wrong. I do not blame Mr. Fisher for that, but I say that we have an inner military circle, and unless a man is inside that he has no show. I certainly think that we, as a people, should do more than we are doing at the present time, that we should send to the Belgians a seventh of what the Commonwealth Government have sent, and that we should encourage our farmers to grow maize. I know there is a prejudice against maize because in the early days it was given to prisoners and was called "homin," but it is a good food, and I know that Hawkesbury natives—fine, strong fellows, 6 feet and 6 feet 2 inches high—were fed on maize, and it would not hurt the people of Queensland if they had nothing else but maize to eat. Party matters should not be discussed at the present time. We should imitate the politicians and statesmen in the old country, where the leader of the Government, the leader of the Opposition, the leader of the Irish party, and the Labour party are joining hand in hand to fight the common enemy. We should do the same thing. This is not a time to discuss paltry matters like the Estimates. We shall get through all right. We have had worse times before than we are likely to have now, and we got through all right, and we will get through again. Nobody in Queensland will starve or want clothing, and we ought to assist men of our own flesh and blood who are fighting to the last breath. Only to-day we saw that 10,000 Belgians have been killed or wounded in a fight against the Germans, and again I say that the Government should lose no time in sending a sum of money to the Belgians.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PAYNE (Mitchell): I agree with the remarks of the hon. member for Townsville with reference to the war. As a Britisher I should be ashamed if I did not do all I could to assist those who are engaged in the war. The hon. member for Townsville has suggested that it is the duty of this State to send a sum of money to the Belgians, and I think that if any people on the face of the earth ever deserved our practical sympathy and assistance it is the Belgian people—(hear, hear!)—because if it had not been for the stand made by them we should not be in the position we are in to-day. As the hon. member for Townsville said, the people of Queensland do not seem to realise the tremendous suffering and hardship created among

the people in that part of the world where the war is raging—among the people who are defending the homes of the people of Australia—and I hope that something will be done in the direction indicated by the hon. member. The Opposition have been accused of not having criticised the Financial Statement in anything like an effective way. In my opinion the speeches on the Government side of the House have been chiefly devoted to boasting about the surplus and trying to tear the Labour platform to pieces. I heard the hon. member for Mount Morgan attempting to criticise the Labour platform. Why, it is only a few years ago that he signed that platform himself, and he became a member of this House through supporting the Labour party. There is such a thing as decent people changing their minds, but they give a reason for it. But the hon. member for Mount Morgan cannot give any reason why he changed his mind.

The TREASURER: The Mount Morgan people justified his conduct by returning him to the House again.

Mr. PAYNE: People sign the Labour platform and get into this House, and then they start to criticise it. I am not ashamed of being a Labour man, and I am not ashamed of having signed the Labour platform. I challenge anyone on the Government side of the House to prove that there is anything shallow or anything of an impossible character in the Labour platform. All the best thinkers of the world to-day, while they do not say so in exactly the same words, express exactly the same meaning as the Labour party's platform. I do not want to pose as a prophet, but after this war is over there will be the starting of a new era of things altogether. The Labour party's platform will have an opportunity of coming into operation at the conclusion of the war that it never had in its whole existence before. I do not mind a man having a mind of his own, if he is against the Labour party, but I cannot stand a twister. (Laughter.) I cannot stand a man who sits on one side of the House to-day and on the other side of the House to-morrow. The Premier himself, only a few years ago, in speaking at Oxley, eulogised the Labour party. He said that they were a respectable party, and that they had come to stay. I do not want to repeat what the hon. member for Paddington said about the Secretary for Public Instruction, who delivered some pretty severe criticisms some years ago against the mismanagement of the Liberal Government. I think the leader of the Opposition dealt very ably with the surplus about which we have heard so much. He pointed out that if it had not been for the sale of lands—the only asset which this State possesses—there would have been no surplus at all, but there would have been a deficit. We are told that every Government does it, and that when the Labour Government get on the Government benches, they will also have to sell land. We are told that the present Government are running the business of this country on business lines. While it might not be possible to run a big State like this on strictly business lines, I think that the present Government are a long way off running it on business lines. There is no company in the world, not even the American meat trust, with their millions of money, would attempt to run their business on the same lines that the Government are running the business of this country. If they

did, they would go down in a very short time. The surplus is made up by selling the only asset the country has got. It is always a curse when they sell the people's rights that they have to depend on for their very existence. Every man, woman, and child in Queensland to-day depends on the land for their existence. It stands to reason if you allow the land to get into the hands of a few people, then the rest of the people must, directly or indirectly, be dependent on them for their existence. The hon. member for Townsville referred to-night to the Government having to buy back land that was sold only a few years ago. That shows the folly of selling land—when we have to buy it back again to make it available for settlement. The value of the land is increased in price and the people who enhance the value of that land get none of the enhanced value. I remember hearing the late Hon. J. T. Bell, late Secretary for Public Lands, say that he believed that if Queensland started again it would be better not to sell one inch of land. By a strange coincidence, I was reading up some old "Hansards" and I find that his father, the late Sir Joshua Peter Bell, said exactly the same thing many years before—that if Queensland were starting again that it would be better not to sell one inch of land. Look what a grand thing it would be, from a Treasury point of view, if the Government owned the whole of the Queen street block of land! Look at the revenue the Government would get from it, and what it could do with the money received from that land. I know that this Government think it is a good thing to sell the public estate. I remember when Mr. Kidston was in office that he passed a Bill called the Proceeds of Crown Lands Sales Bill. It was thrown out by the Legislative Council on the first occasion, but on the second occasion it was passed by both Houses. There was some comment at the time about the Labour party supporting the Bill, but I voted for it on each occasion. It had nothing to do with the sale of land at all, but only provided that all revenue obtained from the sale of Crown lands should go into a special fund and not into revenue. This Government repealed that Act, and I am sorry that they did so. Future generations will see the great evil, the great crime, that has been committed by Queensland Governments in selling land. I hope something will take place to stop that kind of thing. Would it seem business-like for a private company to sell a thing to-day for £2 and in ten years' time be compelled to buy it back at £10? There is no business in it. All this talk we hear about it stopping the progress of the country is all moonshine. Why, the largest industry in this State, the pastoral industry, is carried on under leasehold. That industry is contributing some 8 per cent. of the consolidated revenue, and I do not suppose 2 per cent. of the pastoral holdings in Queensland are held as freehold. In reading through the Statement in regard to railways one would think that the present Government had built all the best-paying lines in Queensland. If you take the line from Brisbane to Cunnamulla and the line from Brisbane to Longreach you will find they are the best-paying lines in Queensland, and the present Government had nothing to do with the building of those railways. I am not opposed to the building of railways, because, no matter what Government is in power, they must build railways if they wish to open up the country and settle

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people on the land, but I believe the present Government have not done a wise thing in building many of the railways. I do not wish to refer to Port Alma Railway, as there are quite a number of other lines built by the present Government that do not pay at all. The result is that the big revenue we are getting from the railways to-day is coming from railways built by the Philp Government. That Government showed great wisdom in regard to railway construction. It was a bold scheme, but it is pleasing for any Queenslander to know that these railways are paying. The present Government have rather a blundering way in building railways. Mention has been made of the line from Winton to Springvale, and we are told that we voted against that line. I did vote against that line, but I voted against it on the same grounds as the hon. member for Gregory and for another reason. That line was passed by this House without any plans or books of reference, and without specifications. It was brought in in such a haphazard way that I did not think it was a good thing to pass it. I did not oppose that railway scheme because it was not wise to build railways in Western Queensland, but I thought they should be built in different places. We were told that money was to be borrowed for the construction of those lines and that it would be earmarked for that specific purpose, yet the line from Winton to Springvale has never been started yet. That line will run through some of the best grazing country in Queensland, and the whole of the country could be settled without cost to the Government. Half of some of the big holdings out there is resumable without cost to the Government, and it is a pity the Government did not start that line long ago and have the country settled while we had good seasons. No matter what Government is in power, it is not possible to settle people on the land in as effective a way in dry times as in good seasons. Something has also been said about the Renard road train. The total cost of that train amounted to £7,824 15s. 8d.; that is, original cost £4,105; for making roads, £2,762; working expenses, £957 6s. 8d.; or a total of £7,824 15s. 8d., and now it is on the scrap heap. I do not want to blame anyone for the purchase of that train, but there has been a mistake somewhere, and I hope the Government will act more wisely in the future. Then, again, as regards the McKeen motor-cars, I cannot understand why the Government had to pay £12,352 11s. 11d. in excess of the contract price for those cars. I cannot understand that that amount could be made up of Customs duty and the fixing of the cars together.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Customs duty alone was over £9,000.

Mr. PAYNE: There was something like £15,000 wasted on the Renard trains and the McKeen motor-cars. Something has also been said about the loans maturing in 1915, and members on the Government side have criticised the Opposition and asked, "What do you know about finance? If the Treasurer was managing a private business and had this amount of money to meet, would he have left it to within seven or eight months before he tried to make arrangements? I think the Government thought that they would be out of office when these loans fell due, and they were going to leave this burden to the Labour party to finance. Certainly, a good deal of land has been thrown

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open for settlement by the present Minister for Lands, but what do we find? Take the selections to be drawn for on the 2nd of next month. Two bores are on one holding, whereas if the Government had taken over those bores they would have cleared themselves within seven or eight years, and they would have made at the very least £7,000 or £8,000 out of those bores during the twenty-eight years' lease. The result is that whoever draws those selections, they will be dependent on the man who draws the 23,000-acre block for their water, and if he does not care to supply water from those bores at a reasonable figure, it will mean, unless the other three selectors combine and sink a bore, you will over-capitalise those other selections. And then, again, I do not think it is a good thing to sink bores so close together. The Government will serve three purposes by taking over these bores. They

would do a good deal so far as [11 p.m.] the Water Conservation Act is concerned; they would make £7,000 or £8,000 clear out of it before the lease expired, and the people who took up the land would be able to get on to it and start right away. The same thing applies to Portland Downs, which is also very fine country. There would be no speculation in it. You would not be throwing money away, as might be done in connection with mining. Every acre of the land has been tested by private enterprise, and you could, I claim, cut it up into 10,000-acre blocks instead of 20,000-acre blocks, because 10,000 acres of such land, with water, is as valuable as 20,000 acres without any water at all. You would be serving three purposes—cutting the place up into smaller areas, saving the waste of water—if there has been any waste in the artesian area—and enable the selector to take possession and get ahead straight away. In conclusion, all I can see that the Government have done is, that they have been selling the public estate to create a surplus; they have been extravagant in connection with Ministerial expenses, as referred to in the Auditor-General's report; they have deprived the lower paid men in the public service of their just increases, and at the same time given increases to the higher paid servants; and they have lost something like £15,000 in McKeen motor-cars and the Renard road train. Everybody is saying that it is time we were going home, and I am going to conclude by saying that I hope that the Treasurer will endeavour to persuade the Cabinet that, when they are throwing open land for settlement, the Government should take over the bores and supply water to the selectors. That will provide more settlement and make the settlers more secure.

Question put and passed.

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

#### LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL— FISH AND OYSTER BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of messages from the Council, returning these Bills with amendments, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

Consideration of the messages was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at five minutes past 11 o'clock.