

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 1915**

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## QUESTIONS.

## SALE OF UNPATRIOTIC CIRCULAR.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*), in the absence of Mr. Barnes, asked the Home Secretary—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to an unpatriotic circular, entitled ‘I Didn’t Raise My Son to be a Soldier,’ printed by the Ross Printery, Albert street, Brisbane?”

“2. Is it a fact that this particular circular was sold recently on board the ‘Lucinda’ at 1d. per copy?”

“3. Was his attention drawn to this sale?”

“4. Were not the parties—namely, Miss Pankhurst and Miss John—his guests on that occasion?”

“5. Is it true that his attention was called to their conduct, and, if so, what action did he take?”

“6. Is it a fact that Government cars, or cars supplied by the Government, have been used for the purpose of entertaining these disloyal visitors?”

HON. J. HUXHAM (*Buranda*) replied—

“1 to 5. No.

“6. From my slight acquaintancé with these ladies, I have to state they are more interested in social reform work than in any other question, and I would trust their loyalty far more than I would the pseudo-Christianity of the questioner. Further, I consider the questions asked were intended as political tricks rather than from patriotic motives.”

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

## REPAIRS TO PILOT BOAT.

Mr. MCPHAIL (*Windsor*) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was the cost of the repairs to the pilot boat which recently collided with another steamer in the bay?”

“2. Is it a fact that the men on board have continually complained that the boat is undermanned?”

“3. If this fact is proved, will he agree to put on extra hands, so that the proper working of the steamer may be accomplished and future accidents prevented?”

The TREASURER (Hon E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

“1. The accounts for repairs have not yet been received, but it is not anticipated they will exceed £70.

“2. No.

“3. Prior to the accident referred to, the employment of an additional fireman was approved in order that three watches might be kept, and he is now aboard the vessel. According to the Marine Board finding, the accident was not due to shortage in the crew, but owing to a mistake on the part of the acting second engineer.”

FRIDAY, 19 NOVEMBER, 1915.

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

## GOODNA INQUIRY.

The PREMIER (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Barcoo*) laid on the table the report and minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the management of the Hospital for Insane at Goodna.

Ordered to be printed.

## SALE OF MAROOCHY HEADS LANDS.

Mr. MCPHAIL asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. Has the decision of the department not to sell certain lands at Maroochy Heads been revoked by the department?”

"2. If so, what is the reason for the decision?"

"3. At whose request was the matter reopened?"

"4. Is he aware that Mr. Low, the gentleman who escorted the party on the occasion of their inspecting the land, is a son-in-law of Mr. Bury, of Nambour, who, in season and out of season, advocated the sale of the land against the wishes of the majority of the people in the district?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hunter, *Maranoa*) replied—

"1. Certain Maroochydhore allotments were only temporarily withheld from sale by the late Minister for Lands pending inspection.

"2. Inspection subsequently made proved that the general interest of the public would be better served by the sale.

"3. See answer to No. 1.

"4. Department does not know, and is not concerned, as to what relationship exists between Mr. Low and Mr. Bury."

#### LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### INITIATION.

On the motion of HON. J. HUXHAM (*Buranda*), it was formally resolved:—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to amend the Local Authorities Acts, 1902-1913, in certain particulars."

#### CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Jones, T. L.
" Bertram	" Kirwan
" Carter	" Larcombe
" Collins	" May
" Coyne	" McMinn
" Dunstan	" McPhail
" Fihelly	" O'Sullivan
" Foley	" Peterson
" Gilday	" Pollock
" Gillies	" Ryan, D.
" Hardacre	" Ryan, H. J.
" Hartley, H. L.	" Ryan, T. J.
" Hartley, W.	" Smith
" Hunter	" Theodore
" Huxham	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Larcombe and Mr. Smith.

NOES, 9.

Mr. Bell	Mr. Petrie
" Corser	" Stevens
" Gunn	" Swayne
" Hodge	" Tolmie
" Moore	

Tellers: Mr. Bell and Mr. Corser.

##### PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Adamson and Mr. Lennon.

Noes—Mr. Appel and Lieut.-Col. Rankin.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The result of the division was received with Government cheers.

The PREMIER moved that the Bill be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form. (Loud laughter.)

Question put and passed.

#### SUPPLY.

##### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY.

(Mr. Coyne, *Warrego*, in the chair.)

##### TREASURY.

##### INCOME TAX.

Question stated—That £10,000 be granted for "Income Tax."

Question put and passed.

##### MARINE BOARD.

The TREASURER moved that £3,910 be granted for "Marine Board." There was not much alteration in the vote as compared with last year. There were certain increases in salaries, and some increases in contingencies. Last year the sum of £1,235 was spent on contingencies, but it was not anticipated that that amount would be required this year.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): He had intended to move that the vote be reduced by £1 as a protest against the treatment meted out to Captain R. S. Taylor by the Government. He had no brief for Captain Taylor and had not seen him for some time, and when he asked the questions about him in August last it was to elicit information as to the reason that Captain Taylor was removed from the board. The Treasurer had courteously replied to all his questions. Captain Taylor was not an elector of Toombul, but he (Mr. Petrie) believed in fair play and British justice, and that was why he took up his case. Captain Taylor was a reputable citizen of Brisbane; he was Lloyd's surveyor for the port, and he had done a bit of good work for Brisbane in connection with shipping matters. The Treasurer admitted that there was nothing against Captain Taylor, and stated that he had been put off the board because the Government recognised that the seamen were entitled to representation on the board, and they had to find a vacancy to make that appointment. Captain Taylor was not the last person appointed on the board, and it was felt outside that the action of the Government in removing him was something like retaliation because the late Government removed the union secretary from the board on account of having taken a prominent part in the memorable strike some years ago. That gentleman went round trying to get men to go on strike, and he was removed from his position on the board. He had no objection to the seamen getting representation on the board, but the seamen had a good representative in Captain Taylor himself, as he had a great deal of experience from the time he was a seaman until he became a master mariner. It was not always a seaman who would be the best man to represent seamen. Captain Taylor was a man of great experience in shipping, and was one of the best marine surveyors under Lloyd's. He believed that Captain Taylor was now engaged on work in New Zealand of that nature. He was one of the best men on the board, all the members of which were good men, and his removal from office merely to put a certain representative on the board was wrong, unkind, and ungenerous, and showed what might be expected from the tyranny of certain persons outside the House. In August last he asked the Treasurer if any pressure had been brought to

Mr. Petrie.]

bear on the Government to bring about Captain Taylor's removal, and the Treasurer replied that no pressure was brought to bear on Captain Taylor to induce him to resign. The hon. gentleman stated that Captain Taylor was simply removed.

The TREASURER: Not without notice.

Mr. PETRIE: Captain Taylor got very little notice. The Treasurer further said that he had no specific cause of complaint against Captain Taylor, and that his reason for removing him was that the Government wanted to give seamen a representative on the board. The seamen had good representation in Captain Taylor, who was a mar. who would be fair to everybody. The late Government had good cause for removing the union secretary from the board, because he was inducing the men to strike, and there were complaints about his conduct by Captain Mackay and other members of the board.

The TREASURER: There is no report on the subject from Captain Mackay.

Mr. PETRIE: If a member of the board took such action as that complained of, it was a right thing to remove him from his position. He had no wish to make political capital out of this matter, but simply desired to point out that Captain Taylor had received unfair treatment at the hands of the Treasurer and the Government.

Mr. FOLEY: When the other man was put off, you never said a word.

Mr. PETRIE: The other man was put off for a very good reason. The present board consisted of five members, and he hoped that when any vacancy occurred the Treasurer would undo part of the harm he had done by reinstating Captain Taylor as a member of the board.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): There was a matter on which he desired some information. It had been stated by the Treasurer that it was desirable that the seamen should have a representative on the board. If the decisions of the board affected the seamen in any way, that was perfectly fair, but he was given to understand that the decisions of the board did not affect seamen, but affected principally the owners of ships and officers, and he would like some information on that point.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for *Mirani* had been entirely misled as to the interests of seamen not being affected by decisions of the board. The interests of seafaring men on ships coming within the jurisdiction of the Marine Board were sometimes placed in the hands of the board, because often their decisions affected the possibility of loss of life among seamen as well as officers and engineers. The lives of seamen were just as much in the care of the board as the lives of the officers. There was at present a vessel in the dock for inspection, and upon the decision of the board would depend the risk to the men going forth in that vessel after she was permitted to sail. The Marine Board were charged with the duty of looking after the interests of the men and the safety of the vessel, and they had to see that the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act and the Navigation Act were duly observed. The reason for the proposed change in the personnel of the board was that it was intended to appoint a representative of the seamen.

[*Mr. Petrie.*

This was not the first Government that had made a change in the personnel of the board. The Kidston Government reconstructed the board in 1906, in order that representation should be given to the interests specified at that time—namely, ship-owners, agents and charterers, certificated masters and officers, commerce, and engineers. That was the basis of representation up to 1908, when the Kidston Government changed the basis of representation and gave specific representation to seamen. By a strange coincidence Captain Taylor was gazetted out of office on that reconstruction, because it was considered that he did not represent any interest that should be dealt with by the board. In 1912, the Liberal Administration, which thought fit to gazette out of office Mr. Henderson, who was representing seamen, did not appoint anyone in his stead to represent the seamen. His predecessor had placed on record a minute recommending the appointment of Captain Eaton to this position. The minute went before the Cabinet, but he found in the writing of Mr. Denham, the late Premier, the words "William Eaton" struck out and the words "R. S. Taylor" put in, with the memorandum "Fill in name and send across immediately by bearer." It was apparently sent from the Cabinet room to the Treasury, so that it could go through at the same meeting. The then Treasurer recommended Captain Eaton, but Mr. Denham put in Captain Taylor, who did not represent the seamen. When this Government came in they were asked to give representation to seamen, and as seamen were entitled to be represented, there was nothing to do but to gazette Captain Taylor out of office and appoint a representative of the seamen instead. The board now consisted of Captain Forrester, portmaster, who was chairman of the board by virtue of the Act; Mr. Munro, as representing the commercial interests; Captain Collins, as representing the shipowners; and Mr. Burke, the secretary of the Seamen's Union, who was nominated by the union and appointed by this Government to represent seamen, dock hands, and seafaring men of that class. Captain Eaton was practically representing the masters and officers. He was a member of the masters and officers' guild, and was their representative on the board. The marine engineers had also urged that they were entitled to separate representation on the board. They had at one time a representative, the late Mr. Tom Johnson. There might be something in their contention, but the board consisted of five members only, and they could not increase the membership without altering the Act, and as the control of navigation might soon pass to the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth Navigation Act, he did not know whether it was worth while to reconstruct the board.

Mr. McPHAIL pointed out that the treatment of Mr. Peter Henderson by the late Government was more unfair than the way in which Captain R. S. Taylor had been dealt with by the present Government. It was simply a case of spleen on the part of the late Government, and it was because Mr. Henderson was connected with the Seamen's Union at the time of the 1912 strike that they removed him from his position. Captain R. S. Taylor, as the Treasurer had shown, was removed so as to make the representation on the board more fair. The

attitude taken by the late Government savoured of the greatest injustice. There were men in the service to-day who, if this Government desired, had given full cause to be treated in the same way, but the Government scorned to do that kind of thing and were prepared to give every man justice; but Mr. Peter Henderson did not receive justice from the previous Government when they removed him from office because he was the secretary of a maritime union which was concerned in the strike referred to. The hon. member for Toombul appeared to look at this matter from a party point of view, and implied that the Government had removed Captain Taylor because of their bias against him, but the Minister had disproved that.

Mr. PETRIE: As he had said before, he had not raised this matter with any party feeling at all, and the explanation of the Treasurer had enlightened him with respect to some matters that he was not fully acquainted with before. He believed that Mr. Henderson was a worthy gentleman, but he maintained that he should not have taken the action which he did in the strike of 1912.

Mr. FOLEY: What did he do?

Mr. PETRIE: He was informed that he had called out the men in the Marine Department at the time of the strike. The hon. member for Windsor need not be afraid of any action the Government might take in regard to these matters; they would take care that as long as there were secretaries of unions on these boards there would be no bother. He thought Captain Taylor had been treated unfairly. He believed Captain Eaton was a good man, and if the Treasurer had recommended him he should have been appointed. At the time of the affair the waterside workers were commenting on the spirit of retaliation shown by the Government in removing Captain Taylor. He thought that he was just as fair as the hon. member for Windsor, and he did not want to see any man treated badly or unfairly, but he held the opinion that no secretary of a union, no matter what side he was on, should occupy the position of a representative on the Marine Board, because he could not help himself and must take action which would cause a good deal of trouble amongst employees in a Government Department in which he had no business to interfere. He would like to see the engineers represented on the board, because he thought that all sections should be represented there, but probably the Commonwealth would deal with the matter in their own way.

HON. J. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*): His constituents were not as much interested in the Marine Board as perhaps some other hon. members' constituents, because they had not yet established a deep-water port at Toowoomba, but he would like to have some information as to a messenger. He did not know who he was, or even his name, but he was informed that the previous occupant of the position not only had the salary but also a house, and the present occupant was not receiving that accommodation, although he was a married man with a fairly large family.

The TREASURER: That is on the next vote.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Perhaps, when they got to it, the hon. member would give the information, and save him speaking again.

Question put and passed.

## MARINE.

The TREASURER moved that £60,748 be granted for "Marine." The total decrease in the vote was £21,984, the cause, of course, being the transfer to the Commonwealth of what were known as the ocean lights on the Queensland coast. He thought that they had been transferred as from next month, and, of course, that relieved the State of some expenditure, but it also deprived them of some dues. The expenditure on the department in 1913-1914 was £79,120, and last year £78,288. There had been a good many increases of £10 each in salaries all through the department. Under the head of "General Contingencies," the principal items expended last year on buoys, moorings, maintenance of steamers, etc., included £1,599 on maintenance and provisions, £2,902 on repairs and wages, £2,126 for coal, £1,650 for illuminating oil, £869 for oils, paints, etc., £2,681 for sundries and other items, making a total of £18,249. This year they were asking for £15,500. The amount spent last year on railway fares and freights was £442, and this year they were asking for £450. Under the head of "Contingencies," the expenditure last year on allowances to meet the increased cost of living was £1,320; on the pilot steamer for Moreton Bay, £12,940; beacons, £494; and on the gas buoy at Smith's Rock, £1,794. The total that was expended under that subheading was £18,977, and this year a somewhat smaller amount was being asked for. One of the messengers mentioned by the leader of the Opposition was down for £140, an increase of £10, and another at £75, an increase of £10.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): When the vote was going through last year, he had reason to bring before the late Treasurer the matter of the new pilot steamer for Moreton Bay, "Matthew Flinders," and was politely informed by him that he did not know what he was talking about. The Treasurer then even went so far as to say that the boat was giving satisfaction. He had been informed on very good authority that the boat was not giving satisfaction, and, as a matter of fact, a paragraph appeared in the "Brisbane Courier," the official organ of the then Government, making more serious charges than those he had made. It was pointed out that the boat was continually being brought up to Brisbane for alterations. He had previously pointed out that the designer of the boat had no idea of the Queensland climate, and she had had to be altered so as to give the pilots some comfort. The Committee were entitled to know who was responsible for the designing.

Mr. COLLINS: Why can't they build the boats in Queensland?

Mr. KIRWAN: He remembered being one of a deputation which asked the late Treasurer to get the steamer built in Queensland, or, at all events, in Australia, and they were informed that it could not be done. He would like to know from the Treasurer the total expense to which the department had been put since the vessel arrived in Brisbane owing to faulty construction and necessary alterations, which, if the designer knew his work, would have been unnecessary. He was informed that she was not carrying on her work satisfactorily, and never would, owing to faulty construction. Another matter to which he wished to refer, and one regarding which

*Mr. Kirwan.]*

the hon. member for Wide Bay and the hon. member for Bundaberg would doubtless have something to say, was with reference to the fish and oyster industry. Last year, when they were passing the Metropolitan Fish Market Bill, a promise was made by the late Treasurer that Mr. Stevens would be appointed Chief Inspector of Fisheries, but that promise had not been kept, the office being filled by the Portmaster, who did not pretend to possess the necessary qualifications, and, he believed, had no desire to fill the position. He would ask the Treasurer whether he was prepared to carry out the promise made by his predecessor. He understood that Mr. Stevens was one of the most efficient officers in the department, and was enthusiastic about his work; and, if there was any promotion to be given, they should encourage a man who would be a credit to the position.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*) asked whether the amount expended in erecting the buoy on Smith's Rock would be refunded by the Commonwealth Government?

The TREASURER: The cost would be included in the general assessment of the value of the transferred property.

Mr. BOOKER (*Wide Bay*): When they were dealing last session with the Metropolitan Fish Market Bill it was generally understood that Mr. Stevens would be placed at the head of a subdepartment to deal exclusively with the fish and oyster industries. He wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to carry out the original proposal and create such a subdepartment of the Treasury under Mr. Stevens. The industry was of sufficient importance to justify such action. The cost of living was so high that an effort should be made to provide a cheap fish supply for the people. The waters on the coast of Queensland were known to be teeming with edible fish, and it was only a matter of organising the work to enable the people to obtain a reasonably cheap and regular supply of fish. It would require careful administration, and that could best be secured by appointing a man who was qualified to organise his forces. He was in Sydney a week or two ago, and went into the question of the fish supply in that city. Mr. Stevens also happened to be there at the same time and he went away with one of the New South Wales Government trawlers. The Government of New South Wales were making a very earnest endeavour to grapple with the question of a fish supply and had three trawlers at work. A magnificent haul was obtained one day while he was in Sydney, and fish were plentiful throughout the city and suburbs at a reasonable price. The principal part of the haul seemed to have consisted of flathead, and it was rather a remarkable coincidence to find on the evening after the haul was distributed that flathead were for sale in all the "dago" fish shops in the city and suburbs, indicating that the fish, instead of getting to the consumer directly, was still finding its way to the fish shops. The question was an important one, and he would be glad if the Treasurer would give his earnest attention to the whole business. At present those engaged in the industry did not know just what their position was, and the public did not know what was intended to be done. The hon. gentleman might give some indication, when replying,

[*Mr. Kirwan.*

of the intentions of the Government with regard to oyster cultivation. The bulk of the oysters in Moreton Bay that found their way into consumption were primarily brought from Hervey Bay and Wide Bay in the form of culture, which was put down on the ground in Moreton Bay and fattened there. There was an abundance of ground in Hervey Bay and Wide Bay where the Government could develop a very large area of most profitable oyster culture. He understood from the men who knew most about the business that there were very large beds there which, with a little assistance in collecting the spat in the season and laying it down in beds, could be made a most profitable investment for the State in two or three years. One of the officers in the Wide Bay district was very anxious to carry on experimental work in that direction, and there was no doubt that a considerable revenue could be derived from the industry by the department, and profitable employment found for a large number of men. It was worth the Treasurer's while to discuss that aspect of the question with his officers. It was generally accepted that it was impossible to carry on a proper distribution of [4.30 p.m.] fish except by having cold storage depôts at the termini of the various railway lines going out from the different ports, and he hoped the Treasurer would bring the matter under the notice of the Secretary for Railways and the Commissioner. What was wrong with the fish supply was that periodically there was an abundance and later on a sparse supply. When the fish were plentiful, they could be stored in cold stores and regular supplies sent into the large towns and into the country, and the fish supplied to the consumers in good condition. If that was done in a proper manner, it would be profitable to the men in the industry and profitable to the consumer. Meats of all descriptions was going to be dear for a long time, not because there was any false economic pressure on the supplies, but because of the drought and shortage of supplies and the demands of the world. They must accept the fact that meat was going to be high in price in the future, and in the place of meat they had, off the coast of Queensland, one of the most splendid supplies of fish in the world. In Sydney, the week before last, the captain of the trawler he had referred to made the statement that in no part of the world had there been finer hauls than were made with the trawlers out from Sydney. The supply was there, and it was only a question of a proper method of dealing with the fish when it was caught. He hoped the Treasurer would be able to explain how far the Government had gone in connection with the establishment of the industry, what the methods were, and the general conduct of the whole business.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*) was pleased to hear the remarks that had fallen from the hon. member for Wide Bay, because they showed that the hon. member was practically endorsing the policy of State ownership and control of the fish business. He pointed out that the general public when visiting the seaside—God knows there was enough seaside round Australia!—for the week-end, if they took a net with them to catch a little fresh fish when meat was not procurable, were called upon to pay a license before they were allowed to catch fish for their own requirements. That was

a matter that affected his constituents very considerably, and also the constituents of Mount Morgan, who frequently visited Yeppoon and Emu Park. He hoped the Treasurer would be able to do away with the license fee in such cases. Some members might say that the fee was a very small one, but the fact remained that they were in for an era of dear meat, and the Government should give every possible assistance to enable the public to procure cheap food. He hoped the Government would see fit at an early date to introduce a system of State trawlers similar to that in operation in New South Wales. He had visited the State fish shops in Sydney recently, and the crowds were waiting in the streets, so great was the demand for the fish. The hon. member for Wide Bay referred to the fact of flathead being found in the private shops, but the mere fact of flathead being found in the private shops was not a *sine qua non* that they had been bought at the State shop. Everyone who had lived in Sydney for any time knew that flathead of the finny tribe were peculiar to Sydney, and it was quite possible that there had been flathead caught by private fishermen and sold to the private shops. There was this also to be recollected: The people recognised the dearthness of meat and mutton, and the Government of New South Wales recognised that it was their duty to find a substitute, and there was no better substitute than fish. They, therefore, stepped into the breach, constructed trawlers, and had their own State shops. So great a success had the business been that the Government were expending a further sum of £100,000 in the construction of trawlers. The high cost of living could be met very considerably if the Government took steps at an early date to establish the trawling industry, and had their own shops to supply the people with fish in good condition. He trusted that the Treasurer would let the House and the people of Queensland know whether the Government intended at an early date entering the fish business in Queensland.

HON. J. TOLMIE again asked his question in regard to the messenger in the Marine Department. As he had stated before, the messenger was unknown to him, but the circumstances had been brought under his notice. Whether the complaint was well founded or not he was unable to say, but the facts stated to him were that the messenger considered he was entitled to the residence, as the previous messenger was entitled to the concession, and the residence would be peculiarly acceptable as far as the present messenger was concerned, because he was a married man with a large family. He noticed that the messenger was down for £140, and last year the amount received was £130. That did not seem to bear out what the Treasurer had stated earlier in the session that the junior officers in the service had received two promotions; that they had all shared in the £10 increase made last year and a further £10 increase this year.

THE TREASURER: I think it is quite a recent appointment.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He would like to emphasise what had been said in regard to the fisheries business by the hon. member for Wide Bay. There was no better authority on the matter than the hon. member for

Wide Bay, as he had taken a very keen interest in the fisheries of Queensland for a number of years.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member for Bundaberg knows a lot about it.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He did not want to make a comparison between one member and another, but he thought that the hon. member for Wide Bay had a greater experience of Queensland in this respect than the hon. member for Bundaberg. The information which the hon. member for Wide Bay had been able to put before the Chamber would be of great value and assistance to the Treasurer in connection with the fisheries business. With the courtesy of the Treasurer, and the Chairman also, he would like to make reference to a matter which should have come on the previous vote, but the vote went through when he was absent for a few minutes. He would like some information with regard to the steamer "Mutlah." The "Mutlah" came from Thursday Island for the purpose of being docked, and she was docked in Brisbane, when instructions were given for her to be taken on to Sydney. He learned from the engineers in Brisbane that the necessary work could have been done in Brisbane. If the work had been done here, it would have given employment to a lot of men, and why the boat had been sent to Sydney he could not say. The Treasurer would be able to give some information on the action of the board in connection with that matter. If the vessel could have been retained in Brisbane until her repairs were effected without doing any injury to the owners, it should have been done. He was told that the dock was capable of taking vessels of the size of the "Mutlah," and that there were sufficient skilled men in Brisbane to do the work required. He understood that the vessel was taken in tow when it left Brisbane, and that was dangerous owing to the shoals. He read in the paper that some exception was taken to the towing of the vessel to Sydney owing to the danger to the men on board. He thanked the Minister for his courtesy in allowing him to refer to the matter.

Mr. McMINN (*Bulimba*): As one interested in the fishing industry, he hailed with pleasure the statement made by the Treasurer last year that the Fisheries Department was to be made a subdepartment of the Treasury and that all reports would go to the Treasurer direct. With the well-known organising abilities of Mr. Stevens he thought the industry would have been put on a proper footing ere this. There was a splendid harvest of fish in the waters along the Queensland coast, and if they established the industry properly, it would be of benefit to the consumers and profit to the workers as well. In speaking on the Address in Reply he emphasised the fact that the industry would be of benefit to Queensland if properly established; and, while a lot of work and effort had been made in that direction, still that effort seemed to have been misdirected. He was pleased to hear the Treasurer tell the hon. member for Wide Bay last year about the industry being placed on a better footing as a subdepartment, but he could only emphasise the remarks made by the hon. member for Wide Bay this afternoon in that respect. They had every facility for establishing an industry that would be of considerable value to Queensland,

*Mr. McMinn.]*

and the Treasurer should push on with the matter as expeditiously as possible. The hon. member for Wide Bay mentioned the necessity of having cold storage, and he agreed with him. They knew that on occasions it had been found necessary to take some fish back to the sea and dump them. He remembered not long ago that a boat-load of mullet was coming up to Brisbane when the owner received a wire from Brisbane stating that there was no sale for it in Brisbane, and he had better dump it in the sea, and this was done. That was only wasting the men's time and money, and at the same time deprived the consumers in Brisbane of a supply of good wholesome food at a time when it was wanted. He hoped the Treasurer would establish cold stores, even if he only started with one or two to meet with present needs. They were not getting full advantage from the industry because of the faulty distribution, but with cold storage and better distribution it could be made a profitable one. With regard to the matter referred to by the leader of the Opposition, he (Mr. McMinn) interviewed the Portmaster, Captain Forrester, about the messenger employed at the Marine Department. The messenger was not getting the same salary as his predecessor, and he was not getting the cottage either, as it was occupied by someone else. He wrote to the department on the matter, but had received no reply. As to the statement of the leader of the Opposition, that while an increase of £10 was granted to the messenger this year, he had not been granted a £10 increase last year, he pointed this out to Captain Forrester, and that gentleman assured him that at the time the Estimates were framed, the present messenger was not in the employ of the department. With regard to the steamer "Mutlah," he might say that when that vessel first went on to the rocks on the Queensland coast, he approached the Treasurer and the Premier, and asked them if they would grant the same concessions to the agents of the steamer as were offered to the agents of the steamer "Empire," so that there might be a chance of the "Mutlah" being docked in Brisbane for the benefit of the port and the benefit of the workers. This the Treasurer very kindly consented to do, with the result that the "Mutlah" came into dock in Brisbane. But, judging from the reports in the public Press, he feared that the vessel would be allowed to proceed on her voyage to Sydney in tow. The Board of Trade rules laid it down distinctly that where the damage to a vessel was considerable, the certificate of the vessel should be held by the marine authorities until the vessel had been granted a certificate saying that she was seaworthy and fit to proceed on her voyage. He should like to know if this rule had been followed by the Marine Board. An agreement had been entered into between the workers and the ironmasters of Brisbane, and they had given an assurance to the agents of the steamer that there would be no labour troubles during the repairing of the vessel, and that this agreement had been arrived at so that the whole resources of the port could be utilised and the time occupied in repairs considerably reduced. He trusted that the Treasurer would use his utmost endeavours to see that the vessel was repaired here, and that no unnecessary risk was allowed in the towing of the steamer to the South.

[Mr. McMinn.]

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): It was his opinion, and he believed the opinion of the majority of the members of the last Parliament, that when the Fisheries Act was being amended last session, it was distinctly understood that there was to be a readjustment of the different departments under the Marine Board, at any rate, as far as fisheries were concerned. He was certain that when the Bill was going through Committee, it was distinctly understood that the gentleman now occupying the position of Inspector of Fisheries was to be placed at the head of a subdepartment to superintend the fisheries industry, so that he might give his best and his fullest attention to that work. He was very much surprised, when coming down in the train from Bundaberg one day, to read a letter in the Brisbane Press in which it was stated that another gentleman had been appointed to the position. Captain Forrester was, no doubt, thoroughly qualified for the position, but his candid opinion was that Captain Forrester's hands were pretty full in attending to his shipping duties without his being compelled to devote any portion of his time to fishery matters. He hoped the Treasurer would be able to give the Committee some information on this matter, and let them know who was responsible for making the appointment. He had interested himself during the recess in collating information regarding fisheries from the sister States, also New Zealand and Tasmania, with the view of ascertaining their methods of carrying on the industry. Practically everybody in the Commonwealth knew now that New South Wales possessed three trawlers, and he was pleased to learn that they had been very successful. When he was down South the other week, he went on board one of the trawlers and made a few inquiries as to the more progressive methods of fishing that they had adopted, and, very much to his surprise, he found that the captain of one of the trawlers was an old fellow whom he knew years ago. They talked fish and North Sea for about two hours. When the amending Fisheries Bill was before the House last year, various opinions were expressed as to the best method of preserving fish after they were caught. He found that the New South Wales trawlers took a certain quantity of ice with them, as fishing boats did in the North Sea, and that, when the fish were caught, they were placed in cracked ice and kept in a state of preservation for some days. He wanted to point out that last year they had suggested the adoption of a method here which was carried out in New South Wales with regard to the transit of the fish. Instead of putting the blocks of ice on the top of the fish, they ground the ice so that it would melt and percolate through the cases or baskets of fish. With the old slipshod methods which they were working under here,

[5 p.m.] it was no wonder that practically half of the fish was spoiled, and became unfit for human consumption by the time it reached the Brisbane market. He found that Canada had lent the Government of New Zealand their chief fisheries expert, Professor Prince, who had studied the industry in that State. He regretted that the report was not available last year for the use of the commission which inquired into the fishing industry, because it backed up the suggestions which he and others had

made in regard to the industry. The report stated that, instead of treating the fish as they did here, the fish should be placed in cold storage. He had also taken the opportunity of making inquiries into the development of the industry in Victoria, where they were progressing on sound lines, the fishermen there having largely overcome the evil of being "sharked" by unprincipled exploiters by forming a co-operative association. He had the balance-sheets for the last two years, which showed that a very handsome profit had been made. Western Australia had moved on somewhat the same lines as New South Wales. He had here a long reply to some questions he had asked the Government over there some time ago. They pointed out that in December last a small steamer was chartered to catch and convey consignments from the fishing grounds to Fremantle. It was further stated—

"Concurrent with this a retail stall was opened at Perth, and fish disposed of at prices showing a considerable decrease upon the retail prices ruling before the initiation of the scheme. From its inception, the stall has been well patronised by the people, and so keen has been the demand, that the Government has now replaced the chartered steamer with one of their own boats, and has equipped a second and smaller vessel as a store ship on the fishing grounds. In the latter the fish, when captured, is carefully packed, and eventually transferred to the latter for conveyance to Fremantle. In addition to the business at Perth, supplies are forwarded twice weekly to the goldfields—Kalgoorlie and Boulder—for retail disposal, and it is anticipated that a shop will, within the next week or two, be opened at Fremantle. Country orders are also showing a marked increase, and parcels packed in ice are forwarded daily to various districts removed from the metropolis.

"As giving some idea of the popularity of the State fish stall at Perth, it might be stated that, exclusive of orders despatched to the country or elsewhere, no less than 68,168 cash sales have taken place since the inauguration of the scheme."

That showed that the State control of fishing, and the preservation and disposal of fish, had proved very successful in Western Australia. At Perth, the municipal council had a small cold storage, and had done what was suggested here last year—that was, to see that cold storage was provided at the water's edge, or as near as possible to where the fish was landed. That would save an enormous amount of handling, which involved not only considerable expense to the fishermen, but contributed more or less to depreciate the value of the fish. Small charges were made by the council for running the cold storage, and it had proved a good paying business. He had got one of the members of Parliament in New Zealand to supply him with information as to the condition of the industry there. The municipality had a fish market in Wellington, and the inspector and his staff received all the fish that was sent to the market. It was sent from different parts of the dominion. The price of the fish was ticketed, and the market had been very successful. The market was open daily in summer,

from 1st October to 31st March, from 6 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.; and in winter, from 1st April to 30th September, from 7 a.m. to 1.30 p.m., and the sales were for cash only. He would like to compare the price charged for fish there with what the public in Queensland paid. They had different classes of fish there to what we had here. Flatfish could be procured there at 6d. per lb. Trumpeter fish, cut into slices, was 4d. per lb. There were very few of them caught as far south as this—they were got further north, and it was one of the finest classes of fish in the Commonwealth. Then blue cod was disposed of at 3d. per lb.; round fish, schnapper, hake, and kingfish at 2½d. per lb. Garfish were sold at from 6d. to 1s. per doz. He quoted these figures to show that, where the fishing industry was undertaken in a scientific manner, it would not only provide employment for thousands of people, but the public would be able to get fish at about one-sixth of the price which they had to pay in Brisbane. Some doubt was expressed in regard to the action of the New South Wales Government when they decided to have three trawlers constructed in the old country; but from his knowledge of the business, the type of vessel which had been constructed was suitable for the work along our coastline. He hoped that, at the very earliest opportunity, the Treasurer would obtain a trawler for operation in Queensland waters.

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

Mr. BARBER: He would take another five minutes. He was sure that after the experience on the coast of New South Wales they should well be able to work the business here. He had looked into the State fish shop in the South when he was there, and found that they were selling flathead for about 5d. per lb., or about half what they had to pay here. Leatherjackets, somewhat different from what they got here, were being sold at 3d. per lb., and various other fish were being sold much more cheaply than the people of Brisbane were able to get them. He knew that an up-to-date trawler cost a considerable amount of money, but if the State intended to go in for the industry they should not rush in and buy up some old swill-tub, some old second-hand vessel that leaked like a basket—(laughter)—but go in for it properly and have up-to-date appliances. He had a yarn with the crew of one vessel in the South, and though they told him that they felt a bit strange in working under Australian conditions, still they were satisfied that there was no country on God's earth like this, and one of them—he was a bit of a Cockney—said to him, "I only wish I had abaht £30,000 to start two or three vessels; I would be a bleeding millionaire in ten years." (Laughter.) What he wanted to impress on him was that there were millions of money to be made out of the industry. He was sure that they could strike the same class of fish as they got off the New South Wales coast. One of the New South Wales trawlers arrived in port with somewhere about 15 tons for three days' catch, and in one week one of them secured nearly 30 tons of fish. Of course, the conditions were not quite the same as they were at home. Here they had to trawl at about 60 fathoms, whereas in home waters they trawled at from 25 to 30 fathoms. There was, however, a splendid opportunity in the business for the State, and he was sure that a shrewd business

Mr. Barber.]

man like the Treasurer would recognise that there were possibilities in it from the financial point of view.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): He had listened with a great deal of interest to the discourse of the hon. member who had just sat down, and to other hon. members, but what he wanted to know was how it was going to affect the electors he represented and others who were inland. He hoped that if the trawlers were put into operation and got a good supply of fish, the Treasurer or his officers would be able to despatch some of that good and wholesome fish to the people inland. He could assure hon. members that at the present time conditions were very bad in the country, and the sheep and cattle being in many cases too poor for human consumption, they had to live on tinned meat or sardines, or something of that sort. Although they had very few fish at the present time, on account of the drought, still they had a fishing industry in the interior. They had the Murray cod, he supposed the finest fish you could put on the table. He was sorry to say that it was an almost extinct fish in his electorate. He had been dried out of his holes. You could see his fins sticking out of the water as it went down, till he got sunburnt on the back, and the cranes had to go in to feed him. (Laughter.)

Mr. STOPFORD: Do you want a trawler to catch him?

Mr. GUNN: The way they caught him was to get a bit of rabbit netting and get into the hole and sweep it from one end to the other. But it was a wasteful way of trawling, and the fish were being exterminated. He would very much like to know whether a close season could not be established for Murray cod and other good fish they had in the country, such as barracouta and catfish. He remembered that when he went on to the Barwon River, all he had to do was to put a half hitch of the fishing line round his toe and it would be no time before something would wake him. Now you could sit all night on the bank with a line round your toe, and not get a fish. At the present time drovers and others could not get meat or fish of any kind, and the only thing they had to eat was goanna—and that was not a very good fish to eat. (Laughter.) He hoped that when the industry was established, instead of having to eat goannas and similar fish, the Government would see that they were supplied with fresh fish on ice or packed or somehow—so long as they got it. He also hoped that the remnants of the fish that they had would be protected, so that future generations would have an opportunity of getting some of their wonderful Murray cod. There was a new item in the vote—two holophote lenses—which cost £300. He would like to know what sort of birds they were. (Laughter.) The item had never appeared in the Estimates before. Perhaps they were two birds that were imported with the idea of breeding some more, though he really suspected that they had something to do with lighthouses. If that was so, he would like to know why they were bought.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) did not claim to be an authority on fish like the hon. member for Bundaberg, but he would remind the Treasurer that there was such a place as North Queensland. All the speeches previously made referred to South Queensland; but, if trawlers were going to be bought

and State fish shops established, he hoped that Mackay, Bowen, Townsville, and Cairns would not be overlooked. He found no reference in the departmental report to the fish or oyster industries of the North, and he did not know whether the department had made any investigations into the prospects of those industries being developed in the North, but he had received a letter only yesterday from a gentleman who wished to start fishing around Bowen, in which he stated that he would have to pay £5 for a license from now till the end of December. He thought that was an injustice. He (Mr. Collins) understood the amount of the fee was governed by an Act of Parliament, but it was a big tax to have to pay £5 for such a short period. He hoped the Treasurer would give some consideration to the North, if the Government were going to enter into the fish business, and that the hon. gentleman would realise that there was a large number of people in North Queensland. He had no doubt that there were fish in the ocean in the North just as well as in the South. He would also like to know when the work in connection with the Bowen jetty was likely to be completed.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Brisbane raised the question of the cost of the repairs and alterations to the steamer "Matthew Flinders," which had been secured for the pilot service for the port of Brisbane. He was informed that the cost of the alterations was in the vicinity of £500, chiefly caused through the necessity of altering the midships cabin in order to give better ventilation to the other cabins. That was done at the request of the pilots in order to make their conditions on board more comfortable. There had been no structural alterations. With regard to the fish question, it had been stated by several hon. members that an undertaking had been given by his predecessor last session that Mr. Stevens would be appointed Chief Inspector of Fisheries and that he would be placed in charge of a subdepartment, having sole control of that business under the Treasury Department. He could not say whether any definite undertaking had been given by the late Treasurer, but he knew that some alteration had been made in the position as it existed when the Metropolitan Fish Market Bill was being considered. At that time the Fisheries Branch was under the control of the Marine Board, and it was now under the control of the portmaster in connection with the Marine Department, and Mr. Stevens occupied the position of senior inspector. Whether it would be wiser to place Mr. Stevens or someone else in the position of Chief Inspector of Fisheries, making him directly responsible to the department and not subject to any subdepartment, was a matter that was, no doubt, worthy of consideration; and, if the State was going to launch out into the business of supplying fish, that was one of the problems that would have to be considered. If it was found better to have one man who thoroughly understood the business to control it without interference from the officer in charge of a subdepartment, he would undertake to say that whoever was appointed, would have full control of the fish business, and that it would be put on a more satisfactory basis in order to encourage fishermen to extend their operations and ensure for

{Mr. Barber.

them a better market and better facilities for handling their catch, at the same time ensuring for the consuming public more constant supplies of better fish. The question had already been considered by the Government, and from time to time he had made announcements through the Press, indicating what the Government were doing in that regard. It was the definite intention of the Government to go into the business, but, of course, before launching out into any comprehensive scheme, they wanted to be assured that they were fully seized of all the facts bearing upon the question in order that no costly blunders should be made in the initial stages. A great deal would depend upon the qualifications of the man they put in charge, because necessarily the Minister could not be actually in control of the details of the business. He could only formulate the policy and see that it was carried out. He must rely upon men with technical and practical knowledge of the work. The Government intended including oyster culture in their scheme. It might be necessary to assume a certain amount of control and establish a State industry in the matter of oyster culture, but it would form a part of the larger scheme. The suggestion had been made by the hon. member for Wide Bay, the hon. member for Bundaberg, and other hon. members that it would be necessary to establish cold stores and receiving depôts, so that the fishermen would know that, no matter how large their catch might be, it would be taken, and there would be no necessity for them to dump any portion of it on the ground that there was no accommodation for it. Under the scheme the Government had in contemplation, they would take all the fish that was brought in, and it would be stored so that it could be taken into consumption as the demand required. The scheme, of course, contemplated the establishment of markets, cold stores, distributing depôts, and possibly State fish shops in order that those who desired to buy fish direct could go to the Government shops and do so, the same as was done in Sydney under the scheme that had been started there by the State Government. It might be necessary to have a very large storage capacity for the storage of fish during the mullet season when fish were very plentiful, and when the fishermen could reap a rich harvest. It might be necessary to have large facilities to store all the catch, and then during the remainder of the year deal with the catch by allowing it to go

[5.30 p.m.] into consumption as required, or by canning.

In order to thoroughly establish the business that branch of it must have consideration. The hon. member for Wide Bay referred particularly to the question of the culture of oysters, and the hon. member appeared to think nothing very much had been done, in spite of what was said last year when the Act was under consideration, to properly protect or encourage the oyster industry. He would call attention to the report of the Senior Inspector of Fisheries as recorded on page 10 of the Marine Department's report. In the second and third paragraphs of the report Mr. Stevens stated—

“The oyster industry, taken as a whole, has maintained the standard of former years, and the marketing of matured oysters, the collecting and laying out of young oysters for restocking the beds and sections, and the general

development work of improving the cultivation grounds has been carried on systematically in most parts of the bay. The process of shelling and hardening the banks has become a recognised and essential feature of the industry, and the licensees are now reaping the benefit of their labours in this direction. Ground so prepared is now being used in place of natural oyster banks previously ruined by the mud worm, especially in the zone of the 2-foot limit.

“Queensland oysters still continue to command high prices in the Southern markets at Melbourne and Sydney, especially in the former, where first-class oysters realise up to £3 10s. per sack. Only the best grade, however, is in demand, and an inferior class finds a very slow sale. For example, Stewart Island oysters, which are of a lower grade, are selling at as low a rate as 15s. per sack, and this has militated against the demand for Queensland oysters of second-class quality.”

There was no doubt the Senior Inspector had a thorough knowledge of the business, and if he were given encouragement by whoever had the administration of the department for the time being, he would carry out that policy, and it was the intention of the Government to give him that opportunity. Mr. Stevens had been sent down South to see what had been done in New South Wales and Victoria with regard to placing the fish industry upon a more satisfactory footing, so he would get into immediate touch with the latest methods of dealing with the subject. No doubt the information he would gain would be of great value to the Government in determining its policy and in carrying out that policy. Hon. members might depend upon it that within a very short time the new venture would be launched and someone would be placed in charge to see that the industry was put upon a firm footing and he would be given a free hand. He (Mr. Theodore) understood from the general expression of opinion that members favoured the Government going into the business in no half-hearted fashion. It might be necessary to incur a considerable expenditure, but no one doubted that such expenditure would be warranted by the increased food supply and the general benefit to the community. In carrying out such a scheme, due regard would be paid to the interests and attending to the wants of other places than Brisbane, but as a start would have to be made somewhere, a start would be made in Brisbane, where the facilities were greater and where the demand was greater, but subsequently it would be extended until the scheme was perfect in the matter of attending to the requirements in every part of the State, even if it became necessary to secure trawlers. The suggestion had been made by the hon. member for Normanby and the hon. member for Bundaberg that the Government might forthwith experiment with a trawler, and it might be necessary to do that. The Government favoured such a scheme, and if they could get a favourable offer they might forthwith endeavour to secure a trawler and test the Queensland coast. If the ground was tested and found suitable, one trawler would not be sufficient for the scheme; but they had to start somewhere, and if they could extend the scheme to such places as Bowen, and other parts of the

*Hon. E. G. Theodore.]*

coast, all those places would be included. The hon. member for Normanby referred to the question of amateur fishermen who used nets having to pay a license fee, and the hon. member spoke of it as rather a hardship. The Minister had no control in that matter as the Act required that those who used nets must pay a license fee. It was urged last year that those alleged amateur fishermen often made good hauls and entered into competition with the professional fishermen who had to pay a license fee, and there would be no great hardship in compelling those who used nets to take out a license. The hon. member for Carnarvon spoke about the presence of Murray cod and other edible fish in the inland waters. It was a well-known fact that some of the inland streams had an abundant supply of edible fish. That was particularly true so far as the Northern portion of the State was concerned. The hon. member also referred to the practice in vogue in the Carnarvon district of using nets to catch a great quantity of fish and practically depleting the supply, particularly during the dry season.

Mr. GUNN: They might as well have the fish as the cranes.

The TREASURER: The hon. member recognised the more serious part of the business, because he had suggested that there should be a close season. As a matter of fact, there was a regulation under which it was illegal to use nets in inland waters, just as it was illegal to use dynamite in inland waters for the destruction of fish. The question of the number of hooks to be used on each line also came under the regulations, so the department took every care to protect the fish so that there would be no diminution of the supply in the inland waters. Reference had been made to what had been done by the Government to secure to the port the work involved in the repairs to the "Mutlah." Some hon. members seemed to be under a misapprehension as to the exact powers in the hands of the Government in regard to the matter. Of course, the Government was charged with the administration of certain Acts of Parliament which were framed for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of those who travelled on ships, and it was that power, delegated by the Government to such judicial authorities as the Marine Board, which gave them power to prevent a ship going to sea in an unseaworthy condition. The Government, in regard to the "Mutlah," were carrying out their duties in the matter, but their duties ended with seeing that the ship, or any other ship, was in a seaworthy condition before it passed out to sea. The mere fact that it would be beneficial to Queensland that a ship should be repaired here could not weigh with the Marine Board in giving its decision. Once the board gave instructions that certain repairs should be undertaken to place the ship in a seaworthy condition, and those instructions were carried out, then its power to compel the ship to remain here disappeared. To exercise any further power would be tyranny over the shipping industry. If the Government were to compel a shipping company to do their work here as against some other port, although it might be beneficial to the shipbuilding trade, it might mean tyranny as far as the shipping companies were concerned. The Government had not that power and could not exercise it. The "Mutlah" was ordered into port

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.

here for investigation as to the extent of the damage. She was navigated successfully from Thursday Island to Brisbane and placed in the Dry Dock by order of the Marine Board, when she was inspected by the officers of the Marine Board, who reported to the Marine Board. The Marine Board deliberated on the report and evidence placed before it, and issued certain instructions with regard to repairs. He would quote from the report of the Engineer Surveyor of the Marine Board with regard to the condition of the vessel and the repairs that should be made in regard to it. The Engineer Surveyor dealt with alternative proposals, and this was an extract from his report—

"Referring to the proposal in the letter of the 5th instant, of towing the vessel to Sydney, should the Marine Board consider this favourably, Mr. Smart's suggestion, mentioned in his first letter, of temporary repairs by stopping all leaks by means of cement, bolts, and washers where rivets are broken or missing, should also be carried out. Afterwards, all ballast tanks will, of course, be filled to add stiffening to the vessel. This would then, in my opinion, be reasonably safe conditions, as there is less likelihood of the vessel becoming separated when in tow, than if accompanied by a convoy only. In addition to the repairs necessary for the vessel to leave in tow, two extra shores would require to be fitted from the deck beams to the after part of tank top in No. 1 hold, and all the ballast tanks filled and passed by me before any water is allowed in the dock."

That was the suggestion made by the Engineer Surveyor as a necessary condition before the vessel was allowed to proceed under tow to Sydney, and the company decided to carry out those repairs. Only in the last day or two, a representative of the board made an inspection of the vessel to see that the repairs were being carried out, and he reported that they were not carried out to his satisfaction, and he required certain additional repairs to be carried out. Until that was done the vessel would not be allowed to leave the Dry Dock. As soon, however, as the repairs were carried out, the vessel would be allowed to leave, unless there was an appeal made to him as Minister in charge of the department to override the decision of the board. Good and sufficient grounds would have to be given before he could override the decision of the board, because the Government would otherwise render themselves liable for detaining the vessel in port longer than was necessary. That was the position in regard to the "Mutlah." It was no use the ironworkers and ironmasters complaining that the Government were not doing their duty in not detaining the vessel. They had no power to do so. They only had power to detain the vessel while the necessary repairs were being carried out. The ship-owners had the right to appeal against the decision of the board, and have an inspection made by an independent engineer surveyor, and in such a case the decision of the Marine Board might be upset. The powers of the Government were strictly limited in the matter; and it was in the interests of shipping that the Government should not have arbitrary powers to detain a vessel unnecessarily. If it was the desire of the owners to remove the vessel to some-

other port, they could not stop them, although he would like to see the work done in Brisbane, as they had every facility for doing the work, and had also the necessary skilled labour to carry it out. The Government had certain powers under Acts of Parliament, and they had to observe them in matters of this sort. The leader of the Opposition referred to a messenger named Dudell, employed at the Marine Department. He was appointed a few months ago at £130, and was now down for an increase of £10. He was occupying a residence, which was not a very elaborate one, and he maintained that he should be supplied with the residence occupied by his predecessor in that position. The messenger had formerly been in the service of the Government as a casual employee, and when he accepted the appointment at £130 from the late Treasurer, he knew the position exactly before he accepted it. He knew what salary he was to get and what privileges there would be, and he accepted the appointment under those conditions. The messenger carried out his duties satisfactorily enough, but he could not state that he had been misled in any way, as he knew all the circumstances before he accepted the position.

Mr. PETRIE thanked the Minister for his explanation with regard to the intentions of the Government in the matter of the fishing industry. He did not believe in the State taking over every industry, but this was one industry which he thought should be in the hands of the State. The bays and harbours in Queensland teemed with edible fish, and it was only right they should do something to develop the industry. He was pleased to hear the Minister say a trawler would be put into service, as it would enable the various towns along the coast to get a supply of cheap fish and fresh fish. The fishermen had been under a disadvantage in the past in not getting a sufficient price for their fish at times, and he was glad that the Treasurer was going to look into that. He knew at times the fishermen had a good catch of mullet, but could not get a good price for it in Brisbane. He was glad the Government contemplated going in for canning and smoking fish as well, as many people preferred smoked fish to any other kind. Mr. Stevens had taken a great interest in the fish industry, particularly the oyster culture, and he was glad to know that his services would be recognised.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*) noticed that the explosives magazine came under this vote, and perhaps the Treasurer could give him some information. In *Mount Morgan* the company had substituted a fracture for what they had been previously using. This fracture was not only defective in its action, but the fumes from it were very injurious to the men. When the matter was brought before the management, they said they could not get the same class of fracture that they had previously used owing to the war. The war might have created a demand which did not exist previously, and the company, without any desire to practise economy, might have been forced to use what the miners considered to be an inferior brand of fracture. Not only did they use a different fracture, but they also used a different fuse. When speaking on the Address in Reply, he showed that the honorary inspector who worked in the mine decided to test the new fuse, and that he

found that 2 feet of it fused four seconds quicker than the old fuse. He left hon. members to imagine what that meant to men working on a face with a number of holes, and regulating the length of the fuse according to the notice posted up. An accident of a very grave character might have resulted. Seeing that the Treasurer had charge of explosives, he would ask the hon. gentleman did the department take action to test any new brand of explosives that might come on the market? In his opinion, the Government should test all new brands of explosives put on the market, and communicate the results of the tests to the Mines Department, and it should be the duty of the Mines Department to acquaint persons substituting new explosives for old ones with the results of those tests, as such information would tend to safeguard the lives of those using explosives.

The TREASURER: There was just as keen a check on explosives now as there was previously. Certain circumstances had occurred recently which had led to the introduction of new explosives that had not hitherto been used to any extent in Queensland. A few months ago great difficulty was experienced in getting ships to carry explosives from England to Queensland, and there was a serious shortage in the supply. So serious was the shortage that it was expected that, if the Government did not step in and assist in some way in the importation of explosives, some of the mines would have had to close down. The Government took immediate action to acquire the control of explosives then in Queensland, and to arrange for the importation of further supplies. That had the effect of insuring to Queensland a fairly sufficient supply. Once or twice they approached the danger line of shortage, but by prompt action they managed to avert any serious difficulty. To meet the difficulty, recourse had to be had to the importation of other than the usual brands of explosives, and, although the department had taken the greatest care in testing explosives, it was quite possible that *Mount Morgan* had obtained certain supplies of inferior explosives. It was well known that some explosives which were powerful enough in their action were very deleterious in their effects when used in a close atmosphere underground. The chief explosives used in Queensland were Nobel's, which were manufactured in Glasgow, but Nobels had intimated to the Advisory Committee appointed by the Government to control explosives that there was some difficulty about sending forward supplies owing to the destruction of one of their factories which was blown up a few months ago. However, the hon. member could rest assured that, so soon as we had a sufficient margin of supplies, there would be no relaxation in the standard required, especially with regard to explosives used underground, where they were likely to engender fumes and gases which would not conduce to the health of the miners.

Question put and passed.

#### PRINTING OFFICE.

The TREASURER moved that £88,900 be granted for "Printing Office." There was an increase of £11,010 in this vote as compared with the appropriation for last year. The principal increases were in the wages of the employees, which increases amounted

*Hon. E. G. Theodore.]*

to £6,000; and under the heading of "Contingencies," which were increased by £5,000. The increases were rendered necessary mostly by the general expansion of business which was going on from year to year, and the necessity of employing more hands.

Mr. STEVENS: There is a reduction of twenty-five in the number of employees.

The TREASURER: Yes, that was so. However, there had been an all-round increase in wages since the present Government came into office, and there was a big increase in the cost of paper and other material used by the Government Printer. The expenditure for last year was £91,281. It was not anticipated that they would spend quite as much this year as last year. The revenue received by the Treasury from the department was £101,253, so that the undertaking made a profit of about £10,000 for the year.

HON. J. TOLMIE: This was one of the most interesting votes in connection with the Treasury Department, and there would be far more scope for discussion [7 p.m.] if they adopted the practice which formerly prevailed of having a report of the work done by the Government Printing Office, but the practice had been discontinued in recent years.

The TREASURER: It was discontinued while your Government was in office.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was of opinion that the practice should be resorted to again. There was now more reason than ever why such a report should be submitted so that they might know what work was being done. In previous years there was a loss every year in connection with the office, but that was not the case now. He understood that this year was a distinct improvement on last year, in which there had been an improvement on previous years. From the Auditor-General's report they found that the expenditure was about £91,000, and the revenue £100,000. That showed that the Government Printing Office was a paying institution, and it also kept a large number of persons in employment.

Mr. CARTER: A State-run printery.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He hoped that when the hon. member's Government had been in office for three years they would be able to show that it was as good a paying concern as it was now. There had been a difficulty in making it pay in the past, but they appointed the present Government Printer, who had run it on business lines and succeeded in making it pay. He did not know whether hon. members were familiar with the quality of the work turned out by the Government Printer in the shape of reports, which were beautifully illustrated, and all the illustrations were prepared in the office. They could turn out illustrations as good as any in the world.

The TREASURER: Are you in favour of illustrating "Hansard"?

Mr. KIRWAN: Have an artist in the gallery.

HON. J. TOLMIE: They had an artist in the House. (Laughter.) It was not about illustrations in "Hansard" that he wished to speak. He remembered that some years ago "Hansard" was published daily, and circulated through the medium of the various newspapers in the State, so that the

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.

people had then an opportunity of seeing what took place in Parliament, and it occurred to him that it might be a good thing if there was a reversion made to that practice. One great advantage of it would be that it would break up the conspiracy of silence which prevailed on the other side, and do more to bring out the qualities of eloquence possessed by hon. members opposite than anything he knew of. He believed the muzzle got off by accident last night, but it had been put on again. The issue of "Hansard" as suggested, would give the people an opportunity of judging of the work they were doing in Parliament. The work of the Opposition had been most trying this year in knocking into shape the legislation which had been introduced into the Chamber, but the work was lost sight of by the general public by reason of the fact that there was not that distribution of "Hansard" that would enable the general public to familiarise themselves with what was going on here. The Treasurer and his colleague, the Minister for Justice—he knew they were both of a literary turn of mind—(laughter)—might during the recess in their leisure hours go thoroughly into this question, and see if they could bring out another issue of "Hansard" altogether different from the one they now had, so that they might distribute it throughout Queensland. He did not think that the people realised the work that was being done in the Chamber. What he had suggested would be of advantage to the State, if they were able to bear the expense, but they had borne it thirty years ago and should be able to bear it now. They had made the franchise as wide as they possibly could, and the next thing was to see that the people were politically educated, and the best possible means of giving them that education was through the medium of "Hansard." He could quite understand how hon. members on the other side would exercise great care in the preparation of speeches and how eagerly they would seek an opportunity to catch the Speaker's eye when they knew that their speeches would be scattered far and wide, so that not only their constituents but also those thousands of persons who were hungering for the information that was so ill supplied to them at present might have their wants supplied.

\* Mr. LARCOMBE (*Keppel*): It was surprising to find in members of the Opposition this new-born zeal for the supply of "Hansard" in a palatable form. It was not an original idea. Personally, during last session he had suggested the paragraphing of "Hansard," and the printing of it in larger type, and he wished to repeat that suggestion. But observe the difference between the attitude of the hon. the leader of the Opposition now and the attitude which he and his colleagues adopted last year, when they ridiculed his suggestions! They had only to take up a volume of the New South Wales or Federal "Hansard," to notice the difference between them and the Queensland "Hansard." The type of the latter was dull and small in comparison. One could not find the divisions of a subject as he could in the "Hansard" of the other States.

The TREASURER: I am not in control of the "Hansard" vote.

Mr. LARCOMBE: He knew that there were really two subjects, but last year he dealt with the two under one heading, and

he thought that the two could be dealt with under one heading now. He knew that the question of paragraphing "Hansard" should come under the heading of the "Hansard" vote, but the question of larger type came under the vote they were discussing.

The TREASURER: It is a matter for the Printing Committee.

Mr. LARCOMBE: If the Printing Committee made the recommendation, the printing would have to be done by the Government Printer, and, strictly, it came under the vote. The majority of members on the other side hardly spoke last session, but now they were making long speeches, and they had an interest in seeing "Hansard" in an attractive form and larger type. He knew that the present time was a time of economy, and he did not suggest that the Treasurer should give a promise or even seriously consider it at the present time, but he hoped that, when the money was available, the matter would not be forgotten and the reform would be carried out. What was the idea of printing "Hansard"? Surely it was printed with the idea that it should be read, and they knew that it was not read nearly as widely as it should be. He was sure that the Committee would realise the reasonableness and the desirableness of the suggestion he was making.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Merthyr*) desired to emphasise the remarks of the hon. member who had just sat down, of the need for printing "Hansard" in larger type. The type in use at present had been in use ever since they had had "Hansard," although there had been a slight improvement by cutting out altogether the smaller type in which extracts used to be printed and printing them in the same size type as the body of the matter. He did not think that very great expenditure would be necessary to print it in larger type. All that would be required would be new matrices and magazines for the linotype machines, and if the Printing Committee would take the matter into consideration, they would find that the expense would not be so great. More paper would, of course, be necessary by reason of the greater space occupied, but that would be more than compensated for by the amount of reading that would be done, and the desire of the leader of the Opposition would be obtained if "Hansard" were made more easy to read. He rose principally for the purpose of congratulating the Government on the Government Printing Office as a State concern. Anybody who knew anything about printing—and he flattered himself that he knew a little about it—and had taken the trouble to go right through the Printing Office in those latter days, and see it as a going concern, must be struck by the very fine institution which they had in their State printery. It simply proved what could be done by State enterprise. The office was thoroughly up to date, and, as the leader of the Opposition had said, the man in charge knew his work thoroughly and had introduced up-to-date methods in the carrying out of the work there. They were able to turn out work equal to any done in any part of the Commonwealth. Some of the books that were printed for the Intelligence and Tourist Bureau showed colour work that reflected the greatest credit on the office. The Government Printing Office was not only a printery, but it was also a manufacturing establishment, which manufactured the material used in connection with process

work, colour work, and other necessities of the office. By reason of its being controlled by a keen manager, it was able to compete successfully with the other States, and they had reason to be proud of their State printery. The leader of the Opposition referred to the increased wages that were being paid in the office. He was pleased to be able to state that there had been some increases in wages since the present Government came into power. In the machine-room, particularly, men who had been receiving less than the rate ruling in the city had been raised to the standard rate since the Government took office, and the Government were to be congratulated upon having taken action so quickly. Another matter upon which he desired to congratulate the Government was for restoring some old servants of the office to the status of which they had been deprived in 1912, because they then had the temerity to assert their manhood. The length of service counted for nothing, and they had practically to start *de novo* in the office; but, when the matter was brought under the notice of the Treasurer, he very quickly set the matter right. He congratulated the Government upon their promptitude, and he again expressed his appreciation of the work that was being done in the Government Printing Office.

At 7.20 p.m.,

Mr. FOLEY relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*) said that the work turned out by the Government Printing Office reflected credit on the office, and a great deal of the success of the establishment was due to its excellent manager. (Hear, hear!) He disagreed with previous speakers who claimed that "Hansard" could be made more popular by having it printed in larger type, and perhaps having it illustrated. When he sent the copies of "Hansard" to which he was entitled to constituents, and visited them afterwards, he found "Hansard" kicking about the floor or propping up windows. (Laughter.) The people did not seem to value "Hansard" at all. He noticed that when "Hansard" ceased reporting at midnight, measures were got through more quickly than when members were being fully reported. (Laughter.) He thought it would be a good idea if every hon. member was allowed so many pages of "Hansard" each session free, and that he should have to pay for all extra space occupied by him. Such a limitation would mean a saving to the country in printing and greater expedition in the passage of legislation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You would have had a considerable bill to pay this session.

Mr. GUNN: If such a system had been in vogue, he would probably have spoken less, and then the Government would have been nearer to getting their Estimates through. (Laughter.) He might say that business was got through far quicker now than when the present Government sat in opposition.

Mr. PETERSON: You can't fight.

Mr. GUNN: The other side talked the greatest rubbish, night after night, when they were in opposition. They talked about the rubbish talked by the present Opposition, but it was nothing to the rubbish they themselves had talked in the past. "Hansard" was not a popular magazine at all.

*Mr. Gunn.]*

(Laughter.) Some years ago he was invited by the late Home Secretary to a fishing expedition down the bay. When they got opposite Bribie Island, they got out a net, and when they got into the water and dragged the net into the shore, they found thousands and thousands of "Hansards" in it. (Loud laughter.) They had evidently been sent down in the "Captain Cook"—(laughter)—and jettisoned. That showed what people thought of the speeches of hon. members. He thought that, if "Hansard" reports were condensed, the publication would be more generally read and better work would be done. There was too much reporting, and it was costing too much. If members worked more and talked less, it would be better for the State.

Mr. KIRWAN: I hope the Opposition will take your advice.

Mr. PETRIE: He also desired to congratulate the Government Printing Office upon the good work done by it. The office was one that they had every reason to be proud of. With reference to "Hansard,"

when the first billiard table was [7.30 p.m.] installed, it did a lot to reduce the volume of "Hansard," and the same result followed the introduction of a second table. (Laughter.) If there was more room, and two more billiard tables were put into the room, he believed the cost of "Hansard" would be still further reduced. It would be much better if "Hansard" were printed in a larger type, but he did not favour the suggestion that "Hansard" should be published every day the House was sitting. He could bear out what the hon. member for Carnarvon had said, as he (Mr. Petrie) was one of those who assisted to draw in the net. There they were drawing in the net expecting to get a good haul of fish, and the last haul was nothing but a bundle of "Hansards." (Laughter.) He had heard afterwards that a lot of schnapper were found dead on Bribie beach, and when they were opened to see what had caused their death, it was found that they had swallowed several copies of "Hansard." (Renewed laughter.) He was pleased to know that the Government Printing Office had been able to compete successfully with Government printing establishments in the other States, and had secured a lot of work for the Commonwealth.

Mr. CARTER (*Port Curtis*) said the Government printery stood as one of the strongest living evidences of what could be accomplished by State-conducted enterprises. There was a better class of work turned out at the Government printery than by any other printing office in Queensland, if not in Australia. He had heard the other day of a gentleman who desired to have his "Bulletin" stories printed for sale, and one would naturally have supposed that the same gentleman, being a strong advocate of private enterprise in the daily papers, would have gone to a private printery. No; he went to the Government Printing Office. He (Mr. Carter) had made inquiries to ascertain the difference between the cost in the Government Printing Office and the cost in a private printing office, and he had found there was 50 per cent. difference. That was to say, for a book which the Government Printing Office charged 6d., the private printers charged 9d.,

Mr. PETERSON: How is the wages sheet?

[Mr. Gunn.

Mr. CARTER: The wages sheet in the Government Printing Office was better than in the private offices—the men were better treated and had better conditions, and there was no comparison in the class of work. The work was equal to anything done in the big publishing houses in England. Then, in the matter of tendering. Under the late Administration, tenders were called by the Water and Sewerage Board for certain printing, and the tender of the Government Printing Office was considerably lower than the lowest of some fifteen tenders, and very little more than half the amount of ten of those tenders. That was evidence of what could be done by State-controlled industries. He was satisfied that the manager of the Government Printing Office had not done as well as he would have done had he had a freer hand. Had he been permitted to tender in a more liberal way, a greater profit would have been made, and he was satisfied that, under the present Administration, the increased vote this year would be more than justified by the work turned out in the coming year.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*): If the people in the electorate of the hon. member for Carnarvon did not read "Hansard," that was not so in the electorate he (Mr. May) had the honour to represent. His experience was that, when the "Hansards" reached the shearing-sheds, they were always devoured as soon as they came to hand, and the hon. member for Gregory could bear out that statement. As soon as the "Hansard" copies arrived at the shearing-sheds, everyone had a look at them to see what the member for the district was doing and what the other members were doing. He would not advocate any increased expenses at the Printing Office while the war was on. He added his commendations to what was said about the Government Printer, who was the right man in the right place. A great number of the lower-paid servants at the Government Printing Office had received increases, and it was due to the present Government that they had got them.

Mr. LLOYD (*Enoggera*): As an ex-printer he congratulated the Government on the work done at the Government Printing Office. The work done there compared favourably with the work done by the private firms all over Australia. If any evidence was wanted of the efficiency of the Government Printing Office they would find it in the complaints that the printers' travellers were beginning to make about the possibilities when the Government Printer entered into competition with private enterprise. There was great consternation amongst the printers' travellers in that matter, and it was evidence that they recognised the Government Printer as a formidable competitor. With regard to the execution of the work there, no fault could be found with it. The Government which appointed Mr. Cumming found a good man for the position he held, and he hoped Mr. Cumming would hold that position for a long time. When it came to the emoluments paid to the staff, he was not so sure that the State was a model employer there, though he did not think it was Mr. Cumming's policy that the staff should not be well paid. The female employees, at any rate, were not too liberally treated. He did not say that the State should pay more than the ordinary rate of wages, but the State should set an example to other employers.

With regard to the profits shown by the Printing Office, if the same work had been done by private firms, a sum at least equal to the amount claimed as profit would have gone into private pockets. A statement that the Printing Office showed a profit on any work was, however, likely to be misleading, because it did not follow because there was a profit on the work that the State made a profit out of it. In fact, the State might be losing money by doing unnecessary work. One of the anomalies of the position was that a Government which did a lot of unnecessary printing, could in a way pose as a public benefactor, because the profits shown by the Government Printing Office would be larger than if only necessary work were done.

Mr. COLLINS pointed out that he asked the Chief Secretary some time ago if he would establish a Government newspaper, and he noticed several members laughed at him at the time. When members laughed it showed they did not know the history of the State, because he remembered when he was a young man that a daily "Hansard" was issued in the form of a newspaper, and he always read it with a good deal of interest. He did not read "Hansard" with the same interest now. If it was a good thing to have a daily "Hansard" then, when the population was small, it was a good thing now. They should issue "Hansard" on similar lines and distribute it free of cost to every person who made application for one. If there had always been a free distribution of "Hansard," the Labour party would have been in power ten years ago. (Hear, hear!) They should establish a daily Government newspaper to publish up-to-date news.

Mr. MURPHY: Why not a State newspaper, the same as a State butcher's shop?

Mr. COLLINS: Exactly. The present newspapers were very misleading, and the Government should establish one to circulate all over Queensland. When any of his friends came to Brisbane from the North he always took them over the Government Printing Office to show them the institution as an example of collectivism, and they were always delighted with what they saw. The Printing Office represented the brain of man and the harnessing of the forces of Nature. He advised other members to take their friends through the Printing Office, as it was one of the sights of Brisbane.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: And give them a slug with their name on. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: If the employees were not well paid, they should be well paid, as the State should be a model employer. Excellent work was being turned out by the Government Printing Office, and they hoped it would long continue, because it was better than the work done by private enterprise.

Mr. FORSYTH hoped that the Government would not start a Government newspaper, and that they would not issue a sheet "Hansard" at the present juncture. The issue of a sheet "Hansard" would be an extravagance, as it would cost many thousands of pounds, and it would be unwise to incur expenditure for such a purpose at the present time. There was no doubt that the balance-sheet of the Government Printer was a very good one; it showed that the office under the management of the gentleman in charge had become a paying proposition. A net profit of £10,000 was a

good profit, but he should like to know whether the item of £94,000 mentioned in the report included the capital invested in land and buildings, and whether an amount of 10 per cent. or any other sum was written off for depreciation of plant and buildings.

The TREASURER: Four per cent. is charged against £48,000 of the value.

Mr. FORSYTH: The Committee should have a more detailed balance showing such particulars as he had mentioned. One thing which appealed to him more than anything else was the fact that the Government Printing Office had been able to secure a large amount of business from the Federal Government, as that proved that the department was thoroughly up to date and well managed and well administered. The Federal Government would naturally give their business to the authority which charged the lowest price, so long as the quality of the work done was satisfactory, and the fact that the Queensland Government Printing Office was able to compete successfully with offices in Sydney and Melbourne was evidence that it was well equipped.

Mr. BERTRAM: Printers regard it as the most up-to-date office in Australia.

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes. The various departments of the State for which work was done by the Printing Office were, of course, charged for the work they had done there, and he should like to know whether the prices charged to the departments were such prices as were likely to be charged by outside firms or less.

The TREASURER: The Government Printer says he is certain that his charges to Government departments are 25 per cent. less than outside firms would charge for the work.

Mr. FORSYTH: If that was so, it was very satisfactory.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Some of his other prices are very moderate, too.

Mr. FORSYTH: Some of the printing offices outside got very small profits. He knew some firms in Brisbane who had lost money in the printing business, and other firms who had made a success of it by the capable and sound management of the man in charge. The Labour Government could not claim that they had made a solitary shilling in connection with this department, because it was one of the legacies of good things left them by the Liberal Government. He noticed that the number of employees in the Printing Office last year was 447, while this year it was only 422, a reduction of twenty-five, from which fact he inferred that it was anticipated that the office was likely to have less work this year. That was a reasonable anticipation, because there would, no doubt, be a shrinkage in all businesses throughout the length and breadth of Queensland if things continued as they were at present. He was glad to know that the department had done so well, and he trusted that it would continue to make a profit and do as good work as it had done in the past.

Mr. MURPHY thought that everybody would agree that the Government Printing Office was well managed, and a credit to the State. The hon. member for Bowen desired that there should be a daily "Hansard" and that it should be distributed free to the people, but if they studied the figures it would be seen that unless the Government was prepared to hand out

*Mr. Murphy.]*

"Hansard" to the general public for nothing there would be very few looking for it. The great centres of population got most of their political news from the newspapers. If they supported the Labour party they supported the Labour Press and got the Labour view of political matters, but if they belonged to the Tories they took the "Courier." (Laughter.)

Mr. GUNN: What about the independents?

Mr. MURPHY: He might point out that an independent in politics was one who had discovered that both sides were wrong. (Laughter.) He recollected the time when Sir William Lyne was a particularly admired representative of the people in the House of Representatives. He was the one independent, and the Labour party used to admire him so much that they would not offer any opposition to him until it came to election time. (Laughter.) But neither party had that admiration for him (Mr. Murphy), and it was because he wanted the general public to understand his position that he was going to support the hon. member for Bowen in the issue of a daily "Hansard," because he would then be able to get his views before the public. The Labour papers on the one side, and the Tory papers on the other, simply ignored a party which had not a large following in the House, but they forgot that this particular party had doubtless a large following in the country, and it was because he desired that the people should be educated to the advantages of the non-party political system that it was desirable that they should have a daily "Hansard."

Mr. McMINN: You have the "Bohemian" behind you.

Mr. MURPHY: He was glad that there was one sensible paper behind him. (Laughter.) He liked the name, because one realised that the "Bohemian" was like the independent party. Without wishing to do the "Bohemian" a bad turn, he should say it was like the independent party in this House—not financially very strong. (Laughter.) The advertisement which the "Bohemian" would receive through the channels of "Hansard" and the columns of the daily Press to-morrow—(laughter)—because newspaper men always believed in doing another newspaper man a good turn, and all the daily papers to-morrow, and the weekly papers, irrespective of their political opinions, would give the "Bohemian" a free advertisement. After the "Bohemian" this week had printed their second edition, he would go along to the editor and press his claims for commission for obtaining this advertisement. (Renewed laughter.) If they issued a daily "Hansard," why not make it interesting? The general public liked to know all about sporting events. Why not engage some first-class artist and some clever journalists to write up "Hansard" in nice little paragraphs so as to put them all before the public in a proper light. (Laughter.) They wanted to make politics interesting.

Mr. KIRWAN: We have the "gallery notes."

Mr. MURPHY: "Gallery notes" were very interesting when they were praising you, but most hon. members would admit that they were very uninteresting when they were holding you up to ridicule. (Laughter.) But the politician got £300 a year in order that

*Mr. Murphy.*

newspaper writers might have somebody to abuse. If there were no politicians, what would the writers of the daily Press do for a leader every morning? What would the "Courier," the "Daily Mail," and the "Standard" do if there were no politicians to be abused? The hon. member for Bowen desired that the public should know the truth about politics through the medium of a State newspaper. Who was going to give the public the truth about politics? If the truth was to be given to the public per medium of the Government, then the public would only receive the truth according to the lights of the Government.

Mr. McMINN: They will have to put the editor in a bullet-proof cage.

Mr. MURPHY: Editors were bullet-proof. (Laughter.) Editors, being human, would realise, as most public servants did, upon whom they depended for an increase.

Mr. COLLINS: Have we not got the "Mining Journal" and the "Agricultural Journal"?

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, perhaps he had better deal with that question now. Could the hon. member show him any column in the "Agricultural Journal" which dealt with politics? There might occasionally appear in the "Agricultural Journal" the photo of the Minister for Agriculture.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think that would happen.

Mr. MURPHY: He knew the present Secretary for Agriculture was a modest man, and, like himself (Mr. Murphy), did not care about seeing his photo in the paper. (Laughter.) He had never had his photo in any of the papers yet, because it was very undesirable.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You are too good looking.

Mr. MURPHY: It was not because he was too good looking that he did not want his photo in the paper, but later on the police might be able to discover him because his photo had appeared in some journal. (Laughter.) He would say this for the Secretary for Agriculture: that the work he had done in the department since he had taken charge certainly entitled him to have his photo in the "Agricultural Journal." (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: What about the Government Printing Office—the vote?

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member took no exception to one of his own followers advocating a daily "Hansard" or a State newspaper, but when he got up to point out the absurdity of it, he wanted him to talk about something else.

Mr. COLLINS: You have not pointed out that yet.

Mr. MURPHY: He had proved it. The only reason that the hon. member gave for the publication of a State newspaper was that he wanted the truth about politics to be placed before the public, and he had pointed out that the truth would only be given to the public through the medium of the Government of the day. If it were a Liberal Government, everything in the Liberal policy would be the proper thing, but if it were a Labour Government then everything in the Labour platform would be the truth. The State had plenty of work for its Government Printing Office without

starting a State newspaper. If the hon. member wanted to publish "Hansard" daily, that was a matter for the Government and the Committee.

Mr. McMINN: It was done thirty years ago.

Mr. MURPHY: It might have been, but was there any necessity for a daily "Hansard"? The people of the cities obtained all their political news every morning and every afternoon, and the country districts obtained their political news from "Hansard" every week. There was only a weekly mail in most of the places in the North, so that anybody talking about a daily State newspaper at the present time was, in his judgment, travelling along wrong lines. There was nothing to be gained by it, and he did not think that the Government would be justified in utilising the Government Printing Office for the publication of State newspapers. Two State newspapers were already published and subsidised by the State, one dealing with matters affecting agriculturists and the other the mining community. They did not deal with political matters at all, or with everyday matters.

Mr. COLLINS: They deal with truthful matters.

Mr. MURPHY: There was no newspaper that would deal with politics from a truthful standpoint, because there were very few individuals who could deal with politics from a truthful standpoint.

Question put and passed.

#### STORES.

The TREASURER moved that £4,960 be granted for "Stores." There was a small increase in the vote, made up chiefly of salaries and additional staff, and another £500 under the head of "Contingencies." A greater amount was spent last year than was appropriated, and it was expected, in consequence of renewal of contracts and the securing of supplies under more difficult conditions, that more would be needed this year.

Question put and passed.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

The TREASURER moved that £23,813 be granted for "Water Supply." There was a small increase—only £515. There were increases under certain subheadings, including salaries, and decreases under others. The principal decrease was under the heading of "Hydraulic Survey." Only £800 was asked for equipment, wages, repairs, renewals, and incidentals. A smaller amount was spent last year than was voted. There was an increase set down under the heading of the administration of the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act. The sum of £1,000 was set down for the purchase of a plant to test the underground waters on the Inkerman Estate for the purposes of irrigation.

Mr. GUNN: He came from a district where there was a good deal of artesian work going on. Some years ago the public estate improvement fund sank a bore known as Weengallon No. 1 bore, by day labour, and it had since been taken over by the Treasurer's Department. The report of the

Auditor-General showed that it cost £9,710. It was a little over 3,000 feet, and that was a great lot of money. Later on the Water Supply Department called tenders for sinking an adjoining bore, only a few miles away, and that was put down to the same depth under exactly the same conditions, for £6,184, or a saving of £3,523. The trouble was that the bores were put down for water trusts, and the people who had to pay growled most tremendously because they had to pay such a sum for a bore put down by day labour. They thought that they were not getting a fair go, and neither were they. Why should they pay £3,000 over and above what it should cost? The department recognised the injustice, and wrote off, he thought, some £3,000 or £4,000. The consequence was that the selectors got the bore at the legitimate cost, but the taxpayers of Queensland had to pay £3,523 for the experiment of seeing how they could put down bores by day labour.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: There will be a lot of that before long.

Mr. GUNN: He noticed from the Auditor-General's report that the cost of the Mount Morris bore stood at £10,219. If he mistook not, that bore also was put down by day labour. The Auditor-General made these remarks on the subject of bore sinking—

"The work in connection with the sinking of the bores has all been carried out by contract during the year, notwithstanding the fact that the Water Supply Department has in its store two fully equipped boring plants valued at nearly £4,000. These boring plants were purchased some three years ago, and have never been used. Portion of one of the plants was recently sent to Inkerman Estate to assist in testing operations to be carried out there."

He hoped the Government would never sink any bores by day labour, but that they would lease those plants, and have all bores sunk by contract. His son was sinking a bore in the vicinity of Weengallon No. 2 bore, and it only cost £4,000. It was the same depth as the bore sunk by the Government, and was identical with it in every respect. The cause for the increase might be due to some extra drains, or something like that, but it was quite evident that private individuals could sink bores a lot cheaper than the Government. Contractors had told him that they always charged the Government more for sinking a bore than they charged private individuals, because the Government wanted them to do things that private individuals did not ask for. Some years ago a contractor told him that he was compelled to shift the slush that came out of the bore a long distance away from the bore, and it caused him no end of trouble. He was pointing out the difference in the cost of sinking bores by contract and by day labour, because he was fearful of the present Government trying to put down bores by the latter method. If they did, they would fail. Somehow or other no one seemed yet to have made a success of sinking bores by day labour. Possibly it was another case of "what is everybody's business is nobody's business." Railways were built successfully by day labour, but nobody had been able to get good bores put down cheaply by that system in Queensland.

Mr. Gunn.]

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*): The Weengallon bore to which the hon. member for Carnarvon referred cost very nearly £10,000, and was put down by day labour. It was well known to the people in the vicinity of the bore that the Government were unfortunate in not being able to get men to carry out the work as well as it ought to have been carried out.

Mr. GUNN: That is just the trouble.

Mr. LAND: The heavy cost was not attributable to the fact that the work was done by day labour, but to bad management. His advice to the Government was that they should endeavour to get good men to manage the work. There were plenty of men in Australia who thoroughly understood the sinking of artesian bores. There was no necessity for that bore to have cost anything like as much as it did. The worst feature in connection with the bore was that there was a number of small farmers who had formed themselves into a water trust, and, as the hon. member for Carnarvon said, it was they who had to suffer, though the Government gave them some relief by reducing the cost to about £6,000. The hon. member's condemnation of the day-labour system was not justified, because a contractor had to employ day labour. Very likely he engaged the same men who were employed to sink bores for the Government under a manager. He would now like to say a few words with reference to the Hydraulic Department. He had always been of opinion that that department was costing the Government more than they got out of it. It was a hidebound institution, and it would be worth the Treasurer's while to look into it. The whole of that business should be under the Lands Department.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LAND: When the late Mr. Bell was Secretary for Public Lands, he (Mr. Land) tried to induce him to place £50,000 on the Estimates for the purpose of sinking bores in dry areas which the Lands Department was opening to selection. Every pound the Treasurer could save in the department would be a pound gained, more especially in times like the present, when they should not spend money unless it was absolutely necessary for them to do so. He was very pleased indeed that the Treasurer had introduced a Bill to amend the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act, as water was very precious at the present time. It was safe to say that in the drought of 1902 and in the present drought they could hardly have saved a single hoof of stock if it had not been for the artesian water. One of the greatest troubles at the present time was the quantity of water that was running to waste. The department had a number of men out getting information which should be of great assistance to the Treasurer; and, if the amended Act was properly administered, it would be a great boon immediately. He had been at scores and scores of bores, and at every one of them water in abundance was running to waste, and that water could be utilised in watering dry areas. Some fear had been expressed that a lot of trouble would be caused under the amended Act, but he was sure that there was not a departmental officer in the Western districts who would recommend anything to the Treasurer that would interfere with the best interests of those who owned the bores. Along the main

[*Mr. Land.*

roads in the West, in some cases for scores and scores of miles, there was no water. Some of the roads were old-established roads. Yet water was running to waste that could be brought to those roads. Many of the shire councils did not care to take a bore drain across a road in drains because they had to maintain the drains afterwards. The Government should be very active

[3.30 p.m.] indeed in getting water across main roads where it was at all possible, and it was possible in many cases. The hon. member for Carnarvon had endeavoured to get water across roads with the object of travelling stock to a railway, but up to the present he had been unsuccessful.

Mr. HODGE (*Nanango*): It was absolutely necessary, in order to be successful on the land, to have water. The question of water supply was a very serious one in his district and in many parts of Queensland. Unless a selector had a good supply of water, he might as well get off the land. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Balonne that the subdepartment should be under the administration of the Lands Department instead of being administered in the promiscuous way it was at present by the Treasury Department. He understood the hon. member for Balonne was referring to artesian bores, but subartesian water was the question, as far as he was concerned, and there had been many applications to the different departments for water diviners. One of the most successful water diviners in his district was an officer of the Agricultural Department, Mr. Brooks, who was such a success that repeated applications were made for his services.

The TREASURER: We do not claim to be wizards in this department.

Mr. HODGE: It was not wizardry; it was proved conclusively by the automatic water finder that it was possible to ascertain whether there was water or not at a given place. At the present time they had to go to the Lands Department for one thing, to the Treasury Department for another, and to the Agricultural Department for another. The whole question of the water supply should be under the one head. He certainly recognised that the Hydraulic Engineer should control the artesian supply but not the subartesian supply.

The TREASURER: We will have full control as soon as the amending Bill becomes law.

Mr. HODGE: He was pleased it was going to be compulsory, and the selectors would have the satisfaction of knowing that they would not be sent from pillar to post, as they were at the present time, in connection with the water supply. He had made application to the Agricultural Department for the services of Mr. Brooks, he had also made application to the Lands Department for the services of Mr. Little, and he had made application to the Treasurer for assistance to sink tanks. Why those matters should be under three different heads he did not know. He was pleased that it was the intention of the Government to bring the whole question of the water supply under the one department as it was certainly a step in the right direction.

Mr. GUNN: He was very glad to hear the remarks of the hon. member for Balonne with regard to water on public roads. In

some instances stock had to travel long distances without water. The other day he had to send sheep 50 miles without a drink, and along that road there were two or three bores they could almost smell off the road, but they could not get near them. The water trusts would be willing to allow the bore water to be taken near the road, but there seemed to be no harmony between the shire councils and the water trusts. He was glad to know that the department intended doing something in the matter, and he hoped it would be satisfactorily fixed up. In the matter of subartesian wells for small settlers, the New South Wales Government had a system under which they sent a man in charge of a small plant to sink for subartesian water, and the selector was charged the actual cost of sinking the well and interest and redemption spread over a number of years. He hoped something of that kind would be done in Queensland, as a great number of selectors could not afford to put down wells. He thought it would be better for everybody if the control of the water supply was placed in the hands of the Lands Department as then the selectors could work in harmony one with the other. At present the Lands Department came along and surveyed the selections, then the settlers had to go to a different department altogether to get water, and there was not the sympathy between the two departments that there ought to be. Land and water must be inseparable in this country in order to get on, and it would be more convenient for the settlers if the administration were brought under the Lands Department. The public estate improvement fund was under the Lands Department, but they did not deal with water. At one time they did deal with water, but they did not make a success of it.

Mr. COLLINS asked what progress was being made in connection with the Inkerman Estate, where the Government were carrying out some irrigation experiments? A farmer friend of his, who arrived in Brisbane from the Burdekin district the other day, told him that on the opposite side of the Burdekin River from the Inkerman Estate, they had a crop of cane this year which went 30 tons to the acre as a result of irrigation. He read in a Northern paper the other day that, notwithstanding the drought, the sugar crop of the Burdekin district—taking the price of sugar at £18 per ton—represented a value of £150,000, and that in one of the worst seasons ever known on the Burdekin. That district had only 4 inches of rain from the 1st of January until a few weeks ago, so that that crop was grown under irrigation without the aid of rain at all. To make the Burdekin country a success, and the Inkerman Estate a success, they must go in for irrigation. The Government were taking the initial steps to supply the water in sufficient quantity to carry out the big irrigation scheme proposed there. His friend cut 450 tons of cane himself, notwithstanding the drought, and his opinion was that, without irrigation, the country there would not be a success. Owing to the severe drought, the Inkerman Mill was not working this season. The large area of country from Bowen to Townsville was in the dry belt, and he hoped the Government would push on quickly with the irrigation scheme for the Inkerman Estate, so as to make a success of it. There were a large number of settlers there, and they were having hard times owing to not having had

a crop at all. The soil was good in places, but they wanted irrigation to make it a success. They had got the experience of the United States and other countries to follow, and, if properly cultivated, that district would grow enough sugar to supply half the Commonwealth.

The TREASURER pointed out that the department were carrying out irrigation experiments on the Inkerman Estate. They were satisfied that there was an underground supply of water there, but they had to proceed on proper lines and make proper tests. The tests that had already been carried out had given every satisfaction up to date. They knew that there was a supply in one area sufficient to warrant them going in for irrigation. They were now making tests in other places.

\* Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*): They had heard lots of ideas as to the best form in which to give effect to the securing of water. The Government might well consider some scheme whereby they could conserve the water which fell during the year over huge areas in Queensland. They would find that, as time went on, the country would become more thickly populated, and the demand for water would be much greater than it was at the present time. A few years ago, when he went for a trip to the Eastern countries, he noticed that the population was so closely settled that it would take Australia another 500 years to reach the same number. In these countries the people, although closely settled, were not troubled at all through want of water, because the precaution had been taken to conserve it, and sufficient was found to provide the wherewithal for these people and their families. In the same way in Queensland, they should make some provision to prevent all the water from the watersheds of their rivers, such as the Brisbane River, from going into the sea. Not a drop of that water had a right to get away to the sea. It should all be impounded and be used for irrigation purposes only.

The TREASURER: None of the waters from the watersheds of Brisbane River are allowed to go into the sea. They flow into Lake Eyre.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: What was the use of the Treasurer making an interjection like that? The Diamantina, Landsborough, and Thompson rivers eventually merged into Cooper's Creek, and then ran into Lake Eyre, but they should do something to impound the water from these rivers and prevent them from flowing into Lake Eyre. Investigations should be undertaken by the Government to see if these waters could not be impounded.

The TREASURER: Then there would be complications between South Australia and Queensland.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Not at all. There was no riparian law in Australia.

The TREASURER: There would be a broil between the two States if we stopped the rivers from flowing into South Australia.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That was nonsense. There should be a thorough examination made of the surface and of all dars, to see if they could not do something to impound the waters at the heads of the watershed. What had the Government done in the matter?

Hon. J. A. FHELLY: Why didn't your Government do something?

*Mr. Armstrong.]*

Mr. ARMSTRONG: His Government! He had never been leader of a Government.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Well, the Liberal Government never did it.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Was that any reason why a Labour Government should not do it? The mere fact that past Governments had not done it and that there was a change of Government was the strongest argument why the Government now in office should do it.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Give us the opportunity.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He was suggesting to the Government what it was desirable to do.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Why be annoyed?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The Assistant Minister for Justice was not seized with the responsibility of his position, and he should take no notice of the hon. member's interjections. He asked what were the Government doing with regard to conserving water in the outside districts? What did they propose to do with regard to the very grave question of artesian bores? He would suggest, in regard to artesian bores, that a complete log should be kept of every artesian bore sunk in Queensland, whether the bore was put down by private enterprise or by the Government. There should be a complete analysis of the water in each bore, a complete analysis of constituent materials of the piping with which the bore was cased, and a record of the strata passed through, and all this information should be recorded in the office of the Hydraulic Engineer. At present they did not know why there was a good deal of corrosion in some bores and less corrosion in other bores, but they knew that it was due to the action of chemical constituents in the water.

The TREASURER: Do you suggest that we should take the pressure and things of that kind?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That was one of the things which was being done at the present time, so that there was no necessity to suggest that. All the information he had mentioned should be obtained and recorded. He had a conversation on this subject with our late Governor shortly before he left Queensland. As everyone would admit, Sir William MacGregor was one of the greatest scientists in the world, and that gentleman said, "Why are you not making a complete analysis of the strata which bores pass through and of the piping which you are using? You are using German piping in certain bores, and piping made in England, America, and elsewhere in other bores, and you have no knowledge of the properties of that piping, so that you cannot say why there is great corrosion in one bore and very little in another bore." Such analyses were most necessary. With regard to artesian water, he was on the Diamantina in 1881 at a place between Werna Station and Ayrshire Downs. There they put down a shaft for 200 feet, and afterwards bored another 200 feet with the boring plant then available. At that time they used the Tiffin boring plant, and it would only bore 200 feet. As he had said, they went down 400 feet altogether, and got no water. That was in 1881. In 1884 Mr. Jack Bostock was

[*Mr. Armstrong.*

managing a grazing farm there, and a boundary rider when riding round the fence stopped at the well to have lunch, and throwing a stone into it found that there was water to within 60 or 70 feet from the surface. He reported this discovery at the head station on his return. Mr. Bostock put up pumping machinery at the well, and found that he could not reduce the water to more than 150 or 200 feet from the surface. That was one reason why he suggested that a log should be kept of the strata through which every bore passed. The casing in certain other wells on Oondooroo and Sesbania had evidently rotted and allowed the water to percolate through and supply the well which was put down in 1881. The Treasurer was welcome to laugh, but he was telling the hon. gentleman matters which he had experience of, not matters of conjecture.

The TREASURER: Reminiscences of an old pioneer.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He mentioned these things because they should be recorded, and gave them as a reason why they should have a complete log in regard to every bore put down in Queensland, whether by a private person or the Government.

Mr. GUNN: We have. (Laughter.)

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It was only recently that they had had the data. He was one of those who had always held that the control of the water supply to the towns and country should be in the hands [9 p.m.] of the Lands Department, and not under the control of the Treasury. Then, if there was an application for water supply in regard to the towns, the Lands Department could consult the Treasury as to whether a loan was available and arrange accordingly. Personally, he did not think that sufficient interest was taken in the question of conserving the water from the large bores in Queensland.

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

Mr. ARMSTRONG (continuing): Far more interest should be taken in the question, and if there were not men here with a sufficient knowledge of hydrostatics, they should import them, and get the best advice they could on the subject; but the Government did not do that, and were contented to go along with the officers they had.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He noticed that some hon. members advocated the transference of the control of water supply from the Treasury to the Lands Department. There was something to be said for the change, but he did not think the Lands Department desired to take it over. It was a very large question, and one which involved a very large expenditure of money, and unless they had ample funds, the Lands Department would be hampered, and the general public would become dissatisfied. Under the control of the Treasury, a good deal of excellent work had been done in regard to this matter, and the funds were more readily forthcoming in connection with that department. He admitted that they were not doing as much in the direction of providing water for the people as they should do. He was under the impression that a new era had opened in the State of Queensland

in regard to this matter after hearing the hon. member for Normanby speak on a recent occasion. The hon. member discussed the question of water supply, and pointed out that the present Government were bringing about a changed condition of things. They could almost hear the little streamlets rushing down the hills, and see in their mind's eye great rivers running over waterless tracts, turning the wilderness into a veritable garden, as the hon. member dilated on this question, and all this had been brought about by the present Government. The late Government had been held up as a horrible example of having done nothing. Hon. members opposite cheered the hon. member, and thought they were no longer going to be wearied waiting for the rain to come, as water was going to flow through the different areas in the State, making them wealth-producing in every respect. The Assistant Home Secretary was one of those who cheered the hon. member for Normanby.

HON. J. HUXHAM: I cheer anything that is good.

HON. J. TOLMIE: On turning to the Estimates, he saw that the late bad Denham Government were not so bad after all. There was really very little change in the items in regard to the conservation of water. The salaries to officers and the amount for contingencies were practically the same. Where were all the changes which were going to be brought about, when the expenditure was put down at the same figure? If the Government were going to carry out their promises with regard to the conservation of water, the items of proposed expenditure should have been different to what they were. Most of the preliminary work had been done in years gone by. Every year the Governments of the past had been adding to their knowledge of the various streams and watersheds in the State, and with that knowledge at their command all that hon. gentlemen opposite had to do was to turn on the tap and make the water flow, but they were not doing anything in that direction. When they were asked what they were going to do, they said that they had not been in office long enough, but it was necessary for them to make a start, and realise their duty in this respect. It was a question of being practical.

The TREASURER: Are we not practical? On the Burdekin River we have started the first irrigation scheme in Queensland.

HON. J. TOLMIE: They might have done a little sinking on the Burdekin, but on this estimate the Treasurer had made no provision for water conservation.

The TREASURER: Do you say that we are making no provision for the conservation of water?

HON. J. TOLMIE: Not beyond what the late Government did. Everything done by the late Government had been slavishly copied, when it was understood that they were going to alter their methods. He did not blame the hon. member for Brisbane for telling on the public platform the good the present Government were going to do in regard to water conservation, because he was suffering from an ignorance of the facts; but he was sure a man of the moral fibre of the hon. member was not likely to

denounce the late Government for having failed to discharge its duties in regard to water conservation when he had the Estimates before him. There was one other discovery he had made in regard to those Estimates, on which he would like an explanation from the Treasurer. Looking through the Estimates very carefully, he found that under the heading of the "Administration of Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act" there was an amount of £200 last year to meet the increased cost of living, but this year only £150 was asked for. Had there been a drop in the price of food that they in the metropolis and on the Downs and elsewhere had not realised? Had the cost of living not increased so far as this office was concerned? Had the officers discovered some cheaper means of living than the general community?

The TREASURER: If you look up the Auditor-General's report, you will find that the vote last year was not fully expended.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He thought that the Treasurer had been studying Oliver Wendell Holmes's "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," in which the young man John spent his time in reading the bumps of his fellow-boarders, and showed how the bump of one corresponded to a depression in another. Apparently the hon. member was also equalising things. Here he had just made a little discovery that there had been a saving in the cost of food, and he thought that it was due to the hon. member's promises that they would reduce the cost of living, and that they were starting in this small way. But he found that even that small hope was dashed to the ground by being told that the hon. member's officers could not really live more cheaply this year than last year, and that last year they did not want all that was voted.

Mr. STEVENS (*Rosewood*): There could be no doubt that, especially at the present time, the conservation of water was a most important subject. Hon. members might remember that on a previous occasion he spoke of the desirableness of having a scheme prepared in readiness for a time when there was a dearth of employment, so that the men who were out of work could be utilised on it instead of their spending money on unproductive works, as had been done in the past.

At 9.15 p.m.

Mr. BERTRAM relieved Mr. Foley (Temporary Chairman) in the chair.

Mr. STEVENS: He was sorry to see that there was no increase in the vote for such a scheme. He would like to draw the Treasurer's attention to the necessity for doing something at the present time in a small way for the settled districts where there was a dearth of water. Some weeks ago he wrote to the Under Secretary, pointing out that the water supply had failed at Minden, Tarampa, and Prenzlau, and asking whether something could not be done to provide a water supply for the future.

The TREASURER: Shortly after your letter was received, Mr. Deshon, the engineer, was despatched to the place.

Mr. STEVENS: He was very glad to hear it, and he hoped that something would be done.

*Mr. Stevens.]*

\* Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): At Powlathanga, in his electorate, there was a scarcity of water, and the water at the top and for some distance below the surface of the ground had turned out to be brackish. The Government were thinking of sinking a bore there to a depth of 200 feet in order to enable the settlers to get a living more easily. At the present time they had to pay for water from the Railway Department and bring it from a distance. He hoped that the Treasurer would not be afraid to go further than 200 feet if necessary. There was some theoretical knowledge of where the artesian belt extended, and perhaps it was not so far inland as they thought, and there might be a great future before that district if irrigation were adopted. The Labour party believed in a proper and national conservation of water, and some day they hoped to be able to put that plank of their platform into operation, and when that was done Queensland would prosper. At the present time a scheme of the extent that he would like to see seemed to be too great an expense. In the North they must look to the development of irrigation, and particularly in that part which he represented. In the Burdekin River there was a great amount of water annually running to waste. There was nothing to stop the State in the future damming that river and other rivers and supporting a considerable population in that part of the country. He trusted such a scheme would be adopted in the near future. Meantime, they were living in hopes that a great national scheme of water conservation would be commenced similar to those in the United States of America. Of course, in Queensland they had no snowclad mountains, but an abundance of rain fell on the surface, and it was possible to conserve that water instead of allowing it to flow out to sea. It meant the expenditure of millions of pounds, and that was beyond them at present; but a commencement could be made, and they could go on collecting data so that when they were ready to commence the larger scheme they would have all the information necessary to enable them to work to the best advantage.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) hoped that before the next Estimates were presented all water schemes would be included under the Hydraulic Department, including what was done under the public estate improvement fund. He impressed upon the Treasurer the necessity for taking steps to provide water for areas that were opened for selection. People were going on to those areas to make a start on their farms, and they were 14 or 15 miles from a small township, right away from river beds and creeks that could be dammed, and right away from bores and wells. It was absolutely necessary that a selector should be able to store water before he could commence farming operations. Some of the selectors had to get cream-cans and carry water in them for 14 miles until they pitched their tents and looked round to decide where they were going to start scrubcutting. The present Government had a clear field of operations in the matter of providing water in such areas, and it was the people who were taking up land in those areas who should receive first consideration at the hands of the Government. He was not proposing the adoption of a huge scheme of damming rivers and throwing back water for miles and miles, and making more water available for people who already had a water supply.

[*Mr. O'Sullivan.*]

Some of the new selectors he had in mind could not even keep a couple of horses on their selections for want of water, and they had no means of getting stores out from the townships. If water could not be found in an area, then the Government should hold that land until water could be provided. He hoped the Government would take in hand the big task of settling the water problem with which settlers were confronted.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*) was very pleased to be able to agree with the hon. member for Burnett for once. The hon. member seemed to see that there was a hope that they were going to get something from the present Government. The suggestion made by the hon. member had his hearty support. During the last few months they had been led to believe by hon. members on the other side that the actions of the Government were going to drive settlers off the land, but they were now told that they were coming in hand over fist. Since the Government had occupied the Treasury benches they had passed a Bill which would give small settlers an opportunity to get water.

Mr. CORSER: By forming a trust.

Mr. PETERSON: Two or more persons could combine and secure monetary assistance to enable them to put down a bore or a well.

Mr. CORSER: For the community.

Mr. PETERSON: Not for the community, but for themselves.

Mr. CORSER: We have had experience in that direction before.

Mr. PETERSON: He had had this experience: He had gone through the Dawson Valley, Dalma Scrub, and other closely settled scrub districts, and had seen women and children carrying water in kerosene tins 4 and 5 miles, because no water was provided on the farms settled under the Denham Government. Was it any wonder that those settlers turned round and gave the Labour party an opportunity? He was pleased to think that he would be able to go back to those people next month and tell them that the Government had done something towards providing them with water. An hon. member had asked—and rightly so—“What is the value of settlement unless the settlers have water?” Therefore, he submitted to

the hon. member's consideration [9.30 p.m.] the fact that the Government—so early in its history—had seen fit to submit a measure for the consideration of the House, and had passed it, but they were waiting for the decision of their friends in “another place.” He noticed they had postponed the debate, and he hoped they would not postpone the measure indefinitely, because he was anxious to see it put through as quickly as possible, because the settlers were waiting for it. In one centre of his district there were 500 settlers, and he could truthfully say that, of those 500 settlers, 480 were requiring water to-day.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Have you looked at the Estimates?

Mr. PETERSON: He had looked at the Estimates and compared them with previous Estimates.

Mr. CORSER: There is only provision for office increases—no provision for increased assistance to the settlers.

Mr. PETERSON: There was a Bill introduced to assist settlers to form themselves into trusts, and when the Bill was passed in "another place," they would get all the assistance they required, and he tendered his thanks to the Government, on behalf of the farmers, for that measure. He also desired to tender his thanks—

Hon. J. TOLMIE: That is the second time you have tendered your thanks.

Mr. PETERSON: Yes; and he would never be done thanking the Government, nor would the settlers ever be done thanking the Government, for bringing about that assistance. He hoped that Bill was merely a precursor to greater schemes. The hon. gentleman would admit that, if Queensland was to go ahead, as they wished it to go ahead, then they must have water conservation.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: We would like to see some more money on the Estimates for the purpose.

Mr. PETERSON: As far as he was concerned, he had got what his selectors had asked him to get—that was, provided "another place" passed the Bill. Members of the Opposition had referred to the fact that in Queensland they had not got snow-capped hills to feed irrigation schemes. In India they did not rely on snow-capped hills for irrigation purposes. There were enough natural formations in this State, and he could take hon. members to places in his electorate which were capable of carrying thousands of farmers, under a proper system of water conservation and irrigation. Anyone listening to hon. members opposite would think it was a joke, but New South Wales had this year on their Estimates over £5,000,000 for the purpose of irrigation and water conservation. They had already had examples of the success of the system in Yanko and on the Murumbidgee. As the other States of Australia and other countries of the world had gone in for water conservation and irrigation, they could look forward with pleasure to the time when such schemes would be in operation in Queensland; and he hoped that the Bill, which had been passed through the Assembly, would receive sympathetic administration and every assistance given to the settlers to get the benefits of that Bill.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): In common with other hon. members, he should like to see the water business transferred to the Lands Department, as it was not the right thing that it should be under the Treasury Department. The Lands Department got all the revenue in cases where land was cut up for township purposes, but the people were left without water, and they had to go to the Treasurer if they wanted to get an advance.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: Where else should you go?

Mr. MOORE: The Lands Department got the revenue from cutting up blocks of land, and they should contribute towards securing water. Although there had been a good deal of talk as to what the Bill introduced by the Government was going to do, it seemed to him that all it was going to do was to allow a certain number of farmers to form a trust, borrow money, and then have to pay the money back.

Mr. PETERSON: Look at the terms!

Mr. MOORE: They got terms. He did not know whether the hon. member had had any experience of water trusts. In all cases that he had known anything about, it was a case of the first man getting his water, then the next man came along and got what he wanted, and the last man got nothing at all, and eventually the trust broke up and the water was allowed to go to waste. The only satisfactory way out of the difficulty was for the selectors to have their own wells, as the trusts never worked. There was not a great deal in that, and there was not so much to talk about.

Mr. PETERSON: Is it not better than no water?

Mr. MOORE: They had not got it yet. He did not think that the Treasurer should have command of the streams at all. They should be under the control of the Lands Department. The Treasurer said that the streams belong to him.

The TREASURER: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. MOORE: The Treasurer controlled them, at any rate, but directly the question of the pollution of the streams cropped up the Treasurer threw it on to the local authorities. When they wrote to the Treasurer about the pollution of the streams, he said that they should go to the local authorities, as it was in their hands. When it was a question of getting all the kudos the Treasurer claimed the control; but, when there were any difficulties such as pollution, then he shoved it on to the local authorities. There was dual and treble control all round. They had to first go to the Lands Department, then to the Treasurer, and at the last stage to the shire council. All the dirty work was put on to the local council, whereas it should be the Treasurer's place to see that the streams were kept free from pollution.

Question put and passed.

#### HOME SECRETARY.

##### CHIEF OFFICE.

Hon. J. HUXHAM moved that £3,950 be granted for "Chief Office." There was an increase on last year's vote of £160 made up of small increases granted to clerks in the department.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He did not desire to move any reduction in the vote, and, of course, he could not move an increase. He was sorry that the times were such that the Government were not able to give increases to officers in the head office and other branches of the department, because those officers were discharging their duties in a most efficient manner. It was a matter for regret that the Government could not see their way to grant increases to officers who were getting over £250 a year, because they had claims on them that the men getting lower salaries had not.

Mr. KIRWAN: A man getting more than £250 in the public service is better off than a member of Parliament.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: That was in the hon. member's own hands.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: Will you move an increase to members of Parliament?

*Hon. J. Tolmie.*]

HON. J. TOLMIE: He could not move an increase, much as he would like to. He could only move a reduction in the vote, and if members opposite wished him to do that he might do it.

The PREMIER: You object to the increases. You said we were spending money in a reckless manner.

HON. J. TOLMIE: That did not apply to the public servants who deserved increases. If a man earned his salary he should get it. The Government should have acted the same as the late Government and granted increases to those who were getting more than £250, because of the extra claims made on them. He complimented the Minister on the excellent staff of officers he had in the Home Department. He was sure that the Minister would meet with the co-operation of all officers, and that the department would progress. As this was the first time the hon. gentleman had moved the vote, he would let it go through quickly.

Question put and passed.

#### ABORIGINALS, RELIEF OF.

HON. J. HUXHAM moved that £27,676 be granted for "Aboriginals, Relief of." The net increase over the appropriation of last year was £3,902. There were a number of small increases. Miss Karrasch, a clerk, was paid at the rate of £60 from the 31st August, 1914, to the 1st of December, 1914, from which date she would receive £80 per annum. The storekeeper at Barambah received an increase of £10, and the assistant superintendent an increase of £10. Provision was made for a farm assistant and carpenter, the amount set down for those officers being £170. Provision was also made for an additional nurse at the same settlement, and there was an increase of £4 in the amount for a bullock-driver. The matron at the Hull River Settlement received an increase of £5. At the Taroom Settlement the superintendent received an increase of £10; provision was made for a storekeeper and clerk at £90, and the amount for the medical officer was increased from £60 to £150. There was an increase of £20 in the vote for the "Melbidir." The grants for missions were reduced by £200. The provision for schools in Torres Strait was increased by £208. Under the heading of "Provisions and Incidentals," the amount for Barambah was increased by £540; for Hull River by £900; for Taroom by £100; and for the Lock Hospital by £800. The item "Stocking Retail Store, Barambah," was increased by £300; the sum of £800 for provisions and incidentals at Torres Strait was omitted; there was an increase of £1,500 in the item "Blankets, Clothing, etc.," and the sustenance allowance for the "Melbidir" was increased by £100. The total decreases amounted to £1,150, and the net increase in the whole vote was £3,902.

Mr. GUNN said he had always had a soft spot in his heart for the aboriginals, who were a very humane people and far more trustworthy than many people thought. We had taken their country away from them, and had not treated them too well in the past. The Taroom Settlement was the nearest aboriginal settlement to the place where

[Hon. J. Tolmie.

he lived, and he had always advocated that there should be some settlement a bit nearer than Taroom. Many aboriginals at St. George and Goondiwindi were getting too old and too feeble to work, and they were taken away to Taroom, Barambah, or some other settlement. It was pitiful to hear them say: "This is my country; I was born here; I have committed no crime, and why should I be taken to what is a foreign land to me? I should prefer to die in the district where I was born and where I have passed all my days." There should be a few small reserves for aboriginals in different districts, so that they could have a piece of ground which they could call their own, and end their days in the country where they were born. The matrons at the different settlements were certainly not overpaid; he did not know whether they were aboriginals or white women, but he noticed that the salary was £30 per annum.

Mr. KIRWAN: What about the bullock-drivers' wages?

Mr. GUNN: They were £26 a year, but the cooks seemed to be the worst off. There were two cooks down at £6 per annum. There were more people going into these settlements every year, and he did not think hon. members should begrudge an increase in connection with the vote. As he had said, he had found the aboriginals a humane class of people. If an aboriginal had a young dog, he was too tender-hearted to kill him, and the young dogs grew up and increased until sometimes the aboriginals left the camp to them. (Laughter.) These people were an object-lesson in socialism. If an aboriginal got more opossums than he required, or even only as many as he required, they became the property of the tribe. He remembered once having an aboriginal whom he thought a great deal of, and giving him some iron and other material to build a small house. This man was the gardener on the place, and made a garden round his house, planting tomatoes and other plants which he (Mr. Gunn) had given him. The rest of the tribe, who were not very far away, came along, and said: "My word, Willy got flash place," and they settled down and cut up and distributed the cabbages. The next thing they did was to rob the beehive and divide the honey. Of course, Willy could not say a word, as he was a socialist, like they were. The consequence was that poor Willy got disheartened and planted no more cabbages. Then the whole tribe settled down in the cottage.

Mr. FREE: Did they bring the dogs with them?

Mr. GUNN: Yes, they brought their dogs with them, and fleas, and other things. (Laughter.) Poor Willy took a few sheets off the roof, and made a place at the trunk of a tree just big enough for himself and his wife and two children to sleep in. The rest of the tribe could not divide that with him, so he was left alone at the root of the tree, and the others stopped in the hut with only part of the roof on. (Laughter.) That was pure socialism. If it had not been for that, the aboriginals of Australia would have had houses and many things that civilised races had. It was simply socialism which kept them down. (Laughter.) That was the reason why the aboriginal was the

serf and outcast that he was, although he had plenty of brains, a fine physique, and a good disposition. He never regretted any assistance given to the aboriginal, and the only fault he had was that he was a socialist. (Laughter.)

Mr. MCPHAIL was pleased to note that the Protector of Aborigines stated in his report that he had adopted a new scheme with regard to the payment of aborigines who went out to work on different stations, and elsewhere, for white people. The report stated—

“In previous reports I have pointed out the great disparity in the rates of wages paid to aborigines employed in the various districts and the great injustice and hardship often, as a consequence, inflicted upon such workers where too low a value had been placed upon their services.

“For a native in one district to be paid only 2s. 6d. a week for work which his brother in a neighbouring district, where conditions were in every way similar, received 15s. or £1 a week, was absurd and unfair, and when, as frequently shown, he had to support a wife and family in the camp on his earnings, it became a positive hardship.

“To remedy this, towards the end of the year, a graduated minimum wage scale, based on the average payments in the majority of fair wages districts, was instituted, and, though a few employers selfishly demurred, it was gratifying to find that the protectors, as a whole, approved of the action; in fact, many of them had previously strongly recommended such a course. As proof that fair-minded employers were also satisfied, the protectors of the districts affected all reported, when questioned, that the increased rates had not in any way diminished the demand for the labour.”

The rate of pay for black labour should be commensurate with the services rendered, because otherwise there would be a rush for aboriginal labour to the detriment of white workers. Many of the aborigines were hard workers, and were entitled to a full return for their labour. He noticed that grants had been made to ten mission stations. From the experience of the Government settlement at Barambah and other places where the aborigines were under the care of Government officials, it was found that they were controlled much better than if they were under private control. He hoped that eventually all the private mission stations would be abolished and the blacks placed under Government control. He was not saying that everything possible had not been done at the mission stations, but they had formerly had unfavourable reports in connection with Yarrabah. There was an item of £60 put down for a carpenter at Yarrabah. He did not know whether it was an aboriginal or a white carpenter, but £60 would be a ridiculous sum to pay a white man. Then there was £60 for a visiting medical officer at Barambah. Was that a Government officer who attended to the patients at the institution, or was he a doctor at a town near the settlement, and retained at a fee of £250 to attend the blacks at the settle-

ment? They could not find any fault with the general management of the aboriginal settlements. As the hon. member for Carnarvon had said, the aborigines were a decaying race which originally looked upon this country as their own, and every comfort should be given them in their last days. He was glad to know that a lock hospital had been established. He agreed with the hon. member for Carnarvon that not one penny that was spent on the settlements, not one penny that was used in providing comforts for the aborigines, would be begrudged by the House. He sincerely trusted also that the men who were sent away to the distant places, where they were deprived of intercourse with others of the white race, in order to look after the aborigines, would receive the remuneration which their arduous labours deserved.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*): Although he thought that they should look after the niggers in the way they were doing, and the departure that had been mentioned by the last speaker was a good one, still he wanted to bring under the notice of the Committee the danger of bringing dangerous men, men with records, down to Barambah and leaving them there to be a menace to the people round about. They had only to take up the paper to see that not long ago one of them tried to enter the house of a white woman. He held that the aborigines should be classified if possible, and if necessary such aborigines as that should be sent to an island. It was only five or six years ago since a man who was up for no less a crime than murder was sent to Barambah. He need not go deeply into the subject to show members the dangers that existed once a nigger had got a craving for a particular kind of crime. He had no time for such a one, and the sooner he died out the better. The time had come when they should protect the wives of the settlers round about Barambah whose husbands might at times be away during a dry period, and try to prevent one of the most grievous crimes that any man could commit.

HON. J. TOLMIE: It had been pointed out by more than one speaker that the salaries paid were not very high, and he noticed that the matron was down for £30. He took it that she was the wife of the superintendent, but he thought that the matrons should be paid more than they were paid. It was an opinion he had always held, but sometimes one could not always give expression to his opinion.

The PREMIER: You had power to increase it when you were in power and there was no war.

HON. J. TOLMIE: One member of the Cabinet could not interfere with another member's department. He hoped that the Government would see their way to increase the salaries paid to the matrons. The hon. member must know that the House was looking to him to carry out all the conditions imposed by the unions, and it was for him to find the money, and it was utterly useless for him to try to shelter himself behind the late Government and say that they failed in their duty. It put him in mind of the old story about the Athenians and the Lacedaemonians. The Athenians, it was said, understood what was good, but the Lacedaemonians practised it. They understood

*Hon. J. Tolmie.]*

what was good, but it was for the hon. member now to put it into practice. He believed that most of the aboriginal settlements were well conducted. He had been at the settlement at Taroom, which was, perhaps, the only one in the South-western portion of the State, and there was a very large number of men, women, and children there, and they seemed happy and contented. The children were growing strong and healthy, and they were all well supplied with blankets, clothes, and food, and, generally speaking, seemed to be in a very happy condition. Hon. members quite recognised that there were some of them who should be taken away and placed where they could not do any harm, and he thought that it would be a wise precaution on the part of the Government to place any notorious criminals under some restraint, even if it were necessary to put them on an island, rather than allow them to remain at the settlements, as a menace to the peace of the rest of the community. There was a real danger, as the hon. member for Cooroora had pointed out, in the neighbourhood of the settlements and also at the settlements themselves. There were very few white people there, and a very large number of aboriginals, and sometimes an aboriginal would get liquor. They liked to walk about a bit, and sometimes an aboriginal got into the town and was in possession of money and got liquor. They knew that it was against the law, but some people would sell it so long as they got the money for it. Under its influence the aboriginal was prone to commit a crime, and a man of notoriously bad character should not be allowed to remain at such settlements. He should be removed somewhere else. He would like to ask the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimates whether the work done on the settlements was proving satisfactory in all cases. There had been a controversy between those in charge of the departmental settlements and those associated with the mission settlements as to which class of settlement was doing the better work. One hon. member, who probably spoke from a personal knowledge of the subject, declared that the work being done on the mission stations was inferior to the work being done at the departmental settlements. Perhaps the Minister might be able to give them valuable information on the point. If the mission stations were not doing the work properly, then he did not see why they should be assisted; if they were carrying out their work successfully, there was every reason why they should be defended and encouraged in their efforts. The late Home Secretary—who had devoted a great deal of attention to the subject, and was very sympathetic towards the aboriginals—expressed the opinion that the mission stations had been attended by a large amount of success. The aboriginal had always been the child of nature and accustomed to roam about the country at will. They could not take out of him the instinct of ages, and they should, therefore, treat him so that he would feel the restraint that was placed upon him as little as possible. He believed that the present Home Secretary would exercise the same watchful care over the interests of the aboriginals as his predecessors had done. The officers were experts in the business and were sympathetic. Under such conditions he believed the position would improve with each successive year.

[Hon. J. Tolmie.]

Mr. CORSER noticed an item for the maintenance of aboriginal children. Seeing that some white children were not adequately protected, they should be pleased to find that the aboriginal children were provided for. He would like to refer to a very sad case in which protection was required for a white child. Hon. members would remember the recent case in which the wife of Dr. Lohde, of Maryborough, brought an action against her husband, a German, who was a naturalised British subject.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That has nothing to do with this vote. The hon. member might possibly raise the question on the vote for State children.

Mr. CORSER: He hoped to have an opportunity of bringing the matter up on some vote in the Home Department in the interests of an Australian infant, who was likely to be taken away from Australia and Germanised because the child was not old enough to be able to speak for itself. He hoped the opportunity would be given him of bringing the matter up on some vote in the Home Department.

HON. J. HUXHAM: With reference to the case referred to by the hon. member for Windsor, the man was a half-caste, who was acting as carpenter at Barambah. In addition to his pay of £60, he was provided with food and quarters and was quite satisfied. He was living among his own people, and that appeared to make him more satisfied. The medical officer referred to by the hon. member went from Wondai once a week, and he was quite satisfied with the payment of £250.

Mr. MURPHY: Has he the right of private practice?

HON. J. HUXHAM: He was in private practice at Wondai, and merely visited the settlement once a week. With reference to the aboriginal with a criminal record who was mentioned by the hon. member for Cooroora, the experience of the department was that aboriginals who had criminal instincts, when allowed to associate with Europeans, appeared to undergo a radical change in character when they returned to their own people. That was noticeable in the case of the man referred to. He had settled down, and was engaged in doing good work on neighbouring stations. The hon. member for Cooroora and the leader of the Opposition spoke of the advisability of removing aboriginals of criminal type to some island on the coast, but, in view of the experience of the department of the reformative effect of association with their own people, it would not be fair to isolate such men.

Question put and passed.

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.

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