

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 1914

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FRIDAY, 6 NOVEMBER, 1914.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 3.

ASSENT.

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

A message was also received from His Excellency assenting to the said Bill.

PROPOSED NEW RAILWAYS.

PLANS, ETC., TABLED.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) laid on the table the plans, sections, and books of reference of the following proposed railway extensions:—

Cloncurry-Mount Cuthbert, second section—Dugald River to Mount Cuthbert;

Enoggera to Terrors Creek;
Inglewood to Texas and Silverspur;
Rockhampton to Alton Downs;
Tinana Deviation;

Via recta, Mount Edwards to Maryvale; also report by Mr. N. G. Bell, late Chief Engineer, on alternative routes across the Main Range;

together with the Deputy Railway Commissioner's reports thereon.

Ordered that the reports be printed

QUESTIONS.

MARYBOROUGH RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER (*Maryborough*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is it true that the Railway Department contemplates the removal of five men from the Maryborough workshops to the Ipswich shops; if so, for what reason?"

"2. Is it true that the Railway Department contemplates sending from Maryborough and districts repair or other work, which would exceed three days to complete, to the Ipswich workshops, nearly 200 miles away, instead of the Maryborough workshops; if so, would not this action necessitate extra expense and loss of time?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. No.

"2. No."

ADVANCES TO CERTAIN COMPANIES.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Marcc*), on behalf of Mr. Huxham, asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. What were the amounts advanced by the State to the Broadsound Meatworks, the Mackay Meatworks, the Mackay Butter Factory, and the Nundah Fruit Canning Company, respectively?"

"2. Were any of the above undertakings taken over by the State?"

"3. Were any of the above undertakings disposed of on account of the State, and what was respectively realised?"

"4. Of the above undertakings resold or otherwise disposed of by the State, what were the respective losses sustained?"

"5. Are there any reasonable prospects of repayment of the total amounts advanced and incurred by the State to the above undertakings, and which of them may be so favourably circumstanced?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. John White, *Musgrave*) replied—

"1. The only advance by the State has been £425 to the Queensland Co-operative Fruit Preserving and Distributing Company, Limited, Nundah.

"2. No.

"3. No.

"4. No loss was sustained by the State.

"5. The Queensland Co-operative Fruit Preserving and Distributing Company, Limited, Nundah, has paid instalments due to the 30th June, 1914, less £7 9s. 4d. See former answers."

SUPPLY OF ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Mr. GILDAY (*Ithaca*) asked the Treasurer, in the absence of the Premier—

"1. Has the Brisbane Tramways Company, Limited, parliamentary authority for supplying to the public and charging them for electric light and power, as it is at present doing?"

"2. If so, will he state the provisions and the Act from which the Brisbane Tramways Company derives such authority?"

"3. Is he aware that quite recently the Hamilton, Windsor, and the Toombul local authorities declined to grant the application on behalf of a proposed company for permission to supply electric light and power within their boundaries by means of overhead electric wires?"

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

"1. From my reading of the Act, I do not think that they have. The question, however, is a legal one, and a definite answer cannot be given immediately.

"2. See answer to No. 1.

"3. No."

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' MEDICAL INSTITUTES.

Mr. GRANT (*Fitzroy*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Before doing anything in the alteration of the friendly societies' medical institutes in the way required by the

Pharmaceutical Society, by deputation, will he take into consideration the good work performed by these institutes for their members?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—
"Yes"

NUTGRASS AND RAILWAY WORKS.

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is he aware that sand and gravel containing nutgrass is being used for concrete work on the Mumbilla-Mount Edwards section of the via recta, thereby infecting clean areas of land?"

"2. Will he issue instructions to prevent the spread of the pest and mitigate any damage already done?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1 and 2. There is no information on this subject in the Brisbane office, but I am having inquiries made from the resident engineer on the work."

FIXED PRICE FOR WHEAT.

Mr. HUNTER (*Marrnna*) asked the Treasurer, in the absence of the Premier—

"If, in view of the pressing necessity for foodstuffs to feed and support the subjects as well as the defenders of the Empire, and in consideration of the great commercial importance of the same during the time of war, it is the intention of the Government to guarantee a fixed price for wheat next season so that farmers may be encouraged to cultivate larger areas for crop next year?"

The TREASURER replied—

"A final decision on question has not yet been arrived at."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SECOND ALLOTTED DAY.

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

HOME SECRETARY—ELECTORAL REGISTRATION.

Question stated—That £15,530 be granted for "Electoral Registration."

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): When the Committee were discussing the increase of £50 to the visiting justice to Dunwich they were told by the Home Secretary that the reason for the increase was because that gentleman's duties had increased. Surely the hon. gentleman did not contend that the duties of the officials in the Electoral Office had increased! Allowing that they had not increased, he (Mr. Kirwan) was prepared to admit that when the Bill which was being gagged through the House was passed, the duties of those officers would considerably increase. What he wanted to know was why this differential treatment should be meted out to officers in the Home Secretary's Department—why Mr. Macdonald should get an increase of £50 because his work had increased and no increase was given to the men in the Principal Electoral Registrar's

Office? He thought there was nobody who would not admit that they were important officers and that they carried out their duties with credit to themselves and the department.

Mr. THEODORE (*Chillagoe*): He thought that this was an opportune time to question the Home Secretary with regard to the system of electoral registration and some of the practices adopted by the revision courts. They should make it absolutely clear that those persons who desired enrolment should be protected. It had been stated that some of the chairmen who presided at these courts required the claims to be filled in according to very strict technicalities and formalities laid down by themselves. It appeared to him that claims should not be rejected on account of unimportant technicalities, and the Home Secretary should take some action, such as issuing a circular to the chairmen of the courts, so that the Act would be uniformly administered. It would not be interference with the officers, but something like what was done in the case of police magistrates regarding the administration of certain matters. A claim should not be rejected, for instance, merely because "N.S.W." was used instead of "New South Wales." The magistrates presiding over the courts should exercise ordinary common sense in reviewing the claims. If the Act did not give the Home Secretary power to do what he had suggested, he thought each registrar should be instructed that when a claim came in showing slight informalities he should immediately take steps to have the irregularity corrected before it came before the court. It was scandalous that persons who had the qualification to get upon the roll should be prevented by informalities which did not in any way affect the qualification. The Hon. the Home Secretary should take the matter into account. The evil could be remedied in one or two ways, either by advising the chairmen of the courts or by instructing the registrars or police, or whoever dealt with the claims in the first instance, in the manner he had suggested.

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*) wished to bring under the notice of the Home Secretary the way in which names were left off the rolls. He found that in every electorate a number of names were omitted from the roll of persons who had not been in any way disqualified. He had gone to the Principal Electoral Registrar and he had not been able to find out the cause of it. If a person was marked as "left" or "disqualified," there would be a record of why he was erased from the roll. The Principal Electoral Registrar had only to turn up the previous roll and he would be able to find out whether he was on the roll the year before. He thought that some provision should be made by which persons who were omitted from the roll through some clerical error and through no loss of qualification might be able to get a vote on polling-day. It often occurred that persons went into a polling-booth and had no knowledge previously that their names had been left off the roll. Very often the presiding officer was a local man and knew, perhaps, every elector in the vicinity, but he just quietly told each person, "I am sorry your name is not on the roll, and there is no provision in the Act by which I can give you a ballot-paper." Speaking from memory, he knew of cases which occurred at the last election. In one case a man's name had been removed, but

his wife's name had not been interfered with, and there were two other cases in which men had never changed their residences and had lost no part of their qualification. They were quietly told that their names were not on the roll. He would like the Home Secretary to take the matter into consideration and amend the Act, so that the presiding officers could give such persons votes.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): He would like the Home Secretary to give the House some assurance in regard to the matter referred to by the hon. member for Chillagoe. He would give the Home Secretary the letter which had been written to him in connection with the matter. With all due respect to anyone else, he thought this matter affected him the most, because this letter came from Longreach. The Home Secretary said "Hear, hear!" when the letter was read out previously. Was he going to back up Mr. Aird, the electoral registrar in Longreach, when he said that the bench would reject any claim not properly filled in, and would not allow such abbreviations as "N.S.W." for New South Wales, "Vic." for Victoria, and "Q'land" for Queensland? Was the Home Secretary going to allow such small, insignificant things to deprive a man from having a vote? What objection could the Home Secretary or any other fair-minded man take to a man's address being given as "care of the Australian Workers' Union office," where his letters always went? What corruption could there be in that? There was no possibility of giving any other honest address. Although the man might be living at an hotel or boarding-house, he would have his letters sent to the Australian Workers' Union office, because the secretary of the organisation was always in touch with the men, and knew whether they were shearing in the shed or were in the town, with the result that they would get their letters when they were out shearing. The hotel-keeper or the boarding-house keeper would not know where the man was, but the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union would. It would not be fair if a notification to strike a man's name off the roll was sent to the hotel, as it might lie there for a couple of months, but if the letter went to the office of the Australian Workers' Union the man would be sure to get it. Unless the Home Secretary had made up his mind to squeeze these men out of their votes—

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, no!

Mr. PAYNE: He had strong doubts.

The HOME SECRETARY: Well, if you approach the matter from that point of view I have nothing more to say.

Mr. PAYNE: He had very strong doubts—knowing the circumstances of the occupations which those men followed—whether the Hon. the Home Secretary was not placing great obstacles in the way.

The HOME SECRETARY: What has the Government to do with the office?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They carry out your instructions.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, we never give them any instructions of that character.

Mr. PAYNE: Did an electoral registrar ever send a notice to an elector?

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course he does, in conformity with the Act.

[*Mr. Land.*

Mr. PAYNE: But he was pointing out that unless he sent it to the address where those electors' letters had been addressed for years, the probabilities were that they would not get it for some months.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will answer that.

Mr. PAYNE: Then, he wanted the Home Secretary to consider that part of the letter with reference to a man having to give the exact date of his birth. Men might know that they were born in a certain month, but they could not tell the exact date, and, if the exact date was not put in, was the application going to be thrown out? He hoped the Committee would obstruct the vote until the Minister gave some answer to the questions which had been asked.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*) said he could corroborate the statement of the hon. member for Mitchell that a great many who followed the occupation of shearing had the Australian Workers' Union office as their address, as the secretary of their union always knew where they were. He, therefore, saw no reason why that address should not be allowed. Why did Mr. Aird, the electoral registrar at Longreach, have a different mode of filling in claim forms from that adopted by other registrars in Queensland? The Minister stated that he never sent out instructions to the registrars. Why, then, should Mr. Aird take it upon himself to tell applicants that, in addition to their country of origin, they must state the town in which they were born, and the very date of their birth?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is what I am going to find out. When that instruction was first mentioned in the House, I thought it came from the head office, and I had to back it up, whatever it was. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. HAMILTON: It seemed from what the Home Secretary said, that Mr. Aird alone was responsible for the issue of those instructions. He (Mr. Hamilton) had filled in a great many claim forms, and had seen many others filled in by other persons, and he did not remember one case in which the town where a man was born was given. There were thousands of men who could not tell exactly the date of their birth. He knew that he left home when he was only a few months old, and that until he wrote home and got particulars he was a year out in the date of his birth. Many persons who came from the old country were born before the Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages Act came into operation, so that it was very difficult for them to get the exact date of their birth. The matter of filling up application forms should be made as simple as possible, as long as there were reasonable safeguards. Mr. Aird had evidently taken a lot on himself.

The HOME SECRETARY: He has.

Mr. HAMILTON: He thought Mr. Aird should be called over the coals.

The HOME SECRETARY: He has already been called upon for an explanation.

Mr. HAMILTON: The head office should send out some simple instructions to all registrars, so that there might be uniformity in filling up the forms. There should be no sending out of instructions by individual registrars according to their individual interpretations of the law.

The HOME SECRETARY: There won't be after this.

Mr. HAMILTON: The result of rejecting applications on the grounds mentioned in Mr. Aird's instructions would be that the persons concerned would have to send in fresh applications. Certainly Mr. Aird should be called over the coals for his action.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is going to be.

Mr. GILDAY (*Ithaca*) wished to know what was the reason that such a large percentage of electors in Ithaca, who still occupied the residences in which they had lived for years, had been advertised since the last revision court as having left the district. He did not suggest that the blame for this rested with the department, but thought the trouble arose from those who were sent out to revise the rolls not knowing the boundaries of the electorate. He held that any person who attempted to have the name of an elector removed from the roll without a legitimate reason should be fined.

The HOME SECRETARY: He has to lodge 5s. with his objection.

Mr. GILDAY: Was that so under the original Act?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. GILDAY: Then the department should be in a position to collect a number of five shillings.

The HOME SECRETARY: As it happens, most of the objections lodged have been successful.

Mr. GILDAY: He would cite a couple of cases which occurred in his electorate. A man named Martin Keogh and his wife had lived in Guthrie street for the last seventeen years; the man was a locomotive driver, and had not left his house during that time except when he was away on his engine between Brisbane and Gympie, yet he was notified that he had "left the district." There were no other persons of the name of Keogh on that electoral roll. Two brothers named Roberts were knocked off the roll for a similar reason, though they still lived in the same place. The name of Stephen Sheldon, who lived in the Soudan Estate, was also removed from the roll, though the names of his son and wife were retained on the roll.

The HOME SECRETARY: They act impartially, because they had removed the name of Mrs. Appel from the roll, though she has been living at her residence since she was six years of age.

Mr. GILDAY: He was not saying that only the names of one party were removed from the roll, but was pointing out that names were improperly removed. There was something wrong with the system, and it should be altered. He noticed that Mr. Rose, one of the electoral registrars, had been in the service since 1879, and was appointed to his present position in 1900. Since that date he had only received one rise of £10. That officer was not getting a fair deal, and he was the worst-treated officer in the department to-day. Mr. Harris, the other electoral registrar, was appointed to the Government service in 1883, and to his present position in 1902, and he only had an increase of £10 since his appointment. There was something wrong, as the work of this department had increased very much in the last two or three years. These two officers did their work well and conscientiously, and they should get a fairer deal than they were receiving at the present time. He hoped that the revision of the rolls

would be done in a much better way than it had been done in the past, so that people who never left their electorates would not have their names marked off the rolls.

Mr. FIEHELLY (*Paddington*) agreed with the hon. member for Ithaca, that there should be some more efficient method of dealing with the electoral rolls. At the present time the Police Department did not work in harmony with the Electoral Department. A capable policeman would be put on to collect names in a certain district, and when he was half way through his work, he would be transferred to the country. The Home Secretary was in charge of both departments, and he should see that when a policeman started canvassing in a metropolitan district that he was kept at that work until he had completed the electoral roll he was engaged on.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Commissioner for Police is entirely in charge of that business. I have nothing to do with it.

Mr. FIEHELLY: The Home Secretary should see that the Commissioner did something in that direction.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have got no authority.

Mr. FIEHELLY: The hon. gentleman could make that explanation, but what good was it to hon. members or to the people outside?

The HOME SECRETARY: The Commissioner has authority under his own Act.

Mr. FIEHELLY: What nonsense! The Home Secretary was the Minister in charge of the department, and he had full authority. Was he going to give over to the Commissioner of Police full autonomy? The Commissioner seemed to be a sovereign within a sovereign State, and if he liked he need not work in harmony with the Electoral Office.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have given power in the Elections Bill to the Principal Electoral Registrar to demand what the hon. gentleman is dealing with.

Mr. FIEHELLY: That was better, as something of that nature was wanted. Messrs. Rose and Harris could not possibly do their work efficiently if they were not assisted in the right way by the police. The Police Force contained many capable men, but they were not all good canvassers, and the Home Secretary knew from his experience of canvassers for the Liberal party that every man was not a good canvasser. That being so, he should put on a good canvasser to do the work and keep him at it. He was glad that the Minister was going to suspend Mr. Aird.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. He will be called upon to furnish a report.

Mr. FIEHELLY: Any officer who acted as Mr. Aird had acted should be dealt with immediately.

The HOME SECRETARY: I quite agree with you that inquiry should be made.

Mr. FIEHELLY: Any officer who said that "N.S.W." did not stand for New South Wales, that "Q'ld" did not stand for Queensland, and that "Vic." did not stand for Victoria should be suspended forthwith. Such a person should not be left in a responsible position. He should be suspended. Three of the questions that had to be answered by people applying for a vote were

Mr. Fihelly.]

"Where were you born?" "When were you born?" and "How did you arrive in this State?" An old lady came to him to-day with an electoral form to sign and she could not answer those questions. She knew that she was born in the old country, but could not say where, and she did not know when, nor did she know how she came to Queensland. The explanation was simple. She arrived here when she was two or three years of age, her parents died when she was a baby, and she simply grew up, like Topsy. Was the Home Secretary going to allow that old lady to have a vote?

The HOME SECRETARY: I hope she will not be deprived of her vote. Is she on the roll?

Mr. FIDELLY: No, he sent in the claim that day. Probably the compulsory voting had frightened the old lady. She did not trouble to get on the electoral roll before, because she could not answer the questions. She pointed out that she could not get on the electoral roll because she could not answer the questions, and if she did not get her name on the electoral roll she would be fined, so what was she to do? The officers in the Electoral Department did good work, but they did not have proper assistance. He trusted the Home Secretary would do something to place them on a better footing. He would recommend that election day should be proclaimed a general holiday throughout the State, and that the young clerks in the public service should be employed as poll clerks. At present they seemed to rely almost entirely upon old men to act as poll clerks; in fact, they seemed to employ what might be called casual labour to do that important work. At the recent Commonwealth election he noticed that wherever young poll clerks were employed the work was done much more rapidly and efficiently than where old men were employed, and he was sure the Principal Electoral Registrar would appreciate the assistance of the younger members of the public service.

Mr. PAYNE: It was only fair before Mr. Aird was suspended that he should read the Home Secretary the first paragraph of the letter which that officer wrote—

"Sir,—I am directed by the chairman of the bench of magistrates to forward you specimen copies of claims for persons wishing to be enrolled as electors for the Mitchell district, and would be pleased if you would put them before any person making out a claim."

He would like the Home Secretary to say who was the chairman of the bench of magistrates. He was very doubtful if it was Mr. Burrowes, the police magistrate.

The HOME SECRETARY: I believe it is; but I have asked to be supplied with the information.

Mr. PAYNE hardly thought it was. Mr. Aird had the reputation in the Mitchell district of being a busybody, and of taking a lot of things on his own shoulders, and he wanted the Home Secretary to make inquiries before he did anything in the matter. If he had taken it upon himself to write such a letter, he wanted pulling up. Here was another paragraph from the letter—

"It is also requested that all claims be filled in, in as plain writing as possible, as we find flourishes very hard to decipher, and it also prolongs the court unnecessarily."

Of course, it would take longer to read bad

[Mr. Fidelity.

writing than good writing, but it was going too far if claims were to be rejected because the writing was not copperplate. The education of many of the men who had helped to make Queensland the prosperous State it was to-day, had, unfortunately for themselves, been neglected, and it would be a miserable thing if, because a man got his mate to fill in his claim for him, and the writing did not happen to be copperplate, it was liable to be rejected. He hoped the hon. gentleman would make inquiries.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member must remember that, when that letter was first quoted here, I was charged with being at the head of it. Of course, I have had inquiries made since then.

Mr. PAYNE: It was naturally thought that no subordinate officer of the department would take it upon himself to write such a letter.

The HOME SECRETARY: I naturally concluded at first that it had emanated from the head office.

Mr. HAMILTON: As a matter of fact, Mr. Aird is an officer of the Lands Department.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; he says that the chairman of the bench of magistrates instructed him to write the letter. I can assure the hon. member he will not do it again.

Mr. PAYNE: Some justices out there were as narrow as it was possible for them to be, and he hoped the Home Secretary would not allow any bench of squatters to deprive a working man of his vote.

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

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) regretted that the matter just referred to by the hon. member for Mitchell had been brought up in that Chamber at all. A considerable amount of time could have been saved if it had been brought under the Home Secretary's notice outside the House altogether. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Paddington that it was frequently very difficult for people to state the date of their birth and where they were born. The reason of requiring the date of birth to be given was that it was thought that a large number of applicants for enrolment were under twenty-one years of age, and it was just as well that inquiries should be made in such cases. Personally, he would prefer to see the paragraph struck out of the application form. He thought the time had arrived when election agents and private individuals should be prevented from getting people's names placed on the electoral rolls, and he would suggest that there should be an officer in every district to attend to that work. Probably the police station would be the most convenient place for people to go to apply for enrolment. An officer of the Police Force could fill in all the answers to questions on the claim form, and then inquiries could be made where necessary. He thought that a system of that sort would prevent mistakes being made. They got no end of duplications on the rolls, and numbers of names on different rolls in Queensland, because in different centres they found men out two and three nights in the week on the street with a candle asking people to get their names put on the roll. He had seen men in George street, Brisbane, [4.30 p.m.] under the influence of liquor, being asked if their names were on the roll. He wanted to get a complete roll and a clean roll, and if the suggestion he had made were adopted, the few pounds

it would cost would be well worth the expenditure; and the Opposition, who paid scores of agents for that class of work, would save a considerable sum of money.

Mr. HAMILTON: You have an organiser in my district now.

Mr. ROBERTS: He knew that there were Liberal organisers, but he wanted to get rid of them. The present system led to confusion, and if there were some public place where people could go and make application for enrolment, it would save trouble afterwards. In the case of invalids, who were unable to attend the office to get their names on the roll, the officer in charge could be notified and he could send out an officer to get the necessary application form filled in. He believed such a system was the right thing, and the day would come when they would adopt such a system, and thereby get a clean roll in Queensland.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Maree*): The hon. member for East Toowoomba had expressed the opinion that the present application form for enrolment should be amended, as he did not believe in persons being compelled to state the date of their birth. It was a remarkable thing that that hon. member did not support the Labour party last year when they tried to have that clause amended, and he (Mr. Bertram) ventured to say, if an attempt was made this year to amend that clause in the Elections Act, the hon. member would be found supporting the Government. He presumed, seeing that the Government could give increases to none but highly paid officers in the service, that it would be impossible to give an increase to the two officers mentioned by members of the Opposition. He had brought the matter up last year, and then intimated that those officers had been in the service for thirty or forty years, and were not being adequately paid for the work they performed. The Home Secretary had then stated that, as a result of passing the Elections Act of 1913, additional work would be imposed on those officers, and that when the Estimates were being considered this year, consideration would be given to the matter. It was well known that, as a result of the amending Bill this session, further additional work would be thrown on those officers, and the elections next year would involve a great deal of heavy work, and, notwithstanding the fact that the Government had decided not to give general increases, consideration might have been given to those deserving officers. He would not have said one word had it not been for the fact that increases were being given to highly paid officers.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; not in the Home Department.

Mr. BERTRAM: The Committee had discussed one the other day. He regretted exceedingly that the officers to whom he had referred and other under-paid officers in the service were not to receive increases.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): The hon. member for East Toowoomba had suggested a new method of enrolment, but probably the hon. member did not consider that a majority of the electors who had the greatest difficulty in getting on the roll at the present time, and in keeping on the roll when they were there, were people who could not afford to lose time in order to come to town to the office where those officials were located. A very large number of people could only get into town on Saturday nights, and if

the method suggested were adopted, it would be a miserable farce. He thoroughly concurred in what one or two members of the Opposition had said regarding the very low salaries received by two officers in the department, and those two men were responsible for nine-tenths of the work of the Electoral Department. It must have been quite patent to every member of the House that when the redistribution of seats took place a year or two ago, that those two men had to work practically night and day, and he had never heard the Home Secretary say that they were getting any increase or anything in the shape of a bonus or overtime payment. Those two men had to ascertain in what electorate thousands of people in the metropolitan area were really in, as the people themselves did not know where the line of demarcation was drawn between the respective metropolitan electorates. In that one instance alone those two men had a tremendous amount of extra work to do, and in the past they had been very harshly treated in only getting an increase of about £10 for a considerable number of years. At the last general election, owing probably to the redistribution of seats, some mistakes may have been made when the names were transferred to the provisional roll, and then again from the provisional roll to the printed roll that was used at the election, and several Bundaberg electors when they went to the poll found their names were not on the roll. Those people had never left the place, but through some error on somebody's part their names did not appear on the new roll. He (Mr. Barber) came down to the Principal Electoral Registrar, and that gentleman gave him every assistance he could. He pointed out that the names being left off the roll, through no fault of the department, so far as he could see, he could not help them. He wanted the hon. member to look into the matter, because it was quite possible that when the next election came round they would find similar cases to those to which he referred, and it was very hard that worthy citizens who had lived for years in the State and in one electorate should, through the error of the Printing Office or some Government official, be deprived of the franchise. What he had stated took place in several electorates, and he was quite safe in saying that at the last general election hundreds of people were disfranchised in the same way. In the filling in of the electoral claims there was very often what the electoral officer considered to be some technical informality, through which the persons who filled them in were debarred from getting on the roll at the court at which the claims were considered. Referring once more to what took place in Bundaberg the other day, he was quite safe in saying that out of 113 claims which were rejected, the major part would be thrown out simply because, in answering the questions as to whether they had been *bonâ fide* residents of Queensland for twelve months, they had answered the question, "In what district or where?" by answering "Bundaberg," instead of Bundaberg and district. It was a peculiar thing about that charming sweet district of Bundaberg that a large number of men who went there to work in the sugar industry were altogether ignorant of the boundaries of the electorate.

The HOME SECRETARY: The organisers who get them to sign the claims are not.

Mr. Barber.]

Mr. BARBER: What had the hon. member got to say about the organisers? Although that lying report appeared in the "Courier"—

The HOME SECRETARY: It is true, absolutely true.

Mr. BARBER: The office from which that lying statement emanated had not the courage to publish the last paragraph in their own paper. All that was referred to there—and he knew that the police magistrate did it—was that the police magistrate called the attention of the claimants in several instances to the careless manner in which they (the claimants) had answered the questions. But that gentleman did not say what appeared in the "Courier"—that the police magistrate practically censured the people who filled in the claims. Every man whose claim was filled in was justly entitled to be on the roll.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were fraudulent claims, fraudulent claims!

Mr. BARBER: If the hon. member says that, he says what is absolutely untrue.

The HOME SECRETARY: Fiddlesticks!

Mr. BARBER: There was no fiddlesticks about it. The statement is not in accordance with fact.

The HOME SECRETARY: The court found otherwise.

Mr. BARBER: Why, the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture knows as well as I do, yet he has the insufferable gall and cheek—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must not use unparliamentary language.

Mr. BARBER: The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture had the impertinence and cheek to say, when he called his attention to the same thing, that a large number were not in the electorate at all.

The HOME SECRETARY: You were bowled out this time.

Mr. BARBER: He was not. At the very time they were rejected 70 per cent. of the claimants were to be found in the electorate of the Secretary for Agriculture. He knew very well that a considerable number of the men had left the mill where they had been working when the claims were made, but they were working in some part of the Musgrave electorate, and the Minister for Agriculture knew it as well as he did. The major portion of those who worked in the Musgrave district always referred to that district as "Bundaberg," or "Bundaberg district," and the hon. member knew it, and that seemed to him to be the technicality which caused a large number of the claims to be thrown out the other day. What was the Home Secretary going to do to meet those cases?

The HOME SECRETARY: See that only men who are entitled get on the roll.

Mr. BARBER: They were entitled.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were not; the court found otherwise.

Mr. BARBER: Of course, they made a big point simply because they put "Bundaberg," instead of "Bundaberg and district." Why, there was not room on the electoral claims to go into all the details about your genealogy and pedigree and autobiography, and all that sort of thing, running back

[Mr. Barber.

for sixteen generations like the Home Secretary had inflicted on the House at a previous sitting. You would require a couple of fair-sized volumes to do it. If these men were to apply at the next court, would the Home Secretary allow them to get on the roll?

The HOME SECRETARY: If they are entitled they will be put on; if they are not, they won't.

Mr. BARBER: They were entitled. At the time they applied to get on the roll everyone of them possessed the necessary residential qualification. (Government laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: Nonsense! You are only trying to cover up your tracks.

Mr. BARBER: That was all you got from the hon. member. The very political atmosphere of Queensland was vitiated and reeked with the stench of this trying to keep people off the roll. To go back to his first knowledge of Queensland twenty-four years ago, they had it in the Bulcock days, and right down the last quarter of a century the same dastardly sort of thing was perpetrated on the majority of these people who had no protection except on the Labour side. And then they were told that they were not qualified.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are not.

Mr. BARBER: If the hon. member said that outside, he (Mr. Barber) would express himself more strongly than he was allowed to do in that House.

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

Mr. BARBER: He had another five minutes. Some of the electoral registrars were not so exacting as to ask these people to remember everything that had occurred in their lives. Hundreds of people of his acquaintance could not tell the date of the month on which they were born, or even give the month or the year, and if the business outlined in the circular was going to be carried out they would disfranchise hundreds of others. He had never seen such a lot of rubbish as was set out there. A man or woman was asked to write practically in a neat hand. If they had applied that test to a large number of the civil servants when they passed the examination, a lot of those who were in the service to-day would not have succeeded. These men, boys of the moleskins, flannels, who had not had the opportunity of education, through having to start to work early in life, who had pioneered the country and helped to build up our industries, and who had provided the money, to a large extent, to give free education in our schools and universities, whereby it had been made possible for town people to get a liberal education—these men were compelled to work outside, and yet they were turned down because they did not dot their "i's" or cross their "t's."

The HOME SECRETARY: Piffle, piffle!

Mr. BARBER: The hon. gentleman was a past master at it. He thought yesterday, when the Home Secretary said he first saw the light in Brisbane, that he must have come under the dominating influence of Mr. Bulcock, and learnt some very queer lessons there. When the hon. gentleman got up in the House and appealed to the people outside, it reminded him of an old saying which was applicable to the hon. gentleman, "He protesteth too much." The hon. gentleman protested that they had got the best elec-

toral franchise in the world. What was the good of giving a broad franchise if they deliberately blocked people who were qualified just as much as the hon. gentleman? These people had to earn their bread and butter outside, and they were deliberately, scandalously, and dastardly robbed of their franchise. If he were the Home Secretary he would do anything before he would descend to such dirty and scandalous work.

* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE was surprised at the indignation of the hon. member for Bundaberg. (Hear, hear!) He did not want to go into mock heroics about the rights of electors, but he thought there was no one in the House who wished to deprive the honest man of a vote. (Hear, hear!) He was going to give one or two instances of the men who were applying to be put on the roll. There was one man who did not want to be put on the roll, and he told one of the Labour organisers in the district who wanted to put him on the roll that he had only been in Queensland for three months; that he had come from South Australia, and that he had only been ten days in the Musgrave electorate. The organiser replied, "Don't mind that; that is all right. You go on the roll." That was an actual case, as the man came and told him at the court.

Mr. KIRWAN: Where is that man working?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was not going to implicate that man, as they knew what the result would be if it was known to the Labour organisers in the Bundaberg and Musgrave electorates. Another man had just come from Rockhampton, and he told them, when they wanted to put him on the roll, that he had only been there ten days, and said he did not want to sign his name, but they said, "Sign your name." The gentleman who was going round getting these names was the champion roll-stuffer of Queensland. (Opposition dissent.) He would read an extract from the "Bundaberg Mail," of Tuesday, 3rd November—

"George Ryland, called by Mr. Hamilton, deposed: I am a labourer, residing in Sussex street, South Brisbane; the claim produced is witnessed by me; I have no knowledge of having seen Miller previous to the day he signed."

It was an understood thing that when a man was putting another man on the roll, and signing the claim as a justice of the peace, he should have known the man for twelve months.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no! What stupidity!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: "and have no personal knowledge of the facts contained in the claim; I have only read part of the Electoral Act; I was thirteen years a member of the Queensland Parliament; I did not know that the justice signing the application form was required to sign a certificate that he had personal knowledge of the applicant."

If the form had been properly signed and the declaration put on to the bottom of it, he would have been liable to a fine of £50. (Opposition dissent.) Mr. Ryland continued—

"I had not been making myself acquainted with the Electoral Act; I did not evade signing the certificate because I wished to evade prosecution; I am not well conversant with the Act."

He (Mr. White) did not profess to be well

conversant with the provisions of the Elections Act, and he did not go round putting people on the roll, whether they were entitled to be put on or not. He neither went round putting the names of people on the roll nor employed others to engage in roll-stuffing.

Several members interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must insist upon members maintaining proper order, and I ask them to abstain from disorderly interjections. Hon. members who are interjecting will have an opportunity

[5 p.m.] afterwards of addressing the Committee, and in the meantime they should allow the Secretary for Agriculture to make his speech without these frequent interjections.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not want to pursue the subject any further, and should not have spoken at all if the hon. member for Bundaberg had not referred to him personally. Hitherto he had never tried to get a single name on the roll in any electorate in Queensland, but the people in his district had taken up this matter with the view of purifying the roll. At the last Federal election a great many men waited at Gin Gin for the purpose of voting there, and they left the district the morning after the election. He was convinced that there had been put on the roll the names of a great many people who were not entitled to be on it, and it was his intention to take more interest in future in getting people off the roll who were not entitled to be on it. It was absolutely against the principles of even hon. members opposite to have men on five or six rolls in Queensland, and he knew some cases where that had occurred.

Mr. THEODORE: You don't know any.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have asked hon. members two or three times already to refrain from interjecting, and I hope the hon. member for Chillagoe will respect my request, and assist in maintaining order.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A great deal of indignation had been shown over this matter, but there was no need for any indignation, because everyone who was entitled to be on the roll would be kept on the roll. But, in some cases, there were men who used two names. One man got on the roll at Fairymead under one name and on the roll at Waterloo under another name, and possibly on the roll somewhere else under another name. How could we have clean rolls when men were going about the country and getting their names on the roll in that way, for one purpose only? He sincerely regretted that the hon. member for Bundaberg had brought his (Mr. White's) name into this matter, because he was not at the court. The hon. member for Bundaberg was there, and he (Mr. White) did not think that any member of Parliament should take part in these matters; they should be left entirely to the electors. The men whose names were objected to in the case under discussion had a solicitor from Maryborough to defend them and see that they got justice, and he presumed they got justice, because he did not think that any member present would say that injustice was done by police magistrates in Queensland, who were just as honest as any member on either side of the House. He hoped that the new Elections Bill would give them clean electoral

Hon. J. White.]

rolls, and if it did so, it would do a great deal of good for Queensland. The system of roll-stuffing that was carried on was no credit to anyone engaged in it, no matter to what party he might belong.

Mr. McCORMACK (*Cairns*): It was rather amusing to hear Ministerialists making attacks on agents of the Labour party for attempting to stuff the rolls, seeing that they themselves were going to do, by a new Act of Parliament, what they could not get their agents to do. A Ministry who owed their position to a Liberal majority should be the last to take exception to their opponents securing the franchise for their supporters. Last year the present Administration appointed an ex-inspector of police as a Liberal organiser, and that inspector was allowed to retire before his time had expired. That was admitted.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, that is not admitted.

Mr. McCORMACK: He hoped the Chairman would protect him from the Home Secretary, seeing that he had warned members on the Opposition side of the House against making interjections. The Minister had the right of reply, and he should allow members on that side to make their statements without interruption. He knew that the Home Department attached to that police inspector's retirement a proviso that he would have to act as Liberal organiser.

The HOME SECRETARY: Now, be honest.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. gentleman knew that the man he referred to, ex-Inspector Malone, never received one penny of salary from the Liberal organisation. The hon. member for Normanby and the president of the Liberal organisation up there denied that Mr. Malone was paid one penny by the Liberal organisation.

Mr. ARCHER: He was paid by the local people up there.

Mr. McCORMACK: Mr. Draper, who was president of the local organisation, denied that Mr. Malone was receiving anything from the organisation.

Mr. ARCHER: Who paid him?

Mr. McCORMACK: He got £450 a year as pension from the people of Queensland. Why was Mr. Malone an organiser? He spoke in the past tense, because he believed that after an attempt for twelve months to make Cairns a Liberal electorate, Mr. Malone gave up the work. He did his work honestly; he sat at street corners trying to get Liberal supporters on the roll, and adopted all the tactics of the Labour party to get men on the roll. If Mr. Malone was forced to get out of office through ill-health, why should the proviso be added that he was to act as organiser for the Liberal party?

Mr. ARCHER: Where was this proviso?

The HOME SECRETARY: In the hon. member's imagination.

Mr. McCORMACK: There was some unholy alliance entered into with Mr. Malone. The Home Secretary had a friend at Cairns whom he would like to see as his (Mr. McCormack's) opponent at the next election.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why not?

[*Hon. J. White.*

Mr. McCORMACK: He had no objection at all, but why should he adopt this method of organising?

The HOME SECRETARY: You say that he adopted the tactics of the Labour party.

Mr. FIELLY rose to a point of order, and asked if the Home Secretary was in order in making interjections after the Chairman had warned hon. members on the Opposition side not to make interjections?

Mr. McCORMACK: He had no objection to the interjections, and he was only sorry that he did not have a voice like the Home Secretary to make himself heard. The Labour party organised from its own funds. The Liberal party had devious methods of organising, but their methods never succeeded. The Minister for Agriculture made a statement about Mr. George Kyland witnessing a signature when the man who signed the claim was not entitled to a vote. They knew very well that the justice of the peace witnessing the signature only attested the signature and not what was in the document. It was the applicant who rendered himself liable if he did anything wrong, and not the justice of the peace, who merely attested the signature of the applicant. What the Government could not do by organising, they were going to do by means of the Elections Act. He would like to draw attention to the results of Mr. Malone's organising in the Cairns district, and it would be interesting to know how he spent his time, for which he was being paid by the people of Queensland. At the State election in 1912 he (Mr. McCormack) received a majority of only seventy over his opponent, Mr. John Mann. At the next Federal election, held in 1913, Mr. Bamford received a majority of 600 over Mr. Mann in the same electorate. The Liberal party then got to work and started organising. He (Mr. McCormack) was the member for Cairns then, and he also attended to the organising on behalf of the Labour party, and he got everybody on the roll who was entitled to be on. After Mr. Malone had been organising for twelve months, another Federal election was held, and in the town of Cairns alone the Labour candidate had a majority over his opponent of over 1,000 votes.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Then why do you complain about Malone? (Laughter.)

Mr. McCORMACK: He was not complaining about Malone. He was quite willing for him to be kept there. Immediately Mr. Malone became an organiser in Cairns, the Labour party swept the elections for the town council in Cairns. Prior to Mr. Malone being appointed as Liberal organiser, the Liberal party polled 750 votes in Cairns, but, after Mr. Malone was at work for twelve months, the Liberal candidate polled only 571 votes. The Liberals did not leave Cairns, but they were disgusted with the action of the Government, and voted for the Labour man. When a public servant was retiring from the service the Home Secretary would at least study the public interests before he put him in the position of organiser of the Liberal party.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*): The hon. member for Cairns stated that all that a justice of the peace had to do was to attest the signature of the person making the

claim for a vote. He had to do a good deal more than that, as he would show from the Act.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: We know it just as well as you.

Mr. FORSYTH: They did not seem to know it when one hon. member said that a justice of the peace only attested the claimant's name. This was what was set out in the Act—

“The justice or any other person attesting the claim shall, if he is not personally acquainted with the facts, satisfy himself by inquiry from the claimant or otherwise that the answers to the questions are true, and shall sign at the foot of the claim a certificate in the following form or to the like effect, as under.”

Did the hon. member say that that was wrong? The person attesting the claim was supposed to ask the claimant the necessary questions, and satisfy himself that everything was all right, or he might accept the man's own word. He did not care whether it was a Labour organiser or a Liberal organiser, but if a man put a person on the roll who was not entitled to be on the roll he should be knocked out. The Minister for Agriculture showed where a man left Rockhampton on the 16th September, and he sent in a claim on the 26th September. That was the evidence which he gave in court, and it was corroborated. That claim was witnessed by Mr. Ryland. According to the next clause in the Act, if Mr. Ryland signed that certificate, knowing that the man was legally not entitled to a vote, he could be fined £50. It was a disgraceful thing for anyone to do that. He intended to deal with this question when he was speaking on the Elections Bill. He thought that no one should get on the roll unless they did so under fair and honourable conditions. He never canvassed for names himself, and he had not signed six election forms ever since he had been in Parliament.

Mr. BOWMAN: You have agents to do it for you.

Mr. FORSYTH: He did not have any agent in his electorate and no organiser. If the people liked to put names on for themselves they could do so. From the evidence they had that day, men were put on who had no right to be on the roll. It was illegal to try to put a man's name on the roll when he was not two months in the electorate.

Mr. THEODORE: Members on this side uphold you in that. No organiser would put on a man unless he was entitled to be on.

Mr. FORSYTH: He was not blaming the hon. member for Chillagoe, but it was a contemptible thing for any organiser—Labour or Liberal—to put a man on the roll when he had no right to be on the roll. He did not say that any hon. member on the other side would do it; but the evidence showed that people were being put on the roll who had no right to be there. He knew of a case in which a man applied for enrolment in a district and stated that he was already on the roll of another district, and he was put on the roll; but, when the roll which he stated he was already on was examined, it was found that he was not on it at all. Everything should be done to discourage such detestable practices. He would rather go out of Par-

liament altogether than remain there through a lot of his friends stuffing the roll in his interests. He trusted that the Home Secretary would take steps to deal severely with any person who did such a thing.

Mr. McCORMACK knew the Act quite as well as the hon. member for Murrumbidgee. What he said was that the justice of the peace attesting a claim had only to see the applicant attach his signature to the application form, and the applicant was responsible for the statements contained in the document. That was the law.

Mr. FORSYTH: Read section 36.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member only read as much as suited himself. The section read—

“The justice, or any other person, attesting the claim shall, if he is not personally acquainted with the facts, satisfy himself by inquiry from the claimant or otherwise, that the answers to the questions are true, and shall sign at the foot of the claim a certificate in the following form, or to like effect.”

That was the only Act on the statute-book where such a thing was required of an attesting justice. How could any man in Queensland know whether an applicant came to the State by the s.s. “Bremen” or the s.s. “Orvieto”? In any case, was there anything to show that Mr. Ryland had not done all that that section required? The hon. member made an ex-parte statement, and it was without foundation. He (Mr. McCORMACK) had attested numbers of forms for people he did not know, and he distinctly asked them whether all their answers were true, and, if he said “Yes,” he attested the forms. He would undertake that not one-half per cent. of the forms filled in in the Electoral Department since the Act came into force had that proviso. Any Act of Parliament that was not carried out was not an Act of Parliament at all; it became a dead letter. There were any amount of Acts on the statute-book that were broken every day, but they had not been repealed, and no one would think of instituting a prosecution against anyone for breaking them. In this case, because one individual did not put in a proviso after witnessing a form or a number of forms in the Bundaberg district, he was being pilloried in that Chamber and called a roll-stuffer. Well, if Mr. Ryland was a roll-stuffer, every person in Queensland who had witnessed any other person's claim was equally a roll-stuffer. The mere say-so of the Secretary for Agriculture in the matter was not worth anything. If this man signed the declaration under the Oaths Act, why was he not in custody for perjury?

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

Mr. McCORMACK (continuing) said that if the Home Secretary knew that this man had broken the provisions of the Oaths Act, it was his duty to bring that person to justice.

The HOME SECRETARY: Don't blame me, because I do not care to prosecute.

Mr. McCORMACK: He rather admired the hon. gentleman for not being willing to prosecute; but, when a matter like that was made the subject of debate in that Chamber, it was the duty of the hon. gentleman, as head of the department which was responsible for the administration of the Act, to

Mr. McCormack.]

take action. The Secretary for Agriculture said that Mr. Ryland did not know the Act. It was quite possible that he did not, seeing that that part of the Act was a dead letter, and that nobody complied with it.

The HOME SECRETARY: You don't believe that.

Mr. McCORMACK: He did believe it. He had seen Ministers—particularly the Secretary for Agriculture—introducing Bills of which they knew very little. He had seen the Home Secretary having to refer to the statutes, and he did not blame him for having to do that. It was not a crime not to know Acts of Parliament. It had been amply proved that there was nothing wrong in what Mr. Ryland had done, and that everyone else did it; so why single out Mr. Ryland and accuse him of roll-stuffing?

The HOME SECRETARY: You will agree that it is time that sort of thing was discontinued?

Mr. McCORMACK: He would agree with the hon. gentleman in anything when he brought this man to justice. At any rate, that was no excuse. The whole thing had been brought about as a result of [5.30 p.m.] instructions from the head office on the eve of an election. It was part of the Government's organising scheme, and, no doubt, the objections were made at that particular time in that particular place just when the Elections Bill was to be discussed in the House. That had been the whole foundation of the arguments why the law should be altered; because a few men at Bundaberg who, in spite of all the talk about qualifications, were entitled to a vote.

The HOME SECRETARY: One man is already on the Bundaberg roll, and he tried to get on the Musgrave roll—one of your organisers.

Mr. McCORMACK: He was not a Labour organiser.

The HOME SECRETARY: Here it is. I will read out his name—Henry John Saunders.

Mr. KIRWAN: There is no such man employed by the Labour party.

Mr. McCORMACK: It was like all the statements of the Home Secretary.

The HOME SECRETARY: Here is the Bundaberg roll; there is his name, and he tried to get on the Musgrave roll. You cannot get outside that.

Mr. McCORMACK: He was quite satisfied nothing definite could be proved in connection with the Bundaberg affair. The only thing that had been proved was that the Home Secretary had not carried out his duty.

The HOME SECRETARY: I believe you are right in that, but I am going to carry out my duty in the future.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*): Whatever the Home Secretary thought or said, Mr. George Ryland was not a roll-stuffer in the sense stated by the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Agriculture.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member knows he is a champion at it.

Mr. ADAMSON: Mr. Ryland was perfectly right in seeking to put men on the roll whom he believed had a right to be on the roll, and it was the duty of the electoral officers to see if there were any mistakes, and that these mistakes were corrected.

[*Mr. McCormack.*]

There were some mistakes in putting men on the roll when they ought not to be there, and there were also mistakes in putting men off the roll when they ought to be on. There was no more honourable man in Queensland than Mr. George Ryland, and no man had worked harder for the principles he believed in.

The HOME SECRETARY: He's a perfect political crook.

Mr. THEODORE: You are a perfect blackguard for saying that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must withdraw the expression "a perfect blackguard."

Mr. THEODORE: I withdraw the statement that the Home Secretary is a blackguard, but I will repeat it outside, because he has called a man, behind his back, a "political crook." No man but the Home Secretary would do a thing like that.

Mr. ADAMSON asked if the Home Secretary was in order in calling Mr. George Ryland a "political crook." It was a most cowardly thing to traduce a man behind his back.

The CHAIRMAN: The expression made use of by the Home Secretary is unparliamentary, and I must ask him to withdraw it.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have been asked to withdraw the statement "political crook," and I do so willingly.

Mr. ADAMSON said he had been in communication with certain people who had a good deal to do with the last revision court in Rockhampton, and some of these people would like to know very much why a great number of names were taken off the Fitzroy and Rockhampton rolls, and on what information they were taken off; why names were taken off the Keppel roll as well, and how many of those people who were taken off had since applied to be put on, and had already proved that they had not removed from the electorate; that they had not been away from the electorate for a number of years, not even for two consecutive days, and yet they found that one in every five of the claims brought forward in the Fitzroy electorate were rejected, and one in every six in the Rockhampton electorate. They knew that much of the information was supplied by the police, and many of the claims which were filled in by the police were incorrect. There was a Sergeant Brown, at Allentown, and the statement was that many of the claims he filled in were incorrect. If the officers employed by the department could not fill those claims in correctly, those whose claims were filled in incorrectly should not be disfranchised because of the actions of those employed by the Home Secretary's Department. So far as members of the Opposition were concerned, they were just as anxious as members opposite to have a clean roll, and to have a correct roll, but they wanted to have a full roll. After the last Federal election there were something like 900 electors taken off the Rockhampton roll: there were 400 taken off the Keppel roll, and about 36 taken off the Fitzroy roll; and what did they find in relation to that matter? That the agent of the Liberal party in Rockhampton went about his business very quickly, and the names that had been taken off the Fitzroy roll, and taken off wrongly, had been restored. Members on the Government side

had spoken about the Labour party using agents. Nobody used more agents for that particular work than the Liberal party, and they did it more effectually, because they had got more money to do it, and they could get money in ways that the Labour party were not able to do. So far as the Normanby by-election, which took place soon after the Federal election in 1913, was concerned, why the roll was purged to such an extent that there were about forty people in one little place just outside Mount Morgan, Baree, Labour voters, who were taken off, and who would have voted had they been dealt with fairly. As far as roll-stuffing was concerned, he (Mr. Adamson) did not know that he had filled in twelve claims during the whole of the time he had had to do with politics, and so far as those certificates, about which there was so much noise, were concerned, it was only lately that they had heard anything about them. He guaranteed that 70 per cent. of the claims that had been received in the past by the electoral registrars, and the names put on the electoral roll, did not contain that certificate. The Liberal party were anxious now to purge the rolls again. That was what this new Bill was designed to get—clean rolls. He would guarantee that the men on that side would do their best to get clean rolls, but they were also going to do their best to get full rolls, but a lot of men would be disfranchised by that Act of last year and the present Bill who ought to get on the rolls, and who had as much right to exercise the vote as the Home Secretary had. The definition of "residence" and all that kind of thing, which would be discussed, he supposed, next week, prevented persons from getting on the roll. He knew that at the last Rockhampton revision court the absolutely ridiculous and vexatious application form, with all its questions, caused a good deal of annoyance, and one man who watched the Labour interests emphasised the fact that there needed to be a simple application form that could be filled out by everybody. It was not only the claims of illiterate people which were rejected because they were not filled out properly, because some men who were bank managers and insurance managers did not fill out that claim properly. When the State elections came round next year he hoped the Home Secretary would be just as anxious to have as many people as possible on the roll as he was anxious to have a purged and clean roll. They wanted to get as many people to the polls as possible, and one way to get that was to have as many polling-places as possible, and yet at the last two or three elections in Rockhampton they applied for additional polling-places at places a good way from the central booth and they could not get them.

The HOME SECRETARY: Were the applications in time?

Mr. ADAMSON: They were in time, but they were refused by the returning officer, and there were people in Rockhampton who had just as much judgment as the police magistrate. They ought to have a polling-booth in the Archer Ward and another down at the swamp, which was nearly a mile or more than a mile away from the central polling-place. He was prepared to say that the Home Secretary wanted to have a square go at the elections, though it did seem that the Bill he had brought in was a

very peculiar Bill, just as the Bill passed last year was a very peculiar Bill, and the arrangements in the past were not in the direction of trying to get as many to vote as possible, but as many as possible to vote as might be of a certain kind. He was sorry to have to say that, because he liked to give the credit of honesty to members on the other side, but he did say that the provisions of the 1913 Act and this Bill would prevent thousands of splendid men from getting a chance to vote. The Home Secretary ought not to try to do such things. He had a very serious responsibility for the Act of last year, and he would have a more serious responsibility for this Bill, because, of course, they knew that he could pass it because he had the numbers. But the time would come when they would get back to the more democratic measures which were passed in 1904 and 1908. He hoped that the Home Secretary would see that they got more polling-places in all of the centres around Rockhampton.

Mr. LARCOMBE (*Keppel*) would like to ask the Home Secretary whether anything had been done to give effect to the resolutions carried at the Premiers' Conference in Melbourne in March and April last in connection with electoral uniformity, in which conference Queensland participated? He considered that electoral uniformity was one of the pressing electoral problems of Australia to-day, and the Government should have embraced some of the suggestions of the conference in the Bill which was now before the House.

The HOME SECRETARY: I confess it has never been brought before the Home Secretary's Department.

Mr. LARCOMBE: That went to show the slipshod methods of the Government. There were two representatives from the present Administration—the Minister for Public Instruction and the Acting Premier—and resolutions were arrived at, and they were not placed before the department concerned. What was the use of spending money in holding these conferences if the recommendations made were not placed before the different Administrations and seriously considered? It went to show what a mockery these conferences were. The Minister should convey those sentiments to the Minister for Public Instruction and the Acting Premier. It appeared to him that there was a split in the Cabinet. (Laughter.) He was really surprised at the unsophisticated nature of the Home Secretary, when he said he knew nothing about this discussion. He (Mr. Larcombe) wished to quote briefly from the speech delivered at the conference by ex-Senator McColl, who was then a Federal Minister. In introducing the subject, he said—

"I feel deeply indebted to the conference for their kindness in permitting me to deal with this important matter now, as I may not be able to be present to-morrow. The remarks which I have to make relate to the bringing about of electoral uniformity between the Commonwealth and the States of Australia. This represents a phase of what was in the minds of the people of Australia when they voted for federation. They desired that, wherever possible, the Commonwealth and the States should work

• *Mr. Larcombe.*]

together to promote efficiency, save expense, and render each other mutual services at actual cost, not seeking to make any profit."

That summed up the position very concisely and lucidly. Senator McColl pointed out that this was one of the questions running through the minds of the people when federation was discussed, and one of the benefits which they hoped would be obtained as the result of federation. Yet fourteen years had passed away, and nothing had been done. Conference after conference had been held, and the question was still shelved. It was something like the proposal to transfer the State debts, which was a problem which should have been settled long ago. This was not, perhaps, of as much importance as the transfer of State debts, but it was important all the same. Senator McColl pointed out that electoral matters consisted of—

- "1. The enrolment of voters.
- "2. The preparation of rolls.
- "3. The periodical revision and cleansing of rolls.
- "4. The preparation for and conduct of elections."

These were questions that he considered should be dealt with by the conference, and some decision arrived at upon them. The advantages of electoral uniformity were also outlined by Senator McColl, who set them out as follows:—

- "1. One set of officials for both Commonwealth and State enrolment and registration work, and the greater competency of those employed.
- "2. One set of offices and furnishings.
- "3. One set of rolls.
- "4. One set of advertisements relating to enrolment and registration.
- "5. One set of claim cards, preventing persons getting confused and annoyed by the duplication of claim cards.
- "6. The improved conduct of affairs, by having trained and competent men.
- "7. The expenditure incurred by Commonwealth and State Governments, which, by dividing the cost, would be greatly reduced to each."

Senator McColl further said—

"The electoral departmental cost for the Commonwealth and the States for the past three years has been £303,000, excluding cost of elections, which amounts to £227,600, or a total of £530,600."

The reasons set out by Senator McColl were forcible and convincing. There was no doubt that electoral uniformity would produce this advantage, and prevent a lot of duplication, and put an end to the tedious and tiresome charge of roll-stuffing which they heard so much about, and which was absolutely without foundation. There might be a certain percentage of irregularity taking place with regard to enrolment, but it was general, and not confined to members on this side. If the hon. gentleman looked up the papers for the last few years in connection with the Liberal plebiscites in Australia, he would find something which would open his eyes in the nature of malpractices. In the Koppel electorate they went round to the electors who supported him (Mr. Larcombe) and got them to take tickets making them members of the Liberal league, and got them to vote

[*Mr. Larcombe.*

in the Liberal plebiscite, but the electors realised that they had been duped, and when the elections came round they voted for him and returned him to the Assembly. He did not know who was responsible for the plebiscite up there, but this was done.

The HOME SECRETARY: That was an informal affair, wasn't it?

Mr. LARCOMBE: It was irregular and corrupt. It was an indication of how the Liberal party worked in their own little circle. The same thing also occurred in South Australia. There had been almost a revolution in Liberal circles in South Australia through roll-stuffing. In view of the revelations he had made, was it not absurd to hear hon. members opposite accusing hon. members on this side of malpractice, corruption, roll-stuffing, and various other charges? Hon. members opposite were the people who were historically responsible for this kind of thing. In addition to the prevention of overlapping and various other anomalies, the cost of elections in Australia, both State and Federal, would be enormously reduced by electoral uniformity. That was a very important consideration at this particular juncture, when the Government professed to be desirous of economising in every possible direction. Here was a way in which they could economise to the extent of thousands of pounds, but if they adopted electoral uniformity they would not retain their places on the Treasury bench.

The HOME SECRETARY: You advocate it for that reason?

Mr. LARCOMBE: No, but because he conscientiously believed it was a good thing. The Acting Premier expressed his opinion to that effect: theoretically he believed in it, but when it came to taking action, he refused to move in the matter, as he knew what the result would be. Listen to what the hon. gentleman said when dealing with this question, and giving his nominal endorsement to it. He was a man who damned the proposal with faint praise. On page 167 of the report of the Premiers' Conference, held in March and April this year, the Treasurer said—

"If something of this kind could be done it would be a good thing. Apparently there is a good deal of overlapping between the Commonwealth and the States in regard to the collection of names and other things. I quite agree with the motion, because it seems to me that at the present moment the difficulties are pretty acute. We, in Queensland, only last year passed a new Elections Act, after very great consideration had been given to it, and, looking to the needs of Queensland as a whole, I think it would be found that we should have some considerable trouble in connection with charitable institutions as between the attitude of the Commonwealth and the attitude of the State. I am now speaking for Queensland. We have a home for old people, and I suppose there are generally about 1,000 people in the home."

In making these remarks, he was speaking to the following resolution proposed by Mr. Murray, of Victoria—

"That the proposals of the Commonwealth Government relating to electoral uniformity be referred to the Governments of the States for early consideration and decision."

The HOME SECRETARY: I understood the hon. member to say that the Treasurer had supported this.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Yes, inferentially, he did. He said there was a good deal of overlapping, and went on further to indicate the necessity for some action. He supported a motion that the matter should be referred to the different States for consideration and decision. They had an Elections Acts Amendment Bill before them, which might be the last thing in electoral legislation for some years, and yet the Acting Premier so far failed in his duty as not to bring the suggestions before the Cabinet so as to have some of them embodied in the Bill.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is the president of the conference who should bring them before the Government.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The Acting Premier supported the resolution, asking for consideration and decision on this question.

The bell indicated that portion of the hon. tion and decision on this question.

Mr. LARCOMBE (continuing): The excuse the hon. gentleman made that the Government had not received any communication from the president of the Premiers' Conference was absurd and ridiculous. The report of the conference showed that it was not expected that the report was to go through the president of the conference, but that it was expected that it [7 p.m.] would go through the Premiers to their respective Home Departments, who were to work up a conference of the State and Federal electoral officers. Mr. Holman, of New South Wales, made that suggestion.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is very possible that the war conditions have interfered with the matter being proceeded with.

Mr. LARCOMBE: He could quite understand the war conditions interfering with the transmission of the report, but he could not understand the war conditions interfering with the consideration of the matter by the Cabinet. The war conditions did not interfere with the Elections Bill.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is very vital to the electors of the State of Queensland.

Mr. LARCOMBE: It was very vital to the Home Secretary and the Treasurer. The Treasurer laughed, but he did not laugh the previous evening when the leader of the Opposition offered to contest the Bulimba electorate with the hon. gentleman. At page 164 of the report of the Premiers' Conference, Mr. Holman said—

"I would suggest that the various Premiers should arrange to speak themselves to their State departments."

How was it that that was not done? How was it that the Acting Premier had not brought this matter before his colleagues for consideration? The Acting Premier had neglected his duty and jeopardised the interests of the State in neglecting to bring the resolution of the Premiers' Conference before his colleagues. There was additional evidence to prove that the Acting Premier and his colleagues had no desire to see the recommendations of Mr. McColl carried into effect. At page 75 of the report, Mr. McColl outlined some of the advantages which would accrue from electoral uniformity, as, for instance—

"(a) The enrolment of persons qualified for both Commonwealth and State

enrolment being effected simultaneously."

No doubt, simultaneous enrolment would be an advantage to the State, but it did not suit the present Administration in Queensland, who made the qualification for enrolment twelve months' residence, while the Federal qualification was six months' residence.

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

Mr. LARCOMBE: He would take another five minutes. The next suggestion of Mr. McColl was—

"(b) Simultaneous action in regard to transfer and change of enrolment."

That suggestion did not harmonise with the electoral legislation of hon. members opposite, who insisted on two months' residence in a new electorate before a person could transfer his name to another electoral roll, while under the Federal law, and the law of other States, only one month was required. One month was sufficient for all practical purposes, particularly in a State like Queensland where men were frequently forced to move from one electorate to another in order to earn a living for their wives and children. Another suggestion was—

"(c) Concurrent action in regard to the cleansing of rolls by the one authority acting on behalf of the Commonwealth and the State."

That was another suggestion which did not harmonise with the views of members opposite. They did not want a simultaneous and effective revision of the roll; they wanted a Liberal roll, and they also wanted to compel Liberal electors to go to the poll. The so-called purging of the roll in Queensland was simply farcical. The names of persons supporting the present Administration were not removed from the roll, but the names of thousands of workers were removed from the roll before their qualification vanished. The time was ripe for some definite action in this matter, and he trusted the Home Secretary would give it consideration. Let him for the time being disregard the advice of the Acting Premier, and take decisive action himself; it might result in his becoming Premier of the State. He regretted that his time had nearly expired, as there were several questions connected with the administration of the department that he should have liked to have referred to, but he considered the question of electoral uniformity so important that he was justified in giving the time he had to that question. He hoped that in future the Home Secretary would see that sufficient polling-booths were provided for electors who wanted to record their votes. The hon. member for Rockhampton had given instances where polling-booths were refused in Rockhampton. It was a remarkable thing that booths had been refused to people at the lower end of Rockhampton, while booths had been provided for the elite in the Fitzroy electorate. At the Leichhardt school, for instance, they had a polling-booth, but there was no polling-booth at the lower end of the town where there were 1,000 electors. These electors had to walk 2 miles to record their votes, and he thought the returning officer should be allowed to grant booths if there was a sufficient number of electors to warrant it. Take a big centre

Mr. Larcombe.]

like Park Avenue, at North Rockhampton, where there were hundreds of electors. There was no polling-booth provided there. In spite of this, hon. members opposite had the audacity to claim that they wanted to see every vote polled. If they wished that, they would afford facilities for the electors to vote. If these people did not vote they would have a valid reason for not doing so, but it might not be accepted as a valid reason in a court of law.

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

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*) had listened to the remarks from the hon. member for Cairns about the Liberal organiser in his electorate and he had heard what was said by the hon. member for Bundaberg and the Secretary for Agriculture about names being put on the roll that should not be there. In the Cunningham electorate they had neither Labour organisers nor Liberal organisers, not one.

Mr. HAMILTON: You have the Farmers' Union.

Mr. GRAYSON: The Farmers' Union did not put names on the roll. There was no electoral roll in Queensland more perfect than the Cunningham roll, and the credit for that was due to the police, who made periodical visits right throughout the electorate, and put on the names of everyone they came across who were entitled to be on the roll. He complimented the sergeants of police at Clifton, Allora, Yangan, Tannymorel, and Killarney for sending out the police under their charge every three months to put names on the roll. Practically every house was visited, and all persons over twenty-one years of age who had been the required time in the electorate were enrolled. The police had no politics, and it did not matter to them whether the names they put on voted Liberal or Labour. They asked no questions about politics, and made no insinuations, and he had much pleasure in paying them a compliment for the way they did their work in that direction. The police filled in the forms and got the applicants to sign them, and the names were put on the roll.

Mr. FIDELLY: The Home Secretary would not allow the police to do that last year.

Mr. GRAYSON: The Home Secretary did not put any obstacles in the way, and he knew that Major Cahill gave the police instructions to put on every name that was entitled to be on the roll. A Labour organiser came to the Cunningham electorate last year, and went to one corner where there were about 100 electors, about ninety of whom were Labour voters. He found they were all on the roll, and his occupation was gone, and he went to another electorate. With regard to polling-booths, the Home Secretary always granted him a polling-booth whenever he asked for it, if he could show that there were a sufficient number of voters. He once got a polling-booth established at the Tannymorel Colliery, where there were eighty or ninety voters. They were practically all Labour voters, but he got the booth in order to save them the trouble of walking 3 miles to Tannymorel to record their votes. If it had not been for the action of the police in putting names on the roll fully 25 to 30

[*Mr. Larcombe.*

per cent. of the people there would be disfranchised. In spite of the good work done by the police, he had not heard one kind word coming from the Opposition for the police. It was much more preferable to have the police doing the work than for Labour or Liberal organisers to do it. He trusted that before the discussion closed hon. members opposite would express some appreciation of the excellent work done by the police in connection with the collection of names.

Mr. KIRWAN: If members on the other side would see that the promise made by the Government, that they would recognise the work done by the police at the time of the general strike, was carried out on the Estimates, and would see that they got their due, the praise of the hon. member might be in place. They had the spectacle of the Secretary for Agriculture accusing members of the Opposition and their supporters of being roll-stuffers, and he accused an ex-member of the party as being the champion roll-stuffer. The hon. gentleman was not game to repeat the slander outside, where he could be dealt with in the courts of the land. He used the protection of that Chamber—that "coward's castle"—to make a statement that was absolutely untrue.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It has been absolutely proved in the court.

Mr. KIRWAN: Then, he charged the Home Secretary with being an accessory after the fact. If the charge was true, the Home Secretary should have taken action; if the charge was not true, then it reflected anything but credit on the Secretary for Agriculture. It was amusing to hear the charge of roll-stuffing coming from a party that were up to their necks in it. At a plebiscite in Brisbane before the Federal election before the last they had seen Lieutenant-Colonel Flewell-Smith writing to the papers exposing the gross irregularities that were responsible for his defeat and for the selection of another candidate. They knew the roll-stuffing that took place in Windsor before the last election. It was so bad that they were not game to take a plebiscite, and the Premier was called in to select a candidate, and he selected the present member for Windsor. Then they had the spectacle recently in New South Wales in connection with another plebiscite, when the executive, after going into all the facts, carried a motion to this effect—

"That, in view of the gross irregularities that have taken place in connection with the poll, as revealed by the report of the executive, this conference recommend that the said ballot be declared null and void."

That was in connection with the choice of a Liberal candidate for the Ryde electorate in New South Wales. The plebiscite for the selection of Liberal candidates for the Senate in Victoria literally stank. Column after column of letters appeared in the Melbourne "Age" in connection with the tactics resorted to. Even the member for Maranoa in the Federal Parliament was sold a ticket in order that he might vote for the selection of six Liberal candidates. Then, in connection with the Mossman seat, there were gross irregularities. No less than 700 names on the membership roll were objected to by six candidates, and fourteen books were stolen from the secretary's office. All those

charges appeared in the Melbourne "Herald" of 13th September. All those cases were connected with the party that used this "coward's castle" for the purpose of accusing the Opposition and their supporters of being roll-stuffers. He challenged the Home Secretary or any of his henchmen to make any charges in the public Press that could equal the charges he had read out against their own party. Anyone who knew anything about Queensland politics knew the old phrase, "Bulcocking the rolls." They knew what that meant, and how, being unable to secure a person who was equal to doing that class of work, the party opposite now used the whole machinery of the Electoral Department, the police magistrates, and the electoral registrars to do the work of the Liberal organisation that was to be buried on Monday night.

Mr. PAYNE asked if the Home Secretary was not going to reply to the matters that had been brought up by hon. members?

The HOME SECRETARY said that it would be practically impossible for him to reply to all the statements that had been made, because many of those statements had no foundation. There was one matter, however, that he was pleased to be able to deal with. When the instructions which had apparently been issued by the electoral registrar at Longreach were first mentioned on Tuesday night, he was naturally under the impression that they came from the head office. He certainly knew nothing about them, and had never seen them, but, at the same time, a Minister had to stand by his officers, as he was responsible. If an officer did something that was wrong, that was his (Mr. Appel's) misfortune.

Mr. FOLEY: You can tell him not to do it again.

The HOME SECRETARY: That was another phase of the question, and he could assure the hon. member that the thing would not happen again. He proposed to go very carefully into the matter with the officers of the department. The suggestion that some instructions should be issued in connection with advice to electors deserved consideration. If they could secure uniformity and simplicity, he would have no hesitation in directing it to be done.

Mr. COYNE: Was it not over-officious on the part of the electoral registrar at Longreach to send that letter?

The HOME SECRETARY: He had no hesitation in saying that it was. Still they must not blame the electoral registrar, because, according to the letter, he acted under the direction of the bench, and it was simply a question whether the bench were justified in assuming the functions of the Electoral Department. He thought they were not, but he had no doubt the bench did it in all honesty, and with a desire to give applicants for enrolment information that would obviate informal claims being presented. If he were to decline to do anything, it would be said that he was not sincere when he said that the Liberal party were anxious that everyone who was entitled to be on the roll should be on the roll. If the matter could be simplified in any way, he would give instructions that it should be done. There was no doubt that the officers of the Electoral Department were excellent men, and, if it had not been for the un-

fortunate position the State found itself in, Parliament would have been asked to vote increases to their salaries. The work had increased, and, unquestionably, when the Bill they were discussing the previous night became law, there would be a considerable increase in the work of the department. A considerable amount of additional work would devolve upon them, but at [7.30 p.m.] the same time he would point out that when the hon. member for Enoggera and other hon. members drew attention to the matter last year, he had promised to go into the question, and make a recommendation that increases be given to those officers. He was very glad to hear a recommendation from any side of the House, and when it came from both sides of the House it proved that the officer was impartial, which was a very good thing to hear. Hon. members would realise that under present conditions no increases could be given, and those officers had to be passed over; but, when the time came, if he had anything to do with it, he would have no hesitation in recommending them for an increase. At the same time he might inform hon. members that an additional clerk had been provided, as well as other assistance to enable them to do the work.

Mr. BERTRAM: It is a pity they have not got a new office.

The HOME SECRETARY: At the present time, owing to increased work, several subdepartments had to be accommodated in private offices in the city, and that was the reason for erecting the large building, portion of which would be occupied by the Savings Bank.

Mr. BERTRAM: Is our friend Dent in that department?

The HOME SECRETARY: Certainly—(Opposition laughter)—and a very excellent officer he is. The hon. member for Balonne raised the point as to whether an elector who had been improperly removed from the roll was qualified to vote. In answer to that he drew attention to sub-clause (d) of section 40 of the principal Act, which provided—

"When any person claims a vote at an election and it is found that in consequence of mistaken identity and through no fault of the person claiming the vote his name has been erased from the roll in that district, in accordance with section (e) such person, on making a statutory declaration that he is the person whose name has been wrongly erased, shall be permitted to vote."

That was a very excellent provision.

Mr. COYNE: How will the vote be recorded by the presiding officer?

The HOME SECRETARY: Just how the administrative act was performed he was not prepared to say, but the elector got a ballot-paper and was allowed to vote. It was a very excellent provision, but, unfortunately, it was not contained in the Commonwealth law. He had interjected during the afternoon that Mrs. Appel's name had been removed from the Commonwealth roll as having left the district, although she was living at the Hamilton in the place where she had lived since she was six years of age, and no provision of that kind being in the

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

Commonwealth law she was unable to vote. A complaint was lodged, and a policeman came to her and said it would do him a lot of harm if the matter was gone into, and Mrs. Appel said, "If it is going to do a policeman a lot of harm, I withdraw the charge, as I would sooner lose my vote than do a policeman, or any other man, an injury." Hon. members will realise that the Home Department had no authority over the bench, and it would be a very improper thing to attempt to give them any instructions.

Mr. BOWMAN: You can make valuable suggestions.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the department issued a series of instructions, of course the bench would be enabled to see them, but the Home Department could not direct the bench. The hon. member for East Toowoomba and other hon. members stated that many claimants were not able to give the day or the month of their birth.

Mr. FOLEY: The question should not be asked.

The HOME SECRETARY: There was an object in it, and a very reasonable object. The object, of course, was to see that the person was twenty-one years of age, and also asked as a means of identification. Although a claimant might not know the day or the month of their birth, most of them had a fairly approximate idea of the year, and he would see that in all such cases an instruction would be given that as long as the question was reasonably answered no objection would be made. The hon. member for Bundaberg spoke about the officers of the Electoral Department working overtime. No doubt they did, and they were paid for it. In fact, all officers in the public service, more or less, had to work overtime on occasions, and those officers received payment for the overtime worked.

Mr. BARBER: Do they get more than tea money?

The HOME SECRETARY: They got a regular allowance. He thought the giving of tea money was a bad system. He did not propose to refer to the question that was so fully discussed by hon. members in connection with the Bundaberg matter, as he did not think there was any necessity to discuss it. If the law had not been complied with, of course, the names would not be placed on the roll.

Mr. BARBER: Will the hon. member say why he specially mentioned the name of Henry John Saunders?

The HOME SECRETARY: He cited that case because Henry John Saunders was on the Bundaberg roll without notifying it in his claim to be placed on the Musgrave roll.

Mr. FOLEY: Was it not the business of the returning officer at Bundaberg to notify the other returning officer that he claimed to be put on the Musgrave roll?

The HOME SECRETARY: How could he? He never mentioned it. He put in an application for enrolment in the Musgrave without stating that he was on the Bundaberg roll.

Mr. THEODORE: You said he was a Labour organiser.

The HOME SECRETARY: So I was informed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: He may not have known that he was on the Bundaberg roll.

[Hon. J. G. Appel.

The HOME SECRETARY: Then he was a most extraordinary man. He might not be what was known as a paid Labour organiser, but he was simply reported as being an organiser, whether paid or not, of the Labour party.

Mr. BOWMAN: You made some very strong interjections.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hon. members knew that they frequently interjected, and a reply was made, and they said things that they really would not say if they were standing on their feet, just as he had referred to a gentleman in an interjection which, immediately his attention was drawn to it, he willingly and gladly withdrew.

Mr. BARBER: Do you withdraw that charge?

The HOME SECRETARY: He withdrew anything. (Laughter.) If it would afford the hon. member any satisfaction, he would gladly withdraw the interjection, and he was sure that the hon. member, if he had said anything to hurt his feelings, would gladly withdraw it also. The hon. member for Keppel spoke about electoral uniformity, and, as usual, what fell from that hon. member was worthy of consideration. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member studied these matters, and, no doubt that, if circumstances were favourable, a uniformity of the kind he advocated would be beneficial. But they had got to realise that there were certain difficulties in the State of Queensland, by reason of the boundaries of the electorates as compared with those of the Commonwealth electorates. In Brisbane, the Commonwealth boundaries cut across a number of State electorate boundaries, only taking a portion of those electorates into each Commonwealth electorate. However, he had no doubt that with the increase of settlement and population, when the boundaries of the Commonwealth electorates could be altered in conformity with the improved conditions, such uniformity might be possible. It was a subject he would be very glad to discuss with the hon. member, and he would be glad if he would discuss it with the Chief Electoral Registrar, because it was a very important matter, and even if not possible to-day, it was good to have a matter like it considered, with a view to taking action in the future.

Mr. THEODORE: There is an item of £10,000 for election expenses. Can you say when the election will be?

The HOME SECRETARY: He could not. It did not lie with him to give any indication as to the date, but presumably, taking the life of the present Parliament, the date should be anywhere between April and July.

Mr. HAMILTON: Last year I made a suggestion in regard to a map.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had given instructions about that. The hon. member would realise that it took a little time to get the stones prepared. But he had adopted the suggestion, and the map would simply show the boundary of the electorate, and nothing outside that, with, of course, the divisions inside the electorate.

Mr. DOUGLAS (*Cool*) wished to refer to some remarks made that afternoon by the hon. member for Cairns, who criticised the action of the Government in allowing Inspector Malone to retire from the service of the Police Force on pension for the purpose, he understood it was stated, of taking a position as organiser for the Liberal party. When this vote, or the Police vote, was before

the House last year, some very personal remarks were made by the hon. member for Cairns and the hon. member for Chillagoe with regard to Inspector Malone. One of them particularly referred to him as being a malingeringer. He was very sorry to hear the statements that had been made, and he thought that the House should be informed that Inspector Malone had retired from the service after a medical examination. He was personally well acquainted with him; he had travelled with him on various occasions, and he remembered when he travelled with him on the ship to Cairns to go up for his medical examination, he was absolutely unable to get off the couch which was erected on deck. He thought these remarks, made about an officer who had done so much good service for Queensland during his long term in the Police Force, were very out of place. He was not a bit surprised that these gentlemen should criticise the action of the Government, and refer in that way to ex-Inspector Malone, because it was well known to everyone who followed his doings as organiser in the North that there was no one more active in the interests of the party which he was supporting. The hon. member for Cairns was well aware that the Cairns roll had been well revised. No less than 574 names of those who were not entitled to be there had been struck off. It was a most peculiar thing that when a gentleman on the Liberal side chose to come along and do some political work he was subjected to criticism of this kind. They knew the reason for it. It was because he was having some effective organising work done. The Labour party had their regular organisers. They had a man in the Cook district in the same way as they had in other districts, who got £4 or £5 a week and his expenses, and lived on the game. Inspector Malone, by virtue of his long service in the Police Force, retired on a pension which he was justly entitled to. He was in extremely bad health, and unable to carry on the duties of inspector of police. While he was at Cairns he suffered very severely from asthma, and was transferred to Townsville in the hope that he might have better health, but he found that Townsville being near the coast was not suitable. He had a letter in his hand, dated 12th October, after the Commonwealth election took place, in which it was stated that his health was so bad that it was impossible for him to stay in Cairns even recently, notwithstanding his loyalty to his party, which he had supported ever since he had been out of the Police Force. He had been so imbued with loyalty and the desire to do his best in the interests of the party, that he went to Cairns, in spite of his bad health, and stayed there.

Mr. McCORMACK: He had bad results, too.

Mr. DOUGLAS: That was beside the question. They should wait till they saw the result of the next State election; he did not think the hon. member for Cairns would be there to criticise the ex-inspector again. He would assure the Committee, on good authority, that ex-Inspector Malone was today in real bad health, but he was hoping that Northern Queensland would long have his services as organiser in the Liberal interests. He could only say that the remarks from the other side were largely prompted by personal spleen, due to the fact that the ex-inspector was such a capable and effective organiser in the interests of the Liberal party.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member for Cook had done no great service to ex-Inspector Malone by bringing this matter forward, which was at rest so far as the House was concerned. The matter had been ventilated a sufficient number of times to allow the public to judge. The hon. member said some suggestion had been made that ex-Inspector Malone had been a malingeringer.

Mr. DOUGLAS: Certainly, you made it yourself. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. THEODORE: He made that suggestion.

Mr. MORGAN: Will you make it outside the House?

Mr. THEODORE: He would make it outside the House. Ex-Inspector Malone, who, the hon. member for Cook admitted, was a loyal member of the Liberal party before he resigned—

Mr. DOUGLAS: Nothing of the kind. I referred to his action as organiser since he went out of the force.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member had worked himself up to some excitement in this matter, and he hoped he would keep cool. What he was going to say was that ex-Inspector Malone resigned his position in the Police Force with the permission of the Home Secretary, at a time when he should not have done, because he still had seven years to serve before he was entitled to retire on full-pay pension, unless he got permission from the Home Secretary to retire. He got that permission on the understanding that he became an organiser for the Liberal party.

The HOME SECRETARY: On the certificate of the medical board.

Mr. THEODORE: According to the Home Secretary's statement, ex-Inspector Malone was no longer in possession of vigorous health, but his own friends, a few weeks before his retirement, as mentioned in the Liberal paper at Mareeba, said that he looked the picture of health.

Mr. KIRWAN: The magistrate said so.

Mr. THEODORE: The magistrate, in a little function at Cairns, said that the recipient of the honours, he felt sure, would long live and enjoy splendid health, and enjoy the retirement which he so richly deserved. The correspondent of the newspaper which espoused the hon. member's politics said that Inspector Malone passed through there a few days before his retirement looking the picture of health. He admitted that Inspector Malone suffered from asthma, but it was a complaint which many people suffered from and were still compelled to continue in their employment, but they got consideration, and no one expected them to undermine their health in that condition. The fact that the man was subject to even a severe attack of asthma was not sufficient to justify him in resigning his position and draw a big pension, and take up the exacting duties of a Liberal organiser. He had no doubt that it was by a secret arrangement with the Home Secretary that it was done.

The HOME SECRETARY rose to a point of order. The hon. member had said that it was a secret arrangement. He was sure he did not mean it. He could assure the hon. member that he did not even know at the time that the ex-inspector was a member

of the Liberal party or had done any organising work. There was no arrangement at all. The application was made for the retirement of this officer, and it was supported by the certificate of the medical board and recommended by the Commissioner of Police, and approved by himself. He felt sure the hon. member would accept his statement.

Mr. THEODORE accepted the hon. gentleman's statement that he did not know anything of a secret arrangement.

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

Mr. THEODORE: Ex-Inspector Malone had remained in Cairns and worked for the Liberal party. The hon. gentleman did not commend him on his disloyalty to his department in resigning when he was not in ill-health. If he had this wonderful loyalty to his party, why could he not have displayed the same loyalty to the department and not shuffled out of his duties?

The HOME SECRETARY: He was there for thirty years.

Mr. THEODORE: And he was still entitled to serve seven years more, as other members of the Police Force, before he was entitled to the consideration which he got. He said that ex-Inspector Malone was a malingerer, and still adhered to [3 p.m.] that term. He knew very well that a large number of people in the Cairns district, who knew Mr. Malone and his state of health, and who sympathised with him in his asthma affliction, thought that he was still competent to continue the duties of inspector of police.

Mr. FORSYTH: What about the medical inspection?

Mr. THEODORE: One of the medical officers, a Cairns doctor, who gave Mr. Malone a certificate, indicating that he was a fit subject to retire from the force, had a few months previously given him a certificate stating that he was not capable of some physiological act. The certificate of that doctor was not worth the paper it was written on.

Mr. HAMILTON regretted that the hon. member for Cook had brought up this matter of ex-Inspector Malone after the hon. member for Cairns had exhausted his time, and was unable to reply. He (Mr. Hamilton) had known Mr. Malone a good many years longer than the hon. member for Cook had known him, and he knew that Mr. Malone had been an organiser all the time he was in the force. Mr. Malone was the most successful man in "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds" that he knew in Queensland. During a strike in the West he led the shearers to believe that he was their friend, and at the same time worked hand in hand with the pastoralists, and it was the dirty work he did during the strike that got him promotion. Mr. Malone was responsible for getting some of his own colleagues sent out back, and those men did not know what they were shifted for until they got promotion and had access to the charges sheet, when they found that the black mark against them was due to Mr. Malone. It was a remarkable thing that he was so ill that he had to resign on a pension of £400 a year, and that the minute he left the force he could take up the position of Liberal organiser. The hon.

member for Normanby said that Mr. Malone was not paid by the Liberal organisation.

Mr. ANCHER: I said he was paid by the local people.

Mr. HAMILTON: Whether he was paid by the organisation or by the people of the district, he got a pension of £400 a year from the State. However, with the view of giving the hon. member for Cairns an opportunity to reply to the hon. member for Cook, he moved, as an amendment, that the vote be reduced by £1.

Mr. McCORMACK said he was sorry the hon. member for Cook had brought this matter up again. When he (Mr. McCormack) mentioned it, he did not do so with any desire to injure ex-Inspector Malone. All he wished to do was to show the Home Secretary that the result of his work in organising and cleansing the roll was that the Labour party were able to secure in the Federal Herbert division, which had exactly the same boundaries as the State electorate, a majority of 1,762 votes over the Liberal candidate. There were more names on the Cairns roll now than there were when Atherton was included in the electorate. He would admit that there had been quite a number of men put on the roll, legitimately, during the time there were 1,000 men working on the range. When that work was finished, the men went into other districts, and their names were in consequence taken off the roll, but not at the instance of ex-Inspector Malone or anybody else. He knew that Mr. Malone was not receiving any money from any organisation. He might say that he was in Cairns on the 5th of September, the day of the Federal election, and that he saw ex-Inspector Malone running about and working as hard as a man of twenty-five or thirty years of age could work. As a matter of fact, Mr. Malone said to him at the gate of the electoral booth, "We will shake you up to-day; you have never seen work like this before." He (Mr. McCormack) could not help saying, "Not bad work for a man who has retired on the ground of ill-health." Mr. Malone got 571 votes in the town of Cairns for the Liberal party, and he (Mr. McCormack) got 1,751 votes for the Labour party, that was 1,000 of a majority, the rest of the majority being obtained in the sugar districts. The hon. member for Cook no doubt hoped that Mr. Malone would give him some help in his electorate. He (Mr. McCormack) hoped that Mr. Malone would give the Labour party the help there that he gave them in Cairns. He knew numbers of people who, from the nature of the appointment of Mr. Malone by the Liberal Association, had left the Liberal party in Cairns for ever. It was commonly stated in Cairns that Mr. Malone was only getting his pension. He could draw his pension in much nicer places than Cairns, which was no place for a man suffering from asthma. It was a hot, humid climate, perhaps the most humid climate in Australia, and it was not the best place for a retired public servant suffering from asthma to spend his retiring days on £450 a year.

Mr. DOUGLAS: He does not spend his days there. He spends most of his time in the hospital.

Mr. McCORMACK: There was no hospital where Mr. Malone was. The hon. member for Cook, Mr. Douglas, would be doing more

[Hon. J. G. Appel.]

good by attending to the business of his electorate instead of defending Mr. Malone and attacking members in the House.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I look after my electorate.

Mr. McCORMACK: Yes, the hon. member always looked after himself. The hon. member never made a speech in the House unless his own particular business was at stake. The hon. member for Cook said that Mr. Malone was shifted from Townsville to Cairns because of his health. That was not the reason. The Home Secretary and other members of the House knew that the reason ex-Inspector Malone was shifted from Townsville to Cairns was because he had been doing his duty in Townsville. He (Mr. McCormack) never blamed the ex-inspector for doing his duty. He was doing his duty against a certain class of people whom the hon. member for Cook represented in the House, instead of the electors of Cook.

Mr. DOUGLAS: That is a miserable statement. It is worthy of you.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member brought it on himself.

Mr. DOUGLAS: The electors of Cook district know me.

Mr. McCORMACK: So long as the electors knew the hon. member, and so long as the hon. member did not bump against him, he had nothing to say about him. The members of the Police Force objected to Mr. Malone drawing pay for two jobs amounting to £750 a year, and they objected to having to pay something into the revenue towards that sum. The State was subsidising the pensions of the police by over £20,000. Mr. Malone said he was paid from Brisbane, but the hon. member for Normanby, the chairman of the central executive of the Liberal Association, said he was not paid by the executive. Mr. Draper, of Cairns, told him that Mr. Malone was not paid by the Liberals in Cairns. Mr. Draper said that his brother was the Liberal organiser, and he gave up the job because they had no money to pay him. (Laughter.) Mr. Draper also said that if they had £300 per annum to give away they would not give it to Mr. Malone.

Amendment (Mr. Hamilton's), by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GRANT (*Fitzroy*) pointed out that at Rockhampton the clerk of petty sessions staff had to do the electoral work for about seven State electorates. Both Labour and Liberal members would admit that the work was exceptionally well done. Mr. Burrowes, who had been lately transferred from Rockhampton, has been a most obliging officer, and the same could be said of Mr. Scott. There was too much work for those officers, and he suggested that as increased work would be necessitated by the new Elections Act, an officer be appointed to do the electoral work for the whole of the Central district.

Question—that £15,530 be granted—put and passed.

HEALTH.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £16,578 be granted for "Health." There was a decrease in the vote of £303. Dr. Elkington, the previous Health Commissioner, was appointed at £800 a year, and after some years service, his salary was raised to £900. Dr. Moore was appointed at £800, so there was a saving of £100 there.

Provision was made for a health officer at £550. It was found necessary to give an increased salary, because they wanted a medical officer of certain qualifications, and there was considerable difficulty in obtaining the services of a medical doctor with the qualifications they required. It was essential to have a medical man holding the diploma D.P.H. for the position. The vote for clerks was reduced from £432 to £360, owing to the resignation of a cadet clerk who was drawing £52 per annum. The provision for inspectors was increased from £1,200 to £1,210, an increase of £10 being granted to Inspector Simpson, whose salary was raised from £290 to £300 on 1st January, 1914. The increase was given by Executive minute, owing to representations having been made by hon. members last year on the Estimates that this officer's salary should be increased. There was an increase from £156 to £170 to J. Quinn, acting inspector and foreman of health gang. That increase was also given by Executive minute in consequence of the representations made by hon. members last session, and likewise dated from 1st January last. In the vote for food inspectors, there was an increase of £180, owing to the appointment of an additional inspector in connection with the liquor business. His sole duties consisted in the testing of liquor sold in licensed premises. He had been successful in detecting many cases of adulteration, and the penalties that had been inflicted by the courts would doubtless have the effect of improving the strength and the purity of the liquor that was sold. There was a further increase of £70, a messenger having been appointed in October, 1913, at that salary in place of the cadet clerk who resigned. In the vote for enthetic diseases there was an increase of £100. That amount was being paid to the medical officer for extra duties in connection with the examination of certain persons in addition to his ordinary duties, for which he drew £120. The extra £50 provided would be paid when the ward for the treatment of enthetic diseases was opened at the Brisbane Hospital, where enthetic diseases would be treated in the ordinary way.

Mr. MURPHY: Did the Government bear the expense of erecting that ward?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; the nurses were provided by the hospital, but the Government provided the drugs. In fact, they provided the drugs for the treatment of those diseases to every hospital in the State that asked for them. That caused an increase in the vote of £100. The provision for the laboratory of microbiology was the same as last year. In connection with the Northern sub-office, extra provision was being made for the salary of the medical inspector, £600 being asked for instead of £500.

Mr. FHELLY: Isn't that a breach of your promise not to increase salaries?

The HOME SECRETARY: The trouble was that the position was vacant at the present time. Medical men were at such a premium that they could not get a man, and, although they were now offering £600, they had not got a man so far. The work was being done by the inspectors, and the Commissioner of Public Health paid regular visits, but it was absolutely necessary that they should have a medical man in charge in Townsville, as there were matters that

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

could not be dealt with by inspectors, however able they might be. The Government hoped to be able to get an officer for £600.

Mr. **FIHELLY**: Is £500 a "scab" rate? (Laughter.)

The **HOME SECRETARY**: A parently it was not sufficiently attractive, as the position had been vacant for several months. In the provision for "Contingencies," there was a new item of £1,260 for "Fees for Analyses by the Government Analyst." There was a reduction of £700 in the vote for "Epidemics, Postage, and Incidental Expenses," the vote being reduced from £5,700 to £5,000. There was also a reduction in the item for "Drugs, Incidentals, etc., for Enthetic Diseases," the vote being reduced from £1,000 to £200. That was based on the amount required last year, and it was not anticipated that the expenditure would exceed that of last year. The vote for "Fees, Nurses' Registration Board," was reduced from £63 to £38. The board had practically performed its work of examining the claims of nurses for registration, and would meet at longer intervals for the future, so that the amount required would be less. There was a reduction from £800 to £700 in the item for "Railway Fares, Freights, Printing, Stationery, etc." The vote for "Apparatus, Chemicals, etc.," was reduced from £400 to £250, the reduction being based on last year's expenditure. There was a reduction of £100 in the vote for "Travelling and Incidentals, Northern Office." The whole vote showed a reduction of £303 as compared with the vote for last year.

Mr. **FIHELLY** said he would welcome an increase in this vote instead of a decrease, as too little attention was paid in Queensland to the health of the people. When speaking a few nights ago, he had suggested that the Government should launch out in the matter of giving medical assistance and medical comforts to the people generally. Health was an important factor, and he pointed out that on the immigrants the State spent a good deal in the way of medical attention and in the way of medicine. The Home Secretary should devise some scheme to assist the mothers. The maternity grant given by the Commonwealth Government should be supplemented by the State in so far as providing free doctors and [8.30 p.m.] free medicines were concerned, and free nurses. The health of the children, after all, was perhaps the most important thing they had to deal with. Infantile mortality was really more serious here than was imagined. The figures, of course, compared favourably with the other States, but that should not prevent them from having a much lower death-rate in Queensland than in any other part of the world. He would like the Home Secretary, in replying, to say whether it was the intention of the Government, at a future date, to help the mothers in the way of providing skilled doctors, free nurses, and free medicines. He knew of scores of mothers who were very anxious to know whether the State was ever going to give attention to matters of health. Women had pointed out to him that the Government took particular care with regard to the herds of farmers, in regard to ticks and the blowflies in the West, and also in regard to prickly pear, but they did not bother about the child born into the world. The mothers received no attention from the State, and the child was not con-

[Hon. J. G. Appel.

sidered an asset. He would also like the Home Secretary to state what action was adopted in regard to health prosecutions; whether every prosecution recommended by the health authorities was gone on with. And he would also like to know whether the Home Secretary would furnish a return showing the recommendations, and indicate what the Executive action was. There were some very ugly rumours abroad in the city in regard to those matters, and the Home Secretary would have to be very eloquent and very careful if he was going to explain some of them away.

The **HOME SECRETARY**: I am afraid some of the people concerned must have been very eloquent or I would not have withdrawn the prosecutions.

Mr. **FIHELLY**: That was all nonsense. In one or two isolated cases the Home Secretary had refused to withdraw the prosecutions, but it was well known that if a person could put up a good tale, or have proper influence brought to bear, no action was taken.

The **HOME SECRETARY**: You have been misinformed on this occasion.

Mr. **FIHELLY**: He might give some specific cases later on.

Mr. **GILLIES** said he regarded the Health Department as the most important sub-department the Home Secretary had to administer—in fact, the administration of public health was the most important function any Government could concern themselves with. It was of such importance that a great number of local authorities in Queensland were incapable of carrying out the work. He endorsed what the previous speaker had said with regard to the necessity of doing something for the mothers of Queensland in the matter of supplying them with cheap medical attention and cheap medicines. On a previous occasion he had called attention to the fact that the Plymouth Friendly Societies' Association established their own dispensary, and the result of the first year was that the average cost of a bottle of medicine was 1½d. In Brisbane it was impossible to get any kind of a bottle of medicine for less than 2s. 6d. In England you could get a doctor for 2s. 6d., and you could get two visits from a specialist for £1 1s. He would also like to know, when the Commissioner for Public Health made his annual tour throughout the State and held inquiries, whether it was usual for the Press to be admitted to those inquiries.

The **HOME SECRETARY**: I could not say.

Mr. **GILLIES**: A copy of the "Wild River Times" of 30th October had been sent to him, and he would read a report in connection with the visit of the Commissioner for Public Health, which was as follows:—

"VISIT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH.

"The Commissioner for Public Health (Dr. Moore), accompanied by the chief inspector (Mr. Simpson), arrived in Herberton on Saturday and held a private inquiry into the sanitary service at the shire clerk's office in the afternoon.

"[We say 'private' advisedly, for when we asked if the Press were to be allowed to be present, the Commissioner said, 'No.' If the inquiry was held regarding

the sanitary service, we contend that the Press had every right to be present, as the service has to be paid for by the ratepayers, and it is only through the Press that they could learn what really happened.—Ed.]

“Crs. Bonar, Ramsay, and White, and Inspector Wright, of the Health Department, were also present. A visit to the incinerator was paid on Sunday morning, and the Commissioner expressed himself as highly satisfied with the manner in which the nightsoil was disposed of. The trio left again on Monday morning, and we expect that the Commissioner's report on the matter will be furnished to the council in due course.”

The Council previously had some difficulty to secure the report made by the Commissioner for Public Health or his inspector. He quite agreed with the report, that, when the Commissioner visited North Queensland and had inquiry made as to how the council were carrying out the health laws, the Press should be allowed to report the evidence, so that not only taxpayers but the general public should know what was being done. He also wished to bring before the Home Secretary the necessity for the periodical cleaning out of tanks. He knew of some which had been erected for ten or twelve years and had not been cleaned out properly. When such tanks were used by the general public, such as at hotels and boarding establishments and railway stations, and so on, the local authorities should have power to insist that they should be cleaned out periodically. At the present time there was an epidemic of diphtheria at Toowong, and he had called upon the officials in order to draw attention to the necessity of closing the school or taking some other action, and he asked whether the health officers had ever made any recommendation about doing away with the insanitary system of slates. New South Wales had discarded slates, because they regarded them as insanitary. It was bad enough when each child had his own, but when they were passed about from one to another, and the children spat upon them and wiped them with their coat sleeves, it was a very antiquated idea, and Queensland was very much behind the other States in the matter.

Mr. HAMILTON noticed that several inspectors were provided for on the Estimates. Where were they all? Were they all in the Southern portion of the State?

The HOME SECRETARY: Some of them are attached to the Northern sub-office.

Mr. HAMILTON: He wanted to mention the prevalence of the scourge of typhoid in all the Western districts at the present time.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have sent the Commissioner there, and he is now investigating the matter.

Mr. HAMILTON: The department needed to liven itself up and make periodical inspections. The local authorities, although they had very large powers under the Local Authorities Act, took very few steps towards improving the sanitary conditions until an epidemic broke out. There was an unfortunate outbreak in the district he represented, and, unfortunately, it generally took off strong young men between twenty and thirty years of age. There was an outbreak at some stations every time shearing came round. He

did not know whether it was because of insanitary conditions; some people said that typhoid carriers were going about. Another thing he wished to mention was that the Act they passed a few years ago did not seem to have prevented the adulteration of food, particularly milk. Almost every day they took up the papers in the metropolitan area they found that someone had been fined for putting water in milk. The fines imposed did not seem to have stopped it, and the suggestion which was made when the Act was going through the House was a good one—that every purveyor of milk should have a license, which should be cancelled if he was caught the second time or the third time.

Mr. FIDELLY: The first time. They are murdering babies.

Mr. HAMILTON: He would give them one chance. He thought that would act as a greater deterrent than a £3 or £4 fine, which the man could make up in a week or two by putting water in the milk again.

Mr. PAYNE: He was very glad to hear the Home Secretary say that he had sent an officer out to the Western district to investigate the dreadful scourge of typhoid fever. Everyone knew that it was becoming alarming, and it was mainly men in the prime of life who suffered. He thought that eight or ten men from one station died in Winton Hospital. He was not blaming anybody, but, unfortunately, it was becoming a prominent thing all over the Western districts, and it was time the Government gave a good deal more attention to those districts than they had done. As one who had lived in the Western districts for thirty years, he knew how hard it was for the hospitals to deal with the matter. He had been a member of a hospital committee in Longreach for ten or twelve years, and every year it was crowded by reason of an epidemic of typhoid from Ilfracombe. Probably some good results could be obtained from sending the Commissioner out, but his experience was that it was not a bit of good sending an officer out occasionally. It seemed to be a lopsided thing to pay £12 to £15 to bring an immigrant out here whilst a lot of their very best men were being lost without any effort being made to save them. If something was not done it was going to be bad for the pastoral industry, because from Kynuna alone he thought eight or ten cases had occurred. He had heard men saying, “It is no good going there, a man might get typhoid fever and die, although he might earn £40 or £50.” If typhoid broke out yearly at every shed, it was going to stop men going there.

The HOME SECRETARY said he was in somewhat of a difficulty, as the hon. member for Paddington had mentioned wholesale withdrawals of cases brought by the Health Department, but without giving specific cases. The hon. member the other night said that the Health Department's officers were going to resign in a body because of the action of the Home Secretary. Each one of these officers had written to him and denied that it was ever proposed to take such action. He had in his hand a communication from each of the inspectors, in which they denied the statement. If the hon. member would give concrete cases he would be able to trace them. Eight cases had been withdrawn altogether during the twelve months, and of these cases there was only one which he himself had authorised

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

to be withdrawn. The only case he could find of a milk prosecution was one in August—he would not mention names—

“Milk case—added water. Withdrawn on consideration of facts submitted by the Commissioner, i.e., proprietress a struggling trader whose cows on the occasion of milk being adulterated had become impounded and which cost £4 odd to release from the pound.”

There was another case in Townsville in September—

“Adulterated milk. Case settled out of court on authority of Home Secretary on recommendation of Northern Crown Solicitor, on defendant paying amount of probable fine and costs (£5 0s. 6d.)”

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Why should these cases be settled out of court?

The HOME SECRETARY: If the Commissioner thought that a case should be withdrawn for certain circumstances which had come under his notice, he sent that recommendation along. From what the hon. member for Paddington had said, he took it that he (the Home Secretary) had directed cases to be withdrawn to such an extent that the inspectors of the Health Department felt so disgusted that so many cases were being withdrawn that they threatened to resign in a body. One of the cases which he had directed to be withdrawn in January was in connection with the adulteration of liquor, and was as follows:—

“Adulterated liquor. Withdrawn owing to ill-health of licensee, who was unable to exercise strict supervision over business; also that liquor was only adulterated with water.”

In March, there was another case withdrawn on the recommendation of the Department of Justice—

“Withdrawn on recommendation of Department of Justice owing to previous character of licensee, and the fact that the adulteration was probably due to act of son's wife to obtain drink without knowledge of her husband (also employed in hotel), and also because hotel had changed owners.”

The third was a case in connection with the adulteration of liquor in the Valley, which was withdrawn on the recommendation of the Justice Department. The fourth case was withdrawn by the Minister who was acting for him in his absence, on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police. Then there were some cases in connection with labelling against aerated water and cordial manufacturers at Ipswich, Boonah, and Warwick. They had failed to comply with the regulations. The Commissioner called them into his office and explained the whole thing, and, as it was a comparatively trivial matter, upon their promising to comply with the law, no action was taken. The other two cases he had already enumerated; one was withdrawn on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police, and the other on the recommendation of the Crown solicitor. If he, as Home Secretary, directed the wholesale withdrawal of cases, and in opposition to the advice of officers of the department, it would be a most improper action; and if the hon. member for Paddington could assist him by giving any specific cases, he would endeavour to get to

the bottom of the matter. Of course, hon. members would realise that it often happened that action was taken to-day against a vendor, and upon the matter being gone on with it was found there were extenuating circumstances, and either the Commissioner of Public Health, the Commissioner of Police, or some other responsible officer, made a recommendation that it be not proceeded with. The officer was responsible, and the Minister acted on his recommendation.

He had always had the [9 p.m.] greatest disinclination to direct the withdrawal of any prosecution, and during the six years he had been in the department had not directed the withdrawal of a single prosecution under the liquor law. As a matter of fact, soon after going to the Home Office, he wrote a minute to the effect that under no condition would a case be withdrawn after a summons had been issued. Men in his own electorate had come to him and asked him not to take action, but he had shown them that minute, and said, “What can I do in the face of that? If I withdraw this case to please you, I must withdraw other cases to please others.” And they had admitted that he could not comply with their request. Some reference had been made to milk prosecutions, and it had been said that a fine was not a sufficient punishment for adulteration. He realised that a fine, even if it was a fine of £20, was not sufficient in some cases, and for that reason he had just had new regulations framed and they had been finally passed by the Justice Department. It was proposed in those regulations that every milk-seller must be licensed. Milk-sellers were licensed at present by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, but under the new regulations, which he hoped to have issued next week, they would be licensed by the Health Department, and one of the provisions of the regulations was that on conviction of a second offence the license would be cancelled. (Hear, hear!) Where there was no health officer, these regulations would be carried out by the police or some other public official. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Paddington respecting free doctors, free medicine, and free nursing for wives about to be confined, he should like to be in a position to carry out that suggestion in cases where it was so desired. Last year the hon. member for Port Curtis laid a great deal of stress on maternity homes. During his tour in the North-western part of the State, he observed that in many instances people lived in miserable little hovels, tin shanties, with just one room, and it seemed to him a terrible thing that a mother should have to be confined there with her children all about. He, therefore, determined that wherever a hospital committee provided a maternity ward, they should get the same subsidy for that ward as they got for their general hospital. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Gregory had spoken on a subject which had caused him very much concern, and that was the prevalence of typhoid fever in the Western portions of the State. At every hospital that he and his party visited and inspected during his recent tour they found a ward full of typhoid patients, and in one instance the cases were of such severity that the doctor would not allow them to go into the ward. Speaking in the localities where this condition of things was observed, he stated publicly that it was his determination to

[Hon. J. G. Appel.]

see that the local authorities did their duty as far as drainage and sanitation were concerned, even if that meant extra taxation for the ratepayers; and he further stated that he would send the Health Commissioner to make an inspection and report, and that in every instance where he reported that certain work should be carried out, the department would insist upon that work being done by the local authority. The Health Commissioner was now making his inspection and conferring with the local authorities, and he (Mr. Appel) could assure hon. members that the Home Department was determined to endeavour to stamp out the fearful scourge, which, as the hon. member had said, took off, not the old and weak, but the very flower of our youth. The department had the fullest power to compel them to do it, and if they failed to comply with the department's order, the department could carry out the work themselves and obtain the necessary money from the local authorities. He would do everything possible to ameliorate the conditions so far as the prevalence of typhoid fever in the Western districts was concerned. The hon. member for Eacham asked if the Press could be admitted to the inquiries held by the Commissioner for Health. He had no objection to that, and would ask the Commissioner to admit the Press and report the evidence taken at these inquiries. There was nothing to hide, and it would educate the public to hear all that was going on. If any hon. gentleman at any time wished to get information about any case that was supposed to be suppressed, he hoped a question would be asked in the House, and he would be pleased to answer it. If he was responsible for the withdrawal, he would say so and give his reasons.

Mr. FIELLY was glad to get the Minister's assurance that only eight cases were withdrawn last year. He would like to know if health officers had threatened to resign if the paraffin oil scandal cases were withdrawn. He understood several prosecutions were ordered, and it was common rumour that the department was in a state of turmoil because the cases were to be suppressed. Only one paper published the names of the chemists who were charged with the offences at that time, and he would like to know if the health officers threatened to resign.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had no knowledge of any threatened action by inspectors of the Health Department. All he could say was that if the influences brought to work had been successful, the prosecutions would have been withdrawn. He was urged by those who had been guilty of the offence to withdraw the cases. They made all kinds of excuses; but, as the Health Commissioner would not recommend the withdrawal of the cases, he would not withdraw them.

Mr. FIELLY: Then influences were at work.

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course. They came to him in a body, the whole lot of them. The Commissioner stated that these chemists had been selling sewing machine oil, which cost them a mere fraction of what they charged for it, and they disposed of it as paraffin oil for internal use. He considered that it was a scandal, and he would not withdraw the cases. (Hear,

hear!) It was not a pleasant thing for him to have to do it, as the men concerned were all eminent citizens.

Mr. HARDACRE: All highly respectable citizens of Brisbane?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, they were. It was unpleasant to have to put the law in motion, but he did not care. The Health Commissioner refused to recommend the withdrawal of the cases, and he, as Minister, let the usual course be adopted. First of all these cases were sent to the Minister, and he sent them on to the Justice Department. If the Justice Department decided to take action, they were not returned to the Minister, but the Justice Department issued the summonses themselves. There was no doubt that influences were sought by the men themselves, not by outside influences, and they were charged with the offences.

Mr. FIELLY: Was there a threat of resignation?

The HOME SECRETARY: He had never heard of any. The Commissioner recommended the prosecutions, they were carried out, and the chemists were all fined.

Mr. FIELLY: They did not get three months without the option, like the poor wharf lumper.

The HOME SECRETARY: That was another matter. These men were fined, and the result was that the public were now getting paraffin oil instead of sewing machine oil.

Question put and passed.

HOSPITALS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £143,315 be granted for "Hospitals and Charitable Institutions," which was a decrease of £17,506 as compared with the previous year. There was an increase of £26 in the provision for laundresses at the Dalby Sanatorium, their wages having been raised from £65 to £78, and from £39 to £52 in the case of the assistant laundress. The increased rates were approved of during the last financial year, as they could not get laundresses for the wages they had been offering. In connection with the Diamantina Hospital, the provision for wardsmen was reduced from £172 to £164 owing to resignations and appointments at lower rates. The scale increases to nurses were not provided for, in common with all other departments, on this year's Estimates. That caused a decrease of £44. There was a reduction of £250 under the heading of "Maintenance, Postage, and Incidentals," the vote being reduced from £4,250 to £4,000. The item was founded on the expenditure last year, and it was anticipated that the amount asked for would be sufficient. There was a new item of £250 for the Alexandra Home—a home for boys which was established in one of the suburbs of Brisbane. It was an excellent institution, and was being placed on the same footing as similar institutions, the amount of the grant being based on the number of boys who were maintained in the home. There was a decrease of £45 for the Lady Musgrave Lodge. He asked for the smaller amount because it was anticipated that the subscriptions would be no greater than they were last year. In connection

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

with "Conditional Endowments," there was a reduction of £17,385, but, as he had already indicated, the amount to be paid to hospitals by way of endowment would still be at the rate of £2 for £1, and if the amount of subscriptions exceeded the amount anticipated, and the vote proved insufficient, the extra amount would be paid, and Parliament would be asked to pass the additional amount on next year's Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*) was glad that both the Dalby Sanatorium for Consumptives and the Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases were wholly controlled by the State, as the way in which they were managed was an argument in favour of the nationalisation of all hospitals. The deputy leader of the Opposition and he had visited the Dalby Sanatorium early in the year, and found that the accommodation and the attention were both excellent. He noticed that the clerk, Mr. Fabian, was only receiving £80 per annum.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is like pocket money—he is an inmate in the institution.

Mr. BOWMAN: He did his work as well as anyone who was not an inmate could do it, and he thought he had something to do with the dispensing of drugs in addition to his duties as clerk.

The HOME SECRETARY: If he does, he does it without our knowledge.

Mr. BOWMAN: For the work he did he certainly was not adequately paid. He knew it was hard to ask for an increase at the present time, but he hoped that, when the Estimates were being framed next year, the Home Secretary would bear Mr. Fabian's case in mind and see if he could not give him an increase. Of course, for those in an advanced stage, Dalby was not a fit place for them, but it had prolonged the lives of many who went there in the early stages.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Some of them have been absolutely cured there.

Mr. BOWMAN: The Diamantina Hospital was another institution that Queensland should be proud of. The matron, Nurse Chatfield, was probably one of the most competent women in the public service of the State. (Hear, hear!)

The HOME SECRETARY: One cannot speak too highly of her.

Mr. BOWMAN: The trouble was that however desirous she was of coping with cases, there was not sufficient room for the number of applications for admission. In view of the excellent results achieved, they might well increase the expenditure on the hospital. He

had been trying for five or six [9.30 p.m.] weeks to get a patient into the institution. It was not the fault of the matron that he had not yet succeeded, because he knew that cases that preceded his had a prior right to admission. The trouble was that there was not enough room. Anyone who visited the institution must be struck with the cleanliness of the place, and with the care and patience that were exercised by Nurse Chatfield and the nurses, and others in authority. Personally, he did not think the Government could spend too much money on an institution like that. It was a home from which quite a number never expected to go

out, but the treatment meted out, no matter who the patient might be, was always the same. There was no discrimination, and that was one of the features he liked about it. That institution was growing almost daily, and the staff could not cope with the work. When they had many very sad cases—cases where parents were looking after invalided sons and daughters, and daughters looking after invalided fathers and mothers, and so on—it was time the State stepped in. There was no other institution to which they could go, unless they were prepared to pay for the accommodation, except the Diamantina Hospital, and most of the cases that went to that hospital were such that they had to depend on the charity of the Government, which, in many cases, was the just thing for them to do. His only regret was that there was not sufficient money on the Estimates to enable the Home Secretary to declare that he was prepared to give further accommodation to meet the many urgent cases that required immediate relief. It had been his lot, time after time, to use those two institutions as one of the strong arguments in favour of the nationalisation of hospitals. These were instances where the Government had complete control, and they were giving satisfaction, not only to the Government, but to almost every citizen in the State. They might get a few people who were discontented, but they would find them in every walk of life. Generally speaking, the two institutions were such that they could be proud of, and he hoped those who were in authority would be long spared to carry on the successful work they were doing at the present time.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*) said quite a number of men from Charters Towers had found their way to the Dalby Sanatorium, and every one of them were very high in their praise of the treatment they received at that institution, particularly during the earlier stages of the disease, and most of them—although they did not make a complete recovery—recovered for a time. But there was a feeling that when the patients got to a certain stage there ought to be a better method of transferring them to some other institution. As long as a man could get about and do something for himself, all was well, but when he got beyond that stage, the facilities for treatment were not what they ought to be. He was fortunate enough to get one patient transferred from Dalby to the Diamantina. It was recognised that he would never get better, but he was well looked after at the Diamantina for a good long time. Another one improved when he first went to the sanatorium; he put on about 2 st., and met with an all-round improvement, but by some means fresh complications arose, and he was confined to his bed, and they did not seem to realise that he was as bad as he was until he was dead. It was a pity that some arrangements could not be made to transfer such cases to some institution where they would be treated in the best way possible. It was rather a pity that it was necessary that the subsidy for benevolent institutions should be reduced at the present time. Of course, the Home Secretary stated that the hospitals were not going to suffer. That was very satisfactory as far as it went, but the subscriptions upon which the endowment was based might not be forthcoming. He hoped, that in spite of the demands made on the public at the present time in other directions, benevolent

{*Hon. J. G. Appel.*

institutions—particularly the hospitals—would not suffer, as those institutions had to be maintained. People would still get sick and would still have to be looked after. The ambulance brigades were evidently going to suffer. He was glad to see that some of the ambulance brigades were in pretty good circumstances, generally speaking, but in some of the outlying districts, where they were most needed, they would not be able to stand the reduction, and it seemed a pity that the subsidy should be cut down from £1 for £1, which was paid last year, to 15s. in the £1. As population increased, the work of benevolent institutions increased, but the vote for this year was the same as last year—namely, £2,800. On a pro rata basis last year they received £1 5s. in the £1 subsidy, but this year it was down to 19s. 7d. As far as the Charters Towers benevolent institution was concerned, it had always done pretty extensive work, and they were finding that the demands on their funds were much greater at the present time than for a long time past. The subsidy for the first quarter last year amounted to about £273, while for a similar period this year it was only £214, and they were certainly going to have great difficulty in meeting all the demands made on their funds. When it was remembered that over £1,000 was collected in Charters Towers for that very worthy institution, it seemed rather a pity that the subsidy had to be cut down. He would rather have seen the subsidy increased. In this connection, he would like to ask who was responsible for immigrants when they came to Queensland—whether they had to look after themselves or not? Several families had gone to Charters Towers who were entirely unfitted for a place like that. For instance, bricklayers, saddlers, and others had found their way to Charters Towers, where there was no work for them, nor any likelihood of any. They had had nowhere to go; they were “strangers in a strange land,” and the benevolent society simply had to keep them, because they could not be allowed to starve, although the society found it a very hard task to meet these demands in addition to others on their funds. He was quite satisfied that the benevolent society would have a hard task this year, because of the number of persons out of work and the number who had gone away looking for work, leaving their wives and families there. If possible, something should be done with a view to allowing them the subsidy that was granted last year, to say nothing of that of the years before. As benevolent societies had increased and the amounts they collected had increased, the subsidy had gradually decreased, and in a district like Charters Towers they found that a reduction this year would be a very serious matter indeed. He would like the Home Secretary to make inquiries to see whether something could not be done to help them, because people could not be allowed to starve; and if they were not helped by these institutions, they would have to be helped in some other way, and he knew no better means than the benevolent institutions in which the people had given their services gratuitously and willingly for many years past.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) was glad to have a word to say on this vote, and, generally, on all the branches of the Home

Office administration. It was one of those offices you could walk into at any time and everything possible was done to meet your wishes. He was very glad to hear the Home Secretary say that he would establish a maternity home in any country hospital where it was a necessity. From his experience, there was no country hospital where such a ward was not needed. In his electorate he had experience of two men—one with six children and the other with five or six children—whose wives left their homes to go into maternity hospitals, and they only lived a few hours afterwards. The Home Secretary should compel hospitals which admitted maternity cases to have nurses who had passed examinations in the work. He did not believe that the ordinary nurse was competent for those cases, and it was one of the most important matters they had to deal with. Our settlers and working men and their wives had to sacrifice a good deal at those times, and the least they could do was to give them the best possible accommodation. He would rather see heavier taxation than that the hospitals should go short in anything whatever. He believed that those who were making the greatest sacrifices in order to keep up the hospitals were not the public particularly—although some contributed very largely—but the nurses who had passed their examinations. Many had passed severe examinations, and were working for a less salary than they could earn as housekeepers. Many of them remained in their positions years after they had any need to, and at very low salaries. What would happen to the hospitals and the sick if they all went and the hospitals were left to nurses who had not passed their examinations? He thought that the Home Secretary should take steps to see that they got a salary proportionate to the number of head nurses required and their positions.

Mr. McCORMACK hoped that the Home Secretary would get the Cabinet to reconsider the decision in regard to ambulance subsidy in the outside districts, where they are really taking the place of hospitals. He knew that in a good many places in the North the local ambulance was practically the local hospital. There was not sufficient population to keep a hospital going, and the ambulance man had to supply the place of the local doctor and attend to all the medical needs of the place. He hoped that the Cabinet would see their way to give the subsidy to centres which had no bank deposits, so that they might keep their outlying places going. He did not think that the Cairns centre had any bank balance, and they were doing splendid work all over the sugar and mining areas. Mr. Hogan, the local superintendent, had told him that they would have to close the station at Kidston, and probably that at Chillagoe. No local subscriptions were coming in, owing to the terrible condition of the mining fields, and a reduction of the subsidy would inflict great hardship on those places. There should be differentiation in that respect. It had been advocated that hospitals should not be allowed to become financial institutions. He knew that the Brisbane Hospital was not a financial institution. (Laughter.) But the committees of some hospitals seemed to run them as if they were businesses. That should not be allowed; it was not in the interests of the public. No doubt, if they built up fixed deposits by proper methods, it was a good thing, but if they built them up by the devious methods which some hospital committees used, the Government should step in and cut off a little

Mr. McCormack.]

of their subsidy. The Dalby Sanatorium did good work, and the Government should establish another institution of the kind for the treatment of miners' phthisis. Herberton would be a good place for that purpose, because, apart from the suitability of the climate, there would be a chance for the men, when they got better, to go out tin scratching in the district. It would not cost the Government the large amount which it cost to bring those patients to Brisbane. He believed the mineral districts throughout Queensland would be willing to subscribe something towards the upkeep of a sanatorium at Herberton. A number of people who were suffering from phthisis did not go to the hospital. They were without money, did not know how to procure a passage to Brisbane, and did not care about taking charity from anybody, so they knocked about North Queensland in a bad state of health.

Mr. MURPHY: It is only fair to the Home Secretary to say that he never refuses a pass.

Mr. McCORMACK: The Dalby Sanatorium did good work for Southern Queensland, but it would be better to have an institution in the district where miners' phthisis was prevalent; and there would be no difficulty in getting the miners—who were always a generous crowd—to subscribe to the upkeep of it.

Mr. GRAYSON did not approve of the subsidy to the ambulance being cut down. In his district the ambulance had done very good work, particularly about the Warwick centre. He had received the following letter from the superintendent of the Warwick centre, dated 17th October, 1914—

"I have the honour to point out that in 'The Brisbane Courier' of the 15th instant the Home Secretary had reduced the endowment to the ambulance brigade from £1 for £1 to 15s. in the £1. This has come as a great shock to the committee at a time when this branch of the institution is feeling very keenly the movement that is being carried out in the whole of this district to help the patriotic fund.

"A very large portion of the income of this centre is derived from sports, socials, and special efforts promoted in the district by the residents, which is now diverted to assist the patriotic movement. Even in our town the annual carnival, which usually nets from £150 to £200, will this month only net about £50, which goes to show how severely this institution is feeling the terrible state of affairs owing to the war.

"This centre has to supply the whole of the district from Nobby, Clifton, Allora, Yangan, Killarney, Stanthorpe, Inglewood, Pratten, and Leyburn, and all intervening places. The whole of these places must necessarily suffer, especially Clifton and Stanthorpe, which are performing a splendid work in assisting suffering humanity. Warwick has been keeping these places going, expecting the £1 for £1 as last year, in the hope that they would become self supporting in a short time.

"The debit balance at bank stands at the present time £150, with accounts due this month amounting to about £125.

[Mr. McCormack.

"The committee will sincerely thank you if you will lay the case before the Home Secretary, praying that he, in his wise judgment, will reconsider the question of endowment to this branch of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade Hospital, and extend the £1 for £1 as last year."

If the Government were going to apply the pruning knife to the ambulance vote, they were starting on the wrong tack altogether. The ambulance was doing good work in every district in Queensland. He had heard that some of the ambulance brigades had large sums to their credit. Possibly that might be the case in larger centres of population, where they had not so very much travelling to do, and where they had not to keep so many horses and appliances to attend to wants in the country. He knew of a case where a resident of Killarney, who had been a bullock driver for the last ten years, met with an accident at the head of the Condamine, and a telephone message was sent to Warwick for the ambulance, and the ambulance motor went out. If he had had to remain at Killarney till the train left next morning he would have suffered greatly during the interval. The ambulance went out and brought him into Warwick Hospital, but he regretted to say that the poor man's leg had to be amputated a few days after he arrived in the hospital. If the subsidy were reduced, it would mean that the Clifton branch would be curtailed in their sphere of influence. The Clifton district was a very large district; it extended to Nobby and the surrounding farming districts. It had a bearer residing in Clifton, and a wagon and two horses, and they attended to every accident which took place in the district. There was Allora, Yangan, Tannymorel, and Killarney, and also the Warwick district, which practically extended as far as Inglewood and Stanthorpe. The country districts ought to be treated differently to large centres, which had a credit balance in the bank. There were many calls on the people for subscriptions to patriotic funds, and the subscriptions which used to go to the ambulance were now given to the patriotic funds. He was pleased to hear the hon. member for Cairns speak in the way he did of the work done by the ambulance brigade in his district, and believed that the same thing could be said about ambulance brigades in other districts. The superintendent of the Warwick Ambulance Brigade was a man eminently fitted for the position, and had [10 p.m.] worked up the brigade from a hand stretcher brigade to a brigade with a motor wagon and a building of modest dimensions suitable for present requirements. On many occasions the wagon travelled 20, 25, 30, and even 35 miles out into the country to attend accident cases or cases of sickness. He was speaking now more particularly in the interest of the working classes in the country districts, who were not in a position to provide conveyances to take them to a hospital should they meet with an accident and become disabled. If the subsidy was reduced from £1 for £1 to 15s. in the £1, that simply meant that many country centres would be abandoned by the ambulance brigades, and that would be a great calamity. He hoped that the Home Secretary would reconsider this matter and impress upon the members of the Cabinet the

necessity for allowing the subsidy for ambulance brigades, particularly brigades in country districts, to remain at £1 for £1, instead of reducing it to 15s. in the £1.

Mr. HUNTER wished to bring before the Minister the matter of the removal of incurable patients from country hospitals to Brisbane. He had had two or three complaints from the Roma Hospital Committee, who stated that applications made by them to have incurable patients sent to Brisbane for treatment had not received the attention they should have received. Patients were well treated in country hospitals all the time they remained there, but it was not the function of country hospitals to keep such patients. We had an institution for incurable patients in Brisbane, and that was the right place for them, and he hoped that the department would respond more readily to the applications of country hospitals for the removal of patients to that institution. With regard to the sanatorium for consumptives at Dalby, he believed there was not sufficient accommodation there, and that it would be better to have another hospital somewhere else than to add to the Jubilee Sanatorium at Dalby. He was not advocating that there should be one at Roma, though he thought the climate at Roma was much better than the climate at Dalby, where the country was flat and the air cold. He thought the site for a new hospital should be chosen on the advice of the Government Medical Officer. The sanatorium at Dalby was not selected on such advice. Originally it was intended that it should be at Roma, but the town council and the hospital committee would not have a consumptive ward at their hospital, as they thought it would be unfair to the other patients to be near to persons who were suffering from phthisis, which was a communicable disease. He was mayor of Roma at the time, and he said that if they put the sanatorium on the range, 3 or 4 miles out, they would subscribe the money. The matter was an important one—too important for any electorate to claim. There were patients that could be cured if facilities were given to them and they were well treated. A district like Herberton, where there were so many miners suffering from phthisis, would be a suitable one to establish a sanatorium. The matter was one that should be grappled with, and now that they had not got sufficient accommodation at Dalby they should adopt a decentralisation scheme and have a sanatorium elsewhere.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*) thought that if the ambulance brigades were going backward in their finances, the Government should assist them. But they should not discriminate between the different brigades and decide that because one brigade went back to the extent of £100, it should get special treatment, and that the other brigades should get nothing. He quite admitted that they could not vote money for any better purpose than for the hospitals and ambulance brigades, but the fact remained that when he looked through the balance-sheets of the various hospitals at the time the endowment was raised to £2, he found that, with the exception of one or two, they all had substantial credit balances, and many of them had their money invested as fixed deposits in the banks. He considered that it was an unfair thing to give those hospitals an extra 10s. in the £1 endowment when they did not really want it. The consequence of

the increase was that in 1911-12 their contributions to the hospitals increased by £50,000 for the year. It was bad business to give all that extra money to hospitals with credit balances. Brisbane was a base hospital and received patients from all over Queensland, and it would have been better to have given more money to the Brisbane Hospital. Hon. members opposite talked about not reducing the vote. He would remind them that in 1904, when the Labour party were in power in Queensland, the hospital endowment was reduced to 25s. per £1, and in the year 1904-5 the Government paid £16,000 as endowment, as against £127,000 paid last year. The Home Secretary said that if any ambulance brigade wanted its endowment raised, it would get it if the circumstances justified it, but it would be better to put them all at the same rate as before—namely, £1 per £1 collected.

Mr. TROUT (*Enoggera*) thought there were no better institutions than the hospitals and ambulance brigades, and he was glad that the Government were going to give the hospitals the same amount of endowment as previously. The Government had always generously treated the hospitals since they had been in office. He had had eighteen years' experience of ambulance brigades, and knew something about the work attached to them. Years ago when they started they got no subsidy at all; they had to exist on subscriptions only. When they considered that the amount involved would be only £3,000 or £4,000 extra if the full £1 per £1 was paid to the ambulance brigades, he thought that the money should be found, whether it was by subscription or taxation. The hospitals and ambulance brigades should not be handicapped for want of funds. The Brisbane Hospital was a splendid institution, but at every annual meeting they noticed that some medical gentleman asked for some extra convenience to be supplied, as it was required for the hospital. Anyone who went to a public hospital should be treated in the same way as a man with money could get treated in a private hospital, or by a private doctor. He hoped the Government would give the ambulance brigades £1 for £1 right through. The time had arrived when the Government should appoint a general inspector of hospitals, who should report where it was necessary for the endowment to be paid.

Mr. BOWMAN: Most of the other States have that.

Mr. TROUT: He was not aware of that, but he thought it was very necessary. There were four or five centres that would be placed at a very considerable disadvantage, more particularly Ravenswood, Cairns, and Dalby, and he thought Charters Towers was another. Seeing that the additional amount required was so small, he hoped the Government would see their way to increase the vote, because, if they were going to impair the efficiency of the service and starve those institutions, some one would suffer, and no person should have to suffer, never mind how the money was got.

Mr. GILLIES said that the Home Secretary gave the deputation that waited on him a few days ago a sympathetic reply, and promised to see if he could get the Cabinet to increase the vote. He hoped the hon. gentleman would be able to tell them in his reply that he had been successful in his representations to his colleagues.

Mr. Gillies.]

Mr. DOUGLAS: Last year a Fisheries Act Amendment Bill was introduced, and there were certain charges provided in that Bill to be levied against the employers and employees of the fishing industry for the support of the Thursday Island Hospital. Whilst the Bill was going through he pointed out that, although those levies were compulsory, it was desired that they should be subsidised on the same basis as ordinary contributions to hospitals. The Treasurer, who was in charge of the Bill, was not able to make an appropriation for that purpose in the Bill; but, when he (Mr. Douglas) brought the matter under his notice and was supported by the deputy leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Murrumba, the hon. gentleman said—

“With reference to the question raised by the hon. member for Cook, with regard to the Government subsidising the amount raised under the Bill, he would be very pleased to represent to the Home Secretary what had been said, and, as his colleague was very sympathetic, he was sure he would give the question every consideration.”

He had represented the matter to the Home Secretary, and, when the hon. gentleman was recently at Thursday Island, the committee of the hospital pressed the matter on him, because, unfortunately, the hon. gentleman was not present when he (Mr. Douglas) brought the matter under the notice of the Treasurer. He thought that the recommendation of the Treasurer would have ensured for the hospital its full share of endowment, but they were going to be put on half rates, so far as he could see, and that was distinctly unfair. He hoped the Home Secretary would carry out what he considered was an undertaking given on behalf of the Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: Any undertaking will be honoured.

Mr. DOUGLAS: He could assure the hon. gentleman that there was a distinct understanding when the Bill was going through the House that those levies would be subsidised on the same basis as voluntary contributions.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It has been asserted that the Home Secretary was a very humane man, and he had very much pleasure in joining in the chorus to that effect. When replying to the deputation that waited on him a few days ago, the hon. gentleman made some remarks with reference to ambulances. One of those remarks tended to show that there was to be no cutting down of the endowment to ambulances, and that he had appealed to the Treasurer, but that gentleman so far had not been able to see his way to put the matter right. He would like to say a few words about the benevolent societies. In Charters Towers they had an excellent benevolent society, and a lot of people put in a great amount of very hard work in trying to keep that society going. Lately their fears had been aroused that, owing to a diminution of subscriptions on account of the war, many a home might suffer. He, therefore, hoped that the Home Secretary would see his way to assist those societies. The whole vote was only £2,300, and it would be regrettable if a little more was wanted, and it was not

[Mr. Douglas.

forthcoming. He was very much surprised that it was intended to reduce the vote for ambulances. It was not always desirable that a number of hon. members should get up and voice the same thing, but in this case he thought that the greater the cloud of witnesses who testified to the valuable work that was being done by ambulances, the greater effect it was likely to have on the Treasurer. Owing to the Administration of the Liberal Government, Queensland was in a very happy and sound position, and they had been told that it was much more prosperous than some of the other States, and he quite agreed with those hon. members who urged that the ambulance vote was the very last that should be touched. There should be no starvation of any votes having for their object the relief of the sick or the wounded, and he hoped that more consideration would be given to the matter. There might be some wealthy hospitals and ambulances, but unfortunately that was not so in the district he came from. He did not want to make it a parochial matter, but he was quite certain that in numbers of districts the cutting down of the vote would be felt very keenly. It had been suggested that there should be lists provided of the different hospitals and ambulances, and that some discrimination should be made. He had no doubt that the wealthy hospitals and wealthy ambulance brigades would not [10.30 p.m.] desire to take money and thereby lead to the starvation of other institutions. He hoped the Home Secretary would again appeal to the stony-hearted Treasurer on this occasion and induce him not to cut down the subsidy to the ambulance, and more particularly those institutions which were in need of money.

At 10.30 p.m.,

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

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The TREASURER: I beg to move that the House do now adjourn. The business on Tuesday will be the resumption of the second-reading debate of the Elections Acts Amendment Bill, and it is expected that the debate will finish at that sitting.

Mr. THEODORE: The acting leader of the Government has indicated that he expects the second-reading debate of the Elections Acts Amendment Bill to be concluded on Tuesday. The hon. member should have regard to the fact that the Standing Orders provide a very strict limitation of speeches, and as every member who wishes to speak on that Bill should have the opportunity of doing so, I think he should not attempt to arbitrarily put it through on Tuesday night.

The TREASURER: I do not wish to curtail debate, but there is a good deal of business to do yet, and I wish to get it through.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at thirty-two minutes past 10 o'clock.