

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1916

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

FRIDAY, 17 NOVEMBER, 1916.

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

QUESTIONS.

FEES PAID TO ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Marce*) asked the Attorney-General—

“1. Have fees been paid to the Attorneys-General of previous Governments for services rendered as counsel on behalf of the Crown?

“2. What were the offices held by each Attorney-General, and what amount was paid to each?”

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Barcoo*) replied—

“1. Yes

“2. I am unable to give the total amounts, but, so far as I have been able to ascertain from the records of the departments, the following fees have been paid to the previous Attorneys-General—

	£	s.	d.
Sir S. W. Griffith (Chief Secretary and Attorney-General)	3,389	18	6
Hon. T. J. Byrnes (Solicitor-General and subsequently Attorney-General)	5,710	17	6
Sir Arthur Rutledge (Attorney-General)	4,204	12	0
Hon. J. W. Blair (Attorney-General and Secretary for Mines)	2,052	16	8
Hon. T. O'Sullivan (Attorney-General)	4,746	7	6.”

RAILWAY REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Is it the intention of the Government to take over and run all the railway refreshment-rooms?

“2. If not, which do they not propose to take over, and for what reason?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. H. Coyne, *Warrego*) replied—

“1 and 2. Matter is now receiving the attention of the department.”

PUBLIC SERVANTS ON MILITARY SERVICE.

Mr. CORSER asked the Premier—

“1. Are the State public servants who are on active service, or those called up for military training, being credited with their State salaries?

“2. If not, what is the amount saved to the State per week?

“3. Are the members of the public service being remunerated for the extra half-hour per day they have been called upon to perform?”

The PREMIER (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Barcoo*) replied—

“1. No; but the seniority of such officers is being preserved.

"2. I suggest the hon member move for a return.

"3. They are paid their salaries in accordance with the Public Service Act and Regulations."

WAGES OF RAILWAY SURVEYORS' EMPLOYEES.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. What is the wage paid to railway surveyors' employees?

"2. If they are paid at a lower rate than navvies, why do they not receive the same wage?

"3. Is it true that on account of the low wages paid to the railway surveyors' employees, the railway surveyors cannot keep their employees any length of time?

"4. Is it not a fact that the railway surveyors are seriously retarded in their work by the continual changing of their men?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. For the purpose of wages of surveyors' employees the State has been divided longitudinally into four districts. Wages range from 8s. in the South-eastern (Brisbane) district to 11s. in the Western district (Cloncurry). Sixpence a day extra is paid to men after twelve months' service, and also 6d. a day extra when camp is more than 50 miles from a railway.

"2. The pay is not so much as that of navvies because the work is not so strenuous; they are paid full time (wet and dry), supplied with tents and utensils provided by the surveyor, and a cook is supplied by the department.

"3. Previous to outbreak of war there had been no difficulty in keeping employees, and some have remained for long periods. Latterly there has been difficulty in getting suitable men to take the places of those who have enlisted.

"4. Yes; since the outbreak of the war it has been difficult to get the class of men most suitable for survey work, owing to that class having enlisted in large numbers."

SUGAR CANE PRICE BOARDS.

Mr. STODART (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. What is the total number of local boards created under the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act of 1915, for the year 1916?

"2. What is the number of such local boards that made awards?

"3. What is the number of such local boards that delegated their power to make awards to the Central Board in terms of section 7 of the Act?

"4. What is the number of the awards made by such local boards, which have been appealed against, and by whom were such appeals lodged?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*) replied—

"1. Thirty-three boards.

"2. Thirteen boards.

"3. Seventeen boards. Three boards failed to make any award or to delegate their power to the Central Board.

"4. Eight awards were appealed against, three of which were by mill-owners only, and in four cases the appeal was by millowners with cross appeal by canegrowers. In one instance the appeal was by the canegrowers with cross appeal by the millowners."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—FIRST ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. W. Bertram, Maree, in the chair.*)

EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The PREMIER moved—That there be granted a sum not exceeding £2,325 for "His Excellency the Governor." That vote showed an increase of £60, which was caused by providing a gratuity of £60 for the widow of the late lodgekeeper.

HON. J. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*) thanked the Premier for very kindly providing motor-cars the previous evening to enable members of the Opposition to get home. (Laughter.) It was desirable that the Committee should get some information on a point that was of considerable interest to the general community. It would be remembered that the relations between His Excellency and the Cabinet were very strained not so long since on account of certain statements made by one of the Ministers. Those statements caused a considerable amount of feeling in the country, and a great many persons felt that such statements should never have been made by a Minister, and that the hon. gentleman who made them should not have been allowed to continue to hold a position as Minister. They saw in the Press a letter of apology from the Minister to the Premier.

HON. J. A. FIBELLY: There was no letter of apology to anyone.

HON. J. TOLMIE: That was what he wanted to arrive at—whether it was a letter of apology or not. To his point of view it was not an apology, but simply rubbing the insult in. He would like to know if the Minister in question did make a sufficient apology to His Excellency in order to restore friendly relations.

HON. J. A. FIBELLY: Can you explain how your ex-leader supplied meat to the Germans?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was asking a question he was entitled to ask, and a question the Premier should reply to.

HON. J. A. FIBELLY: Can you explain why your Government bought those German dredges?

HON. J. TOLMIE: There was an amount of £1,175 shown in the estimates for "Rent of country residence and to meet the travelling expenses of His Excellency and staff," etc. He would like to know what was the exact amount set down for a country residence; whether a country residence had been decided on by the Government, and where it was situated, or whether the Governor could suit his own convenience and travel about from place to place. Then there was another item, "Gratuity to widow of P. Gorman, late lodgekeeper." The granting of gratuities of that kind had been discontinued for a number of years, but he noticed that the Government were reviving the practice. He did not say that the gratuity ought

not to be granted, but he would like to know whether it was going to be a general practice and whether the widows of public servants would be entitled, as a matter of right, to a gratuity of that kind in all cases where public servants did not come under the Public Service Act.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you remember a vote of £2,000 granted by your Government to the widow of a one-time Minister?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He could not remember anything of the kind.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Cast your mind back twelve years or so.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He had no intention of referring back to that period. He knew that the practice was discontinued, and he was not going to saddle himself with anything that was done by past Administrations, nor was he taking credit for anything done by past Administrations.

Mr. CORSER: The first thing that struck him was the matter of motor-cars. (Government laughter.) He was not referring to the motor-cars that were provided for members last night. The motor-car he referred to was the one of those in regard to which the Chief Secretary said, when he answered the question of the hon. member for Mirani on 15th November, that he would have inquiries made, but that it would take a considerable time as most of the motor-cars referred to— one of them being of German manufacture— were extremely costly, and were purchased before the present Government came into office. That motor-car came under this particular vote, and the Premier, by his remarks, made an inference that the past Government had bought German motor-cars. The motor-car referred to as of German manufacture was an old motor-car which was once used by a former Governor of this State, many years before war broke out, or before war was contemplated. (Laughter.) It was scrap-heaped in Brisbane for twelve months or more. The Chief Secretary could easily have answered the question without giving a sort of political stench to the matter, and making it appear that the late Government had been doing some trick.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! If the motor-car was purchased many years ago, it has no reference to the vote we are now discussing. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. CORSER hoped that the increase in the vote would be found sufficient, and that the widow of the late Mr. O'Gorman would get some relief from the amount of gratuity provided.

Mr. FORSYTH (Murrumba) thought that the Governor was not too well paid, but, of course, his salary did not come under this vote.

THE PREMIER: I cannot hear you.

Mr. FORSYTH: In connection with printing, stationery, railway fares, postage, telegrams, etc., there was £300 put down this year, while last year the amount spent was only £117, or less than half. What was the reason for that? Of course, they did not want to stint the Governor in connection with expenditure of this kind. The travelling expenses, uniforms, and incidentals were put down at £1,175, while last year a considerable amount less than that was actually spent. Was it necessary to spend the higher amount this year, when it was

so necessary to study economy? He had no desire to restrict the amount, but the Chief Secretary might be able to give them some information on the point.

THE PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition had raised a matter which, with his knowledge of constitutional practice, he should know should not be directed in the nature of a question to the Chief Secretary. Any communications or discussions between the Chief Secretary and the Governor were entirely confidential, and it was not his intention to say whether any discussions had taken place between the Chief Secretary and the Governor, or to disclose them. (Hear, hear!) With regard to the expenses referred to by the leader of the Opposition, there was an amount provided for travelling expenses for His Excellency and staff, and vouchers which he would send in were acquitted in the ordinary way. They did not adopt the practice of questioning every item sent in, but assumed that they would be sent in reasonably, and it was hardly fitting that the leader of the Opposition should suggest that any different practice should be adopted.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I never alluded to that.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member for Burnett had referred to several questions asked by the hon. member for Mirani with regard to the expenses attaching to motor-cars, the country from which they came, and so on.

Mr. CORSER: I only referred to one portion of it.

THE PREMIER: He was going to refer to the whole of it, because, according to an important rule of fairness, they could not refer to part without referring to the whole.

Mr. CORSER: I was referring to your answer with regard to the German car.

THE PREMIER: He could not answer the questions until he had obtained all information necessary to enable him to do so, and he was making investigations for that purpose which would involve communication with certain persons in Germany. The hon. member must know that it was somewhat difficult now to make inquiries from persons carrying on business in Germany in respect to a very expensive motor-car which was purchased by the late Government. (Government laughter.)

HON. J. TOLMIE: Which Government?

THE PREMIER: A previous Government; a Liberal Government which held office before the present Government. All he needed to say with regard to the motor-car referred to was that it was not only used—

Mr. STEVENS rose to a point of order. When the hon. member for Burnett was speaking he referred to the matter of some motor-car purchased some years ago, and the Chairman said that he was out of order in referring to an ancient matter of that kind in connection with this vote. He asked the Chairman's ruling as to whether the Chief Secretary was in order in referring to the same matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Burnett was not in order in discussing the matter on this vote, and, strictly speaking, the Chief Secretary is not in order.

THE PREMIER: He had no wish to proceed with the matter. He had no intention of discussing the matter, but as the question was asked, he was about to answer it. With

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regard to the points raised by the hon. member for Murrumba, it was impossible to estimate exactly what amount would be spent on any particular item.

Mr. FORSYTH: This is nearly three times the amount.

The PREMIER: That was the strongest evidence of the economy which had been practised by the Government during the past year. The amount was fixed at £300 on the experience of years in which the Liberal Government were in office.

Mr. FORSYTH: No.

The PREMIER: But they found that by economy the amount of £300 could be reduced to £117. He did not know whether that could be continued, but they must strike an average on the amount spent in previous years.

HON. J. TOLMIE thought that the Chief Secretary had displayed the evasiveness which was quite natural to him in dealing with these questions. There was no effort to give a straightforward answer to any of the questions which had been asked concerning the administration of his department. It was only from the Auditor-General's report that they could form some conclusion as to what the Government were doing. Past Ministers in this Chamber gave all the information that was necessary in a straightforward manner.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Not always.

HON. J. TOLMIE: So that the House understood what the real expenditure was. This was the time to get that information, and if the Chief Secretary or any other Minister endeavoured to cover up the facts in regard to the administration of their departments the public could only draw the conclusion which they were entitled to draw. Ministers would do their departments honour, and bring credit to themselves, if they would give the information sought. The people had a right to know how public money was expended. If the relationships between the Cabinet and those with whom they came in contact were not what they ought to be, the public had a right to know.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You refused to give information about your ready-made farms.

Mr. CORSER: They were not there to give information about.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He gave all the information on that point that was available. (Government laughter.) The present Government were following exactly on the lines he had laid down in connection with farms for soldiers. There was an old adage that "imitation was the sincerest form of flattery." At any rate, he laid the foundation upon which the Government were going to build, and he laid it solid and well. He hoped the building would be a good one. They would discuss it further when they came to deal with the dual positions occupied by members of the Cabinet, and then they would be able to discover who was Mr. Dobson and who was Mr. Fogg. They would then be able to differentiate as to which Minister was administering the particular votes. If he

asked the Secretary for Lands a [4 p.m.] question he was told that it should be asked of the Chief Secretary, and vice versa. All that evasive-

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ness was not for the good of the Government, and was certainly a poor compliment to pay to the country. He had raised the question of the relationship between the Governor and the Cabinet, and he was entitled to do so. Personally, he did not suppose that he would get any further information than he got from the Assistant Minister for Justice, who said that he apologised to no one. He was in accord with that statement, because the hon. gentleman in his letter to the Chief Secretary did not humble himself in the least. Whether the position the hon. gentleman took up was the right or wrong one did not matter: he, at any rate, made no apology.

HON. J. A. FHELLY: Will you explain how you appealed to the electors of Toowoomba as "Herr" Tolmie for the German votes?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He had a publication in his hand which was issued by "Herr" Carter. (Loud laughter.) At the last election the Treasurer went to Toowoomba for the purpose of advocating the candidature of a German candidate in opposition to him (Mr. Tolmie).

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. J. TOLMIE pointed out that the Assistant Minister for Justice made a charge against him, and he asked for the protection of the Chair.

The TREASURER: I was advocating the Australian candidate.

HON. J. A. FHELLY: Don't forget the "Darling Downs Gazette" libelled Vernon Redwood, and had to stump up.

HON. J. TOLMIE: The Minister said that he appealed to the German voters as "Herr" Tolmie. He appealed as a loyalist, at any rate, and the man who was making the insinuations against him supported the German candidate, and did his best to get him returned. He only rose to refer to the attitude taken up by the Assistant Minister for Justice. That attitude was not going to be allowed to drop until they, the Chamber, was satisfied what the truth was.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You are stirring up the sectarian business for all it is worth.

HON. J. TOLMIE: There was no sectarian business about it at all.

HON. J. A. FHELLY: Remember what the last libel cost you.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was never guilty of sectarianism in his life. Just because the Minister happened to be an Irishman that was no reason why he should not be criticised. If the hon. gentleman misconducted himself he should be treated as a man who misconducted himself without the question of sectarianism being wrapped round him. Matters of this sort should be discussed, no matter what a man's nationality was.

Several GOVERNMENT MEMBERS interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must insist on these interjections ceasing, more particularly interjections which have no relation to the question under discussion. If interjections are made, I cannot prevent the member who is speaking from replying. That means that the time of the Committee is wasted. I hope, therefore, that hon. members will cease from interjecting.

HON. J. TOLMIE noticed that there was a gratuity of £60 to the widow of Mr. P.

Gorman. He asked what the practice was with regard to giving gratuities to the widows of public servants.

The PREMIER pointed out that a gratuity was given to the widow of the lodgekeeper at Government House, where he had been for about thirty years. Some leave was due to the late lodgekeeper, and it was in accordance with the regulations and practice that the gratuity was made.

Mr. BOOKER (*Wide Bay*) drew the attention of the Premier to the question raised by the leader of the Opposition in reference to the Governor. It was a well-known fact that certain political unions had referred to what was known as the Governor's episode, and passed resolutions condemnatory of the action taken up by His Excellency. It was a grave matter and a serious matter when subtle insults were allowed to be passed against a gentleman occupying a delicate and responsible position. The Governor should not be subjected to votes of censure from anyone, no matter what their political views might be. To say the least of it, the position was an obnoxious one when a body of public servants like the Railway Union could pass such a vote. He knew one other meeting which was called for the same purpose, but lapsed for want of a quorum, and a third meeting called for a similar purpose defeated the proposal, owing to the loyalty of the members of the union. The Premier and the Minister for Railways should see that reflections of that kind should not be made on the Governor. He hoped the head of the Government would see the importance of it.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): He had listened to the hon. member for Wide Bay, and was sorry to have to listen to him. They were Britishers, and they had the right from time immemorial to criticise governors, and criticise kings, too, if they wished to.

Mr. BOOKER: The Governor has no right of reply.

Mr. COLLINS: Great Britain was just as important as Queensland, and there they found that even the King was criticised. "Reynolds's Newspaper," which had a large circulation in Great Britain, never hesitated to criticise the monarch who sat upon the throne, and surely in Australia they were not going to get down that low as not to have the right to criticise the Governor. Who was the Governor that he should not be criticised? As Britishers, they should not forego that right. He was a member of a party who believed in the abolition of governors altogether. He looked forward to the time when they would be able to save that expense. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee said that the Governor was not overpaid at £3,000, and yet he referred to the gratuity of £60 given to the widow of the gatekeeper, and said that this was the time to study economy.

Mr. FORSYTH rose to a point of order. The hon. gentleman said that he referred to the gratuity of £60 to the widow of the gatekeeper. He absolutely denied having made any reference to that at all, and hoped that the hon. gentleman would withdraw that statement.

Mr. COLLINS accepted the hon. member's denial. Members opposite were continually talking about loyalty. Members on the Government side were just as loyal as anyone else. All the same, he was not going to surrender his right to criticise the Governor or

the monarch in the interests of the people, because the people should be supreme. Queensland was a self-governing State, and they must prove that they were fit to be governed, and then no governor would override their self-governing powers.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): Opportunity had been taken on the vote to raise the trouble of a few months ago, and also to drag in a condemnation of one of the truest unions in Queensland, the Queensland Railway Union. He contended that the members of that union had the rights of free Australians, as had the members of every other union, just the same as His Excellency the Governor might have had the right to find fault or make complaint of a certain statement that had been made. If they were going to cease to speak their minds as free Australians, as men born to a right of freedom that others never had, then they were again going to sacrifice themselves to the idols of slavery and forsake the ideals which they came to Australia to gain under her ample skies—the right to a better and a freer and a truer life. He strongly objected to the insinuations that had been made against hon. members on that side of the House because they took the same right as His Excellency of disagreeing with him and stepping into a semi-public matter. He thought that the whole business was simply pandering to the old time ideals of another country that many of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers left to get away from that environment and that condition and to build up in Australia a free, true, democratic Commonwealth that would yet take its place in the forefront of the nations of the world. As Kipling said—

"They pass with their old world legends,
Their tales of their song and dearth;
They held by the right of purchase,
But we by the right of birth."

And he thought they should live in the spirit of the lines given to them by one of our own Australian poets—

"The world should yet be a wider world,
For the tokens are manifest;
North and East should the wrongs be
hurled,
That followed us South and West."

"The march of freedom is North by the
dawn,
Follow, what ere betide,
Sons of the Exiles, march, march on!
March till the world grows wide."

It was time they passed out all the little mean things that were underlying the attacks on the Assistant Minister for Justice, and lived in a truer spirit of Australian freedom—that every man should have the right to give free expression to his opinion, within the Constitution, on any public matter.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): He noticed when the references to the Cabinet trouble appeared in the papers, that several meetings were held and reported in the "Daily Standard," at which motions were carried condemning the Governor. The Governor had no chance to reply; he could not go to the papers and vindicate himself. The only person that could vindicate the position he had taken up was the Premier, and he held that the Premier, although he had not told the House so, had taken steps to protect the

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Governor, because those resolutions were passed anticipating an event that never took place. If the event had taken place there might have been some excuse for those unions to condemn the Governor. So far as they knew, the Governor never did anything, and why should those slurs be cast on him, and no one get up to say a word in his defence, in the defence of him who was appointed by the Executive of Britain? He thought that nobody was in a position to protect the Governor, except the Premier, and he hoped he would do so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION rose to a point of order. It seemed to him they should just ascertain where they were, and for that purpose he asked the Chairman whether the Committee or any member of the Committee was in order in discussing the Governor or the relations of the Governor with the Cabinet, or any member of it in Committee of Supply or Ways and Means, rather than in the House.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: What is the point?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He would like to point out that the salary or amount of His Excellency was provided in a special schedule, and not in that vote at all.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: What is the vote then?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The vote had nothing to do with anything expended or proposed to be expended on His Excellency's establishment or himself.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: His travelling expenses, his staff?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: One might discuss his travelling expenses, but that was not a matter of the relationship of the Governor with the Chief Secretary. He had always understood that a motion or discussion concerning His Excellency or his relations with the Cabinet could only be taken in the House on a specific motion. He wished to ask the Chairman's ruling, because otherwise they might have a discussion that would be very acrimonious as well as out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: At the present moment I cannot see that the debate has got out of order. It may happen that remarks may be made which will be out of order, but we have not heard any such yet, and I cannot say that the debate is yet out of order (Hear, hear!)

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): His Excellency might well say, in all sincerity, "Save me from my friends." Did hon. members opposite know anything about constitutional history? Had they read that in the time of King Edward a certain diplomatic appointment was made and the King got a rough passage from a certain powerful organisation in the United Kingdom? He did not recollect that at that time the leader of the Opposition denounced it, either in his paper or elsewhere. Did the hon. member for Wide Bay remember the recent crisis in Tasmania where Sir Ellison Macartney took certain action for which a section of the Press, including the Melbourne "Age," and one of the leading dailies in Sydney, gave him a good dressing down?

Hon. J. A. FHELLY: And so did the Home Government.

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Mr. KIRWAN: As the Assistant Minister for Justice reminded him, so did the Home Government. He was not aware that the hon. member for Wide Bay took up the cudgels on behalf of the Governor of Tasmania. He thought that the Governor knew his duties and would be able to look after himself without any assistance from the leader of the Opposition or any of his party.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): At the risk of being considered a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, he was going to state that he did not think there was one item in the vote which was necessary. The time had arrived when they should state their opinions on the matter pretty definitely, and he was one of those who believed that six Governors were too many in Australia, and that Australian taxpayers had quite sufficient to bear without bearing the cost of those six gentlemen.

Mr. FORSYTH: The same might be said about Parliaments.

Hon. J. A. FHELLY: Wipe out the Legislative Councils.

Mr. POLLOCK: He had no objection to wiping out the Legislative Council and the Opposition, but he had an objection to having himself wiped out. He contended that a State Governor in Queensland was entirely unnecessary.

Mr. GUNN: What would you do—have the Australian Workers' Union run it?

Mr. POLLOCK: He did not know that they required anybody other than a Cabinet to run a country. (Hear, hear!) If there was any necessity for a Governor, the Governor-General could look after all the functions, and the money could be put to much better use than that of paying a man who was doing practically nothing but opening shows and attending to social functions.

Mr. BARNES: Move for a reduction.

Mr. POLLOCK: He was not prepared to move for a reduction. He would like to see the total abolition of the vote.

Mr. GUNN: Then move that.

Mr. POLLOCK: He was not prepared at the present time to move that, but he hoped that before another couple of years were over the House would not be called upon to say "Aye" or "Nay" on a vote of that kind. The hon. member for Wide Bay had stated that he believed that the Governor had no right of reply. He only wanted to say that if the Governor had followed the scurrilous political career of the hon. member, then he must have been very sorry that he was one who had elected to reply for him.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): The hon. member for Gregory had all the strength on his side, including the Government of the day, and he should move for the omission of the vote, and then he would see what support he would get from his own Government and those sitting behind them. If, as he said, it was necessary to do without six Governors, they might just as well have only one national Parliament and wipe out all the State Parliaments.

Mr. POLLOCK: Why do you not move in that direction?

Mr. PETRIE: If he were in the Commonwealth Parliament, or some higher authority, he might do so, because he believed that in the interests of the country

Queensland would have been in a far better position if Parliament were shut up altogether, so long as they got good seasons, no matter what legislation they might have—and they had had a good deal of bad legislation during the last eighteen months or two years.

Mr. BARNES (*Warwick*): It seemed to him that was the only place where one matter that had taken place could and should be discussed, however regrettable those episodes might be. One hon. member condemned the slightest reference to the matter, but at once jumped to another land and introduced troubles that occurred there. Another hon. member opposite was disposed to wipe out the vote altogether. He should test his comrades on the point. It would be interesting to know whether he was speaking with any degree of authority when he hoped that in a few years certain things would take place. It might merely have been discussed at the Trades Hall, but if it was a matter that was being discussed within the ranks of the party it would be more interesting still if the House and His Excellency were advised of it. With regard to His Excellency, it was a matter of very great encouragement and satisfaction to the people when the statement appeared in some newspaper that His Excellency had come to a certain decision, largely out of his respect for the Premier of the day, and it was evidence, to his mind, that the Cabinet generally were in sympathy with His Excellency and worked together. The statement was satisfactory, but what authority [4.30 p.m.] there was for it he did not know.

One could readily believe that that explanation was the true explanation of the general fixing up of a business that was entirely regrettable.

Question put and passed.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The PREMIER moved—That £100 be granted for "Executive Council." There was a decrease of £240 in the vote, which arose from the fact that Mr. Saunders, the late messenger, had resigned, and no provision was made for a messenger this year.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The PREMIER moved—That £1,165 be granted for "Legislative Council." There was a decrease of £155 in the vote, which arose from a readjustment of the staff through the death of the late Clerk, Mr. Costin. The salary of Mr. Gregory was £100 less than was received by the late Mr. Costin. The Clerk Assistant and Usher of the Black Rod received £45 less than Mr. Gregory did, and there had been a transfer of a messenger. There was no decrease in salaries. As a matter of fact, those gentlemen had received increases on their previous salaries.

Mr. BARNES (*Warwick*) thought it was to be regretted that the successor to Mr. Costin did not receive the same salary as his predecessor. It was quite evident that Mr. Gregory was doing the work in a satisfactory manner, and he was an old servant of the House.

The PREMIER: He obtained an increase of £110 in his salary when he was appointed Clerk of the Council.

Mr. BARNES: Having been appointed to a position which had a certain salary, he thought Mr. Gregory should receive the salary.

The PREMIER: There is a minimum and maximum for that position.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY expressed regret that the vote appeared on the Estimates at all, as the Legislative Council did not fulfil one useful purpose to the State. No reduction could be moved in the vote, because an amendment of the Constitution was necessary to wipe the Council out. He was pleased to say that there was a majority of members on that side of the House who were firmly convinced that before very long the item would not appear on the Estimates. There was not the slightest doubt that the Council was a Chamber simply for the obstruction of all matters that would make for the progress of the community in general. It was composed of a lot of political derelects gathered into the harbour of that Chamber from the sea of political opportunity.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You will be there shortly.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: There was not the slightest chance of him ever being in that Chamber. There was a greater chance of him belonging to the Industrial Workers of the World, because it was institutions such as that in the old land and in the United States that had made the Industrial Workers of the World possible. It was only because of strong and strenuous discontent, and in absolute desperation of ever getting any decent measure of progress for the benefit of humanity passed, that had brought the Industrial Workers of the World into existence. Without discontent and without privation and suffering it was impossible to organise the people into bodies such as the Industrial Workers of the World. The Council practically represented vested interests only. Only the other night, when the Gas Bill was going through the Chamber, two parties were represented outside the bar, the North Brisbane Gas Company and the South Brisbane Gas Company, with their secretaries and their solicitors, just the same as there was a solicitor in the Assembly the previous night framing amendments or giving advice upon amendments in connection with the Insurance Bill.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Just the same as the Government had a man assisting them.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY said the gentleman who was assisting the Government was the head of the department, a servant of the State, and not a legal adviser subsidised by the companies who wished legislation put through for their own betterment and advancement and not for the advancement of the State in general. It was time the Council was wiped into oblivion, and into the sea of political obscurity. He was sure from the obstructive tactics adopted by that Chamber in regard to many measures for the advancement of the workers of the State that the people of Queensland would repose confidence in the Government and accede to their request to wipe that Chamber out of existence.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He did not understand whether the hon. member said he was associated with the Industrial Workers of the World, or whether he was graduating in that direction. He was pleased to see that idolatry had had no effect on the Premier in relation to that vote, and that notwithstanding he had

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behind him strong opponents of the Legislative Council, he would not accept their advice but would allow the vote to go through.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: He was not going to allow the leader of the Opposition to cast a stigma upon him, as no doubt the hon. gentleman and many of his supporters would like to do, of being a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. What he had said was that there was a greater chance of him going to the Industrial Workers of the World than of going to the other Chamber, because it was chambers like the Legislative Council that had made the Industrial Workers of the World possible. He was not as well acquainted with the doctrines of the Industrial Workers of the World as he would like to be, because he thought every public man should make himself acquainted with those doctrines, but he wished to say emphatically that he had no association with that body at all.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) was surprised at the hon. member making the remarks he did with regard to the other Chamber having two representatives of the two gas companies with solicitors advocating their claim. One might just as well state what they saw in regard to the Assembly. He had observed, since the present party had been in power, that the Minister's room and the lobbies were packed with organisers and secretaries of unions. It was only a few nights ago a man was seen leaving the Chamber with the latest up-to-date State electoral rolls in his hand. He would like to know for what purpose they were gathered there. Those men came down to Parliament to see that the amendments they wanted, and nothing else, were put into Bills. That was the House that wanted wiping out, and the Government ought to be thankful that they had another House, because they knew that some of the legislation passed by the Assembly was impossible. They had to pass that legislation, and they were only too glad, if they would admit the truth, that there was an Upper House to wipe it out.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PREMIER moved that £3,727 be granted for "Legislative Assembly." There was a decrease of £20 in the salary of the clerk assistant, a new clerk assistant having been appointed in place of Mr. Dickson, who had been transferred to the Council. The amount for sessional cleaners was increased by £9.

Mr. PETRIE said that very often through late sittings the messengers and other officers were kept very long hours—for instance, from 9 o'clock yesterday morning till half-past 2 this morning—and some consideration ought to be given to every officer in the Assembly when they had to work these long hours. Of course, when Parliament was in recess, the work was not so strenuous, but they had to put in the ordinary hours just the same.

The PREMIER: I do not think they are treated any worse than they were by the late Government.

Mr. PETRIE: If some Governments had done wrong they should not carry on that wrong. It was not the first time this matter had been brought up by members on this side. Would the Chief Secretary consider

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whether something could be done in this respect? He did not ask for any increases, but some additional amount might be given to the officers, from even the Clerk of the Assembly right down to the messenger.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PREMIER moved that £12,474 be granted for "Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly." This was an increase on last year of £750, due mainly to the fact that the contingencies had been increased by £750, and that there had been an increase for printing. Certain alterations had been made in the staff, which meant a decrease of £70, and a switchboard attendant and the lift attendant were now provided under "Buildings" at £135, leaving a total increase of £700.

HON. J. TOLMIE asked the Chief Secretary if he would follow the usual practice in connection with the sessional messenger for "Hansard," and see that he was provided for during the time that Parliament was in recess. It had been the practice to find work for him during that period.

The PREMIER: Have I not done so?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was only provided for for a period of six months on the Estimates.

The PREMIER: That is always the practice on the Estimates.

HON. J. TOLMIE: But at one time he was only kept on for six months.

The PREMIER: Not in my time; I think he has been kept on.

HON. J. TOLMIE: The lift and switchboard attendant formerly accounted for £125 per annum, but the Chief Secretary said that that item had now been transferred from "Contingencies" to "Buildings," and that a lift attendant had been appointed for six months at £35. He understood that the man who was acting as lift attendant was a returned soldier, and he would like to know what regular wage he was being paid, and whether he came under the Wages Boards Act and was being fairly dealt with. A full-grown man and one who had served his country should be worth more than £35, and he hoped the Government would be able to see their way to deal with him differently. They had heard a good deal about the liberality of the Government.

The PREMIER: There is really an increase on the total expenditure on that account from £125 to £135.

HON. W. McCORMACK: You will notice on last year's Estimates the lift and switchboard attendant was £125.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He noticed that the switchboard attendant, Miss Byrne, was put down at £125, and a lift attendant for six months at £35. Possibly there might be an error in printing, but for a full-grown man to get less than £6 a month, under present conditions, was not in accordance with the provisions of the Wages Boards Act. He wanted to refer to "Hansard," which was costing over £6,000 a year. He did not know whether the State got sufficient value for the money.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are doing a lot of talking. (Laughter.)

HON. J. TOLMIE: He noticed that last year the Assembly sat on an average 7 hours 46 minutes per sitting.

MR. MURPHY: Eight hours a day

THE PREMIER: That works out at eight hours from bank to bank.

HON. J. TOLMIE: If they allowed twenty minutes for smoke-ho, it would be eight hours a day. He thought the gentleman who compiled the report was a bit of a humorist, for after saying that the Assembly sat so many hours, he said: Result, 3237 pages of "Hansard." (Laughter.) If "Hansard" was to be maintained, he thought it would probably be a wise thing to revert to the practice which prevailed a number of years ago when "Hansard" was distributed as a broadsheet to the electors of the State, which gave them an opportunity of seeing how business was conducted in this Chamber by those who were attending to the business of the country. They were spending nearly £7,000, and the revenue from subscribers amounted to £67 9s. 6d., which was about 1 per cent. of the money invested in "Hansard."

MR. MURPHY: That shows the public are not caring about reading "Hansard."

HON. J. TOLMIE: It did not show that, but it showed that they had not the opportunity of getting it. If it was distributed in a broad sheet, he believed the people would take a more intelligent interest in their politics when the time came for them to select their Parliament.

THE PREMIER: Would not that be a very bad thing for the Opposition. (Laughter.)

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was speaking for what he believed to be the good of the country and the elevation of the standard of the House, and if in doing that he, or the Chief Secretary, had to pass out, they would cheerfully leave their position, inasmuch as they knew that some good was being done for the State. (Laughter.) He would also like to direct attention to the condition of the library, of which they were very proud. He believed that a large number of members made use of the library, and if they did not do so they were inflicting an injury upon themselves. It was one of the best libraries in Australia, and certainly one of the best libraries in any Parliament of the Commonwealth. He thought it would be much better if they could keep all the books in a uniform binding, as the motley colours of the bindings detracted somewhat from the appearance of the books. Of course, he quite agreed with the hon. member for Bowen that they should not judge a book by its cover, but they ought to take pride in seeing that the library was improved from time to time, and kept up to date, and that new books after they had been in the library for a certain time should be re-bound. He noticed that the space was very limited, and he hoped that the Library Committee would take into consideration the question of getting additional space for the increase of the library.

HON. W. McCORMACK (*Cairns*): In regard to the lift attendant, he might state that the man was in receipt of a pension from the Commonwealth Government. He was really not capable of performing any other work than attending to the lift,

[5 p.m.] and he was only engaged during the day when the other Chamber was sitting. The payment of £35 was in addition to his pension. The switchboard

attendant, Miss Byrne, was getting only £60 per annum previously. They had increased that amount to £100, because they thought that £2 a week was little enough for any adult engaged on work for the State.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I quite agree with you.

HON. W. McCORMACK: With regard to the night watchman, he received an increase of £10. He had been in receipt of less salary than the night watchmen on the other Government buildings, but had actually had to do more work, because he was engaged every night of the week, including Sunday night, and they thought it was only fair that he should be put on the same footing as the other watchmen. With regard to the printing, the leader of the Opposition, since he had a paper of his own, must know that the increase in the cost of paper accounted for the increase in the printing vote.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I do not take exception to it.

HON. W. McCORMACK: However, he thought that some better system could be adopted by the Government Printer in connection with costing. He had made some investigation, and he had found that the Government Printing Office system was a little bit loose. For instance, some work which they were getting to-day was costing actually less than it did two years ago, when paper was at a much lower rate. The leader of the Opposition mentioned the library. The selection of books for the library was in the hands of a firm in London, and the Library Committee had little discretion in selecting books. They were really at the mercy of that firm, which evidently exercised a censorship. At least, they had to accept what books they sent along, and his own opinion was that the books were not the best selection.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I thought that the hon. member for Bowen selects them all.

HON. W. McCORMACK: The hon. member for Bowen, if he were in London, could do very good work for the library, because the firm in London evidently held the opinion that works by authors frequently quoted by the hon. member should not be read by members of Parliament in Australia. There were numbers of works by well-known authors, some of the most prominent writers of the day, which could not be found in the library. They even found on the committee some attempt to censor the reading matter that went into the library. It was a remarkable thing, but that was the truth. Some members of the committee said, "Do you think such-and-such a book would be a good thing in a parliamentary library?" (Laughter.) He was sure that they all would agree that men who were elected to Parliament should have access to all classes of literature, whether they agreed with it or not, whether it was the literature of enemy countries or otherwise. It was a good thing for them to know exactly how other nations of the world conducted affairs. They must learn from each other, and he himself could only wish that they had somebody in London who would make a more careful selection than they got at present. If hon. members would look through the list of books that came to the library, they must admit that not much care was taken in the selection, and it was unfortunate that no other method could be adopted. They were at the mercy of a firm in London, and whilst that firm did

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very good work and sent a lot of very good books, hon. members must admit that they sent along a lot of rubbish. So long as they could not get over that difficulty, they must put up with those consequences. They had a book in the library for suggestions, but very, very few suggestions were made to the committee as to books that members desired.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I thought, generally speaking, there was a fair selection.

Hon. W. McCORMACK: There was a good selection, but a number of the books that came along—of course, they might suit certain members of Parliament—in his opinion, would be very good books for a young ladies' library. For a Parliament House library they want books on social and economic questions, and it was apparent that the people who had control of the selection of books in London did not attach sufficient importance to that class of literature.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You get every issue of the international science series.

Hon. W. McCORMACK: They got a number of good books. He might just mention that they got a good number of books on travel. All those selections were all right. But they also got a good many books dealing with the love affairs of different prominent individuals—lords and earls and kings.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Neither you nor I read those.

Hon. W. McCORMACK: The Government of Queensland had to pay for them, and whilst they might be interesting reading, he did not think they were necessary in a parliamentary library.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): He was very pleased to hear the remarks of the leader of the Opposition; it was not very often he agreed with him. (Laughter.) He had been an advocate of the distribution of "Hansard" for many years, long before he became a member of the House. One of his reasons was that the Press did not seem inclined to report the speeches of hon. members, especially Northern members. They got very little report of speeches in the Northern papers, many of which were owned by men who were not able to pay for a long telegraphic report. He remembered asking the Chief Secretary last session whether he would consider the circulation of "Hansard" to all persons free on application. He hoped it would be done. He also wished to point out that he wished to get a special circulation for one of his speeches, a reprint of 10,000 copies. But it was held up. In other words, he was stopped by the censor, and he was not allowed even to increase the revenue of the Printing Office. It was held up for about three weeks, and a similar thing happened to the speeches of the hon. member for Fitzroy and the hon. member for Mbuait Morgan.

He was also very pleased to hear the remarks made by the Speaker relative to the selection of books for the library. Last night they had a very important discussion, and he went into the library to get some authorities dealing with trusts, but he found that they had about the poorest selection of authorities on that subject of any Parliament in Australia. In fact, he had better authorities in his own library at home, but unfortunately he did not have them with him. He hoped that the Chief Secretary would take into consideration the advice tendered by the leader

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of the Opposition with regard to the free circulation of "Hansard." Personally, he favoured his own proposal to give copies to all who applied for them.

Mr. MURPHY: It would cost a tremendous amount of money.

Mr. COLLINS: It cost £6,000 at the present time, and it would not cost a great deal more.

Mr. MURPHY: You would have to put a stamp on each copy.

Mr. COLLINS: They might be able to make some arrangement with the Federal Government so far as postage went. They did not know what could be done until they tried. At any rate, considering the poor reports the newspapers gave members of the House, they should have a better circulation of "Hansard" in justice to the people they represented.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): He was pleased to see that the telephone attendant, Miss Byrne, was put down for £100. He looked upon her as one of the most capable at her work. He was also glad to see an increase for the night watchman. The groom and labourer, to whom £140 was provided, was a most capable man. He had been in the position for a number of years and he had never heard any complaint. Any labourer could demand 9s. or 10s. a day at almost any class of work nowadays, and he thought the salary of £140 was much too low.

Mr. KIRWAN: Add his house on to that.

Mr. GRAYSON: He thought he should receive at least £20 a year more. Relative to the supply of "Hansard," he believed that in the country districts not 1 per cent. of the residents ever saw it.

Mr. KIRWAN: That accounts for the representatives they send here. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: He posted the twenty-four copies to which he was entitled to some of his constituents, but he did not think half a dozen of his electors ever bought "Hansard" on their own account. There was something in the contention of the hon. member for Bowen. Probably the cost would be justified, because it would enlighten the electors as to the doings of their representatives in the House. He trusted the Chief Secretary, in the next Estimates, would not overlook the groom who attended to the gardens and lawns at Parliament House.

Mr. FORSYTH: In connection with the proposal to distribute free copies of "Hansard," he was dead against it. He did not think 1 per cent. of the people read "Hansard," nor that, if they had an opportunity, they would read it then. Quite a large amount of money would be spent, and he thought it would be a great mistake, and a waste of money. There might be a few people who read "Hansard" regularly, but, taking it all round, "Hansard" was one of the papers that people would not be bothered to read, especially the speeches of hon. members opposite.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: It would make you consider what you were going to say.

Mr. FORSYTH: When he did make a speech, the hon. gentleman had not the brains to understand it. In his report, the chief of the "Hansard" staff pointed out that if the Public Works Commission was going to continue its investigations during the session, we would require at least one or two more

permanent reporters. They had had no advice as to whether the Government would provide those extra men, or whether the Public Works Commission was going to be dispensed with. He thought it was only right that they should have some statement that if the extra men were necessary they would get them. He hoped the Minister would be able to give the Committee some information in regard to those matters. He noticed that the number of publications issued free of charge was 1,398. He did not know who those persons were, or whether each person mentioned got a number of copies.

With regard to the Joint Parliamentary Committee and the Parliamentary Library, he thought every member would agree that the librarian was a first class man, a man who was always willing to help hon. members in regard to books, and he hoped he would get a higher salary than at the present time. There was a large number of volumes in the library, and they had not the room to keep those books in. They would like to know what the Government, or the Committee, would do. Did they intend to arrange for more accommodation, because if that was not done, the books would be wasted. With regard to books in the library that were not required, he was glad that the hon. member for Cairns had mentioned the matter and explained the position. He would suggest that the Parliamentary Committee should write home and tell the firms who were buying the books that that was a class of book they did not want, and state specifically the class of book they did want.

At 5.20 p.m.,

Mr. FOLEY relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. FORSYTH: At the same time there were a very fine lot of books on different subjects in the library, books of very great interest to public men, but there were also a lot of books that were of no use at all.

With regard to the refreshment-rooms, he saw the Government had put down £1,000. He did not think that would cover the expense of running that department this year. Last year it cost £1,175. Everything had gone up in price, and, therefore, the vote would probably be exceeded. It was a matter of wonder how the caterer could afford to give members such a splendid lunch or dinner for 1s.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Why not charge 2s.?

Mr. MAY: Members would object.

Mr. FORSYTH: He did not see how the caterer could make money out of it. He thought hon. gentlemen would be satisfied that, taking all things into consideration, the charge was certainly very cheap.

Mr. MURPHY: I suppose the Committee appointed by the House has gone into all these things?

Mr. FORSYTH: It was exceeded last year, and it was likely to be exceeded this year, and he thought the charges should be higher. Perhaps he would not make it 2s., but he certainly did not think 1s. could be considered a fair price for the meals they got. He could quite understand that "Hansard" was costing a good deal more than last year. It had been explained by Mr. Speaker that the cost of paper had increased. At the same time, while they put down £5,250 on the Estimates last year, when they all knew paper was rising rapidly, the vote was

exceeded by about £650. He hoped that the reason for the vote being so high—namely, the war—would come to an end, and that with normal conditions the vote for "Hansard" might be the same as last year.

Mr. PETRIE was glad the hon. member for Murrumba referred to the librarian. He knew that they could hardly expect the Government to give increases at this time, although in many cases they had made increases to the lower paid servants, which he was glad to see. He hoped when the Government did consider any increases they would give increases to the messenger, the groom and labourer, and all the lower paid servants of the House. The groom and labourer had a house in addition to his salary, but, all the same, he thought he was worth an increase, especially as the hon. member for Cunningham had pointed out the cost of living had gone up. With regard to the librarian, he did not cast any reflection on the present Government, because he thought his salary should have been raised years ago. The late librarian for many years had a salary of £1,000, and, if the late librarian was worth that, he thought the present librarian was worthy of a great deal more consideration. He hoped the Chief Secretary would take the suggestions, as they were given—in a good spirit. He trusted that, when the time arrived, and funds allowed, that not only the librarian, but also the lower paid servants in the Legislative Council and Assembly, would have their salaries raised.

He rose more particularly to refer to the lift. They had a lift that was of very little use in the building. Although he was a member of the Buildings Committee, he was not responsible for that lift being in its present position. For a time he was relieved of his duties on that Buildings Committee. He suggested that the lift should be at the end of the building where it would be available for all members and other persons using the House. Two estimates were got—one for a lift where it was, and the other for this end of the building, where it ought to be. The committee did not take into consideration that they would have to close in the lower and top balcony, and the result was that it cost a great deal more there than if it had been at this end. He hoped the Chief Secretary would suggest to the Treasurer, when he had sufficient money, that the lift should be shifted to its proper place, where it would be available for everybody using the building. That lift could be shifted at no very great cost. He would like to point out, with reference to the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition with regard to the overcrowding of the library, that they had overcrowding in every part of the building, and he thought the Hon. Mr. Speaker would back him up in that. They required a room in the building for papers, but they had no accommodation. The

[5.30 p.m.] Buildings Committee was almost a farce, because the vote for repairs and keeping the grounds in order was only £104. That did not go far, and for anything over ordinary repairs they had to send along to the Works Department. A letter was written by the Clerk of the House, and after the lapse of a fortnight or three weeks an inspector came along and talked the matter over. Very often the whole thing could be done while that waste of time was taking place. He suggested the advisability

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of putting a larger sum on the Estimates so that the repairs and other things should be controlled by the Buildings Committee.

He quite agreed with the suggestion with regard to issuing a full daily report of "Hansard," and for the sheets to be sent out through the Press. If that were done, he thought the people of Queensland would take the trouble to read them, but as things were the printing of "Hansard" was a waste of money.

The hon. member for Murrumba mentioned the price of meals in the refreshment-rooms. That was a matter that was controlled by the Refreshment-rooms Committee, and they could safely leave the matter in their hands. The Refreshment-rooms Committee last year took into consideration the high cost of food, and allowed the caterer another £100 a year, which they thought was quite sufficient.

Hon. W. MCCORMACK: The caterer has been asked to give a definite statement of what it costs him; he has not done so yet.

Mr. PETRIE: The committee could deal with all those questions, but at the head of the various committees were the Speaker and President, and sometimes they had over-riden the other members of the committee. He trusted that the matters he had referred to would receive favourable consideration.

Mr. POLLOCK hoped the lift would not be shifted from the other end of the building so long as the Upper House existed. They had some difficulty in getting a quorum in the Upper House to pass their legislation, and if the lift were shifted to the other end of the building they would never get a quorum at all. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER did not support the shifting of the lift, but thought they might put it to better use. The Ministers and heads of various parties in the House had bedrooms, and he thought the lift, when not in use, might be used as a bedroom for the leader of the Country party. He noticed an item of £175, "Gas for Parliamentary Buildings," but members of the Opposition never saw any of that £175. The Parliamentary Librarian was receiving £375 a year when the Liberal party left office, and he had been kept there by the present Government. With the increased number of books and the increased possibilities he had of imparting knowledge and the increased necessity there was for imparting knowledge in connection with the present Government, he thought the salary should be increased.

In the matter of printing, he did not know that the Government Printer was altogether to blame for providing certain printed matter at a less cost to-day than he did a few years ago. Although labour had certainly increased in value, still it was to the credit of the Government Printer that he was able to do work to-day cheaper than he was able to do it some years ago. He attributed it to the fact that the Government Printer had better machines and had adopted a better system, and they should commend him for the success he had brought about. No doubt the increase in the vote was on account of the increase in the cost of paper, and something should be done to save the waste of paper that occurred.

Then the question of parliamentary expenses to witnesses wanted some consideration. Last year £50 was voted for expenses

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to witnesses, and yet in one case a professional man who was summoned by order of the Legislative Council to give evidence was only paid £1. His payments to his men for the day were £2 and his own expenses £1, and he claimed £2. His men were unable to do any work on account of his absence, and he lost the work he had contracted to do, and yet, without any explanation at all, £1 was sent to him. Witnesses should be remunerated to the full extent of their losses, and he sincerely hoped that the man he had referred to would receive the full amount he was entitled to. He understood the regulations were not particularly clear, but he trusted in future the members of the committee would decide what should be paid.

Mr. GUNN: As far as he could see, the principal increase in the vote was in connection with printing "Hansard," telegrams, stationery, etc. Last year that vote was increased by £250, and this year there was a further increase of £750, making an increase of £1,000 in two years. There was a lot of printing done in connection with the House that could be done without. For instance, he received two copies of "Votes and Proceedings," when one copy would be quite sufficient for each member. Then members got a copy of each report, many of which they did not read, as they were dealing with subjects in which they were not interested. If members asked for reports they should get them, but if they did not take the trouble to ask for them they were not worth having. If private persons were running the House there would not have been the increase in printing that was shown. Last year members had twelve free copies of "Hansard," while this year they had been supplied with twenty-four copies. He supposed that was to the advantage of hon. members, but they might very well wait till the war was over before going in for increases of that sort. "Hansard" would be far more popular if it were printed on tissue paper with nice little holes through the corner. (Laughter.) He was quite sure that the hotel-keepers and boarding-house keepers would readily buy them. (Laughter.) The people would read them where they did not read them now. (Renewed laughter.) He must take the opportunity of complimenting the "Hansard" staff. He did not know what some members—and he supposed he was one of them—would do if it was not for the "Hansard" staff. They put in the "h's" where he left them out, corrected his bad grammar, and they were of untold value to him. He would "smodge" to the "Hansard" staff at any time and every time. (Laughter.)

He would like to say a word with reference to the attendants altogether connected with the parliamentary buildings. He did not want to specify any individual, but he sincerely hoped that the Government would be able before long to increase the salaries of the attendants who had been carrying on their duties for the last two years without any increase. He thought the cost of living had gone up, as far as they were concerned, just as much as it had in connection with navvies and other people working for the Government. A good deal had been said with reference to the lift to get up to the Chamber. He had never had occasion to use the lift; he was not, perhaps, old enough. He was reminded of an old German who he had once working for him, who said he had had a letter from his brother in America.

He said that his brother was in great distress. He (Mr. Gunn) asked him what was the matter. The man said, "My brother was in an hotel at Santiago which had thirteen stories. Now the earthquake comes, and twelve stories is cellar and only one story is left." (Laughter.) This trouble would be got over if they sunk this House in the ground, and made the ground floor a story, so that everybody could walk into the Chamber without a lift. (Renewed laughter.) He would like to make another suggestion. He had to use a dunny-bag to put his few documents in, and there were many other members who had not sufficient means to purchase the dunny-bag—at any rate, they had not got one. (Laughter.) To obviate that difficulty there was plenty of space under the seats where a little locker could easily be placed in which to put their documents and always have them at hand. He did not wish to run the country into any great expense, but they could even have kerosene tins cut lengthways and put under the seat, in which they could hold their documents, and that would be of undoubted use to members of Parliament. (Laughter.) Generally, the great objection he had to this vote was in regard to the increase in the printing, and he was quite convinced the difficulty could be got over in the way he had suggested.

Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*): He thought it would be very undesirable to allow the hon. member who had just resumed his seat to have the whole monopoly with reference to members of the "Hansard" staff. Something needed to be said with regard to the "Hansard" staff, and that was that while there was no increase on the Estimates for them, something should be done in the way of providing medical attendance for them. Not only the other side, but this side—and particularly the members on the front benches—caused the "Hansard" staff a considerable amount of pain and illness. He had himself seen the ear of one of the members of the "Hansard" staff stretched considerably over the side of the balustrade in his effort to catch the mumbings and jumbings that came on occasions from both the front benches. (Laughter.) He thought that some recompense should be made to the "Hansard" staff for the disabilities they laboured under in that direction. Either they must provide something on the Estimates for medical attention when their ears were unduly strained, or those hon. members who were in the habit of talking very quietly to Mr. Speaker on certain matters connected with the business of the House, should raise their voices sufficiently high, if not for the back benches to hear, at any rate for the "Hansard" staff to catch their words. (Hear, hear! and laughter.)

Question put and passed.

CHIEF SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

CHIEF OFFICE.

The PREMIER moved—That £8,000 be granted for "Chief Office." There was an increase of £230 on last year's vote, made up in the ordinary regulation increases for certain clerks and typistes, and the appointment of a new messenger at £150.

Mr. FORSYTH thought that the Chief Secretary would have given a good deal more information in regard to the enormous increase in some of the items. For instance, he

had only stated that the difference between the vote last year and the vote this year was so much, and did not give any information in connection with the amount set down for incidentals and miscellaneous expenses, which were put down last year at £3,000, and at the same amount this year, while no less than £6,121 had been spent, which was more than double. Then, the item with regard to railway fares and freights, printing, stationery, etc., was £1,300 last year, and also £1,300 this year, when, as a matter of fact, £1,921 had been spent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The increase is for the conveyance of soldiers all over the State.

At 5.55 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. PETRIE pointed out that the messengers were very often kept late, and he would like to ask if they got anything extra for the overtime they put in when they were detained after the ordinary hours.

The PREMIER: That is not in this vote.

The PREMIER: The increase in incidentals was mainly due to the expenditure by the Chief Secretary's Office for patriotic purposes, particularly in railway freights and fares. A good deal of money had been spent, too, for the Recruiting Committees and other committees in connection with the Queensland War Council. The Red Cross, for instance, was provided with £350 for rent of their building, and they had provided clerks for the War Council at an expenditure of £155 9s. 3d.; while there were other items for printing. The expense could generally be taken as having been incurred for patriotic purposes.

Mr. FORSYTH: The incidental and miscellaneous expenses?

The PREMIER: Yes.

HON. J. TOLMIE: No doubt the Chief Secretary had the items in connection with this incidental and miscellaneous expenditure in his possession, and there was no reason why he should not give them to the Committee. He did not say that the Premier had spent a pound more than was essential. This was the time that they should ask the Chief Secretary for some explanation in connection with his visit to Great Britain. He had made statements both here and outside in relation to what he was going to do, and as to what he had achieved. He had told them that one of the reasons he went home was for the purpose of bringing about a deal in connection with copper, a matter that was to be of very great importance to the State. They had had no explicit information in connection with the matter, but merely a statement that the Imperial Government had arranged to take 48,000 tons of copper in two years. The hon. gentleman claimed credit for having brought about this arrangement, and it was time for him to tell the people of Queensland how this amount of copper was going to be raised. They knew that the price of copper must keep up to what it was for the next two years.

The PREMIER: That it must keep up to the present price?

HON. J. TOLMIE: Or go more than the present price.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Or go down.

Hon. J. Tolmie.

HON. J. TOLMIE: If the hon. gentleman thought it was going down, then the Premier had achieved something of importance.

The PREMIER: Do you think it is not important to give them copper at a reasonable price? You are delighted the higher copper goes; £200 a ton would suit you gentlemen there.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Did the Premier not go home in order to develop the interests of this State? He was only reading a short time ago the statements he made [7 p.m.] in Brisbane the evening he went away, when he said he was going to achieve great things in the way of the development of the State of Queensland. When he was in America he told the people there what a splendid opportunity there would be for the development of the meat trade between America and Queensland. It was time they had a declaration as to the results that were going to accrue from his tour.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Would you not give a reasonable time for results to accrue?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He would. When six months had passed, it was nearly time for them to become manifest. The Prime Minister of the Commonwealth announced that certain results were going to flow to Australia as a result of his visit to England, and he particularised the mines.

The HOME SECRETARY: You can put that down to vanity.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Probably they all had a touch of vanity in them. Still, making all due allowance for the vanity of Mr. Hughes, he said that mines A, B, and C, were going to benefit as a result of the arrangement which he made. The Chief Secretary said he had made arrangements by which 48,000 tons of copper were to go from Queensland in the next two years, or about 2,000 tons a month. The quantity was pretty big so far as Queensland was concerned, and if it was going to be done, something more must be done than a mere contract made in England between the Chief Secretary and the Imperial authorities. The mere arrangement was not going to make 48,000 tons of copper flow from Queensland to Great Britain. It had to be taken out of the earth, it had to be smelted, and that all meant that capital had to be put into the concern. At the expiration of four months they found that no steps had been taken in that direction, no large mines had been opened up, enterprise was not operating in that direction. The Government were not taking it up as one of their concerns, as they were taking up meat and sawmills and other businesses. They had to get a move on, and get a move on quickly, because, so far as results as to copper were concerned, practically nothing had been done. He had just been reading a report of the Chief Secretary's interviews with gentlemen on the other side of the Pacific, and there he pointed out—very properly, too—the great resources of Queensland from the meat producing point of view, and said there ought to be business between Queensland and America. But, were the actions of the Government in that direction such as would enable their growers of meat to find a market in America? As a matter of fact, the greater number of members of the Chamber repudiated the idea of

any business relations between Queensland and America with regard to meat. They had heard over and over again that Queensland, within the last two years, had been sending some of its meat supplies to America, and that it had been used by the Americans to supply our enemies.

The PREMIER: I referred to sending meat after the war.

HON. J. TOLMIE: The Premier was advocating those relations between Queensland and America, and the business must go on now. Why should there be any qualification? If they were to establish the relationship, they ought to be doing it now. In one breath the Premier said that they ought to be doing those things, and in the next the party behind him said they ought not. It was very desirable they should know the extent to which negotiations had proceeded. Were they going to lie dormant for the next three or four years until the war was over? If that was so, the probability was that some other Premier would have to take the necessary steps. Again, while in America, the Premier told the Americans that he had solved one of the problems he had gone across to solve—that was, the question of getting steel rails to enable railway construction to be carried on.

Mr. MURPHY: That was an after dinner speech.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He said that one of the difficulties was freight, but that so far as that was concerned it would not apply. They had been told that one of the reasons why the construction of railways was hung up was that the Government could not get the necessary steel rails. He hoped the Premier would give some explanation. Then again, as one of the results of the Premier's visit, they were to have a closer connection between Queensland and America by means of a line of steamers. He understood that the Premier brought to Brisbane the captain of one of the lines it was proposed should come to Queensland or Australia, in order that he might investigate their port accommodation.

The PREMIER: Yes.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Yet he heard it stated in the Chamber last night that it was a Germano-American line of boats.

The PREMIER: By whom?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He could not say by whom.

Mr. COOPER: A gentleman by the name of "Rumour."

HON. J. TOLMIE: The hon. member for Wide Bay told him it was a German-Dutch line of boats. Surely the Premier could not have been aware of that.

The PREMIER: That is just what I would expect from the hon. member for Wide Bay, but it is absolutely untrue. The Oceanic Steamship Line is not a German-Dutch line.

Mr. BOOKER: Smile!

HON. J. TOLMIE: He wanted to know how that business was progressing. If it progressed satisfactorily and some good would be done by the Premier's trip, the money expended would not have been spent in vain.

Mr. FORSYTH: He presumed that the expenses of the Premier's trip to England were included in the item of £3,000 for incidental expenses, because it was generally

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included in incidental expenses. If that were so, he would be in order in discussing the Premier's trip to the old country. The Premier stated that he had arranged to supply 48,000 tons of copper from Queensland for the Imperial Government in the next two years, and the copper was to come from mines which were not at present producing copper. The hon. gentleman also stated that as he was to get £100 per ton, that would mean £4,800,000 that would come to Queensland in the next two years. Such a statement was so utterly ridiculous that he could not understand how the Premier could make such a statement. At the present time the copper produced in Queensland was under contract arranged by Mr. Hughes. At present the only mines turning out copper were Mount Morgan, Hampden, Mount Elliott, and Mount Cuthbert. If they looked at the last report of the Under Secretary for Mines they would see that the value of copper produced in Queensland last year was £1,400,000, which, taken at the rate of £100 per ton, would be 14,000 tons per year. The Premier proposed to produce 24,000 tons a year, or double the quantity produced in the State for last year. It was utterly impossible to do it. How was he going to get the copper treated, even if he got it from the mines? Where was it going to be smelted?

The PREMIER: You have not taken the trouble to read what I have said on each occasion.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman said that he would be able to turn out 48,000 tons of copper in two years, which represented to the people of Queensland £4,800,000.

The PREMIER: I said that the Imperial Government gave a guarantee to take up to that amount. They would not take more.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman said that Queensland would benefit to the extent of £4,800,000.

Mr. MURPHY: So they would if private enterprise would buck in and get the copper out.

Mr. FORSYTH: There was only one smelter in Queensland that was not working at the present time, and that was at Chillagoe. The Chillagoe Company had never been a paying proposition. It never paid a single dividend to shareholders. That was another thing that the Premier went home about to make arrangements for—the purchase of the Chillagoe Railway. They saw in the paper that the Premier had purchased the Chillagoe Railway for £450,000 cash, but since that day they had heard nothing more about it. Evidently, the deal has fallen through.

The PREMIER: Do you say that you have heard nothing more about it?

Mr. FORSYTH: He had heard nothing more about it. He did not know whether the Premier had paid the £450,000 for the railway.

The PREMIER: There is one thing that I can say about the Chillagoe Railway, and that is that I protected the people of Queensland.

Mr. FORSYTH: Even if the Premier did get the copper, where would he smelt it?

Mr. COLLINS: The Einasleigh copper mine.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Echo answers where.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman was quite right. It was a case of "Echo answers where."

The PREMIER: One company has advised the Government that they can guarantee 5,000 tons of copper a year.

Mr. FORSYTH: He had heard that statement before. What company was it?

The PREMIER: I can give you the name of the gentleman. Mr. Corbould. You have heard of him.

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes, he knew Mr. Corbould. Even if the Government got the copper, they could not get it smelted, and it would take two years to get the necessary smelting machinery and have it erected. The machinery was expensive at the present time, owing to the high cost of freight and everything else. There was not the slightest possible hope of the hon. gentleman getting 48,000 tons, or even 4,800 tons.

The PREMIER: That is through some combination you know all about. The American copper kings have evidently been in it. How is it that one company guaranteed 5,000 tons?

Mr. FORSYTH: That was only one company.

The PREMIER: But you said that we could not get 4,800 tons.

Mr. FORSYTH: He would like to know where the Government was going to get 24,000 tons of copper a year. He did not know where the hon. gentleman could get it.

The PREMIER: Are you interested in any copper proposition?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes. He had got a few shares in Mount Cuthbert, in the Cloncurry district, and they had had a lot of trouble in connection with the smelter. They started to erect it twelve months ago, and it has not started yet. He hoped that it would turn out plenty of copper for the benefit of the Empire, because it would assist the Empire all right. This was one of the companies that had been fixed up by Mr. Hughes to supply copper. He could not help smiling at the credulity of the hon. gentleman who thought that he could place that quantity of copper in a couple of years. He would also like to know what had happened in connection with Chillagoe. They saw in the papers that the Premier had bought that place for £450,000. Had the sale taken place? He thought they should know about it, because it was in connection with the Premier's visit to the old country. It might be that the money he spent was well spent. He had no objection, so long as the Premier gave them information that was of some value, but as far as he could judge they heard of those things and then they died out. As far as he knew there was no special development going on in any of the copper shows.

Mr. MURPHY: There is only one thing that goes on gaily and that is the public debt.

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes. It was given out that the Government bought this Chillagoe Company for £450,000 debentures. He understood now that it was £450,000 cash. Had the money been paid? Those were things the House and the country should be told.

The PREMIER: Who are you talking for?

Mr. FORSYTH: He was speaking on behalf of the people of Queensland.

The PREMIER: Do you mean to say you do not know all about Chillagoe?

Mr. Forsyth.]

Mr. FORSYTH: He did not profess to know all about Chillagoe. The hon. gentleman said he did these things to protect and benefit the people of Queensland.

The PREMIER: You represent the copper kings and the copper companies.

Mr. FORSYTH: He did not represent the copper companies at all. His interest in them was not worth two pence.

The PREMIER: Then you are their spokesman, the same as the leader of the Opposition was the spokesman of the insurance companies last night.

Mr. FORSYTH: He was not their spokesman at all. His interest was so small that there was nothing in it. He did not suppose the hon. gentleman blamed anyone for taking up a few shares in a mine. If he wanted to be patriotic, he thought it was all right to put a little money in a show. For instance, Croydon, where the Government were finding some money to sink a shaft.

The PREMIER: All the copper that came out of Chillagoe went to Germany.

Mr. FORSYTH: That might be. They knew a great deal of copper went to Germany.

The PREMIER: I could not get the analysis of Chillagoe copper except from Merton's.

Mr. FORSYTH: None went there now in any case, and he hoped that the position would be that no more copper would go to Germany.

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

Mr. CORSER: In dealing with the first item on the Chief Secretary's Estimates, he thought they might get some information in the direction of a matter of great public interest. He noticed by the paper there was likely to be a change in the Agent-Generalship.

The PREMIER: That is not on this vote.

Mr. CORSER: He merely wanted to ask one question in regard to it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If we adhere strictly to our Standing Orders, the hon. member will not be in order in discussing anything that is not related to the Chief Office. It has been the practice to discuss general matters on the first vote, and it is for the Committee to say whether they will adopt that practice again or not. If we adhere strictly to the Standing Orders, limiting discussion on the first vote, hon. members will not be in order. I shall put it to the Committee.

The PREMIER: I think the Minister has the option. I think it should be confined to the vote.

Mr. CORSER: He would let it go. He noticed that the Premier, when the leader of the Opposition was speaking with regard to the steel rail business, did not remember by his remarks some statements which appeared in the local Press, and which he denied. On 27th May, 1916, the hon. gentleman was reported to have said—

"One of my principal missions in San Francisco was in connection with the importation of steel rails from America to the State of Queensland concerning certain contracts made by the late Administration there. Much of my time in San Francisco—short as it was—was occupied in interviews with representa-

tives of the contractors for the supply of the rails. Certain difficulties have arisen regarding the carrying out of the terms of the contract entered into by the late Government of Queensland.

"What is the crux of the difficulty?" pointedly inquired the interviewer.

"That would prove a very long story," replied Mr. Ryan with alacrity, but suffice it to say that as a result of my conversations with the steel contractors' representatives in San Francisco, I think it now possible that the grievances which have arisen will be speedily removed, and that the contract will be carried out satisfactorily to the strictest detail."

The PREMIER: Exactly, that is right.

Mr. CORSER: When the leader of the Opposition was speaking, the Premier, by interjection, practically denied those statements. He left that impression.

The PREMIER: No; the leader of the Opposition did not suggest that I was patching up something the late Government did.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: What about the report that was to be printed in the "Courier" in German?

Mr. CORSER: The leader of the Opposition suggested what was stated in the report of the Brisbane "Courier."

The PREMIER: He did not do any such thing. What you have read out is quite correct.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member for Fitzroy referred to the "Courier," and that was what the Premier said.

The PREMIER: I may tell you that the vice-president of the Steel Corporation interviewed me in San Francisco with regard to a contract made by the late Government with that corporation.

Mr. FORSYTH: Are you getting those rails now?

The PREMIER: The rails have been landed since.

Mr. CORSER: Then why were the railways hung up for the want of rails? The hon. member for Fitzroy remarked that the report he read was in a paper that was stopped from being printed in German. This was what the Premier said about the "Courier"—

"If I were asked to mention my greatest impression in the United States it would unhesitatingly be that there is a tremendous preponderance of public opinion in favour of the Allies, even more strongly than I have been led to believe. This favourable attitude of America has been indicated in special despatches published at intervals in the Brisbane 'Courier,' letters which I have regularly read with the greatest of interest for some years past."

Notwithstanding all they said about the "Courier," the Premier still had those words to say for it. There was another matter of very great interest at the present time to public servants. Some little time ago he asked the Chief Secretary if it was correct that members of the public service had been asked to work an extra half hour without increased payment, and the Chief Secretary replied on 9th November—

"1. Regulations pursuant to the Public

[Mr. Forsyth.

Service Act have recently been issued extending the time of departure from 4.30 p.m. to 5 p.m."

To the question he asked the Chief Secretary was, how did he justify the action of the Government in breaking down an established and just system of increased payments for overtime work, and the Premier replied—

"There is no change in the system of payment for overtime worked."

Although the Premier did not indicate just what his department was doing he left the inference that he had not broken [7.30 p.m.] down the established system of paying for overtime. To get at the fact as to whether these Government servants were being remunerated for the overtime work or whether the Government were saving the salaries of those who had enlisted, he had directed the following question to the Premier:—

"Are the State public servants who are on active service, or those called up for military training, being credited with their State salaries?"

The Premier replied that they were not, and therefore there must be a saving to the public as far as those salaries were concerned. Therefore he asked—

"If not, what is the amount saved to the State per week?"

That question the Premier would not answer, but asked him to move for a return—a return that would come in due course. He further asked the hon. gentleman—

"Are the members of the public service being remunerated for the extra half hour's work per day they have been called upon to perform?"

That was a question he could not get an answer to. Everybody would agree that if the public servants were called upon to work an extra half hour each day, and the Government were not paying the salaries of those servants on military service, it would be a fair thing for the State to give them extra remuneration. The Government would not ask the wharf labourers who were loading a transport to work an extra half hour without pay for patriotic purposes. What would they say to the hon. gentleman if he attempted such a thing? The Government might reconsider the matter and not ask the public servants to work the extra half hour each day without extra remuneration.

Mr. FOLEY: Are you stirring up a strike amongst the public servants?

Mr. CORSER said nothing was further from his mind. The fact that the public servants were working the extra half hour without complaining showed that it would take more than that to make them strike. While they had good servants they should deal with them in the same manner as they dealt with others who had to work for a living.

Mr. COOPER: That is in keeping with your spirited denunciation of the stopping of the automatic increases in 1914.

Mr. CORSER: The argument for automatic increases not being paid in 1914 was supported by the fact that everybody in receipt of £100 a year or less was to receive the increase, and if there was a surplus then the next class would receive their automatic increases. The Government did not come along with the same proposition as we put forward in 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing general automatic increases on the first vote of this department. His remarks would be more appropriate on the vote for the Public Service Board.

Mr. CORSER: He sincerely hoped that if anything could be done for any of the public servants that those receiving the smallest remuneration would get first consideration, and if they had the money to consider others then he would put in a little word for the Chief Clerk who carried on the arduous duties of the Under Secretary, during the absence of that officer, to the credit of the department and to the man who was responsible for his training. He hoped the Premier would not exceed the amount placed on the Estimates.

Mr. SWAYNE: He supposed the biggest question to-day, outside the question of the war, was the position of the Empire in the matter of foodstuffs. The Premier, speaking at a function soon after his return to Brisbane, said that he looked forward to very important results accruing in regard to the sugar industry from his trip home. He hoped that, as far as possible, the Empire would be self-sustaining, and that they would produce within the boundaries of the Empire all of the most important foodstuffs. In connection with that matter he might mention that what was known as the West Indies Committee in London made inquiries as to what market existed throughout the British dominions in regard to the production of sugar, and he noticed that Mr. Easterby, an official of the Agricultural Department who was asked to give evidence, expressed the opinion that Queensland had an undeveloped margin of 250,000 tons—that they could, if they worked themselves up to their natural limits, supply something like 250,000 tons of sugar to the Empire in addition to the present output, which, in the best years was sufficient for Australia's own requirements. He (Mr. Swayne) supposed that the Premier had that in view when he mentioned that he hoped one of the results of his visit home would be that Queensland would supply her share of sugar to the Empire. Unfortunately just after the Premier's return they know that such a blow was struck at the industry that it looked very much like as if it would become a thing of the past unless something was done.

The PREMIER: A Jeremiah.

Mr. SWAYNE: As the Premier was evidently very sanguine not only as to their ability to supply Australian requirements but also to supply other portions of the Empire, he would ask the Premier what he had in his mind when he made that statement, and also how he hoped to carry it out, especially in regard to the present position in the industry. So far as he had noticed since the hon. gentleman came back, one of his aims in connection with that industry was to hand it over to another Parliament altogether. Altogether there was room for an explanation, and members were justified in seeking information on this matter. With regard to the post-war tariff, it had been urged in Great Britain that all sugar produced in the dominions of the Empire should be admitted at a preferential rate, or should have protection over other sugars; but he was afraid that that would not be sufficient for Queensland in the present position of the industry.

Mr. Swayne.

Mr. MURPHY: There seemed to be some misunderstanding regarding this copper transaction. The Premier, like his predecessors in office, and like the Premiers of all the Australian States, decided that a trip to England would be beneficial to the State, and he presumed that the hon. gentleman also considered it would be beneficial to himself; so, like the other Premiers, he took a trip to the old country. When Premiers returned from London they had to give some account of the work which they had done there—he did not mean the work they had done at the dinner table, or the after-dinner speeches they had made, but the big things they had done in London. When Mr. Denham returned from London, he said he had arranged with the financiers there to convert all the loans then becoming due, and naturally, having fixed up the great loan question, he received a very cordial welcome when he came back to Brisbane. The present Premier went to London, and he received the same cordial welcome there as all Australian Premiers received. Before he came back to Queensland a certain cablegram appeared in the Press telling of interviews the Premier had had with members of the British Cabinet and big financiers, and the papers were nearly as full of his doings in London as they had previously been full of the wonderful work done by Mr. Hughes. He was referring particularly to the Labour newspapers. Amongst the information given in the cablegrams was a notification that the Premier had succeeded in entering into an arrangement with the British Government for them to take 48,000 tons of copper in two years.

The PREMIER: That was only in a cable sent on the day I left London.

Mr. MURPHY: Anyhow, if it was not cabled out—

The PREMIER: I cabled it.

Mr. MURPHY: Now that the Premier had taken him off the track he was pursuing, he should like to say that it was strange that, as far as the people of Queensland were concerned, they never heard a word about this copper deal until the hon. gentleman had to find some excuse for his attitude with regard to the referendum on conscription. Then he not only published the matter in the papers, but stated on every platform from which he spoke that he had effected this deal. He said, "Look what I have done! I have arranged with the British Government to take 48,000 tons of copper in two years. Look what we are doing for Britain." And he said we were doing that for Britain for £105 per ton. The agreement was that if Queensland could produce 48,000 tons of copper in two years the British Government would pay for it.

The PREMIER: At a certain price.

Mr. MURPHY: My word, they could bet their bottom dollar that Australian Governments would see that the British Government paid for anything that was produced in Australia. The British Government had not objected to pay for anything they got from this country.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Hughes has got them for £140 a ton, though.

Mr. MURPHY: The first arrangement made by Mr. Hughes was for £100 per ton. However, with regard to the copper transaction mentioned by the Premier, the people

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of Queensland were convinced by a casual look at the report of the interview the Premier gave the "Courier," the "Standard," the "Daily Mail," and other journals, that Queensland was going to supply 48,000 tons of copper to the British Government at £105 per ton. Nothing of the sort. The fact was that the Premier had made arrangements that if the people who desired to invest their money in mining found copper they would be able to sell it to the British Government. When he first read the announcement, he thought the Queensland Government were going in pretty extensively for mining, that we were going to have State mines, and that the Government would produce this copper themselves. He noticed in one of the London financial journals during the time the Premier was at home a statement which was made at a meeting of the debenture holders in the Chillagoe Company, to the effect that an arrangement had been made with the Premier for the purchase of the Chillagoe Railway for £450,000 cash. The Premier was not the first man to negotiate with the Chillagoe Company with regard to the purchase of the Chillagoe Railway. They knew that the Chillagoe Company had been in a bad financial way for a very long time, they had eaten up their capital and spent over £2,000,000, he believed, in building railways in the Gulf, and in trying to develop the mining resources in the district through which the Chillagoe Railway ran. When the war broke out he supposed they were unable to raise more capital. They knew from Mr. Denham that there had been negotiations regarding the purchase of the Chillagoe Railway, and that before Mr. Ryan went to London there had been negotiations between this Government and the Chillagoe Company with regard to the purchase of that railway.

Mr. D. RYAN: Did you try to help that?

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member need not try to be so funny; he had to try very hard to be funny, and he was not a success at it. The arrangement between the Premier and the Chillagoe Company seemed to be that the Government was going to pay £450,000 to the Chillagoe Company, and were going to invest some capital in the mines, some of which had been previously worked by the company, and to restart the smelters at Chillagoe. He thought that that was part of the scheme for supplying this 48,000 tons of copper to the British Government. They now found that the Premier, although he had not definitely stated it, led them to believe by his silence that so far as the Government was concerned, they were not going to worry at all as to whether any of this 48,000 tons of copper was produced or not. It was true that Mr. Corbould, of the Mount Elliott Company, had notified the Premier that he would be in a position to supply 5,000 tons.

The PREMIER: If he has certain railway communication.

Mr. MURPHY: That would, he supposed, be a matter to which the Government would give the closest attention, in order to come to a conclusion as to whether the expenditure on a railway would be justified for the production of this extra 5,000 tons of copper. They would see what the rise in copper would do for a district like Cloncurry, which had languished for a good many years. It was very interesting to know that so far as the

Government itself was concerned they were not proposing to expend any large amount of money in order to assist the copper producing industry; they were going to leave that to private enterprise. There were several places in Queensland where companies would find it remunerative to commence operations with regard to copper developments. All the same, when they looked at the thing fairly and squarely the agreement which had been entered into by the Premier was not going to help copper production at all. These people were enabled to sell every ton of copper that they could produce to the Federal Government.

Mr. DUNSTAN: For two years ahead?

Mr. MURPHY: For a very considerable period, anyhow, and he was not one of those who was trying to take any credit from the Premier with regard to his good intentions. No doubt, when he entered into that arrangement he believed he was doing a good thing for Queensland, and they ought to give him credit for his good intentions. His own opinion was that, as far as copper production was concerned, that agreement was not going to help to produce another ton of copper. The Premier, thinking otherwise, entered into the agreement, and if private enterprise wanted to make an arrangement for two years they were now in a position to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is not that a good thing?

Mr. MURPHY: He was not saying that it was a good thing or a bad thing; he had given the Premier credit for his good intentions in that respect.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A good market and a good price.

Mr. MURPHY: The market and the price were assured before the Premier ever left Queensland.

The PREMIER: That is not so, and that price is not assured to-day under any other arrangement.

Mr. MURPHY: The Federal Government had made all these arrangements.

The PREMIER: They had not. There is no arrangement made now to guarantee a price by the Federal Government, not for that period.

Mr. MURPHY: They could not beat a barrister for side-stepping.

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

Mr. MURPHY: He would take another five minutes. It would be interesting to learn whether the negotiations between the Government and the Chillagoe Company had finally ceased.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. MURPHY: There was a probability that the announcement which was made in the papers some months ago might have been true, while not exactly definite, that there might have been some agreement entered into by the Premier in London, and the debenture holders of the Chillagoe Company with regard to the purchase of that railway. Or if that arrangement was not entered into in London between the Premier and the debenture holders there might have been an arrangement for the purchase of that railway entered into between the Treasurer and the representatives of the Chillagoe Company in Melbourne. They had only to read the

newspapers carefully enough, and they could get most of the information which they sought. The Treasurer had paid a number of visits to Melbourne in connection with financial and other matters, and in one of the mining papers he noticed that the Treasurer had discussed the question of the Chillagoe Company during his visit to Melbourne. That might or might not be true. They could not believe everything they saw in the papers.

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to know, you have run a paper.

Mr. MURPHY: That was why he knew, and why he did not take so much notice of criticisms in the papers. It was the man who had been running a paper who [8 p.m.] knew for how little the criticism of a paper counted. Hon. members never heard him complain about criticism or moderate reporting in the papers. He just took it as it came. (Laughter.) As regards the paragraph that appeared in that mining paper, they might yet learn that the Government had already purchased the Chillagoe Company's railway, although every time he had referred to it during the present session some occupant of the front Treasury bench had vehemently denied the suggestion and led the House to believe, by inference, that negotiations with the Chillagoe Company had entirely ceased. They knew, and the Treasurer knew it too, that in all the district served by the Chillagoe railway things were pretty bad.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the vote.

Mr. MURPHY: That was quite easy. He was dealing with the two matters dealt with by the Premier during his trip to London. He dealt with the question of copper, and he was trying to get information as to whether the Government proposed to proceed with the purchase of the Chillagoe Railway. They knew that negotiations were carried on in London, and they believed also in Melbourne, and he was therefore trying to elicit information as to whether the Government were proposing to bring them to a conclusion one way or the other, and he was just pointing out to the Government that the district served by that railway was in a very depressed state at the present time. The smelters had been closed down for a considerable period. Copper propositions which were worked by the Chillagoe Company had been compelled to close down because of the want of finances of the Chillagoe Company, and he was sure it would be interesting to the people of the district, as well as to the people of Queensland generally, if the Government were in a position to make any statement with regard to the question. Of course, he thoroughly understood that if negotiations were still proceeding, the Premier possibly might meet his request with his usual reply—that the policy of the Government would be disclosed in due course.

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

Mr. CORSER: The present was a time when they might expect information "in due course." For instance, they might expect the Premier to give them the result of the muster at Mount Hutton. They were all part owners in the station, and it was only a fair thing that the information should be given before the cows calved again. Then, again, in "Elder's Journal" of Adelaide, he

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saw that the Queensland Government put through the Adelaide yards forty-six bullocks at an average price of over £19 a head. It would be interesting to know if those were the product of the Queensland stations, and whether they had received any privileges so far as exemption from the embargo was concerned, and whether it was the intention of the Government to trade across the border with Queensland cattle at a huge price when private individuals were hampered by their embargo. If that was so, would the people of Queensland be satisfied with the price they were receiving for their meat?

Mr. GUNN rose to a point of order. He was very anxious to discuss the question of meat and State stations, and everything connected with the question, and he would like to know whether the present was the proper time, or whether it ought to be done later when the amounts came up on the other Estimates?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the question might be more properly discussed on some other vote, but so far the hon. member for Burnett has not strayed very far from the question before the Committee.

Mr. CORSER: Would it be better to slaughter those cattle in Queensland and supply the State butchers' shops rather than send it away to other States and have to take meat from their meatworks which would otherwise be going away to the soldiers in the trenches? Was it good policy for the State to compete with cattle-growers in other States, thereby, no doubt, keeping up the price of meat in other States when they had plenty of use for the meat in Queensland, and so much had been said about the Premier doing all in his power to send as much meat as possible to the other side? They would like to have a plain and simple statement as to the policy of the Government and the cattle stations generally.

Mr. BOOKER: For six weeks or two months during the present session the aim of hon. members on the Opposition side had been to gather from the Premier what attitude, if any, he was prepared to take up in order to help the sugar-growers of Queensland to get out of the difficulties into which, through no fault of their own, they had been forced. The only occasion that the Premier had ever discussed the sugar question and its bearings on the prosperity of the industry had been in a political sense, and to some extent it gave the public a false impression. During the last Federal election when Mr. E. B. C. Corser and the Labour candidate, Mr. Thompson, were contesting Wide Bay, one of the burning questions at that time was the condition of the sugar industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think that a moment's reflection will convince the hon. gentleman that a discussion on the sugar question should take place on the appropriation for Agriculture and Stock.

Mr. BOOKER: The Premier had handled the sugar question right through and his remarks just now had a very close bearing upon the point he was going to emphasise later on. The Premier took a great deal of credit to himself for having entered into an obligation with the Prime Minister of Australia to commandeer the sugar crop of Queensland. That had been done. He put

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a question to the Premier that day, but unfortunately was not able to get an answer, which he hoped would come later on.

The PREMIER: You will get it on Tuesday.

Mr. BOOKER: It would be interesting if the Premier would give the House an explanation of the position as he knew it, as it would relieve the pressure in the industry very much. The only time the Premier gave any information about the industry was when he said that the growers and millers of Queensland had communicated with him by letter and personally, and thanked him for what he had done. That was so.

The PREMIER: And they asked me to do it again.

Mr. BOOKER: Conditions, however, subsequently altered the case. When the Premier entered into that undertaking to give £18 per ton for sugar, the industry was working under the Macnaughton award, and even under that award the judge was satisfied that the industry could not carry on. If the industry could not pay the rates fixed in the award, then there was nothing else for it to do but to drop out. Judge Macnaughton was satisfied that the industry would have great difficulty in carrying on. Subsequent to that the Premier, acting no doubt on the advice of his experts, took it on himself to enter into an arrangement to buy the 1916 crop for £18 per ton. Neither the Premier nor his advisers could see any distance ahead. The Treasurer was deeply interested in the industry because he was running several mills for the Government.

Mr. COLLINS rose to a point of order. Was the hon. member for Wide Bay in order in discussing the whole of the sugar question on this vote?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes, he is.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are not Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I informed the hon. member for Wide Bay a moment ago, that he was not in order in discussing the sugar question on this vote. I have given him some latitude, but I must ask him now to confine his remarks to the vote before the Chamber and other hon. members must do likewise.

Mr. BOOKER: The Premier was the responsible head of the Government and he was handling the sugar question. He must, therefore, carry the burden of any disabilities that took place in the industry. They were now discussing the salary of the Chief Secretary.

The PREMIER: No, my salary is in the schedule.

The CHAIRMAN: The salary of the Chief Secretary is provided for in the schedule. I call the hon. member's attention to the fact that he will have ample opportunity of discussing the sugar question on a subsequent vote. Such a discussion must more properly take place on the appropriation for the Agricultural and Stock Department. I ask the hon. gentleman to confine his remarks to the vote before the Committee.

Mr. BOOKER: They were discussing the expenses incurred by the Premier on his trip to London. The Hon. the Premier went through London and America on a specific issue. He went to London in connection with the price of sugar, and with the object of benefiting the selectors and farmers in the sugar district in Queensland. The hon. member's

determination was to so develop the sugar resources of Queensland that Queensland would be able in a year or two, like the copper proposition, to become fabulously rich. The people in the copper industry were to become fabulously rich and he was also going to make the sugar producers fabulously rich. The Premier ought to have had a bigger knowledge of affairs in Queensland than anyone else, and he should have had secret information as to certain action that was taken, because the Treasurer was identified with a certain corporation, and he knew that that corporation was going to raise the issue as to Judge Macnaughton's award.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is disregarding my ruling.

Mr. BOOKER: I have no desire to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: I have listened to the argument of the hon. gentleman. He is not in order in pursuing that line of argument. I again ask him to confine his remarks to the question before the Committee.

Mr. BOOKER did not desire to disagree with the Chairman's ruling, but the issue was such a grave one in the interests of the people involved, that the discussion had a wide bearing upon the issue. That was why they were unable to carry out what the Premier said they could carry out under present conditions. When the Premier was asked to answer certain specific questions in regard to the sugar industry, he repeatedly used that plagiarised term "the matter has been duly considered," or something of that sort. But there had been no information from the Premier at any time that gave to the sugar-growers and millers any indication of what the Government was about to do. For two or three months men interested in the industry had not known what they were going to do. The same thing applied also in connection with the meat export business. The Premier was subtle all the time. Members of the Opposition could get no information about the State cattle stations. The Government had involved the State to £600,000 or £700,000 already, and it was generally understood they were going up to a million of money in this direction. If the Premier was going in for cattle-raising, naturally the corollary was they would go in for sheep, goat, and pig-raising. The Premier and his friend Dr. Jekyll—it was Sunday, Mr. Hyde; Monday, Dr. Jekyll; Friday, Dr. Jekyll; Saturday, Mr. Hyde; no none knew who was responsible for the business of the country—whether it was the Premier or the Minister for Lands—those gentlemen, backed up by the supporters of the Government, had involved the State already to the extent of £700,000, and it was generally understood they intended to extend their operations, and possibly before they went out of power, in eighteen months, they would leave on the shoulders of the men who had to carry on subsequently great responsibility. The Government had entered into those undertakings without taking the House, or the country, into their confidence. Outside the junta nobody knew anything about the transactions. Two of those transactions, anyhow, had not been profitable. No man spending his own money with a view to working those properties profitably would put the amount of money into them that the Government had. Take Mount Hutton, for instance. He know the country pretty well. There were a certain number of cattle there

of a class that were no more worth £7 a head than the Premier was worth £2,000 a year to run a cattle station or any other kind of business. Those transactions had been discussed right through the pastoral circles of Queensland, by men who knew something about it, and he had never heard any man say that £7 5s. a head was a value that the Government should have given. It was "over the odds" altogether. It was an obligation on the Government—the Premier, or his collaborator in this business, Dr. Jekyll—should give the House and the people of Queensland, who were responsible for the money involved, the fullest information.

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

Mr. BOOKER: He would take a further five minutes. The Premier and the Minister for Public Lands should be absolutely candid about the transaction, so that the people would know exactly what the position was and the extent to which the country was involved. The same applied to the meat transactions. Possibly, on Tuesday he would put a question to the Minister for Public Lands to get a definite reply, but it was generally stated in circles that understood the business that the Government was involved to the tune of 1,500 tons of briskeet beef stocked in the cold stores in Queensland, some of it hawked about the Southern States, which they had purchased, or commandeered, at a price, and they could not sell it at that price. At the same time that meat was filling space in the cold stores that was making it further unprofitable, and when the transaction was completed it would prove to be very unprofitable. And who had to stand it? The general taxpayer. It was one of those many instances where the Government were not qualified to deal with these big commercial undertakings. The deeper the Premier was entering into these undertakings—controlling the production of the country, controlling the distribution of the products of the country—the loss to the general community would be the greater.

Mr. GUNN: He did not know the discussion would extend as far as it had on this particular vote, or he would have been better prepared. There were one or two things he would like some information about. One was this wonderful copper deal. They heard remarks about it in the papers, but surely to goodness it was important enough that they should have a statement from the Premier as to what had been done and what was going to be done. While the hon. member for Murrumba was speaking, the Premier asked if he had anything to do with a copper company. If so, he supposed he was to be ostracised under the Act the Premier was going to pass. It was therefore dangerous to say whether you were interested in a copper mine or not, for fear you would be thrown out of the House. He thought it all to a man's credit to be connected with anything that was going to put the industries of Queensland in a better condition. He was not a director, nor had he anything to do with any mine, unfortunately. (Laughter.) It was fortunate for himself but unfortunate for the State, because, if he had been in a mine, the State would have got his money, and he would have got the experience. He represented a district that had copper mines in it. The Premier said just now that some gentleman would agree to supply so many tons of copper to the Imperial

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Government on condition that he got certain railway connections. That was his trouble; he wanted railway connection.

Mr. KIRWAN: Where is the mine in your district—at Texas?

Mr. GUNN: There was a copper, lead, and silver mine at Texas. It was worked for twenty years with very good results. Before the war broke out, as they all knew, mixed ore was only bought by Germany, and since the war broke out that market was shut down, and now the mine was closed because it was not able to sell its products. Since then arrangements had been made in the old country whereby mixed ores could be got rid of in Great Britain. The Denham Government, in its wisdom, passed a railway—and it passed without a single dissentient voice through this Chamber—with the intention of keeping that mine going.

The PREMIER: How much copper can they produce per annum?

Mr. GUNN: It was not so much copper as lead. It was a mixed ore, but there was a considerable amount of lead, silver, copper, and zinc. There were thousands of tons of slag now at the surface, which, [8.30 p.m.] if the railway were there, could be smelted and the metal in it would be of great value to Great Britain at the present time. Other railways had been gone on with since that railway was passed. Not only would the construction of that railway open up the mine and reinstate a town of about 500 inhabitants, but it would open up for returned soldiers some of the finest country in Queensland, all Government land, and available for resumption at any time. The Government had turned that line down, and yet they were able to spend £500,000 in the purchase of cattle stations. If the Government had not purchased those stations the number of cattle would have increased just the same, fats would have been turned off just the same, and the Imperial Government would have got their share just the same, and the world would have been just as well off; whereas, if the railway to Texas had been constructed, a considerable amount more wealth would have been produced. The Government were putting money on the Estimates for State hotels, for insurance companies, and for all sorts of things, yet they neglected to construct a railway that would give communication to a town and reinstate a mine of untold wealth to the Commonwealth.

The graziers had found it very inconvenient for the Chief Secretary's Department to control the export of stock. The stock inspectors were employed by the Department of Agriculture, and when a grazier applied for permission to send stock out of the State he had to go to the Chief Secretary's Department, and often there was a great deal of delay in getting an answer. He knew of cases where cattle had been hung up three or four weeks along the border owing to the want of co-ordination between the two departments. It would be far better if the Chief Secretary's Department took over the control of the whole Stock Department or else the Agricultural Department left to control the whole thing. It was very difficult to get on with two masters. Although the price of stock had gone up, many settlers had lost a considerable number of stock owing to the drought, and the increased price

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of meat was not going to recompense them for what they had lost. He had a letter last week from a cocky in his electorate, who had lost practically three parts of his herd, and he wrote as follows:—

“This is the cow with the crumpled horn,
All the others are dead and gone;
The steer, the bullock, the bull, the stag,
Have wilted and died under union's rag.
Queensland's industry, export of beef,
Under union rule has come to grief;
And nothing is left of its riches now
But just one tuberculosis cow.
Pray, Mr. Red-rag Ryan and Co.,
Let us poor cattlemen kindly know,
Have we vainly struggled and come
through drought,
Just to get our final and last knock-out?
Will the greedy eye and the greasy hand
Of the unionist, settle the men on the
land:
Or will you give us some quick relief,
And let us get paid fair price for our
beef,
Or are we to end as I said just now—
Where the red rag waves o'er the last
dead cow?”

(Loud laughter.) When his constituents could write poetry like that, things were very serious with them. (Continued laughter.) The embargo on stock crossing the border was a very serious thing. The only market for the cattle along the border had been Adelaide. The people there had used that market ever since they took up their runs, but now it had been cut away from them and the whole of the cattle jammed through the American Meat Company down the river. Who was getting the benefit of that? The workers were getting good pay from the American Meat Company, and if they were going to pass out solicitors who acted on behalf of that company why should they not also pass out men who got employment from the company? Capital that came from America was just as good as capital that came from any other part of the world. They should all welcome capital, because capital was only stored wealth, and if they could introduce stored wealth into Queensland it would be a good thing for the State. Monopolies were a curse, but so far there had been no monopolies in Queensland or in Australia, with the exception of the tobacco monopoly, and the tobacco monopoly was thought no end of by the Labour party.

Mr. SWAYNE: When speaking previously he had endeavoured to elicit from the Premier some information as to how he proposed to put the sugar industry on an export basis.

Mr. MAY rose to a point of order. Were they to have a debate in regard to sugar going on everlastingly every day they came into the House?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will not be in order in discussing the sugar industry on this vote. I called the hon. member for Wide Bay to order for discussing that question.

Mr. SWAYNE said the matter he wished to discuss was in connection with the Premier's trip home. He had in his hand a paper published in London which showed the Premier's photograph as large as life, and he proposed to deal with the hon. gentleman's utterances on other subjects besides sugar. He wished to elicit from the Premier

what he did during his trip home, and he thought the report in the paper covered it. He was naturally very anxious to know how the Premier proposed to put the sugar industry on an export basis. According to the report the hon. gentleman said—

“Not only are our railways State owned, but we have our State sugar-mills, and the sugar industry is developing very rapidly. Questions affecting that industry are among those that I have come over to discuss with the Imperial Government.”

He just wished to ask the Premier what question in connection with the sugar industry it was desired to discuss with the Imperial Government—

“Within a year or two I anticipate that we shall increase our supply of sugar beyond the requirements of Australia. Queensland is also the main meat-producing State of Australia, and we were the first to place our entire meat export at the disposal of the Home Government on the outbreak of the war. We are undertaking the control of cattle runs with a view to cheapening the cost of living.

“In fact, we are extending State enterprise as far as we can go, because by that means alone can we get effective control of the ultimate cost of commodities to the consumer. We have started a State butcher’s shop, which has already had the effect of reducing the price of meat. Starting with one establishment, we have now four more at the principal centres, but we have not finished yet. If we remain in power we shall go a good deal further in that direction, and we shall soon have to consider the setting up of a commission to control these and other State enterprises.

“Then we have State sawmills, which have brought down the cost of timber for Government uses by 10 per cent., and for private consumers by 5 per cent., besides preventing a threatened rise in price all round. We have State insurance, a public trustee—we called him the ‘Public Curator’—and State coalmines. I hope it will not be long before we reach the State ownership of shipping. I think it would have been a good thing if the whole tonnage of Britain had been commandeered on the outbreak of the war. That would have kept down the scandalous high freights which now prevail here.”

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SWAYNE: As regards this advertisement of our socialistic policy, we were told that one of the objects of the hon. gentleman’s visit was to encourage the investment of private capital in Australia. We wanted to see our mines opened up, new enterprises started, and our resources developed; but were such utterances calculated to induce people to come to Australia and invest money on their own account? The hon. gentleman might have told the people of England in connection with State insurance that the Government had virtually confiscated the business of all competitors in one branch of that industry. As far as his utterance was an advertisement of Queensland as a field for the investment of capital, the hon. gentleman could not have been a worse advertisement to the old country. At any rate, he hoped the hon.

gentleman would tell the Committee how he proposed to put the sugar industry on an export basis.

Mr. BARNES: This vote had been very well discussed, but not too well or too fully discussed, because so many matters arose out of it. No one could cavil at the increased expenditure of something under £1,000 in connection with the vote. Nor did he cavil at the expenditure which took place last year when the vote was exceeded by £3,000, if the things which were indicated in the various speeches made by the Premier were realised. If business to the extent of £5,000,000 was going to result from the copper transaction, which the hon. gentleman said he had arranged, then the amount expended on that visit would be a mere flea-bite. What they desired to know was when that agreement was to take effect. If it was to culminate in two years, then about 25 per cent. of the time had already gone, and they were not aware as to whether any copper had yet left Queensland in fulfilment of the agreement. Was the country likely to be penalised in the event of failure to complete the contract? A contract had been entered into to supply a certain quantity of copper, and he should like to know what would be the result if that copper was not supplied. Was there any arrangement for a given quantity to be supplied per month. As far as hon. members knew, only one man had indicated that he could supply 5,000 tons per annum. Possibly other persons had made similar intimations, and it would be well if the House and the country were advised of any contracts which were likely to be entered into.

The PREMIER: For whose information do you want to know if there is a penalty attached? You want to know how far we can be squeezed, I suppose?

Mr. BARNES: Not at all.

The PREMIER: I did not make such an arrangement as that. I am not squeezable in this matter; your friends will not be able to squeeze me.

Mr. BARNES: That was just what he wanted to get out.

The PREMIER: Well, you can tell them that you cannot squeeze the Government of Queensland.

Mr. BARNES: The hon. gentleman had told him all he wanted to know. The Premier had an open order that if he could provide 48,000 tons of copper within a given period he could do so, but if he was not able to do that, the bargain would be off. Seeing that six months of the time had already elapsed, it followed that the 48,000 tons of copper had dwindled down to some 36,000 tons, and that the longer they were before they commenced to execute the order the less copper they would have to supply. That was what he wanted to know—not whether the Premier was squeezable or not. They knew that the hon. gentleman was not squeezable, and that he could be firm if he liked. The hon. member for Mirani, in referring to this matter, forgot to mention one thing, and that was that at the very time that the hon. gentleman was addressing people in England and telling them that they had altogether wrong ideas with regard to the Labour party, that that party was sometimes charged with confiscating things, and that it was foreign to

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the idea of the Government or the Labour party to do such naughty things—(Government laughter)—the whole of the accident insurance business of Queensland had been confiscated by the Government.

The PREMIER: Representatives of the insurance companies waited on me in London. They did not squeeze me, though. It doesn't matter, so long as you do not say they can squeeze me.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: They can squeeze you all right if they go the right way about it.

Mr. BARNES: Just a word or two about the meat business. They had been informed that certain business would result when the war was over in connection with the shipment of meat to America. Had any conditions been laid down with respect to that meat? Was it for the use of the people of America, or was it likely to find its way to Germany?

Mr. COLLINS: That is what happened when your party were in power.

Mr. BARNES: Nearly every week during the life of that Parliament the hon. member for Fitzroy had asked a question regarding the quantity of meat that was sent to America by the Denham Government, and which, the hon. member alleged, had found its way to Germany. That meat was sold prior to the war.

Hon. J. A. FHELLY: Seven million pounds left after the war.

Mr. BARNES: There was a sorry time coming for the Premier if the big driving force in the corner learned that the hon. gentleman was allowing meat from Queensland to find its way to Germany. He would leave the hon. gentleman to the tender mercies of the hon. member for Fitzroy, who blamed the previous Government for selling meat to America which ultimately found its way to Germany.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You ought to state what I did say. I said it was consigned to Germany, but was seized in London and confiscated by order of the Prize Court.

Mr. BARNES: It was sold to America; it might have been diverted thence to Germany; but he wanted to know if, in connection with the meat business that was to eventuate after the war, the country was properly protected, if the ideas of the hon. member for Fitzroy had been respected, or if there was any likelihood of the meat finally reaching Germany.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You can trust the Premier to take care of that.

Mr. GUNN: Early in the session he asked what amount of money was held by the Government in connection with cattle subject to the embargo on stock crossing the border. He was told that the case was sub judice, though he did not know what that had to do with it. After the case was decided he asked a question with reference to the money that the Government held in connection with the stock that had crossed the border, and he was asked to give notice for a return. He gave notice for a return, and he was still no further ahead. A considerable number of stock had gone over the

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border—not fat stock—some of them poor breeding ewes. In many cases people living in districts in New South Wales where the drought was much worse than it was in Queensland had sent their stock into Queensland for agistment, and, when they were being taken back to New South Wales the owners had to pay 10s. a head on their cattle and 6d. a head on their sheep. All that money was held by the Queensland Government, and he did not think it right that any money should be held by the Treasurer or by the Chief Secretary that did not appear in any of the Treasurer's returns. Whenever he had sought information on the subject he had been sidetracked, and, for all he knew, there might be enough money held by the Government in that way to account for the Treasurer's surplus.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: More.

Mr. GUNN: The people of Queensland were entitled to know how much money the Government held in that way. They ought to know whether the Government intended grabbing it and making use of it to show a profit on their State butchers' shops. Whatever use was to be made of it, the people of Queensland were entitled to know all about it.

The PREMIER: During a somewhat desultory discussion, hon. members opposite had discussed a great many matters which might have easily been discussed on other votes. However, he was glad to see that the Chairman gave hon. members the latitude he did, because it proved they had no criticism to level against the vote that was actually before the Committee. The leader of the Opposition had led off by asking about the copper arrangement which was made by him (Mr. Ryan) with the Imperial Government when he was in London. On several occasions he had made it perfectly clear—at all events, to the intelligent section of the electors of Queensland—what the nature of that arrangement was. He pointed out that when the Government came into power they were impressed with the fact that there were certain copper propositions in Queensland which were not being worked and which ought to be worked. The difficulty in getting them started was the absence of an assured market with a guarantee for a sufficiently long period at a satisfactory price. He made representations to the Commonwealth Government on the matter in August, 1915, and he received the reply that they would consider the matter.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: What! Is that where you learned the expression? (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Apparently, they had been considering it ever since. It was not until he went to London that he was able to make any arrangement in the direction the Government desired. They desired to have an assurance for persons who would produce copper that they would have an assured market for an extended period. In order to meet that desire the Imperial Government gave the necessary guarantee, covering a period of two years ending in September, 1918, at a price not exceeding £105 a ton.

Mr. FORSYTH: In London or here?

The PREMIER: C.i.f. London. They considered that that was the utmost extent to which they could go. They were desirous that as much copper as possible should be produced from British possessions in order to prevent the American copper [9 p.m.] kings from demanding exorbitant prices, which they were doing, and which they were still doing. He thought that £105 per ton of copper, c.i.f. London, was a reasonable price, even under the circumstances of the present time, and he did not think it should be the policy of any Government in overseas possessions to extract as much as they possibly could from the Imperial Treasury for the supply of material to carry on this war.

Mr. FORSYTH: Where is the copper?

The PREMIER: He was satisfied that if they put their shoulders to the wheel in Queensland that amount of copper could be supplied during the period mentioned; but, if they had some companies that were determined not to produce copper, they would not be able to do what he had set out to do.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You are ruining all the industries.

The PREMIER: He was satisfied that the arrangement had already had the effect of attracting a good deal of attention to the development of the propositions to which he had referred, and he was hopeful that when September, 1918, came round, Queensland would have supplied a great portion of that amount. (Hear, hear!) It was not suggested that Queensland was bound to supply 48,000 tons of copper, but that was the limit, and the part that was binding on the Queensland Government was that they would make reasonable efforts to see that the copper was produced from such propositions as he had referred to.

Mr. FORSYTH: What efforts have been made?

The PREMIER: He had made a good many efforts, but it was not open to him to make a statement with regard to some of them. He knew that hon. members opposite—who were really the mouthpieces of some of the copper companies in Australia—would be very anxious to know exactly what steps he had taken in regard to the matter. There had been quite a thirst on the part of hon. members opposite for information with regard to Chillagoe this evening. As far as Chillagoe was concerned, he just wanted to correct one misstatement that had come from hon. members opposite. Chillagoe did not close down on account of the war; Chillagoe was closed down before the war broke out, and the Chillagoe Company had intimated to the Queensland Government before the war broke out that they could not—and, moreover, that they would not—appeal to their shareholders for more capital; that they were looking to the Government to do its part. Certain negotiations have been carried on with respect to Chillagoe, and when these negotiations have been completed one way or the other, the Government would be prepared to make an announcement regarding them. He wished to add that with regard to copper, and with regard to Chillagoe, the Government were determined to see that the interests of the people of Queensland were protected in this matter.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Reference had been made to the question of the supply of meat for America, and to the dealings which were carried on by him while he was in the United States of America, from the time he landed at San Francisco to the time he left that city on his way back. The first question referred to by the leader of the Opposition was with regard to steel rails, and the hon. member suggested that he had said that he arranged for the supply of steel rails that were necessary for Queensland. He never made any such statement. The statement he made was quoted by the hon. member for Burnett, when he referred to a certain contract which was made by the late Denham Government, with regard to the supply of some thousands of tons of steel rails to the Queensland Government by the American Steel Corporation. He might say that the contract which was made by the late Government with the American Steel Corporation was against the advice of the Queensland engineers in London, who were in favour of giving the contract to a British firm. However, a contract was made, the war broke out, and there was some difficulty with regard to the obtaining of freight to bring those rails to Queensland, and the American Steel Corporation made certain requests to the Government with regard to an allowance on the freight that would have to be paid to bring the rails to Queensland. One of those requests was received in Queensland after he sailed from Sydney. A communication came from London to the Acting Premier—Mr. Theodore—and he communicated with him (Mr. Ryan) by cable to San Francisco in regard to the matter—that was as to the request of the American Steel Corporation to allow them £1 11s. 6d. per ton extra freight on those rails. They said it was costing them twice that amount in extra freight, and they were asking the Queensland Government to pay half. He received that cable when he landed in San Francisco, also a telegram from the President of the American Steel Corporation in New York, advising him that the Vice-President would call upon him with regard to the matter. He told that gentleman that the corporation had made a contract at a price, and the Queensland Government expected them to carry it out. The Vice-President informed him that a steamer—the "Westmeath," he thought—was lying at New York, with space to load those rails for Queensland, but they were not loading them until they knew whether the Queensland Government would agree to the proposed alteration of the arrangement. He (Mr. Ryan) informed him that the Queensland Government expected them to load the rails, if the space was there, and they would have to leave the question of the extra freight to be decided afterwards. When he went to New York, the representative of the Steel Corporation saw him there. In the meantime, those rails had been shipped on that steamer for Queensland, and were landed at Rockhampton. There was no allowance by the Queensland Government on account of any extra freight; the American Steel Corporation were held to their contract. That was the whole matter with regard to steel rails in America. He saw that they carried out their contract in every detail. The Opposition had now got some information which they did not wish to elicit, that was the fact that the late Government made that contract

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with the American Steel Corporation, against the advice of their own engineer in London, who wanted to give it to a British firm.

Mr. FORSYTH: A very good thing—we got the rails all the same—was it not? (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: It was just as well to know that the late Government, instead of giving a contract to a British firm gave it to the American Steel Corporation—against the advice of their own officers

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The arrangement with regard to inducing the Oceanic Steamship Company to make Brisbane a port of call had been referred to. Before he left Brisbane he expressed the opinion that Brisbane should be made the first port of call and the last port of departure on the San Francisco-Australia mail service, because Queensland was nearer to San Francisco than Sydney. He was under the impression the leader of the Opposition had stated that he should not have to go to Sydney to get on board a steamer to San Francisco, but that he should be able to get on board at Pinkenba. He went into the question when in San Francisco with the representative of that company. But before he referred to that, he might say that for some months before he left, the representative of the company in Sydney contended that the Queensland Government should pay £1,000 per steamer in the way of subsidy to induce the company to make Brisbane a port of call. The Government were against the policy of granting subsidies, and consequently would not entertain that proposal. When he went to San Francisco he discussed it with the company there and they advised him that they were under a contract to occupy only a certain number of days in going from San Francisco to Sydney, calling at Honolulu and Pango Pango, and unless they could get an additional day added to the contract time, they would not be able to make Brisbane the first and last port of call. They also referred to the fact that they would require subsidies for the additional mileage at the same rate at which they received subsidies from the United States Government on their outward run to Sydney. On his way back he went to Washington for the specific purpose of seeing the United States Postmaster-General, Mr. Burleson. He saw him personally and explained the position—that Brisbane was the nearest port to San Francisco, and that it would shorten the mail trip from London via San Francisco by a day, and asked him if he would make those concessions to the company. He promised that they would grant the extra day and that he was favourable to granting them two dollars a mile subsidy on the extra mileage, which would run into something like £200 per steamer. All those things were done on account of the representations which he made at Washington. When that was reported to the company they said that, whether they did it immediately or not, there was no doubt that in a very short time, in view of those concessions, they would make Brisbane a port of call. Since his return they had again taken up the matter, with the suggestion that the proposed £1,000 subsidy should be reduced to £500. That also had been declined by the Government, but the company pointed out that it would only be necessary

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whilst the war was on, because afterwards they would get sufficient trade to enable them to make Brisbane the first and last port of call. He was hopeful that it would not be very long before they would find those ships coming into Pinkenba. The only other remark he wished to make in regard to that matter was that they were not a German-Dutch line. They were an American line subsidised by the United States Government to carry mails, and if they were good enough to carry mails from San Francisco to Sydney, surely they were good enough to call in at Brisbane and carry passengers and cargo and mails to and from Queensland. It would mean a large increase in the number of passengers, which would benefit Brisbane to a considerable extent. They would also be able to take cargo away, of wool or meat, direct to San Francisco. And he believed that in Honolulu there was a good market for meat and also for dairy produce. So far as meat was concerned, he pointed out when in London, that the whole of their meat supplies from Queensland were to be for the use of the Imperial Government. He never suggested that they should have a trade in meat with America while the war was on. He knew that the British Government wanted it for the use of the Imperial troops, and the civilian population. The only exception was in regard to meat supplied to the United States troops in the Philippines. Hon. members seemed so full of the subject that was discussed by the House on the previous day, the question of excluding representatives of monopoly and alien companies from seats in Parliament, that they contended that because that was the attitude of the Government, the Government should also be against having any trade with the United States of America. He would like to point out for the information of hon. members that there was a very vast difference between encouraging trade in meat from Queensland to San Francisco, if they had a surplus, and allowing the beef trust to govern them.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It was an entirely different matter to allow the representatives to have a seat in Parliament and use their advantage in the House for the purpose of gaining advantages for the companies they represented.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Whitewash!

The PREMIER: It was not a case of whitewashing. He had made certain charges in the House that certain persons were the representatives of monopolies and alien companies. There was nothing to be proved, because hon. members opposite had admitted it. They had, in fact, taken up the attitude that they were going to defend it. Of course, they would not give their real reasons—because it was likely to cut into their friends and the people they represented. For example, the leader of the Opposition last night was moving a lot of amendments on the Insurance Bill, and he had a whole brief by his side prepared on behalf of insurance companies. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee spoke on behalf of co-operative companies. It was a remarkable confession of inconsistency that saw no difference between advocating trade between a great Commonwealth like Australia and a great Commonwealth like America, and allowing the American

Beef Trust to rule them in Parliament. The hon. member for Mirani referred to the question of sugar. When he was in London he took advantage of any suitable opportunity to bring before the people the vast resources and great opportunities that were afforded in Queensland for settlement. The hon. member for Mirani had read out some of his remarks from a journal. He would find that he said in London exactly what he had heard from him when he was sitting in Opposition, and what he had heard when he was sitting on the Government benches. There was no difference. He was showing what the policy of the Government was, and what the resources of Queensland were. The occasions on which he referred to sugar were occasions when they were considering the whole policy of the trade relations inside the Empire, and he advocated that they should endeavour to get markets within the Empire, because they had the experience when war broke out that Germany at once prohibited the export of any sugar, in order to starve out Great Britain. He therefore contended that within the British Empire they should develop as much sugar land as would be able to maintain the Empire with sugar.

Mr. SWAYNE: You mean, to put it on a good footing.

The PREMIER: He was advocating that the Empire should not be caught in the same position in which she was caught at the outbreak of war by allowing herself to be dependent on Germany as a sugar producer. He pointed out that in Queensland an extra 250,000 tons of sugar could easily be produced annually.

Mr. SWAYNE: Under good government.

The PREMIER: Under good government, such as they had at present. (Hear, hear!) Everybody knew that it was only after the present Government came into power that any stable market was found for the sugar-grower in Australia, and an arrangement was made with the Commonwealth Government whereby the whole of the sugar crop of Queensland was made available at a better price than it had been made available before for the whole of the Commonwealth. An arrangement was entered into at the request of the growers and millers themselves, who thanked the Government for having made the arrangement, and asked them to make a similar arrangement again. (Hear, hear!) The Government did just exactly what they were asked to do, and they were taking the same action with regard to the wheat farmers as they had taken with regard to the sugar farmers. They said to the wheat farmers, "Tell us what you want and we will do it. We will give you assistance." They were told by hon. members opposite that they were opposed to the man on the land, and that they did not consider the man on the land at all, but here they had an instance in regard to wheat when they told the farmers to come to some conclusion themselves, then come to the Government and ask for assistance, and the Government would help them in the same way as they had helped those in the sugar industry. The Government intended to continue to adopt that policy, notwithstanding the charges that might be levelled against them by hon. members opposite. After all, they were there representing the people of Queensland, and they must not take any notice of the little pinpricks

levelled at them by the Opposition, or the bricks fired at them by hon. members opposite. They must not forget that they were there representing the interests of the whole of the people of Queensland. He was satisfied that they would benefit the people in that way again. They had been asked about the sale of cattle in South Australia. All he could say in regard to that was that the Governments of the other States and the Commonwealth were anxious to obtain meat from Queensland. The Commonwealth Government wanted it for the troops, and 4,000 tons of meat was supplied for the use of the Australian troops under contract to the Commonwealth Government by the Queensland Government. The Government of South Australia had been most anxious to be supplied with meat, and they had allowed a certain number of cattle—he did not remember how many—to be sent to South Australia for the use of the South Australian Government. It was not possible for the Government to allow private individuals to promiscuously send cattle over the border to the other States, because there was no control over it, but they could easily control it when it was a matter of one Government dealing with another. The most important feature of the whole of the stock embargo business was the attitude of the friends of hon. members opposite—the Pastoralists' Association—the gentlemen who were prepared to make every sacrifice for the Empire when the Meat for Imperial Uses Bill was passed. Their representative in the Legislative Council said, "We know that the markets of the other States will be closed to us, but that is a sacrifice that we ought to be prepared to make." At that time they did not think that there was going to be any sacrifice, because the price of cattle was so high that they did not think that it would go much higher. However, as soon as the price of cattle went up in the South the members of the Pastoralists' Association clubbed together, and through a widow, they brought an action against the Queensland Government to have the embargo placed on stock crossing the border declared illegal. Whenever the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company came up for discussion in Parliament they were always told about some widows who held shares in the company. These poor widows were always referred to when they wanted to protect the corporations and monopolies and alien companies. The same policy was carried out with regard to the stock embargo, and a widow brought an action against the Government. The lady was possessed of some property near the South Australian border. He congratulated her on the fact that the costs of the case would not fall on her. He should be sorry indeed if the costs of that very expensive lawsuit did fall upon her. He was glad to hear that the Pastoralists' Association were behind her, and that they would pay the costs incurred. He was satisfied that if the learned judge who tried the case had had ample evidence that she would have to pay her own costs then he would not have given costs against her, and the Queensland Government would not have asked for costs against her. (Hear, hear!) But, because the Pastoralists' Association, those patriots they heard so much about, who were prepared to make such a great sacrifice, that body of rich men, came forward in that secret way to attack the Government, the Government asked for costs and they got them. (Hear, hear!) He did not think he

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had anything further to say in regard to the meat matter. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee asked if the expenses of the Premier's trip to England were included in the incidental expenses. He could assure the hon. gentleman that that was so. The hon. member for Burnett brought up the question of the public servants working an extra half-hour each day from 4.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. It was well known that certain members of the public service had been called up for service, and the work had to be carried on just the same. Everybody knew that when a person was called into camp the principle established by the Commonwealth Government and other State Governments since the beginning of the war was that the person called up must rely on his military pay. He could not draw pay from the State Government or Commonwealth Government and military pay as well. There must be only one pay, and consequently no explanation was needed as to why these men did not receive pay from the State during the period they were called up.

Mr. FORSYTH: You had the amount on the Estimates just the same last year.

The PREMIER: With regard to the extension of the half hour for work, he was glad to be able to tell the House and the people of Queensland that the General Officers' Association and the Professional Officers' Association of the public service considered the question of working an extra half hour from 4.30 to 5 p.m. at a meeting of the two associations when it was resolved "That the action of the Government be acquiesced in without any remuneration." (Hear, hear!)

Mr. FORSYTH: That's all right.

The PREMIER: Did anyone suggest that at such times as they were passing through that people should not be prepared to rise to an emergency such as this and work an extra half hour in order to do the work that was necessary for carrying on the public works of the State? He was very glad that the public servants themselves were able to realise that, and he was sorry that an hon. member on the opposite side should be prepared to get up and say something he did not believe in in order to gain a little political capital from the public servants.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. TOLMIE: He wanted some further information from the Premier with regard to his visit to England and America. He did not charge the Chief Secretary with having done anything out of the way in relation to the steel rail business in America.

The PREMIER: But you find that I did do something out of the way by keeping them to their contract.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He did not know that the Premier had done anything out of the way at all. Here was his own statement—

"One of my principal missions in San Francisco was in connection with the importation of steel rails from America to the State of Queensland and the two contracts made by the late Administration there."

Judging from what the hon. gentleman said,

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with regard to the important mission to San Francisco and the steel rails contract, it took place when the hon. gentleman was half-way across. It met him when he arrived in San Francisco. Yet he wanted the Committee to believe, and the public to believe, that this matter had arisen before he left Queensland. Later on, what did the hon. gentleman say here—

"I think it now possible that the grievances which have arisen will be speedily removed and that the contract will be carried out satisfactorily."

That was some trouble that arose after the Premier had left Queensland, and because he happened to be passing through, the Acting Premier asked him to inquire into the matter and settle it. But the hon. [9.30 p.m.] gentleman adopted quite a different attitude in relation to the matter. He wanted the public of Queensland to believe that the late Government had done something that was inimical to the State of Queensland, and that it was his grand mission to go across to America to settle all those difficulties. The hon. gentleman also took a certain amount of credit to himself and to his Government in relation to what he had done in the copper business. They did not know a short time ago that the copper business was of such supreme importance that it had now turned out to be. When the Premier returned he did not tell the people of Queensland of what importance copper was and what possibilities lay before the people of Queensland in that respect. Let them see what the position was. The quantity of copper produced in Queensland in 1915, according to the "ABC Statistics," was 19,704 tons. In the year before that the production was 18,436 tons, and in the year before that 23,655 tons were produced, which was the greatest production that had taken place in Queensland during the last ten years. That was not equal to the amount that the hon. gentleman said he had made provision for. The people who were dealing with copper mining made their own arrangements in regard to the rest of the output, but what they expected from the Premier after what he had told them was that the Government were going to do something to induce the people to put their capital into the copper business in order that there might be increased production.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is what they are doing.

HON. J. TOLMIE: That was exactly the thing they were not doing. Every act of the Government had been in the direction of destroying the confidence of those engaged in enterprises of various kinds. That being so people would not invest in enterprises, and the result was the depression in Queensland to-day.

Mr. KIRWAN: Did you read the Statistician's report?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He had read the report issued by the Secretary for Public Works on the 10th of last month dealing with the industries in the State of Queensland, and pointing out how gloomy the position was and how many thousands of men were finding a difficulty in getting employment. One of the things they expected the Premier was

going to do by the action he had taken in relation to copper was to relieve the distress in Queensland. The Premier told them that he went home and made an arrangement with the Imperial Government to take 24,000 tons of copper at a price which at the present time was below the market price. The Imperial Government would have the advantage of a lower price than the market price, and if during the next two or three years the market price fell then it would only equalise matters. What the Premier had to do was to produce the copper, and that he had not done; and he had not shown that the Government were in any way going to assist those engaged in the industry. If he did not do that all else he had done was simply failure. The Government were posing before the country and saying, "We are doing things to induce you to develop the State of Queensland," when nothing of the kind was being done. The matter in connection with the sugar industry was just as great a failure as all other matters the hon. gentleman had endeavoured to deal with. The production was not what it ought to be, and those engaged in the industry were unable to carry it on, and for months and months the Premier had seen the sugar industry wilting; he had seen those who put their all in the industry struggling to find bread for their families, and, although the Government might have interposed and done something for the sugar-growers, they had remained inactive the whole of the time, and then the hon. gentleman came to the Chamber and said, "Look what we did in regard to the sugar industry. Look what we did in regard to copper. Are not we the producers' friends?" There were not three producers in ten in Queensland who would have any consideration for the Government or any of their supporters if they had an opportunity of dealing with them.

Question put and passed.

AGENT-GENERAL FOR THE STATE.

The PREMIER moved that £14,960 be granted for "Agent-General for the State." There was a decrease in the vote of £830, which was principally due to the decreased amount spent in advertising. There were some small increases in accordance with regulations.

Mr. FORSYTH said, although there was a decrease shown on the Estimates according to what was voted last year, that was not so far as the amount expended was concerned, as last year the Government did not spend anything like the amount voted. They only spent £12,000 instead of £15,000 as voted. When discussing the matter last year he had said it was a great mistake to spend money in advertising Queensland while the war was on, and he was pleased to see that his advice had been acted on. Although £4,500 was put on the Estimates last year for advertising, only £1,800 had been spent, and still the Government put £3,000 on the Estimates for advertising this year. What was the good of advertising at the present time, more especially in connection with immigration? They did not want any immigrants, and the Government should wait till the war was over before advertising, and thereby save a considerable sum of money.

Mr. D. RYAN: Do you object to it being cut down?

Mr. FORSYTH: No, he did not; he said the vote should be wiped out.

The PREMIER: It will not be used, probably.

Mr. FORSYTH: Then, why on earth was the amount on the Estimates?

The PREMIER: You must leave a proper margin.

Mr. FORSYTH: The money should not be spent, because we did not want to advertise the State at the present time as far as immigration was concerned. We should as far as possible cut out immigration until the war was over, when, no doubt, a great many people would want to come here, and he would not object to seeing money voted to bring them to the State. According to the Auditor-General, Victoria cut down this vote to £1,200 last year, and New South Wales spent only £1,700.

At a quarter to 10 p.m.,

Mr. FOLEY relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. FORSYTH: A number of people who were engaged in the war would naturally want to get back when the war was over to the billets they previously occupied, but a great many of those people would want to come to Australia, and he should be very glad to see them come here. However, he would not continue the discussion of this matter, as he understood the Premier wished to adjourn the House.

The PREMIER: No discourtesy was intended to the hon. member for Murrumba in the desire to adjourn. He would point out that the hon. member would have an opportunity of referring to immigration on a subsequent vote.

Mr. FORSYTH: It's all right.

Question put and passed.

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

FISH SUPPLY BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they invited the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered that the message be taken into consideration on Tuesday next.

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they invited the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered that the message be taken into consideration on Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at six minutes to 10 o'clock.

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