

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 1 AUGUST 1918

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on the pretext of securing employment in the sugar industry in Bundaberg and the Isis districts?

"2. Is it a fact that a number of these men have been stranded through unemployment, whilst others have not earned more than 3s. per day?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"1. The Fairymead Company engages its labour independently of the Government exchanges. I am informed that Mr. Brand has this season engaged sixty-seven men outside of Bundaberg, of whom forty-nine were engaged in Brisbane and eighteen in Toowoomba.

"2. I have not been able to obtain any information on this matter."

PAPER.

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

The thirty-fourth annual report of the inscription and issue of stock, under the provisions of the Queensland Stock Inscription Act.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3).

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the HON. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*), this Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

SUBVENTION OF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT.

On the motion of Mr ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*), it was formally resolved—

"That in view of the beneficial results following the passing of the Subvention of Friendly Societies Act in New South Wales, this House is of opinion that consideration should be given to this matter with the object of assisting the aged and permanently sick members of friendly societies in Queensland."

INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FREE CONFERENCE—CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S MESSAGE OF 30TH JULY, SUGGESTING A FREE CONFERENCE ON THIS BILL.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—That the following message be returned to the Legislative Council:—

"Mr. President,—

"The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Council, of date 30th July, requesting a free conference on the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Agree to the proposal contained in the message.

"The Legislative Assembly have appointed the Hon. T. J. Ryan and the Hon. E. G. Theodore as managers to represent them at such free conference, and they name 12 o'clock noon on Friday, 2nd instant, as a convenient hour at which to meet, if it will suit the convenience of the managers of the Legislative Council."

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 1 AUGUST, 1918.

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

QUESTION.

EMPLOYMENT IN SUGAR INDUSTRY.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. How many men have been induced by Mr. F. R. Brand, representing the Fairymead Sugar Company, to leave the Downs and other parts of Queensland

[*Hon. A. J. Jones.*

BRISBANE TRAMWAY FARES BILL.

To BE CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE.

On this order being read,

The PREMIER (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Barcoo*) said: I beg to move—That consideration of this order (No. 3) be postponed until after the consideration of orders Nos. 4 and 5, to meet the convenience of the Home Secretary.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Toowong*): I trust the hon. member will consider the position in which the Opposition may be placed by the alteration of the order in which the business is proposed to be taken, if necessary.

The PREMIER: Oh, yes.

Question put and passed.

DINGO AND MARSUPIAL
DESTRUCTION BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*): I rise for the purpose of moving the second reading of this Bill. It will be seen by the title that a change has been made, seeing that the Bill intends to devote very much greater attention to the destruction of the dingo because of the fact that the marsupials invite destruction themselves in consequence of the value of their skins; and, moreover, even a dog's skin, as well as the dingo's skin, now has some commercial value. It is a well-known fact that, in sheep districts, dogs are committing very great destruction. Rabbits and dogs are worse now than at any previous time in the history of the State. I am also advised of that fact by the Wool Expert of the department, Mr. W. G. Brown, who says the general opinion in sheep districts is that dogs are now doing more harm than at any previous time during the last twenty-five or thirty years. During the whole of the time the marsupial boards have been in existence—since 1877—they have raised by assessments no less a sum than £728,108, and have paid bonuses on scalps at various rates.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I wish the hon. gentleman would speak a little louder. I cannot hear him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am sorry if I cannot make myself heard, by reason of the buzz of conversation that is going on.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. gentleman said he could not hear me. I thought I was speaking in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was not your fault.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Whilst that large amount has been raised by assessment of the stockowners by the various marsupial boards, the endowment paid by the State Government during that time amounted to approximately £300,000, or 40 per cent. of the money so raised. To show that there is really no need for boards, or for paying scalp fees on marsupials, we do not make it compulsory; it is optional for them to pay if they choose, as there is no need for it. There are already thirteen boards which will not pay a bonus on wallabies, and twenty boards also which do not

pay on the smaller marsupials, such as paddymelons, bandicoots, and kangaroo rats, so that I really do not think that any grievance can be set up owing to the fact that the Bill does not compel the boards to pay scalp fees on marsupials. Now, I think it has been generally acknowledged that, by reason of the high value of the skins, there is no need to make it compulsory; but if boards are so inclined, and desire to encourage people to come along and extinguish, if possible, the marsupials, they will pay whatever bonus they please. Some newspaper comments have been recently made with regard to this Bill. How the gentleman in question arrives at the opinion he expresses I do not know—at all events, he has made two or three blunders. In his letter—which I will not refer to unless hon. members opposite desire—for example, he states that the whole State will not be brought under the Bill. Now, such words do not occur in that way—that the whole State will not be brought under the Bill; there is nothing said about that, because the boards already remain under the Bill itself; it gives the Governor in Council power to establish dingo boards, which is the new name by which they have to be known in any part of the State. The critic is, therefore, somewhat wide of the mark when he says that no provision has been made in that regard. At the present time there are no boards in the coastal districts at all. There were at one time, but they dropped out, as they did not care about the job. North of Townsville there are no boards at all. The most northerly ones are Cloncurry and Dalrymple. In that wide stretch of country the whole of the Gulf country is practically devoid of any organised attempt at dealing with this pest. But it fortunately happens that the Gulf country does not seem to be a good ground for the dingo; it does not thrive there; the climate, perhaps, does not suit him, or it may be that he cannot get a variety of diet, and is left entirely to live on young calves, as he cannot get young sheep; but where he cannot get young calves, it is known to the dairymen that the dingo is doing very serious damage. During the past three weeks I have been informed of instances occurring on the North Coast line between Brisbane and Gympie, where valuable young calves are frequently destroyed by the dingo.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They have been killing yearlings on the Pilton Estate, to my knowledge.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Possibly, as I have said, the absence of the sheep will drive the dingo on to the cattle. I think everyone will acknowledge that Mr. Brown, the Agricultural Department's Sheep and Wool Expert, is a man who knows pretty well what he talks about when he makes a report in regard to dingo destruction. He tells me that—

"From 1894 to 1897 Boatman Station, on the Nébine, suffered huge losses in sheep from dogs. The owner netted-in the holding with a dog-proof fence, and started to kill the dogs within that fence. I know that for some time the average number of dogs killed by scouters reached 145 per month, so within three years dogs became very scarce. This is an area of about 1,100 square miles. These two instances show that

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the pest may be reduced to a minimum by systematic destruction of the animals."

Now, hitherto the assessments have been absurd; that is to say, the money which the boards have raised has not been sufficient in many cases to enable them to do anything. There was no business in the thing at all. The thought has frequently occurred to me that the best way of handling this subject might be to wipe out the boards altogether, and throw the whole onus on the stockowner, but I am not venturing to go that length just now. The hon. member for Drayton need not be alarmed because I have fallen short of that. I have, therefore, brought in this Bill to try and continue, or rather improve, the existing system, and to make some effort to cause a desire on the part of the boards to carry out the work for which they have been created. The particulars of the assessments, which I will quote for the information of hon. members, show that in some parts of the country they do not regard it as of any importance at all. In a perfunctory sort of way they carry on a marsupial board, but the secretary acts, in many cases, as a factotum to the pastoralists in the district, but as to gripping the thing in a business-like way in order to do some good, they seem to be at a loss to rise to the occasion.

I will now give figures showing the variety of assessments made by these boards, and it may be admitted that in cattle districts there is no need to raise so much money as there is in sheep districts. The following assessments were levied by the various boards, covering a period of three years, 1915-16-17. These assessments were on every 20 head of horses and cattle or 100 sheep—

	s.	d.
Adavale	4	6
Aramac	0	6
Barcoo	2	9
Belyando	2	3
Booringa	7	6
Boulia	—	—
Bulloo	2	0
Bungil	7	6
Burnett	1	0
Camooweal	—	—
Clermont	5	0
Cloncurry	—	—
Condamine	8	3
Dalrymple	1	6
Darling Downs	2	0
Dawson	3	2
Diamantina	1	3
Gregory	—	—
Hughenden	1	0
Leichhardt East	3	0
Leichhardt South	3	0
Mitchell West	0	6
Paroo	5	3
St. George	1	8
Warrego	6	3
Western Downs	—	—
West Moreton	2	0
Windorah	1	3
Tambo	3	0

That has a very important bearing on the business, and this Bill insists, as far as practicable, on compulsory assessments of 1s. 6d for 25 head of cattle, or an equivalent number of sheep, taking five sheep to one head of cattle—that is, 25 head of cattle or 125 sheep; 1s. 6d. is the minimum assessment, and they can go up to 5s. at their own sweet will. If they propose to go beyond 5s., they

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merely have to obtain the consent of the Minister, which I am quite sure the House will readily agree to. It will make the minimum assessment higher than the present assessment, which is only 6d., trebling it, really, and also make a level rate on the dogs and foxes. Hitherto, it may be interesting information to the House to hear that in some places—

Mr. ROBERTS: It says 6s. in this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I made inquiry before I left the office, and I was told 5s. A mistake has evidently been made.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: A very small matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: As the hon. member says, a very small matter. Now, with regard to the only compulsory scalp fee which is put on dingoes—which, of course, includes foxes—at the beginning of the Bill, making a level rate throughout the State of £1 per head, which is the minimum rate, the fox need not necessarily be paid for at the same rate as the dog. It is well known it does not go above £1, but you can jump the dog fees, if you like, up to £3 3s., or £5, but you are not bound thereby to make the fox the same. You cannot, however, go below the minimum of £1 in either case. I have been advised that on some of the Downs country the foxes are doing incalculable harm. They attack very valuable young lambs. They do not kill one lamb and eat it, but they perhaps kill three or four, and do not bother about devouring their carcases. I think that very great improvement can be made in the administration of the law on the matter by the change now proposed to be made—that is, making a minimum rate of £1 per head on dogs and foxes.

To show how they have arrived at the present rate in this regard, eleven boards are now paying £1 per head or more. That is to say, in districts where the boards have risen to the occasion, and realised how important it is that these dingoes should be destroyed, they not only pay from the fund of the board itself the sum of £1 5s. per head as a scalp fee on dogs, but the adjoining station-owners throw in £1 and £2 on every dog. Sometimes a certain dingo gets to be known; he becomes so destructive and cunning that they would give almost anything to get rid of him.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Over £25 or £30.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Eight or ten stations put in a couple of pounds apiece, so that the man who brings that dog to earth and takes it into the receiver, profits very well by the transaction. The eleven boards which have a bonus of £1 per head are—Adavale, Aramac, Barcoo, Booringa, Cloncurry, Gregory, Hughenden, Mitchell West, Paroo, Warrego, Windorah. I suppose because they have a large number of sheep. Strange to say, in other places they do not offer so much, though they also have sheep. The other boards pay as follows:—

	s.	d.
Belyando, Clermont, Condamine...	15	0
Boulia, Dalrymple, Dawson, Tambo, Western Downs	10	0
Leichhardt South, St. George	7	6
Bulloo, Bungil, Burnett, Darling Downs, Diamantina, Leichhardt East, West Moreton	5	0

For foxes, eight boards pay £1 scalp bonus.

eight pay 15s.—I need not read their names again, because they are some of the names I have read—two pay 7s. 6d., and ten pay 5s. Where a district has a large number of cattle, they do not bother so much about foxes; they make a small levy, with the result, in many cases, that in an adjacent sheep district where they have a scalp fee of £1 the enterprising scalper, wherever he kills dogs in the neighbourhood, brings them along to the place where he gets the highest scalp fee. If every district, whether it be a cattle or sheep district, is required to pay the scalp fee of £1, I think it will be better for all concerned. There was a letter in the paper, and as I may be questioned on it, and will not be permitted to speak again on the second reading, I think it would be as well if I referred to what the writer said.

Mr. CORSER: Is that Mr. Francis?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The letter is dated 9th July, and appeared in yesterday's "Courier." Mr. Francis says—

"I notice that the Government is introducing a Dingo Bill, presumably in response to representations made on the subject last year. If this is so, as spokesman of the deputation which laid the matter before the Minister, I can only say that every vital principle in the scheme then formulated, which embodied the ideas of practical men arrived at after long and careful consideration, and which I maintain was a thoroughly practical solution of the difficulty, has been omitted from the present Bill, and that as a means of combating the dingo menace the proposed new Bill is absolutely valueless."

That is a very strong expression of opinion on the part of Mr. Francis. I may say that Mr. Francis lives out in the Warrego district, and no doubt he is very sorely troubled by dogs, and would like to compel the people in the Gulf country and the Northern cattle country to pay the same assessment as he is compelled to pay on the Warrego; but I cannot see my way to do that. It would be very unfair to ask the people in the Gulf country to pay as much for the destruction of the dingo as in a district where they are doing so much harm, and are in such larger numbers. He went on to say—

"The vital points I refer to as having been omitted are: No provision is made for the compulsory formation of boards for the whole of Queensland."

As I said a moment ago, the power resides in the Bill, in clause 4, for the Governor in Council to proclaim any part of Queensland a district for the erection of a dingo and marsupial destruction board.

[4 p.m.] And the Bill contains power also to add to the districts of existing boards. Of course, the powers of existing boards will descend on the new boards, but the Governor in Council has power to add to any district which he may think desirable, and take from one territory and add it to another, so that that objection is fully met in that way. He went on to say—

"The vital points I refer to as having been omitted are: No provision is made for the compulsory formation of boards for the whole of Queensland. No provision is made for the constitution of a central

board to receive all assessments and distribute such as required by the different local boards."

I do not see any necessity whatever for any central board. Every board carries on its business according to its needs. It makes a higher assessment on sheep and cattle if it requires large funds to pay for the large number of scalps that are presented. In other districts, where the liability is not so great, they will, of course, make whatever assessment will meet their needs, and therefore, in my opinion, there is no necessity whatever for the formation of a central board, as suggested by this gentleman. He brought the matter fully before me on the occasion of the deputation I referred to, and I think he spoke for nearly an hour; in fact, I was so impressed by his talking ability that I told him he would probably make a good leader of the Opposition—it was at a time when they were in some doubt as to whether they would make any change or not in that position.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You did not say "Minister for Agriculture"?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not. I think I have met all the points that may be raised, without going any further into the objections raised by that gentleman, and there is no need for me to prolong my remarks at any great length. The Bill has already been discussed, because last session a Bill on somewhat similar lines was introduced, practically on the same lines, with one or two variations and with this great difference, however: that the altered minimum rate for scalps was then fixed at 15s. But experience has shown, from inquiries that have been industriously made throughout the length and breadth of the State, that it should be £1, and will probably lead to a ready acceptance by the people concerned and provide the amount of money that will be necessary. I have already explained that the State Government, up to the present, has contributed by way of endowment no less a sum than £300,000 in this direction, without any result of good, I grieve to say, because the numbers of dingoes are not decreasing; they are rather increasing.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you had not discouraged them they would have increased.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say that they have increased, anyhow. That is the general opinion of those persons who travel throughout the sheep districts—that the dogs have increased, although there are others who say that they have actually decreased. Everybody who travels through the State to any extent knows that the numbers of kangaroos have decreased, but the dogs—which constitute a great menace to the cattle and sheep, especially to sheep—have to be dealt with.

Mr. CORSER: Does this include the State properties?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Oh, I should think so.

Mr. CORSER: You are not certain?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, the State properties are already paying assessments under the Stock Act in our tick eradication campaign. I can safely say that that will be done—that they will come under it.

Mr. CORSER: But can they be assessed by the boards?

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The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The State-owned cattle stations have paid assessments to the stock fund the same as other stations.

Mr. CORSER: They will be amenable to the Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course they will, the same as others. It is astonishing to find the peculiar state into which affairs have got. I know that hon. members in another place will probably object to this proposal because I am fixing a limitation on the endowment to be paid by the Government.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is a very big objection.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot help the hon. member's objection. That is so, and I repeat exactly what I said last year—it is £5,000 or nothing, so that there can be no mistake as to the Government's attitude on the matter. I have the figures here in the Under Secretary's report for last year—which, of course, does not include the figures for this year—and I find that for the last fourteen years the payment on only two or three occasions has exceeded £5,000, and the average for the whole fourteen years has been under £5,000, so that if the Government agrees to continue that endowment at the rate of £5,000 a year I think hon. members are robbed of any good grounds of objection.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The receipts under this Bill will be very much higher.

Mr. CORSER: Four times as high.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, if the gentlemen who own sheep and cattle want to keep the dog, that is their business. I would like to remind hon. members that when these assessments were established bullocks were worth about £2 per head. Bullocks now are worth six times that; in fact, I think I am within the mark in saying that they are twelve times as valuable; and if owners were able to pay those assessments when cattle were worth £2 a head and sheep correspondingly low, they can easily afford to pay the increased assessment proposed under this measure, and also very well afford to pay the suggested scalp fees fixed by this Bill. I think I have given prominence to the leading features of the measure. I have not gone into detail. No doubt we will have plenty of discussion in Committee as on the last occasion, and I will not weary the House now by anticipating it at present, but content myself with moving that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I think members of this House hardly realise the trouble to which pastoralists and stockbreeders are put in Queensland by the attacks of native dogs right throughout the country, and it may be interesting for them to know that some private individuals subsidise the scalp bonus by from £5 to £10 apiece. We are greatly troubled, considering that we have had boards established in Queensland for so long a time, and the greatest difficulty has been that there has not been uniformity in paying for the destruction of dingoes right throughout Queensland. And I am sorry that this Bill, the second reading of which the Minister has moved, does not provide for the compulsory inclusion of every part of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say it does.

[*Hon. W. Lennon.*]

Mr. CORSER: That is a feature of the Bill which I claim is a weak one. The Minister claims that it does include all parts of the State. That is the foundation on which this Bill should be based. If it is going to include every part of the State, I say it is a good one—if every portion of Queensland is to pay for destruction of dingoes. Nobody is going to cavil at £1 a head, or probably a greater bonus, but the weakness is that it does not provide necessarily that the whole of Queensland shall be included. Clause 4 says—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time by Order in Council—

(a) Constitute any part of Queensland a dingo district for the purposes of this Act.”

The Governor in Council “may.” It is left to the discretion of the Minister. The Governor in Council may include any portion of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And will.

Mr. CORSER: Why do you not put it in the Bill? Unless the Minister is going to make the Bill as emphatic as he is emphatic in denying my statement, he is going to spoil what otherwise would be a good Bill; a Bill brought about by the representations made by deputations to him and, no doubt, also to the kindly ear he has given to them—deputations that have come to him from all portions of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would the hon. member remember this—that it is not usual to say that the Governor in Council “shall” do this or that?

Mr. CORSER: The Minister need not say that the Governor in Council “shall,” but that every portion of Queensland shall be included in a marsupial area or dingo district, and until that is done we are going to leave out the wilder portions of our coastline and interior where there is no habitation, where the lands are infertile and unproductive; we are going to leave them to breed wild dogs for generations. The Minister has hauled over the coals Mr. Francis, a gentleman who was responsible to a great degree for the representations that have brought about the introduction of this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say he has not.

Mr. CORSER: I claim that he has. I have here a letter from the “*Courier*” of 21st August, 1917, in which that gentleman brought forward the statement that the Government themselves have been dilatory in doing their duty. Mr. Francis is one who, amongst others, has had to fence 100 miles of country to protect it from the dogs bred on Dillalah, and the cost of the fence was so great that a contribution was requested from the Government, but not one penny was paid. It is stated—

“Mr. Hunter claims that Dillalah is as well protected from dingoes now as it was when the Government took it over. Well, there is a letter in the marsupial board's office at Charleville in which the gentleman in charge of Dillalah writes, under the instruction of Mr. McGugan, the general manager of Government cattle stations, absolutely refusing to allow a dog trapper on the place, so that if the best that Mr. Hunter can urge is that Dillalah is now in the same state as it was then, I have only to say

that his own admission is more damning even than the evidence brought forward to Mr. Lennon, and that deputation provided a map showing thousands of square miles of country from which sheep had had to be permanently removed on account of the ravages of the dingoes."

The people hardly realise what the exclusion of so much country from our sheep-breeding areas has meant to the State. It is also stated that the Minister has ninety-three letters in his possession from landowners, of both small and large areas, nearly all of which told the same tale of ineffectual efforts made to combat the dingo pest, and asked for the assistance of the Government. It is also claimed that there are areas on which breeders held no fewer than 21,000 sheep, and to-day not one sheep is to be seen in those areas. I think that the Minister was not quite in order in referring as he did to the statements of Mr. Francis, considering the interest he has taken in the matter and the fairness which always characterises the way which he deals with it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The statements are untrue.

Mr. CORSER: The statements are not untrue. I have dealt with the first one in which he claims, rightly, that the Bill does not include the whole State of Queensland. It is clear from the wording of clause 4 that it does not, because it does not provide that the whole of the State shall be included in any area. One of the reasons why this Bill is not a good one is this: the districts that exist, twenty-eight in number, were arranged some twenty odd years ago. So many petty sessions districts were included in each area. Since that time the petty sessions districts have been altered nine or ten times, so that at the present time there is no distinct boundary of what is and what is not a marsupial district. I hope that the Minister will make the Bill apply to the whole State, because at the present time the Burnett Marsupial Board are handicapped, as while that board are paying for dogs at the present time, we know that on the eastern and northern side of the board's boundary the people are not paying for the destruction of dogs at all. The cattle-owner in the Burnett district at the present time is compelled to pay for the destruction of dogs bred in some Labour member's electorate, and the dogs come over into our electorate. Every part of the State should be made to pay for the destruction of dogs within their own boundary. One district should not be called upon to pay for the scalps of dogs brought from another district. Under the principal Act the scalper is compelled to sell the scalp in the district where the dog was killed, and he is not allowed to take it into another district for sale.

Mr. SMITH: What about your political scalp?

Mr. CORSER: The Premier tried to get my political scalp six times and failed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Denham tried seven times to get mine and failed.

Mr. CORSER: And it killed him. (Laughter.) Section 35 of the principal Act provides certain penalties against the selling of marsupial or dingo scalps out of the district in which they were caught or killed; but I see that the Minister has taken out the whole of those penalties. The penalties provided that a scalper would have to pay

£5 if he took a scalp into another district from that in which it was killed. The Minister has taken those penalties out of the Bill, and has included them in the schedule attached to this Bill. Clause 16 of the schedule provides for the same penalties as we find in section 35 of the principal Act. Unfortunately, we find that the schedule of this Act can be altered from time to time at the will of the Minister or Governor in Council. I think that such an important part of the Act should be included in the provisions of the Act and not in the schedule. I hope the Minister will be reasonable, and see the necessity of including the penalties in the Act. In this Bill we provide that the scalper shall have the right to enter every run. That is not included in the principal Act, and if we are giving the scalper that privilege, we should see that he disposes of the scalps in the district where he gets them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know that the schedule is part of the Bill.

Mr. CORSER: Yes; but the Bill provides that the schedule may be altered or amended from time to time at the will of the Minister or the Governor in Council. The question of the endowment is another big item in connection with this Bill. I do not believe in the provision made in this Bill by the Minister limiting the total amount to £5,000 per annum. It is certainly true that £5,000 per annum is more than has been paid by the Government for the last few years.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is more than the average for fourteen years.

Mr. CORSER: But when we have the compulsory killing of dogs established right throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, there will be a great increase in the number destroyed, and we will be called upon to pay four times as much for scalps as is being paid at the present time. As a matter of fact, the Government paid £18,000 one year as endowment for the destruction of scalps. I think the grazing people in Queensland have done far more than the Government have done in this matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why shouldn't they? They own the cattle.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister for Agriculture said that in the past the Government had paid £300,000 in endowment. As a matter of fact, the other people paid £400,000. Last year only £3,223 was paid by way of endowment, but we only got 243 scalps, although up till last year over 1,046,000 scalps were secured in Queensland. With the increased payment for dogs, I think, the endowment should also be increased. The Minister said that the boards have power to collect assessments up to 5s., but 6s. is provided for in the Bill. The Bill also provides for two assessments in the same year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't you want to get rid of the dogs?

Mr. CORSER: Yes; but I am reminding the Minister of little details which he did not give the House. It is provided in the Bill that the boards can levy assessments of 6s. every half-year. The Minister may make it possible for an assessment of £2 in each year for every twenty-five head of cattle if he wishes. The present Act provides for a payment of 7s. 6d. for every fifty head of cattle, but this Bill reduces the number of

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cattle to twenty-five, and allows two assessments, which might amount to 12s. in one year, and, at the same time, it gives the Minister power to approve of greater assessments in any year if he so desires. In the Bill, therefore, we provide for an unlimited assessment on stockowners. The Minister gets over that by saying that if they want to get rid of the dogs they will have to pay for them. The stockowners want to get rid of the dogs all right, but they do not want to have to pay too much extra taxation, especially as the Minister must recognise that the State generally must benefit by ridding the State of a lot of pests.

Mr. COLLINS: More socialism.

Mr. CORSER: We like a little bit of this sort of socialism. The Minister will see that the stockowners can be assessed at the rate I have mentioned. The Minister mentioned that at the present time stockowners were getting £12 a head for their cattle as against £3 or £4 a head a few years ago. The Minister must also understand that the stockowner has to pay £12 for the mother of those cattle as against £1 10s. a few years ago. So, take it all round, we have increased taxes to pay, and we have to contend with the blowflies and ticks and everything to the detriment of the pastoralist and grazing farmer. I think the Minister wants to take too much to himself in this Bill, and he should alter the word "may" to "shall," and make it apply to the whole State. In section 29 of the principal Act it provides that one-fourth of the assessments shall be raised by endowment from the Government. This Bill provides that the total amount to be paid shall not exceed £5,000 per annum. It does not matter even if it is only 5 per cent. of the collections which are made by the various boards throughout the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is that amount or nothing.

Mr. CORSER: There is a provision which takes away the possibility of more than one vote for elections to the board. I am not going to complain about that. I would just point out, though, that there are a lot of small holders who have to pay for scalps just the same as the big stockowners. The small man has to go to the expense of fencing his farm, and he has to fight hard to get rid of the vermin. He should not be called upon to pay for the scalps coming from the big pastoral holdings. We know that the price of the skins at the present time is sufficiently remunerative for the scalper to destroy the animal for the sake of the skin. No one wants to destroy a marsupial just for what he gets from the board for the scalp. The value of the hide makes it worth while to destroy the marsupial. We must recognise, though, that if we get rid of the dingoes we will have more wallabies in the scrub areas. We know that the natural food of the native dog is the marsupial, and the more native dogs we destroy the more marsupials we will leave to be troublesome to the grazing farmers, especially in the scrub areas. We have killed hundreds of thousands of marsupials, and they seem to be just as numerous in the scrubs to-day as ever they were. I notice that the exemption is entirely wiped out.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No, it is not.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister has wiped out the provision where a run was able to

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get exemption, but there is a provision here that a stockowner can exclude one-sixth of his holding from the scalper. That may be a breeding paddock, or fattening paddock, or horse paddock, where it would be unwise to let the scalper go with any stock, especially if it is a paddock where he keeps the stallion. We know that it would not be a wise thing to let anyone go into the stallion's paddock with stock. There is a provision that the scalper shall not camp within 200 yards of a waterhole.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are not those provisions desirable?

Mr. CORSER: Yes, they are. But they are in the principal Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not the one-sixth exemption.

Mr. CORSER: Yes, so far as the horse paddocks are concerned. Section 19b of the principal Act reads as follows:—

"For the purposes of this section, every owner or manager of a holding, upon notice in writing to the board describing the paddock or paddocks in question and stating the particular use to which the same are being put, shall, while the same are being so used, be entitled to the exemption of such paddock or paddocks not exceeding an area one-sixth of the entire holding."

That is the horse-breeding paddock. That is included in the present Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He may have it for other purposes besides horse breeding.

Mr. CORSER: At any rate, he cannot get a general exemption now. He can get exemption for one-sixth of his holding. We don't want any dog-breeding areas left at all. We know that some of the areas which are exempted from scalpers are the cleanest areas of the lot, and we also know that in some cases they are the areas that are most infested with dogs. As the Minister claims, the number of boards at the present time is twenty-nine. One of the boards is not carrying out any business at all with regard to the payment of scouts. Eleven out of the twenty-eight are paying £1, three 15s., five 10s., two 7s. 6d., and seven 5s. The Burnett

Board is included in those paying [4.30 p.m.] 5s. Unfortunately, it is, among others, paying 5s., and it includes certain areas in which nothing is being paid for dogs, and those dogs can be brought over to our area, or can come over themselves, be killed there, and be an everlasting burden on the taxpayer in our district. I hope the Minister will be quite content with the provision that may be desired in this Bill to make possible the inclusion of every portion of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is already provided for in the Bill.

Mr. CORSER: Will the Minister, in the Bill, make it more definite than it is in clause 4? Why should the Minister tell us he has the provision in the Bill that really is not in the Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is, if you read it.

Mr. CORSER: In saying that, the Minister contradicts Mr. Francis in to-day's paper.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is an incorrect statement, and it is my duty to contradict it.

Mr. CORSER: The reading of the clause is that the Governor in Council may constitute any part of Queensland a dingo district.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: "Any" of necessity includes the whole.

Mr. CORSER: Why does not the Bill say it?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Because I cannot do it all at once.

Mr. CORSER: You do not want to amend the Bill in a few days. If the Minister cannot do it all at once, I am sure we will be able to have an amendment drafted to provide that it shall be compulsory that every portion of Queensland shall be in some marsupial district, and the destruction of these dogs is going to be so general that it will be a benefit; so that the payments being made by the men who are called upon to pay assessments will be of some avail, and other districts will not be breeding to their detriment all the time. That is the factor which I claim to be the most important of all. If the Minister will make that positive in the Bill, make it general throughout the State, the Bill is going to be a very good one, and I think will be acceptable even to those who are paying a smaller bonus. It is a good thing, also, that there is no compulsory payment for the scouts of marsupials and that those foxes may have no maximum, so that in districts sparsely infested with foxes they can give £20 for one, if they like, if they are out to destroy them. Another very dangerous animal is the wild pig which frequents certain areas. I think that might easily be included among those animals that pest the grazer; because, after all, the wild pig is worse than the dog in that it will tackle a cow or a beast that is down and eat it alive. I think the pig is so destructive to young calves that the Minister might see his way to include it in this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot see my way.

Mr. CORSER: I suppose the Minister is aware that in some districts there are hundreds of pigs, probably, for every few dogs.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have seen any number of them, I know.

Mr. CORSER: It is to be hoped he will see that it is reasonable to bring about their destruction. They are a great menace.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are being turned into bacon, and used for pork, in some parts of the State. You cannot eat dingo flesh, but you can eat pig.

Mr. CORSER: We do not know what we are getting at the State shops. You are breeding them at Dillalah, and we do not know what you are doing with them. Everybody else is netted round Dillalah. We do not know what you are doing inside there. This Bill embodies features that have been suggested by conferences to the Minister, and points which he has thought of himself and placed in the Bill. Some of them do not go far enough. The penalties for the destruction of opossums by cyanide have been reduced.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The penalty on that has been increased.

Mr. CORSER: Yes, increased; you are quite correct in that; it has been increased from £10 to £20.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is not that a good thing?

Mr. CORSER: Yes, most decidedly it is. But there are other instances where there is a reduction from £20 to £10.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Quite properly.

Mr. CORSER: The entry by a scalper by virtue of his permit, after notice to the owner as the board shall direct, but not exceeding twenty-one days, if obstructed renders the obstructor liable to a penalty not exceeding £10. There the penalty has been reduced from £20. The penalty for offences by scalpers also has been reduced from £20 to £10.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We found that those penalties were very rarely incurred.

Mr. CORSER: Of course, you will admit that, generally speaking, most of the pastoralists do all they can for the scalper; and for the most part the scalpers do the fair thing by the pastoralists. But there are instances where a scalper probably has not done his duty. If a scalper is objected to for any particular reason by the board, that board may have power to deal with him. But this Bill provides that the scalper will have an opportunity of going to a magistrate. "Magistrate" does not include justice of the peace. He can there have rectified what in his opinion is an injustice. Whatever may be decided by that magistrate is applicable only for twelve months. There may be some reason on some occasions, where stock have been illegally killed, and a scalper has been found doing it, for not permitting him on a run for a longer period. With the few instances I have mentioned, the Bill is a good one. If it is made more definite in the direction of including every portion of the State, it will have my blessing.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): While I can support a good part of this Bill, there are some sections in it which I think are rather drastic.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You were slated by your own friends last time for opposing it.

Mr. MOORE: There are some features which I cannot understand the Government sanctioning. Take the question of one ratepayer one vote. Surely when they oppose this principle so strongly in the Local Authorities Act you would think in a Bill like this they would have tried to bring in adult franchise, and the man who bought a felt hat or a pair of wallaby boots would be entitled to a vote as well as the ordinary man who has to pay the tax.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We do not like to do what the hon. member succeeds so well in doing—make ourselves ridiculous.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman does not mind making himself look ridiculous in the Local Authorities Act. I cannot understand the consistency of it. The principle in this Bill is the right one. There is one other thing in this Bill which is unique—there is no dragnet clause in it. It definitely states what a dingo is and what a marsupial is. This is one Bill in which I would like to see a dragnet clause giving power to the

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board to declare a dingo to be "any other pest which the Governor in Council, by Order in Council, shall at the request of the board from time to time declare to be a dingo or marsupial in this district for the purposes of this Act."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would you support a clause like that?

Mr. MOORE: I certainly would, because in some districts we have pests which we would like very much to have declared dingoes, and get rid of them. We have the pest of which the hon. member for Burnett spoke—the wild pig. Then we have pests that come into our districts owing to strong influences outside, with which the Government, apparently, are not able to deal. We might be able to have declared pests those who go round promoting the Liberty Fairs, and thereby put a stop to this gambling evil. We might also be able to put down proprietary racecourse owners.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Have you never gambled yourself?

Mr. MOORE: It is not a question of that. It is a question of the pests which come into the districts. A dragnet clause by which the board could declare those things pests would be very useful. We would be able to protect ourselves from pests which, owing to strong monetary influence, the Government does not seem able to tackle.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What kind of pests do you mean?

Mr. MOORE: I say gambling, proprietary racecourse owners, spielers, and men who run these Liberty Fair lotteries ought to be declared "dingoes" within the meaning of this Act. There are several other things which could be declared from time to time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it possible to deal with gambling under this Bill?

Mr. MOORE: It would be quite possible to deal with it—immediately declare as dingoes the proprietors who run those concerns.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Could you provide for 6 o'clock closing under this Bill?

Mr. MOORE: No, I do not think we could declare that. The position in which the Government has got itself is so precarious in regard to 6 o'clock closing, that I do not think we will have to declare that a pest under this Bill. There is one other thing to which I would like to call attention, and that is the question of endowment. I am pleased to see that the Minister recognises the principle of endowment. We know that these pests are cleared for the benefit of Queensland, and they are declared pests for the public good, and for the protection of the whole State. Exactly the same thing occurs with regard to the local authority. The Government are breeding pests on their lands. The local authorities have to pay money out, because of the Crown's neglect. In this Bill, fortunately, the Government recognise their liability up to a certain amount; in my opinion, not up to the amount they should. I wonder why they do not do it in the Local Authorities Act?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We pay the assessment on the cattle.

Mr. MOORE: You pay the assessment, but you do not say how much it is going to be.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We pay on our own cattle.

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Mr. MOORE: Of course, you do. It is more than you do under the Local Authorities Act, when you do not pay rates. In this you recognise the principle of endowment, and pay on your cattle. In the other Act you do not recognise any liability.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The King's Government do not pay any rates.

Mr. MOORE: The King's Government should pay rates. They are paying rates in this Bill for the protection of individuals and of Queensland. When the Minister was speaking he practically said he was not going to declare the whole of Queensland liable to tax; there were some districts that practically had no dingoes, and there was no need for them to be brought in.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The whole district will be brought in.

Mr. MOORE: I would like to see it put in the Bill. I think that should be, because that is one of the weak points in it, in my opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You will not see it.

Mr. MOORE: Because there are no dingoes in a district it does not say that those people should not contribute towards the destruction of them in another district. We know that where the dingoes are very thick to-day, the people who are bearing the brunt are protecting other people further on.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The whole of the cattle in the State will be placed on the same lines.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister says so, but there should be inserted in the Bill a provision that the whole of Queensland will be brought under the Bill, in order to make it perfectly clear.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Surely you will accept my statement.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister may not be there always. In connection with every Bill which has been brought in, we have had to have amending Bills, two or three years after, to make it perfectly clear as to what was intended. The Minister has now an opportunity of putting in a clause to make it apply to the whole of Queensland. If the Bill is going to apply to the whole of Queensland, it will be honest and straightforward, and for the protection of everyone.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Read clause 4 of the Bill.

Mr. MOORE: Clause 4 gives power to the Minister to say what he is going to do, but it should be made clear in the Bill, so that we will know where we are. At present it is optional on the part of the Minister. I was rather interested in the statement of the Minister when he said that the moneys which had been expended in endowment had practically been wasted because the dingoes had increased. We do not know what they would have been like if that money had not been expended. It would be just as sensible to say that the money expended in prickly-pear has been wasted because there is a bigger area of land under prickly-pear now.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So it has been wasted.

Mr. MOORE: I do not agree with the Minister at all. A certain amount of country has been cleared from the dingo, owing to which sheep can be kept there, and if that

money had not been expended, I do not suppose there would have been any country in Queensland on which we could have run sheep to-day. I know that the country where dingoes and foxes come from in my district is unoccupied Crown land, where there is no possible hope of getting them out. They breed in the pear. It is monstrous to say that the money which has been expended in the past has been wasted. In my opinion, Queensland would have been almost unable to run any stock at all but for the money which had been expended in the past. A large number of people who to-day are spending money to keep out the rabbits have not got the rabbits, but they are keeping them out for the benefit of the rest of Queensland. Where there are dingoes in a portion of Queensland, it is in the interests of the State that dingoes should be kept down, and the whole of the State should be made subject to the Bill. It should be stated in the Bill, and not left optional. We know there are influences which creep in, whereby the Minister may be induced to say that there are no dingoes in a district, and it would seem hard that such a district should be included.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That may apply to other Ministers.

Mr. MOORE: It may; and it may apply to the Minister in this Government. We know that pressure is sometimes brought to bear on a Minister, which is very hard to resist if it is from his own electorate, where he happens to have got in by a small majority. I do not think the Minister should place himself in that position. Why not have this stated definitely in the Bill? It is in the public interests that pests should not be allowed to increase, as they destroy the carrying capacity of the lands of the State, and everybody should have the same amount to pay, whether the dingoes and marsupials are thick in their district or whether there are none at all, because those who have none at all are being protected by those who have them. I would like the Minister to look at the matter from a reasonable point of view, and save himself from being placed in an invidious position when a large and influential deputation comes down from his own district and says: "We do not want to have a marsupial board declared in this district."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I promise you they will have one.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister promises here that they will have one, but when he gets into his own electorate, and they tell him at a meeting that they will not have a board, you can imagine him meditating.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Name any promise I made which I never carried out.

Mr. MOORE: I have never been up to the district to know what the hon. gentleman promises when he is up there.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It would be unsafe to say that in my electorate.

Mr. MOORE: It was the fortunate accident of the flood coming on, and being able to afford immediate relief to the district, that put the Minister into the safe position he was at the last election.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know that is not true.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister himself was by no means certain of his seat. He used to

be very shaky, and I remember him making statements on various occasions that his seat was difficult to hold. (Laughter.) But when it is left to the option of the Minister to put a heavy tax on a district, if a deputation came along, he might say: "I do not think it is necessary at the present time to establish a board."

Mr. FREE: He is beyond temptation.

Mr. MOORE: He may be; but I would like to put him out of the reach of temptation, and then he will be absolutely safe. He will be able to say: "I cannot do it; I have legislative authority for establishing a board." Nothing backs a Minister up so much, when people go to him on a deputation, as to be able to say that he has legislative authority for his actions.

There is just one other thing I noticed in this Bill that struck me as peculiar—that is, the question of securing the assessments. The Bill says—

"In all cases such assessment and penalty may be levied by distress and sale of any stock."

It is only stock, apparently. If a man sold all his stock, there is apparently no way of recovering the assessment. Under other Acts, you have the opportunity of recovering the money by proceeding against the owner—you can levy distress on goods and chattels—but this is simply to be a charge on the holding afterwards; and having a charge on the holding is of no use, because you can only levy on stock. The stock have to be depasturing on the property on which the amount is due. If a man removes them to another property, apparently there is no way of getting the assessment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Oh, yes; we will find a way of getting it. You know it is a good Bill.

Mr. MOORE: I know that portions of it are good, but there are parts which will cause a lot of trouble. It is rather severe that a man has to allow any trapper to go on his property to kill dingoes. I suppose the trapper can kill marsupials. Why cannot the owner keep his marsupials?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The business of scalpers is one by which these men make a living.

Mr. MOORE: I do not see why, when a man goes to the expense of fencing his place with a dog-proof fence, he should have a scalper forced on him. No man fences his property with 100 miles of a dog-proof fence in order to keep marsupials in it.

Mr. DUNSTAN: A trapper does not want to go in then.

Mr. MOORE: You know that in some cases a man may want to go in, but it may not be for marsupials. There may be kangaroos which the owner wants to protect, but they may be shot. A man may have fenced his paddock with a dog-proof fence in order to keep the marsupials down, but still a trapper has power to go in with his horses, and for what? Certainly not to shoot marsupials, because they would not be there.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The kangaroos are there.

Mr. MOORE: Very often a man wants to keep a few kangaroos. The kangaroo skins are valuable. A man may want to protect a few kangaroos—and I do not see why they should not be protected in certain areas—but they will be destroyed. I think that is

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Minister would be wise if he eliminated, in Committee, the provision allowing a scalper to go into a holding which is fenced with a dog-proof fence. A man is entitled to keep what he likes on his own property, provided it is nothing which is a menace to his neighbour, and he is not going to the expense of fencing his property merely to keep marsupials on it.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): If I had my way there would be no Marsupial Act or Dingo Act at all. I think that the graziers' greatest pests are inspectors and Acts of Parliament. We never get clear of one Act of Parliament but we fall foul of another Act. Every time we pass an Act of Parliament it means so many more inspectors. Speaking as a grazier, having been at the business all my life, I would prefer to be left alone, as far as dingoes and marsupials are concerned. I would far sooner borrow the money to fence in my holding with marsupial netting than I would be bothered with dingo and marsupial boards. I spent twenty-five or thirty years, when managing my father's station, in fighting dingoes and marsupials with poison and traps, and I had to give it up. I wound up by spending a lot of money in fencing in the property to keep them out. That is the only cure, but I know that my fellow-graziers differ from me. They have had deputations to the Minister asking for a Dingo or Marsupial Act, but I think we would be better without an Act. But I can say that they never asked for this Bill—they asked for quite a different thing altogether. This Bill, if it is in the interests of anybody, is in the interests of the scalpers. I do not know who else's interests it is in. It is not in the interests of the man on the land. You must remember that people who have freehold or leasehold land, with a house on it, consider that it is something which belongs to themselves. Under the provisions of this Bill, anyone can get a scalper's permit, and go in and ransack all over your place, and he may not be looking for marsupials at all. I can see that what will happen will be that somebody who wants to steal some cattle on a run will get a friend to get a scalper's license, go on to the run near where the cattle principally run, and so be

[5 p.m.] able to see how many calves are unbranded, and pass the information out to his friend outside, the cattle-stealer, who will come in at night or whatever other time may suit him, take out those animals, and steal them. Cattle-stealing is rampant at the present time, and this Bill, I think, might be called "the Encouragement of Cattle-stealers' Bill." At the head of the Maranoa, for instance, cattle are being stolen right and left every day, and we know by the muster that has lately taken place on Mount Hutton that the numbers of cattle are short there, and I understand it is wonderful how the herds of settlers in the vicinity of Mount Hutton, even those working bullocks, have increased since the Government had that station. I think one reason the Government had for getting rid of those cattle was the cattle-stealing that went on. We had formerly a Marsupial Act, which made dingoes and foxes marsupials, and so on, and I think the title of this Bill could very well be altered to read, "a Bill to Encourage the Destruction of Noxious Animals." Then

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the Government could include from time to time any animal they liked, or instead of a Noxious Animals Bill, we might call it a "Vermin Bill," and then we could get in all sorts of pests—blowflies, if you like. Under the present Act the procedure is very cumbersome. Every now and then a board is appointed. And it is a dingo board, although the Act is not a Dingo Act, but a Marsupial Act. I notice that the definition of "fox" is *canis vulpes*. It is a very good idea to put it in, because only for that you could bring flying foxes under the provisions of the Bill. I want to know why they do not call the dingo *canis dingo*. It is just as right to call it *canis dingo* as to call a fox *canis vulpes*.

Another objection I have to this Bill is this: "One man one vote" is all very well in certain cases. Formerly a man with a greater herd of cattle had more say in the election of a board than a man who had a smaller number of cattle. I would not mind the proposed alteration so much if the Government did not propose to reduce the number of stock to an infinitesimal number, so that everybody is a voter. Why not have the election on the electoral franchise? I suppose that is what they want. Under the old Act a man had to have 150 head of cattle or 750 head of sheep before he could vote or have a seat on the board. Under this Bill he need have only twenty-five head of cattle or horses, or the equivalent number of sheep. That means that anybody who can get twenty-five head of horses gets a vote. He may only have a team. Such men could elect a lot of scalp-hunters on the board, who would then be able to give permits to anybody and everybody to go on everybody else's run.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Do you not think a man has a right to vote who owns that number of cattle or sheep?

Mr. GUNN: I do not think it would work out in practice, because I think, as a rule, that the man who has twenty-five head is not a cattle-owner at all; he is just a beginner.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What about dairying?

Mr. GUNN: It does not refer to the dairying districts at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, it does. It will refer to the whole State.

Mr. GUNN: Even if it is to affect dairying districts, I think a man who has a seat on a board should own more cattle and horses than twenty-five. I can conceive of districts; I know of districts very well—say, the St. George district—where most people have grazing farms with thousands of sheep or thousands of cattle. But there are any amount of carriers in the district and people who have a few horses, and they will have all the votes on that board, and the people who own the big areas and produce the large numbers of stock will have no say in the election of the board. The consequence, I am afraid, will be—I am not afraid of the honest man at all—that the cattle-stealers will get on these boards, and will give permits to fellow cattle-stealers to get on the runs and see where the clean skins are.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you not aware of the Stock Act? You cannot deal with that in a Dingo Act.

Mr. GUNN: It is supposed to deal with the cattle-stealer. There was a cattle-stealer the other day not far from St. George. The stockman saw him steal some cattle, and he was driving them to market. He wired down here to catch him at the yards. The man put them in the truck and brought them down to Brisbane, and he was pulled up and taken back and convicted and sentenced, and a day or two afterwards the owner of the cattle met him walking down the street—released. That is what happens to cattle-stealers.

Mr. COLLINS: What about people who steal country and get knighted?

Mr. GUNN: I do not think hon. members opposite, although they are interrupting me, have any sympathy with cattle-stealers. But there are cattle-stealers, and hon. members must admit that they are very prevalent on the State's own stations. They have stolen any amount of cattle from Mount Hutton, and they are doing it every day, and I think any Act that encourages that sort of thing is a bad Act to put on the statute-book. I object, as I said before, to Jack, Tom, Bill, and Harry getting on to land, whether freehold or leasehold, without the owners having a say. If the owner keeps down marsupials—if he puts on scalpers of his own to keep down the dingoes and marsupials—I do not see why he should have anyone else foisted on to him.

Then, again, if you fence in your land with dog-proof fencing, the hunter of dogs is not allowed to go on to that property unless the owner wishes; but if you fence in your land with marsupial-proof fencing, the hunter of marsupials is allowed to go on to that land by permit, no matter whether you keep down the marsupials or not. I know a man who had seven head of marsupials, and they were increasing. There were not many about, and he thought they were a curiosity, but any scalper could get a permit under this Bill and go in and kill his pet marsupials. The owner or the lessee of property will have no right to it at all if this Bill is passed. There is no statute which gives people power to trespass as this gives it to them. Surely, if the owner keeps down the pest himself, he should be free from the greater pest—that is, the scalper. There are many provisions in the Bill which, I dare say, we will be able to discuss more fully when we get into Committee. If I had my will there would be no Dingo Bill or Marsupial Bill. It is only another method of encouraging inspectors. A great many hard things are said about dingoes, but you must remember that before the whites came to Australia he kept down the marsupial—he kept the balance of power so far as the marsupial was concerned. I remember the time when we killed all the native dogs, and the marsupials increased by leaps and bounds, and then we had to set about killing them. We have a lot of country near the Gulf of Carpentaria unoccupied at the present time. There is a lot of Crown land there, and also some land owned by private individuals. I cannot see any virtue in killing off the native dogs in that country, because, if there is anything that will tend to the spread of rabbits in that country, the killing of the native dogs will do it. We know that the dingo is one of the best means of keeping down the rabbits. In cattle country the dingoes do not do much harm at all, although they are a pest in sheep country. I consider

that when you get to the far North the dingoes are not a pest at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They kill a lot of calves, you know.

Mr. GUNN: The owner of the station can easily cope with them. He can always get in a couple of men to deal with them if they become a pest. I would sooner have the dingoes at any time than have the scalpers running about with permits to shoot kangaroos and other vermin. Take the case of Cecil Plains. I know that two returned soldiers wanted to shoot marsupials on Cecil Plains, and they applied to the manager for permission to do so, but the manager replied: "We cannot give you permission to shoot marsupials here, because it would disturb the stock." That is the same objection that other stockowners have to scalpers going on their holdings. I am quite satisfied that the managers of the State stations will be as much against this Act as I am. I am quite convinced that if you took a vote of the graziers of Queensland generally they would condemn this Bill. You will have to have a very different Act altogether to please the graziers of Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What Act do you suggest?

Mr. GUNN: As I told you before, I don't want any Act, but if I had to frame an Act I would frame one more equitable than this. It is not my province to draft Acts of Parliament for the benefit of the Government. It is my province to criticise Acts of Parliament, and point out their faults. I think this Bill is full of faults, and I hope that when we get into Committee we will be able to remedy some of those faults before it becomes an Act of Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I don't think you will.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): The previous speakers have discussed this matter very well, but there are some things which the Minister has referred to that I must take exception to. The Minister said he would allow any scalper to go on any land fenced in.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No; don't misquote me. I said any land enclosed with a dog-proof fence.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Minister said he would allow any scalper to go on land enclosed with a dog-proof fence, and he would give him a permit to go on that land, because it would be giving the man employment. If there are a few carpenters out of employment in Brisbane, why don't the Government put them on to pull down houses, if it is just a matter of giving them something to do? I think that is a very weak point the Minister has made in order to enable men to go on another man's land after dingoes. I hope when we get into Committee that the Minister will alter clause 4, and make the whole of Queensland a dingo district for the purposes of this Act. He can do that by omitting the word "may" and inserting the word "shall." We know that the present Minister may not always be the Minister for Agriculture, and other Ministers may not be as well intentioned as he is. That is why we ought to make sure that the whole of Queensland should be made a dingo district. If another Minister takes his place he will not be bound by the actions of the present Minister for Agriculture or by his statements. That is why I would like

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to see it made more definite in the Act itself. With regard to the increase in marsupials, I think it is due, in a great measure, to the fact that a large number of young men who were engaged in destroying marsupials have gone to the war. We know that they were splendid shots, and they destroyed a lot of dingoes and marsupials, and many of them are now engaged in destroying greater pests. One of the reasons why I think clause 4 should be altered is so that it will include the Government-owned stations. At present the Government own whole districts, and it might be possible for the Government to exempt certain districts, and let the Government have a monopoly in those districts. That is one reason why we would like to see the whole of Queensland made a dingo district. The Minister stated that, so far as the State stations are concerned, the Government will pay all the taxes on their cattle and sheep, just the same as any other station.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Minister did not say the Government would pay all the taxes, but all the assessments.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Well, an assessment is a tax.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not say that we would pay all the rates, for instance. You could not ask the Government to pay rates.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We know that the Government will not pay anything they can get out of. We have suffered enough damage already owing to the Government not paying the taxes that others are called upon to pay. A lot of taxes are forced upon the rate-payers which the Government will not pay at all. Whenever a State butcher's shop is opened, or some other State business, it throws more taxes on the taxpayers of that district, because they have to make up the difference owing to the loss caused by the establishment of the State concern. Take the State sawmill, for instance. We know that the State sawmill pays no taxes at all, and the taxpayers of Brisbane will have some thousands of pounds to make up which the State don't pay, but which the former private owner used to pay to the council. Whenever a business is opened by the Government it means disaster to other members of the community, owing to the fact that it means more taxes for them to pay. Whilst we can support the second reading of the Bill, we will want to make a number of alterations in Committee.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): There has been such a wide diversity of opinion regarding this measure, that it strikes me it might be well for the matter to stand over until the local authorities have had a chance of expressing an opinion regarding it. Just now we heard the hon. member for Carnarvon, who has had very wide experience in this matter, stating his emphatic opposition to the Bill. On the other hand, the hon. member for Burnett stated that he objected to the Bill in some directions, but in others he was prepared to give it his blessing. In view of the criticisms coming from this side of the House, I think we should delay the passing of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What purpose would be gained by delaying it?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: In order to get a concise opinion regarding the merits or demerits of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Whose opinion should be sought?

[*Mr. Bebbington.*

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The opinion of the local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What have they to do with it?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are the people who are interested in the several districts and who represent the opinions of those districts, and it is therefore self-evident that they are the people who are competent to express an opinion. There is one very serious aspect of this Bill which must receive the attention of the local authorities. In clauses 18 and 19, in particular, the bonus which is payable in the case of dingoes is fixed, and it has been fixed at not less than 20s. per head. Evidently the price which heretofore has ruled for the scalps of dingoes will not prevail in the future.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No, it will not.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Heretofore the figure has varied from 5s. to 20s., and the minimum now is going to be 20s., and therefore the cost to the local authorities is going to be immeasurably increased.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The local authorities have nothing to do with it.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Perhaps not the local authorities, but the boards within the local authorities will have to deal with the matter, and they may be faced with the necessity of paying 40s. per head for the scalps of dingoes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They can pay up to £40 if they like.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. gentleman can readily see that scalpers might put their heads together and refuse to work except for the higher figure. We do not know what kind of a union is going to be brought into existence in connection with a matter of this kind. I am inclined to think that what has ruled in many instances in connection with the destruction of rabbits will also rule in connection with the destruction of dingoes or any other pest. I have another fault in connection with this Bill. When you raise the price of dingo scalps you also raise the price of the scalp of the fox, and consequently the imposition upon boards or upon local authorities is going to be increased enormously. The fox is increasing very rapidly, and I must admit that there is good reason why an effort should be made to destroy foxes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They may form a union not to kill any foxes.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They may, indeed, although the farmers will look after that to a large extent. The raising of the price of the one is going to raise the price of the other, and it is going to be an exceedingly costly matter. In order, apparently, to make the thing easy for the boards or the local authorities, the Minister says that he is going to subsidise the amount to the tune of £5,000.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not to the tune; that is the limit.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Minister is going to keep to that minimum. When this House is making its appropriations you may rest assured that the Minister will ask for no greater appropriation than the £5,000. I maintain that that minimum is altogether absurd.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not the minimum; it is the limit.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Minister has been very anxious in other directions to state his minimum price, and yet in connection with this pest, which is a menace to the country, the hon. gentleman places a very low minimum. When you distribute £5,000 between the various boards in the State it is a mere drop in the bucket.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think they should get any subsidy at all.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That is where the Minister fails to see the responsibilities of his position.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What nonsense!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It is not nonsense. The amount, whether it is £5,000 or £10,000, would be charged upon the whole State, and the whole State is going to be benefited by what may be done in connection with the destruction of dingoes, and, further than that, I say the Minister would be justified in asking that the Government should undertake to pay the whole amount, because the whole thing is being done in the interests of the State. Therefore, every person in the State should contribute to the putting down of a menace of this kind. It is a growing menace and it will continue to grow. The Minister, in attempting to leave out portions of the State, as provided in clause 4, is making a huge mistake. The whole State should be included.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill provides for the whole State.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The clause says—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time by Order in Council.”

There may be a diversity of opinion about it, just as we have a diversity of opinion in regard to this Bill by hon. members even on this side of the House, and there should be no doubt in the matter. It is also provided that the provisions can be amended from time to time or added to by the Governor in Council by Order in Council published in the “Gazette,” and if you turn to the schedule you will find this question is dealt with there, and therefore the thing is practically being put aside for the time being. The proposals of the Government in this Bill present many questions which are of a serious nature and which are antagonistic to the local authorities or the boards, and I do not think the Bill should be passed.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): It will probably be thought somewhat presumptuous on my part that I should get up and speak in connection with such a Bill as this. However, I may say that I have listened with a considerable amount of interest to all that has been said by the Minister and by hon. members on this side of the House in regard to this Bill. I would have liked had the Minister, when moving the second reading of the Bill, given some information—probably he may have it or probably he has not got it—as to what are the probable losses that have been caused throughout Queensland by the ravages of these dingoes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have got it all here.

Mr. TAYLOR: I wish the Minister had given us some more information than we have received.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will give it in Committee.

Mr. TAYLOR: One cannot but be struck with the diversity of opinion which exists among hon. members whom we naturally look upon as having had a fair amount of experience in this matter and who evidently should know what they are talking about. The Minister read a letter that appeared in the “Courier,” either yesterday or to-day, by Mr. Francis. I read that letter myself, and I thought it an extraordinary thing that a pastoralist out in this dingo and marsupial infested country should write a letter and say that in the proposed Bill there was absolutely no measure of reform whatever—that there was nothing in the Bill which could commend itself to the pastoralists in any shape or form. He did not mince his words in any way whatever, but lashed out in a wholesale fashion and said there was absolutely no good in it. That, naturally, makes one ask: “What sort of a Bill would be good?” What sort of a Bill is necessary in order to cope with this particular pest which infests our Western districts, and probably our coastal districts? The Minister said the Bill provided for the whole State. Of course it does. In a measure, it is at the option of the Minister who is in charge of the department administering that Bill. It is not a bit of use for the Minister or anyone else to tell us that “may” and “shall” mean the same thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I did not say so. I said you do not say “shall” to the Governor in Council.

Mr. TAYLOR: Probably we do not say “shall” to the Governor in Council. At the same time we can put “shall” in some other part of the Bill where it will not come in conflict with the Governor in Council or anything that he may happen to do. It is not necessary that that word should be put in the exact place in the Bill where we have had it given to us this afternoon. Then, again, there is this matter with regard to the freedom of scalpers to go on to any property. I think that is fairly sweeping; to think that the scalper can go and camp on any man's property and take his horses with him, and probably the man who owns the holding is carrying out to the best of his ability all that is required of him in the way of destroying dingoes and marsupials. This Bill says that the scalper can go and camp

[5.30 p.m.] there. All he has to do is to have, registered on the back of his permit, permission from the marsupial board in his particular district. He can remain until such time as he chooses to leave; all on the payment of a fee of 2s. 6d. a year. I think that is too much freedom and too wide a latitude to allow the scalper to have. The hon. member for Carnarvon told us a good deal about cattle-stealers getting on the board. I did not think things out in the Western country were quite so bad as the hon. member said they were.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes, they are. He put it very mildly.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very sorry if that is the case. I did not think it was so bad. I hope that hon. members are wrong in that particular direction. With regard to the position of the Government in reference to the various cattle stations they have, the Minister has given us the assurance that they will be included in the assessments made with regard to the destruction of these particular pests. I notice that the Minister is a

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great sticker for the King. He appears to think the King should not pay his debts. It is always "The King should not pay this."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said his Government should not.

Mr. TAYLOR: "He should get all his things free, and not have to pay anything at all." I fail to see why, in a matter of this kind, where the whole of the interests of the country are at stake, and where these pests are proving so destructive, there should be any exemption of any kind in connection with any stations owned by the Government. I was very pleased to hear the Minister say there would be no exemption, so far as the Government were concerned on those stations. I feel sure that, when the Bill comes into Committee, some amendments may be made which will improve it. I do not look upon this Bill as a party measure. I look upon it as being introduced in order to promote the very best interests of Queensland and those people out in the back country who are suffering on account of these pests. I was very sorry to hear the Minister say, by interjection, that, as far as he was concerned, he would not pay anything at all in order to provide for the eradication of these pests.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I would like to wipe out the boards altogether.

Mr. TAYLOR: Governments have to take steps in connection with pests of other kinds. In connection with the hon. gentleman's department there are any number of pests to cope with which the Government find it is absolutely necessary to provide for by a certain amount of expenditure. In many instances they do not get anything back at all in connection with the matter. It is one of those things for which the Government has to provide the money; it is an absolute necessity. When we get into Committee probably we shall be able to make a good Bill of it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is an excellent Bill now.

Mr. TAYLOR: An unfortunate thing with regard to the Minister is that, when he introduces a Bill, he appears to have the idea that it cannot possibly be improved. I would like the Minister to get that idea out of his head, because it is quite possible that the Bill may and can be improved here. He seems to have an idea that no good can come out of Nazareth. I do not think that all the good things are on the opposite side of the House. Out of Nazareth some very good things have come, and some better things, probably, will come in the future.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): This is a Bill in which many people in the country are taking a very great interest. I have listened very attentively to the second reading speech delivered by the Minister. There are many features in the Bill with which I am entirely in favour. I have heard some members on this side say that the whole State should be included in the operations of this Bill. I am not in favour of that. I think the Minister is quite right in reserving to the Governor in Council the right to decide what districts are to be included under the operations of this Bill. Take the dairying districts of Queensland. A big proportion of those dairymen have only small herds

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of anything from twenty-five to fifty head of cattle. If those dairying districts were brought under the operations of the Bill, it would fall on the dairymen of Queensland to render returns of the number of cattle which they had, and also pay a tax. We all know that this Bill is for the express purpose of protecting the pastoralist and grazing farmer of Queensland. I think that the pastoralists of Queensland could do a great deal themselves in eradicating the native dogs and other pests during certain seasons of the year. There are very few native dogs in the south-eastern portion of the Darling Downs. What is the reason of it? The small pastoralists in that district have called meetings and arranged for "drives" at certain periods of the year, with the result that about forty or fifty of those small pastoralists joined in those "drives," and succeeded in shooting all the native dogs in those districts. I notice that the Hon. the Minister states his department are only allotting a subsidy of £5,000 for the eradication of these native dogs and flying-foxes. I contend that the State should render every assistance to these boards in eradicating these pests. If the State allotted £10,000 or £20,000, money could not be expended better, because the more stock there are killed by these native dogs the greater is the loss to the State. It is much to the advantage of the State to allot at least £20,000 to subsidise those boards which have been created for the eradication of these troublesome pests. I notice also that it is intended to give the boards the option of paying up to £1 10s., if they wish, for the destruction of flying-foxes. The Minister stated that flying-foxes were doing great damage on the Darling Downs by killing lambs.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I was not speaking of flying-foxes. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: You said flying-foxes were killing the lambs.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are quite mistaken. I never mentioned flying-foxes.

Mr. GRAYSON: I listened very carefully to the speech of the hon. member for Carnarvon, who, we all admit, is the representative of the pastoral industry in this House. He voices the opinions of the pastoralists in regard to this particular Bill, and it is just as well that we have one member in the House who can voice those opinions. As a farmers' representative, I say that the pastoralists have every right to have their views expressed in this House on any Bill which affects them, and I always listen with the greatest interest to the hon. member for Carnarvon on anything affecting the pastoral industry. The hon. member said that the Bill is of no earthly use to the pastoralists, and that he did not want it.

Mr. COLLINS: Queensland did not want the prickly-pear, but they got it from the pastoralists.

Mr. GRAYSON: The Minister interjected, when the hon. member for Carnarvon was speaking: "What sort of a Bill do you want?" and the hon. member made a good reply, and said that he was not here to draft Bills for the Government, but that his duty was to criticise the Bills.

Mr. FREE: He stated that he did not want any Bill at all.

Mr. GRAYSON: He did make that statement; but, at the same time, he wants a more liberal Bill, which will assist the pastoralists and the grazing farmers. The hon. member for Carnarvon is a large grazing farmer himself, and has had twenty-five years' experience, and there is no man in Queensland who is so well able to voice the opinions of the grazing farmers in the House as he is.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He does not want any Bill at all.

Mr. GRAYSON: It seems to me that every Bill which is introduced into this House means extra taxation on the primary producer, and more returns have to be made out. The small graziers and dairymen in Queensland are being hit by this.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That old whine is played out.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is not played out. The people of the country know that it is not played out. Every Bill which has been introduced during the term of the present Labour Government has hit at the primary producer. This Bill will hit dairymen with twenty-five head of cattle.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you suggest that £25,000 should be the endowment?

Mr. GRAYSON: I suggest that the Government should endow those rates to the extent of £20,000.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Are you in favour of extra taxation?

Mr. GRAYSON: I am amused when I hear hon. members opposite asking if we are in favour of extra taxation. Will hon. members who support the Government impose any more taxation than they had already imposed during the last three years? They are continually introducing Bills, and piling taxation on the backs of the primary producers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We will put a tax on bores. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: The hon. gentleman, if he studied the interests of the agriculturists in Queensland, whom he is supposed to represent, would hesitate before introducing all these pin-pricking measures.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You will admit that I am a good debt collector?

Mr. GRAYSON: Yes, you are not a bad debt collector. My word is equally as good in financial circles in Queensland as that of the Minister. I challenge the hon. member to deny that. He doubted my word.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I doubt every remark you have made about the Bill.

Mr. GRAYSON: In my opinion, the hon. gentleman, when introducing this Bill, did not understand it. We could not make head or tail of his second reading speech. He told us at the end that it would be amended in Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said nothing of the sort.

Mr. GRAYSON: He said that if any further information was required it would be given in Committee. We are going to move some amendments in Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Move them if you like; I will accept them if I like.

Mr. GRAYSON: I hope the Minister will listen to the views coming from this side of the House, and will accept amendments in the Bill.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I hope there will be some amendments made in the Bill when it gets into Committee. I think that any owner who has vermin on his place is quite willing to give permission to any man to go in and eradicate it. There is one very dangerous thing in connection with this matter. All those men who are scalpers are not bad men, and they are not all good men. Occasionally you will find amongst the scalpers—and I have seen them in New South Wales and Queensland—some very unprincipled men. I do not wish any hon. member to think for one moment that I am classing the scalpers as any worse than carpenters, bricklayers, or members of Parliament. (Laughter.) At the same time, I hope that the Minister for Agriculture will bring in some amendments to qualify this provision. I say that the method of destroying vermin has never been successful in Australia. The method of using barrier fences is preferable every time, and if you spend £5,000 in this manner you are only throwing £5,000 of the State's money away. Whereas, if you put it into barrier fences, you are doing some good. After all, nearly all these vermin with which we have so much trouble come off tracts of country that are not at the present time in use. In New South Wales they had trouble with the rabbit pest. The rabbits bred on huge tracts of country which were not occupied, and to-day the same thing obtains in other rabbit-infested States. The breeding grounds are the cause of all the trouble. It is quite right for the Minister for Agriculture to try to bring about the destruction of these pests, but at the same time I believe there are things in this Bill that would not be good for the country. In the first place, an owner is desirous of getting rid of them, because it is his own salvation. For instance, if he has rabbits he cannot have stock. If he has a great number of marsupials, he cannot have stock. It is his desire to have them destroyed, and I have always found that the pastoralist or selector was only too willing for the honest man to come in and help to destroy them, and the Minister should have made some provision for preventing unprincipled men from coming in. That is the striking point I wish to emphasise. It is not that I think the Bill will do any good, or that there is any necessity for it. I know that there is necessity for destruction, and in many cases for keeping them back, but, after all, I think there is something in the assertions of the hon. member for Carnarvon regarding the balance of power between the meat-eating animal and the grass-eating animal, and in some cases the foxes are rather welcomed in Victoria, because they destroy the rabbits. In the Grampians, or the southern part of the Wimmera country, they really like to see foxes. They do not do any harm, except to the lambs, and the owners take steps to save the lambs, and then the foxes are keeping the rabbits down. I will not say so much about the dingo, because I do not know so much about it, but the fox, where rabbits are, is not an unmixed curse. I would like the Minister to meet this question in an open-minded manner. I have

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heard hon. members say that this is not a party measure. Any man who made it a party measure would be simply a fool.

Mr. COLLINS: You are doing all the talking on that side.

Mr. WARREN: I am not going to occupy much of the time of the House, but I think I have as much right to occupy it and say a few words on this Bill as the hon. member has to interject. I am not criticising this to destruction. I am only pointing out these few points with the intention of benefiting the man on the land.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): It is not my intention to say anything regarding dingoes and marsupials, but it appears to me that this is a trouble that is always arising. I think that during the years I have had the honour of being in this Assembly hardly a Parliament has passed that we have not had some Bill introduced regarding the destruction of marsupials and dingoes. It has been pointed out that this should not be a party question, and I look upon it as a non-party question altogether, because there is no doubt that these pests cause a great deal of destruction and loss to pastoralists and others who are engaged in industries on the land. Whether the Bill introduced by the Minister for Agriculture is going to have the desired effect or not remains to be proved, but as has been pointed out by hon. members on this side of the House who are able to judge, there are many things more beneficial than the introduction of certain amendments in the law. I know the Minister is a reasonable business man, and I hope that in his reasonableness, if, when the Bill gets into Committee, any amendments are moved that might make this Bill more effective and workable, he will accept them. It has already been pointed out that we are not speaking from a party point of view. There is a difference of opinion even on this side of the House, and members on this side are the only ones outside of the Minister who have spoken. The hon. member for Carnarvon has a decided objection to this Bill in every phase, and some of his objections appear to me to be reasonable and sound. For instance, scalpers get certificates from a board, and are permitted to go on to any holdings in that particular district.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Only on the holdings endorsed on the permit.

Mr. PETRIE: But still, sometimes that has its objectionable feature, because on some of those holdings the owners have already spent money to destroy those dingoes and marsupials, and after they have gone to that expense, I do not see why any man should be allowed to go there and interfere. Even amongst members of Parliament there are men sometimes who are not altogether desirable to be moving about other people's property. I am not wishing to cast any reflection on the scalpers—there are good and bad men in every class of society—but instead of doing good, instead of being scalpers merely, you may get hold of men who might do a great deal of damage in other directions. I hope and trust that this Bill will receive every consideration, not only from members on this side of the House, but from both sides of the House. We have every desire, as an Opposition, I take it, to assist the Government in any

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measure they introduce which we think is for the benefit of the whole of the community. I am one of those who are anxious to assist, because, although we differ sometimes in politics, we should help as much as we possibly can towards the welfare of the people.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

On clause 1—"Short title and commencement of Act"—

Mr. GUNN moved—That the words "dingo and marsupial," on lines 6 and 7, be omitted, with the view of inserting the words "noxious animals." In New South Wales they had a Marsupial Destruction Act, and

had found it necessary, as they [7 p.m.] had done in Queensland, to amend it again and again, and eventually they concluded that the best thing to do was to change the title of the Act into that of "Noxious Animals Act." They were then able to include various noxious animals in the measure, and avoid the absurdity of calling an animal a marsupial when it was not a marsupial. We had taught our children that marsupials were pouched animals, and no one could say that dingoes were pouched animals. They might, later on, have to include wild pigs or other noxious animals within the scope of this measure, and it would save a lot of trouble and make the title of the measure much more reasonable if they called it the "Noxious Animals Destruction Act."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not believe the hon. member was serious in proposing the amendment. He had already had in mind the desirableness of introducing an Animals Pests Bill, which would deal with all animal pests. But that would involve so many alterations in different Acts of Parliament that he had found it impossible to bring forward such a measure so early in the life of the present Parliament.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He thought the Minister had not treated the hon. member for Carnarvon fairly in insinuating that the hon. member was not treating this matter seriously. He was convinced that the hon. member for Carnarvon was treating the matter seriously.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you honestly believe what you say?

HON. W. H. BARNES: He did. The hon. member for Carnarvon was, no doubt, very anxious to improve the Bill now that it was in Committee, and it was not quite fair to insinuate that the hon. member was merely talking for the sake of talking.

Mr. GUNN: He was quite serious in the matter, and was impressed with the utility of the proposed amendment. The title of "Noxious Animals Bill," which was adopted in New South Wales, was a much more sensible title than that of "Dingo and Marsupial Destruction Act." The Minister himself had practically admitted that when he said he had thought of bringing in a Noxious Animals Bill. The adoption of the amendment would only mean a few consequential amendments later on in the measure.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have already given you reasons why I cannot bring on the measure I had in my mind.

Mr. GUNN: The only reason there was for objecting to his amendment was that it came from that side of the House. He did not speak in a carping manner in proposing the amendment; he was merely trying to improve the measure, and he was made fun of.

Mr. GRAYSON: There was no more sincere member in the House than the hon. member for Carnarvon. This was a matter which the hon. member for Carnarvon understood thoroughly, and the Minister was scarcely fair in expressing a doubt about the hon. member's sincerity in proposing the amendment. The amendment would certainly be an improvement to the Bill, and if the hon. member called for a division on it he would support the amendment.

Mr. MOORE: Last year, when the State Produce Agency Bill was before the House, the Minister tried to include in it everything which he wished to be treated as agricultural produce. That provision was not passed, and now the Minister had introduced a Bill to amend the State Produce Agency Act with a view to giving him power to declare that other articles might be regarded as agricultural produce. Hon. members knew that there were many noxious animals besides dingoes and marsupials, and it was only a reasonable thing to alter the title of the Bill, so that its provisions might be made to apply to those animals. Animal pests were coming into the State almost every day. It was only a few years ago that foxes came into Queensland, and it was not at all unlikely that we should have other pests coming into the State. It was only a reasonable thing to accept the amendment, which could not do any harm to the Bill, and which might prove a great convenience later on. No one could tell what was going to be a pest in the future. Repeatedly conferences were held in Brisbane, and people asked the department to declare certain things marsupials so that they could be dealt with as pests, and invariably they were told by the Minister that he had no power to bring them under the Act. Under a Bill like that all noxious animals and birds could be included. He could not see why the hon. gentleman should be obstinate whenever an amendment was proposed by a member of the Opposition and refuse to accept it. In connection with the State Produce Agency, although the definition of "produce" gave the Government apparently everything they wanted, yet the Minister had to bring in an amending Bill to make the definition still wider. All he asked was that the hon. gentleman should be consistent.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2—"Repeal of Marsupial Boards Acts, 1905 to 1910"—put and passed.

On clause 3—"Interpretation"—

Mr. CORSER: The Minister had told them that he thought the clause made it quite clear that the Crown was included, but he (Mr. Corser) did not think that was at all clear, and he therefore intended to move an amendment placing the matter beyond doubt.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am sure of everything I said.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman was not very definite on the point, and there was no harm in making it definite. The hon. gentleman could not contend that the Crown

held country land "in fee-simple or under lease or license." He therefore moved the insertion, on line 47, after the word "otherwise," on the definition of "holding," of the words—

"including land held for pastoral and agricultural purposes by the Crown."

If the Minister really desired that the Crown should be included, he would accept the amendment. The Crown were now the owners of cattle, and they were just as much interested in the destruction of dingoes and marsupials as any private individual, and, if they extended their operations to the breeding of cattle, they would be still more interested in the destruction of such pests.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not propose to accept the amendment. He believed the words, "or otherwise," were sufficiently comprehensive to include the Crown. In addition to the assurance he had given before, he now repeated that the Crown was prepared, and undertook, to pay all the taxes levied under the Act as well as under the Diseases in Stock Act.

Mr. GUNN: That assurance was all very well; but last session, in answer to a question, the Government said they did not pay the marsupial tax in connection with one of their stations—he thought it was Mount Hutton. This session he asked a similar question with respect to Government stations generally, and he was informed that they paid the marsupial tax. He would like to know whether they would pay the marsupial tax in connection with Cecil Plains. Apparently, sometimes they paid the taxes and sometimes they did not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hereafter they will pay the taxes every time.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Why not insert it in the Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Because I won't.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That is very rude.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Secretary for Agriculture took up an extraordinary attitude. He said he undertook that the Crown would pay the taxes, and he also indicated that, in his opinion, the Crown was covered by the interpretation of "holding."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say the words "or otherwise" are very far-reaching.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman also made the deliberate statement that he would not accept the amendment. From a legal point of view, he (Mr. Macartney) did not think the Crown was covered by that definition. The Crown was not bound by general statutes unless it was specially mentioned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Crown is not mentioned in the Local Authorities Act, either.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was, as a fact. The words "or otherwise," that the hon. gentleman relied upon, were very general. They had no application at all to the persons who were bound by the Act; they only applied to the tenure. The definition read—

"Any country land held in fee-simple or under lease, license, or otherwise."

Mr. Macartney.]

That did not refer to the Crown at all; so that, if the hon. gentleman meant exactly what he said when he stated that he understood that the Crown would pay the taxes, then he ought to accept the amendment, which only made clear what was certainly not provided for, in his opinion. It was only a matter of the hon. gentleman's word to that Committee that the Crown would pay the taxes, and, if that assurance were quoted twenty times over in any court of law, it would have no effect if the Act itself did not specifically state that the Crown was liable.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He reminded the Minister for Agriculture that he was sensitive in dealing with a similar point in another Bill, but in quite the opposite direction. When they were dealing with the State Produce Agency Bill the Secretary for Agriculture was most insistent in saying that the Government were not prepared to allow themselves to be treated in the same fashion as other people. Now the hon. gentleman said it would be all right, and that the word "otherwise" was most comprehensive. Was legislation to be carried out that way? Were they just to take the assurance of the Minister that it would be all right? If they left the paragraph as it was, it might lead to endless litigation. Surely the hon. gentleman had not entered into partnership with any legal firm, because there was no doubt the paragraph was going to cause a lot of trouble at a later period. The Minister knew that he refused to allow the Crown to be put on the same footing in respect to another Bill, and now he was doing something quite the opposite. The amendment was a reasonable one, as it placed beyond all doubt what the Minister said was the intention of the Bill.

Mr. MOORE: The Local Authorities Act made it perfectly clear what the Crown were prepared to pay, and what they would not pay. There were special exemptions of unoccupied Crown land, and land used for public purposes. In other cases it was explicitly stated what the Crown's responsibilities were. Why not do the same in connection with this Bill? In the Local Authorities Act it was laid down specifically that rates could not be collected on land in the occupation of the State or Commonwealth Governments, but this did not include land rented by the Crown from persons or corporations. Why not make it clear in the present Bill, and say that the Crown were not going to pay the rate?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You can move an amendment excluding the Crown, if you like.

Mr. MOORE: He wanted the Crown included. The Minister was only misleading the House when he said that the word "otherwise" would include the Crown. The Minister was not treating the House in a courteous way. It should be made clear, so that another Minister would know exactly what was in the Act, and what was intended.

Mr. TAYLOR: He was surprised at the extraordinary attitude of the Minister. They received an assurance from the Minister that the Crown would pay the assessments, but they knew another Minister would not be bound by what the present Minister said, and it was better to make it clear by putting it in the Act. If they included it in the Bill there would be no misunderstanding whatever.

[Mr. Macartney.

Mr. G. P. BARNES thought the Minister should accept the amendment and make it clear what was intended the Government should do. Were they to understand that the word "otherwise" included the Government, and made them liable just the same as every other member in the community? The Minister was very much like John Chinaman with his "No savee." The Minister should place the matter beyond all doubt by putting in words to show what the Government contemplated. If the Government intended to stand in the same position as other people, why not say so in the Bill? If they did not put it in the Bill, and another Minister succeeded the present Minister, he would be bound only by what he saw in the Bill. The matter should be made clear, and they should know how far the Government were prepared to pay taxation. It was one of the contentious things in the country that the Government always escaped taxation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They pay as much taxation as any other Government did.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They all knew how the animal and vegetable pests spread. It was a fact that the spread of the prickly-pear was largely due to the fact that the Government were not responsible for the pear on their areas and reserves.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Can the hon. member name one individual who will be so large a contributor as the Crown under this Bill, which provides that the Crown pays £5,000 a year?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The interjection of the Minister seemed to indicate the whole responsibility of the Government, and the "otherwise," according to the assertion now made, was going to be covered

[7.30 p.m.] by the paltry subsidy of £5,000.

He was sure the Committee had no idea whatever of accepting that as the full responsibility of the Government, which was a mere drop in a bucket as compared with the huge cost that would be incurred in keeping down the pest. Would the hon. gentleman say that he had been misleading the Committee in the earlier statements he had made and that all the Government intended to do was to pay the subsidy of £5,000? The Committee should certainly have their minds set at rest as to what was really in the mind of the Minister in that regard.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. CORSER: To make matters quite clear he moved the insertion in the definition of "owner," after the word "person," on page 3, line 1, the words "including the Crown." The definition of "owner" would then read—

"The person, including the Crown, for the time being entitled to possession of a holding."

The Minister would agree that there was an omission in the definition of "owner." The definition in the Bill certainly did not include the Crown.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out that the amendment the hon. member is now moving is substantially the same as the one which has just been negatived, and therefore it cannot be put.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 4—"Governor in Council may constitute, unite, or divide districts"—

Mr. CORSER: If the Bill was to be of any use at all, it should cover every portion of the State. There were many factors wrapped up in the Bill, and the taxation it was going to impose would be nullified if it did not cover the whole State. He therefore moved the omission, after the word "Council," on line 37, of the words—

"may from time to time by Order in Council—

(a) Constitute any part of Queensland a dingo district for the purposes of this Act."

with a view of inserting the words—

"(a) Shall divide the whole of the State of Queensland into dingo districts as constituted under this Act."

The whole of the State was divided into electoral districts and into many other districts, and there was no reason why the Bill should not provide that every portion of the State should be included in some dingo district.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member had already had his assurance that he would not accept the amendment.

Mr. CORSER: We heard you say you would not accept any.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He had not said that he would not accept any amendment, but perhaps he "may" not accept any. There might be one or two amendments accepted, but surely the hon. member would not want him to accept an amendment that should not be accepted?

Mr. CORSER: I think this one should be accepted.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not think so, as the wording of the clause fitted the Bill nicely. They already had a large number of marsupial districts which would be called dingo districts, and in other districts the officers would make the necessary inquiries to ascertain the number of persons possessing the necessary number of cattle to entitle them to become voters, and as soon as that information had been obtained the necessary boards would be constituted. The clause provided that—

"The Governor in Council may from time to time by Order in Council—

(a) Constitute any part of Queensland a dingo district for the purposes of this Act;

(b) Unite two or more such districts into one district;

(c) Divide a dingo district into two or more districts;

(d) Alter the boundaries of a dingo district;

(e) Abolish a dingo district."

All those provisions were necessary. It would take some little time to obtain the information, but no time would be lost in bringing the whole State under the Act, because that had been his desire for more than three years. When a similar Bill was before the House two years ago it was not received with very much acclamation by hon. members opposite, and was defeated in another place, and he was aware that a very large number of pastoralists had rated hon. members opposite for not receiving that Bill in a proper manner and passing it. He was satisfied that the same feeling still existed in the minds of the friends of hon. members

opposite. They wanted the Bill, and did not want it amended in a way that would make it unsatisfactory. He could not accept the amendment.

Mr. MOORE: He did not think the Minister was right in saying that the Opposition had not received the Bill with acclaim to-day. They recognised that the Bill was a good Bill, but they recognised that it could be made better. It could be made better by inserting an amendment by which the whole of Queensland would be brought under the operation of the Bill, and not left to the discretion of the Minister. There were various questions agitating the minds of the people of Queensland, and if Ministers had their own way they could settle matters straight away, but they knew very well that outside influence proved so strong that they were frightened to do the correct thing. The same thing might occur in connection with that Bill. The Minister knew very well that certain districts should be included, but outside influence might prove too strong for him. The Opposition did not want to put the Minister in that invidious position.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This party is not subject to outside influence.

Mr. MOORE: What was the good of the hon. gentleman saying that? Did they not see it every day? A blind man could see that outside influence was exerting pressure to-day, and they knew it would be exerted in the future. Men living in certain portions of Queensland who did not have dingoes or who wanted dingoes to keep down rabbits would say: "Why should we be brought in?" They would send down a deputation to the Minister, and then they would hear all sorts of things as to why they should not be brought under the Bill. The Bill was for the benefit of the whole of Queensland, and the whole of Queensland should contribute towards the destruction of the pest which was reducing the flock of Queensland, and had been doing so for years. There was nothing in the amendment to say that the Minister should do it now. The hon. gentleman knew perfectly well he could get the number of people who would be entitled to vote from the stock returns, which were probably in his own office at the present time. There was no difficulty in securing that. All they wanted him to do was to make it clear and definite that the whole of Queensland would be brought under the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The existing Act contains the power to bring the whole of Queensland under the Act.

Mr. MOORE: He did not doubt that the existing Act gave that power. It was being made optional, and they wanted to make it so that it would not be optional. It seemed as though the Minister wanted to carry the whole weight on his back. They wanted to have it put in an Act of Parliament so that the whole of Queensland would be brought under it automatically. They did not want to leave the Minister in an invidious position when men came before him and put forward all sorts of arguments why they should not be brought under the Act. There were many people who could bring forward good arguments. It would not affect the Bill in any way. They believed the Bill was going to be a benefit, and they wanted to put it in such a condition that there would be nothing at which anybody could cavil who was going to be affected by it. It was

Mr. Moore.]

not the Minister, but the people outside, who would be affected by it, and they wanted those people treated fairly.

Amendment put and negatived, and clause 4 put and passed.

Clause 5 put and passed.

On clause 6—"Qualification of members and electors"—

Mr. GUNN moved the omission of the words "twenty-five" on lines 12 and 13, with a view to inserting the word "fifty" At the present time a man had to have fifty head of stock before he had a vote, or could get on a marsupial or dingo board. If they reduced the number to twenty-five, it would mean a lot of hardship to a big number of small men. At the present time they did not have to make a return or pay any assessment unless they had fifty head of cattle and horses combined. If they brought this provision in, returns would have to be sent in by the small people, and the money which they would get out of it would be a mere nothing. It would only worry people whom there was no occasion to worry. He knew a district in which all the carriers would come under the provisions of the Bill, be taxpayers, and be able to get on the board. Fifty head of stock was quite little enough. He was quite sure that that number would meet with the approval of the people interested, though it might not meet with the approval of the Minister in charge of the Bill. He seemed to think that everything which came from that side was brought up for the sake of obstruction. They only wanted to improve the Bill. That was one of the most important amendments which was likely to be moved.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He quite admitted there was an alteration in this Bill as compared with the old Act, which was in the direction stated by the hon. member for Carnarvon. They had an object in making the alteration. In the early days dairy people were of small consideration. Dairy people now were of large consideration, and their twenty-five head of cattle were very valuable. They were suffering a great deal from the ravages of dogs. (Opposition dissent.) He had the assurance of the Wool and Sheep Expert of his own department that in many cases along the coast, where sheep and cattle were being successfully raised, they were driven out by reason of the dogs. They were small holders of cattle and sheep. The equivalent of twenty-five head of cattle would be 125 head of sheep. Therefore, it was absolutely desirable and necessary to make that alteration. He regretted, on that account, that he could not accept the hon. member's amendment.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister was not quite correct in saying that he recognised now there was a necessity to put in a proviso because of the value of dairy stock. The old Bill made provision for special districts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have wiped them out.

Mr. CORSER: It made provision for special districts which would include the owners of fifteen head of stock. So that the Minister could not say there was any reasonable suggestion now that the value of stock made him alter the provision to bring the number down to twenty-five as against fifty. The Minister claimed it was because of the

value of dairy stock. He thought the hon. member for Wide Bay had not whispered any instructions into the Minister's ears, or he would not have made that statement. For the most part they were housed when they were young, and did not come in for the trouble which the bigger holders had with the calves running in the bush with their mothers. So that there was no reason, except to increase the burden of taxation, in including twenty-five head of cattle as against fifty. It would mean, probably, that a person with twenty-five head of cattle would be asked to pay, perhaps, £1 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why have the people in the Allora and other districts been paying on fifteen head?

Mr. CORSER: They paid 1s.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It does not matter. They only pay 1s. 6d. now.

Mr. CORSER: Under this Bill they would have to pay £1 or £5 on twenty-five head.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not on twenty-five head.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister would agree there was no necessary limit. The Bill provided for 5s. on twenty-five head, and gave the Minister power to extend that payment to anything he liked. With his approval a particular dingo board might claim any assessment it liked. He had only to say, "We will make it £2 5s. for twenty-five head of stock," and every owner of twenty-five head would be assessed on that figure. They should not ask the small man to pay for the destruction of those pests. As an appeal for the holder of a few head of stock he would suggest that the amendment be accepted, and that little bit of leniency given, the burden to be carried by those who were prepared to carry it—the men with a large number of stock.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Government on more than one occasion—and nobody more than the Minister for Agriculture—posed as being the friend of the small farmer. They had an opportunity there for living up to their word in that matter. The accepting of the amendment would be a matter of very great pleasure indeed to the bulk of the dairymen not only on the coast but all through the land. There was nothing they objected to so much as the making out of these forms. Whilst the levy did not seem great, it was an unknown quantity, and might be a very heavy one. If the Minister had any respect for the dairymen he would accept the amendment. The dairyman was suffering no loss whatever in connection with this pest. His poddy calves were attended to and guarded in small enclosed paddocks, and were not so susceptible to the ravages of dingoes. It was on the large holdings that dingoes were found. They did not find dingoes in closely-settled districts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I know much better than that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Friends of his own had contradicted him as to that, and said that the dingoes did exist in closely-settled districts, but as far as his knowledge of the south-eastern Downs went, the dingo was almost non est. They were certainly being troubled to a large extent with foxes. It was not fair to penalise the small farmer with twenty-five head of stock in this way, and they could well respect his feelings by

[Mr. Moore.

making the minimum number fifty head. He had pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They made it a rule to exempt a person from income tax up to a living wage, and it was stated to be the same in regard to the land tax, but, unfortunately, it was not so, as the £300 exemption in the land tax was a mere nothing—something similar to what the exemption of twenty-five head of cattle would be under this Bill. They should make the exemption up to fifty head, as a man with that number was only making a living and putting nothing by. He hoped the Minister would agree to the amendment.

Mr. GRAYSON was surprised that the Minister did not accept the amendment, as he could not conceive a more reasonable one. He represented a large dairying constituency, and he was sure that 95 per cent. of the dairymen who held from twenty-five to fifty head of cattle had no desire to come under the Bill. If the Minister wished to be reasonable and assist the small dairymen and farmers who only owned from, say, ten head up to forty-nine head of cattle, he would not bring them within the operation of the Bill. This was a matter of very great importance. The small farmer was subject to the worry of sending in a great many returns, and he should be exempted in this instance. This was a matter which affected carriers in Queensland. There were very few carriers in the western country who had fifty head of horses, and they would be brought under the operation of the Bill if the Minister did not accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Have many of your electors, who are carriers, twenty-five horses?

Mr. GRAYSON: Many of them; but he was speaking of carriers throughout Queensland. If the Minister understood the conditions in Queensland, he would know that a carrier could not have less than twenty-five horses.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then he could very well afford to pay the tax.

Mr. GRAYSON: The Bill was no benefit to the carrier or the small dairyman, and he trusted the Minister would be reasonable and accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hon. members opposite talked about the injustice which the small dairyman would suffer under this Bill, but section 8 of the Act, which was being repealed by this Bill, provided—

“In every special district, every resident, owner, or manager of a holding in respect of which such return has been made of not less than twenty-five head of cattle or a proportionate number of sheep or of cattle, shall be qualified to be elected a member of the board.”

That referred to special districts such as Condamine, Darling Downs, Burnett, and Bungil. Those people had to pay assessment on twenty-five head of cattle. Moreover, subsection (4) of section 8 of the principal Act, which was being repealed, provided that in the case of a district a resident owner or manager of a holding with not less than fifty head of cattle, or in the case of a special district of not less than fifty head of cattle, was qualified to vote.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Those are the evils which we want to repeal.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Those things were put in by a Liberal Government, which forgot all about the necessities of the poor widow, the poor dairyman, or the poor carrier with twenty-five horses. He had made this a democratic measure, and the qualification for a seat on a board was exactly the same as that which was required by a voter. It was not so in connection with Liberal Governments, which had stretched their imaginations so liberally that they had made dingoes marsupials, and also made dairymen pay taxation without representation. This Bill did not impose taxation without representation, but it made a man who had over twenty-five head of cattle eligible to be a member of a board and also liable to taxation. He declined to accept the amendment.

Mr. MOORE: Did the Minister realise that in some districts where there were, say, 100 teams, all the owners would come under the provision? Take a timber district like the Cooyar district, where 150 men are working.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Five, ten, or twenty teams are owned by one man.

Mr. MOORE: Not in this district.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And they can very well afford to pay this tax.

Mr. MOORE: He was not dealing with that at all. Those men would be eligible to sit on the board, and what [8 p.m.] interest was it to them whether there were dingoes in the district at all? They were not stockowners in the sense that they were breeders of stock. They had grown-up bullocks, and dingoes did not attack grown-up bullocks. Why should they have the voting power when they were not interested personally?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You cannot name a hundred men in your district each with twenty-five horses.

Mr. MOORE: He was not talking about horses at all. They were all bullock teams in that area. What interest had they in keeping down dingoes? They were in a timber area, and they were doing special work, and yet they would be subject to taxation, and eligible for representation on the board. Was it of any advantage to the general stockowner that he should sit on the board and legislate for somebody else? He thought the Minister should realise that there were many districts where such a thing occurred. He did not need to go very far from Brisbane. He was serious in the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are always very serious.

Mr. MOORE: It was a very serious matter when such men saw their money expended by men who did not care whether there were dingoes in the district or not, who happened to be in the district, earning their living in a totally different manner.

Mr. TAYLOR: He certainly thought the strongest point had been made by the hon. member for Aubigny. They all knew that there was a considerable number of men who had these teams in timber-getting areas. They came under the operation of the Act, and had to register, but they had really no interest whatever in the matter. He hoped the Minister would see his way to agree to the amendment.

Mr. Taylor.]

Mr. GUNN: The Minister had suggested that carriers did not have twenty-five head of cattle or horses. In the St. George district, with which he was fairly well acquainted, the carriers invariably had more than twenty-five head. All the horses were not working at once; they must have some spelling. They must have a cow and a calf, to give a little milk for the use of the wife at home, and even if they had bullock teams they must have two or three spare horses to muster their cattle. To say that a carrier did not have twenty-five head of cattle was absurd. To bring them under the Bill would be to put them to the trouble of filling in the form and paying taxation in a matter about which they were not interested. Marsupials did not worry their horses, or teams, or calves.

Amendment put and negatived; and clause 6 put and passed.

Clauses 7 and 8 put and passed.

On clause 9—"Rules for proceedings and business"—

Mr. CORSER: He did not rise to propose the insertion of the word that had been omitted. His object was to secure the deletion of the second portion of the clause, which did not appear in the old Act—

"Such provisions may from time to time be amended or added to the Governor in Council by Order in Council published in the 'Gazette.'"

In that Bill they had a lot of matter deleted, some of it, of course, not of a great deal of importance. But certain sections which were of importance had now been placed in the schedule. For instance, section 35 of the Act was being wiped out altogether and placed in the schedule as clause 16, page 12—

"Any person who—

(i.) Knowingly procures or attempts to procure a certificate for scalps of dingoes or marsupials which have not been destroyed within the district in respect of which the certificate is granted or is applied for shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds."

Yet they found provision that the Governor in Council might alter or add to the schedule. Why should they include an important matter in the schedule, and give the Minister power to alter? That clause was a matter of very great importance, a matter with which they should not allow the Minister to tamper, when there might be an inclination in that direction at times when he might possibly be asked to adjudicate upon a case in which a supporter was in trouble.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I would ask the hon. member to allow me to make a slight grammatical amendment in that provision.

Mr. CORSER: That was so. A word was omitted, but if they wiped it out altogether it would not matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved the insertion, after the word "to" in line 41, page 5, of the word "by." It had been omitted in redrafting.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CORSER: The paragraph which he had quoted provided that a scalper guilty of fraud should be liable to a penalty not

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exceeding £20. A scalper might be fined under that provision, and representations might then be made to the Minister by a member of Parliament, which would not be in the best interests of the community. Such matters as that should be taken away from political control. He moved that lines 40, 41, and 42 be omitted, so as to take away from the Minister an opportunity of tampering with Part I. of the schedule.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not see what the hon. member was driving at. The schedule would be a part of the Bill. The criticism of the hon. member drew attention to the fact that the Governor in Council might from time to time by Order in Council amend or add to the words in the schedule. Hitherto a very large area of country had not been brought within the scope of this legislation, so that some slight variation in the schedule might be needed. The sinister influences the hon. member referred to were not likely to operate, and he thought it was very improper for the hon. member to speak in that way. During the deputation season, when the National Show was on, they would have a large number of people from all parts of the State waiting on Ministers, including the Secretary for Agriculture. They might point out that this particular measure required altering or varying somewhat, and that was the reason why the provision the hon. member objected to was inserted in the Bill. There was no such object or influence associated with it as the hon. member insinuated, and he did not propose to accept the amendment.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It seemed an extraordinary thing that apparently all our legislation was going in the direction of really dispensing with Parliament. They were now told that people might come down and interview the Minister, and that because they might point out certain things, the Minister should practically have the right to become a Parliament, and deal with very important matters. It was all very well for the Minister to grow indignant with the hon. member for Burnett for suggesting that political influence might operate in such matters, but pressure might come from where the red flag was flown.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Or where the green flag flies—pressure from the Y.M.C.A.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He was not talking about the green flag, but was simply pointing out that the Minister might be amenable to pressure from the direction he had indicated.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. gentleman was very clever in trying to make it appear that the Minister in charge of the Bill had lost his temper. This provision was part of a large scheme in connection with directions to the board. That scheme dealt with the business of the board, the manner of treating scalps, and so on, and this provision, being part and parcel of a big scheme, was necessarily placed in juxtaposition to other clauses of a similar character. That was done for the convenience of the people. There was no improper design behind it, and there was no red flag or green flag associated with it. There was nothing green about it. It was as red as red could be, and might easily be read by anybody who chose to read it. He refused to accept the amendment.

Mr. CORSER: There was no reason why the Minister should take from the present Act a certain provision, and place it in Part I. of the schedule.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is done for convenience.

Mr. CORSER: Then why was not Part II. of the schedule treated in a similar manner?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That clause is placed in juxtaposition with other clauses of a similar character.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister said that this provision was inserted so that he might be able to meet the wishes of a deputation who required some variation of the provisions contained in Part I. of the schedule. The Committee did not want any variation in the provisions contained in the schedule. Why did the clause distinctly state that Part I. of the schedule might be dealt with in this particular way and not extend that provision to Part II. of the schedule? Why was paragraph 16 placed in Part I. of the schedule, which might be altered by the Minister? Why was it not inserted in Part II. of the schedule, which was away from the control of the Minister? Certain alterations might be made in that paragraph which might be dangerous, and he thought the Minister should not have power to deal with the matter referred to in the paragraph. The Minister was not given such power in any previous Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't forget that measures have been passed by Liberal Governments without any sense at all. The present Government have things done properly.

Mr. CORSER: They did things properly for themselves, but when his party got back to power, they would do the fair thing by everyone.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When! When!

Mr. CORSER: The amendment was one that the Minister should accept. If the hon. gentleman would not accept it, he should at least give some reason why section 35 of the present Act was being inserted in Part I. of the schedule, where he would have power to alter it in any way he chose.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Part II. of the schedule dealt entirely with election matters, and there was, therefore, no reason for applying the provision of the clause under discussion to that part of the schedule. He had already given several reasons why he did not consider it desirable to accept the amendment, and, notwithstanding all that the hon. member had said, he still persisted in that intention.

Mr. GUNN: Clause 22, which gave the Governor in Council power to make regulations upon any subject, seemed to cover all that was required, and there was, therefore, no necessity for the words which the hon. member for Burnett wished to have omitted.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The power to make regulations is contained in every Act of Parliament.

Mr. GUNN: He noticed that clause 22 did not contain the usual provision requiring regulations to be laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament before they could have the force of law. Apparently, the Governor in Council was to have power to do as he

liked, without the authority of Parliament. He knew it was no use asking the Minister to accept any amendment if he had made up his mind not to do so. He would not even allow the hon. member for Burnett to correct a clerical error in the clause, but had to move the amendment himself. It was absurd for members of the Opposition to come there at all if no notice was to be taken of anything they said.

Amendment (*Mr. Corser's*) put and negatived; and clause put and passed.

On clause 10—"Destruction of animals and permits"—

Mr. MOORE moved the insertion, on line 54, after the word "dingo," of the words "or marsupial." The paragraph would then read—

"No permit for dingo or marsupial destruction shall be issued in respect of any holding which, in the opinion of the Minister on the recommendation of the board, is fenced with effective dog-proof fencing."

The amendment did not propose to take away any power from the Minister. He could refuse a permit or not, just as he liked. It was not likely that a man would go to the expense of erecting a marsupial or dog-proof fence at a cost of about £100 a mile for the sake of keeping dingoes or marsupials on his property. Sometimes a man might keep thirty or forty kangaroos, as there were many people who had no desire to see the native animals exterminated. Kangaroo skins were valuable, and, if the amendment were not made, a man would be able to get a permit to enter that property and shoot those marsupials. It was not likely that a man was going to stock up marsupials when he erected an expensive fence, and it must not be forgotten that both the recommendation of the board and the approval of the Minister were necessary. The scalper would not be allowed to go in to destroy dingoes, and he could see no reason why he should be allowed to enter the place to kill marsupials. The owner of the property would not fence the property merely for the fun of the thing, or because he was going to breed marsupials and dingoes. He thought the omission of marsupials must be a clerical error.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not propose to accept the amendment. The object of the paragraph might not be quite plain to the hon. member, but there was no error about it, as the hon. member surmised. In the course of time, when netting became cheaper, enormous areas of land might be enclosed with dog-proof fences, and large numbers of kangaroos and other marsupials might be included in those areas. The owners of the properties had no claim to those animals, which belonged to the State; but, owing to the increasing value of the skins, those people might claim to be the owners of what was a very valuable property, and seek to deprive scalpers of the opportunity of following their avocation. Scalpers would not be permitted to go on to the property to shoot dingoes, because the fact that the owner had gone to the expense of erecting a dog-proof fence would indicate that he meant to keep the dingoes out, and probably he would kill those that were inside the fence himself. But the hon. member must know that a large number of highly respectable men made a living as scalpers, and it was only right that they

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should not be prevented from following their avocation, as they would be if he accepted the amendment.

Mr. MOORE: He was under a misconception as to the reason for the Bill. He thought the Bill was brought in in the public interests to protect the public from pests. He did not think it was brought in to enable the scalper to follow his avocation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The scalper has as much right to live as the cattle-owner.

Mr. MOORE: He could live by getting scalps on unoccupied land without going on to the land privately owned and enclosed with dog-proof fencing. The Bill was supposed to be for the protection of

[8.30 p.m.] Queensland and for the extermination of pests. It was not a Bill to create an industry whereby men could earn a living by going on to private property to shoot marsupials. When a man went to great expense to fence his property, he was not likely to enclose any marsupials. The fencing cost from £70 to £80 a mile, and a landowner did not put up a fence at that expense just for fun. It was not right to allow men to go in and shoot marsupials when the land was enclosed with dog-proof fencing. They knew what had happened in connection with the rabbit-catchers down South. They exterminated a few and left the young ones to breed up so that they could come back again, and that was what the scalpers would do so far as the marsupials were concerned. They would kill a few and leave the young ones to breed up again so that they could come back again. The trappers always went where the marsupials were thick, and they would only kill a few.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the trappers kill a few marsupials, there will be all the less for the pastoralists to kill.

Mr. MOORE: The pastoralists would put men on if they wanted to exterminate the marsupials. They did not want to create a living for scalpers.

The PREMIER: If the scalper kills some, then there must be less for the pastoralists to kill.

Mr. MOORE: The scalper had no right to go on a man's land. Let him go on the outside country.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE pointed out that the measure was called "A Bill to encourage the destruction of dingoes and marsupials." The hon. member considered that the scalper should be prevented from carrying out the very purposes of the Bill. It was a well-known fact that the cattlemen did not care so much about the native dog, because it did not do the cattle so much harm. But when grass was getting scarce, the cattlemen would start a drive, and drive all the marsupials on to the sheep country. The hon. gentleman did not want the scalper to have the right to shoot kangaroos. He (Mr. Lennon) would be foolish if he accepted the amendment, because there was no doubt that the scalper destroyed a lot of marsupials.

Mr. ROBERTS: If the Minister consulted the Lands Department, or the Minister for Lands, he would be inclined to accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Minister for Lands was not in charge of this Bill.

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Mr. ROBERTS: Well, the Minister for Lands had exercised the privilege of refusing permits to various scalpers. The other day two returned soldiers asked him (Mr. Roberts) to get them a permit to shoot marsupials on Cecil Plains. He communicated with the Lands Department, and received the following reply:—

"Department of Public Lands,

"Brisbane, 7th March, 1919.

"Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of to-day's date, asking on behalf of Messrs. Allan J. Williams and C. Kaaland, returned soldiers, for permission to shoot and trap marsupials on the Cecil Plains Estate, and in reply to inform you that it is regretted that the request cannot be acceded to. There is a considerable number of State and privately-owned stock fattening on the estate, and it would be unwise to allow them to be disturbed. I have, &c.,

"W. GORDON GRAHAM,

"Under Secretary."

(Opposition laughter.) The Lands Department decided they would not allow the trappers on the Government lands, and the Opposition wanted the same privilege to be extended to the private landowners.

The PREMIER: The Minister has the discretion to refuse a permit to go on a private landowner's property if he thinks fit.

Mr. ROBERTS thought that if a scalper got a permit for the district, he could go where he liked.

Mr. GUNN: The amendment was an important one. He thought it was not right that a scalper should be allowed to go on to a man's property—especially when it was surrounded with dog-proof fencing—for the purpose of shooting marsupials. If the owners of Cecil Plains—that was, the Government—prevented scalp-hunters from roving over their lands, surely the owners of private property ought to have the same right! The Minister said that the owners of land had no interest in the marsupials. Who paid for the grass that the marsupials ate? Was it not the lessee of the run? They might just as well declare sheep to be marsupials, and allow the scalp-hunters to come in and shear the sheep. The lessee did not want marsupials, but if marsupials came on his run and consumed his grass, then the owner of the land was entitled to them if he liked to kill them in his own interests, particularly if the run was netted in. It was a most extraordinary thing that a man could wire-net his property and keep as many dingoes as he liked, but he could not keep any marsupials.

Hon. W. N. GILLIES: Are you in favour of the Government taking no action at all?

Mr. GUNN: He was in favour of the Government taking no action at all, and had said so all along, but when the Government did bring in a Bill he wanted to see a just Bill. How would the hon. gentleman like, if he had a flower garden, for somebody to get a permit to hunt butterflies in his flower garden and then trample down all his flowers? The Bill interfered with the rights of the subject. Perhaps there might be no marsupials on a wire-netted run, and yet people who, perhaps, only owned twenty-five head of cattle could form themselves into a board and give permits to anybody they liked to go on that run. He had a letter

to-day which showed what some of the graziers thought about the Bill. An extract from the letter read as follows:—

"I know what will happen about here if they grant permits to men to enter our runs with the pretence that they are after marsupials; it is not the marsupials they will be catching, but it will be our unbranded calves.

"I have a lot of marsupials here, and I intend to shoot them myself, as the skins are worth money now. I pay all sorts of taxes for holding this bit of land, and don't see why I should let Jack, Tom, Bill, or Harry in to do me out of my few shillings."

That man was only a poor man. He took up a piece of poor country; the drought came along and practically killed all his cattle, but there were a few marsupials on the run, and why should he not be allowed to kill those marsupials? Even if he fenced it in by a dog-proof fence and everything else, under the Bill anybody would have the right to enter on his run. He (Mr. Gunn) thought, when the Minister introduced the Bill, that he had done so as the result of a deputation of graziers which had waited on him some time ago, but he must confess that he had made a mistake. It must have been a deputation of scalp-hunters who asked the Minister to bring in a Bill to enable them to enter on any private property and destroy whatever marsupials they thought fit. He knew very well that the Minister had made up his mind not to accept any amendments, and he was only talking to the wind, but, nevertheless, he was talking sense.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member was labouring under a mistake, which was not an unusual thing for him. The hon. member had quoted a letter which contained an uncalled-for insinuation to the effect that a lot of scalpers would go on to his run, not to kill marsupials, but to steal his calves. He (Mr. Lennon) would like to say that a lot of those scalpers were quite as respectable as the hon. member for Carnarvon. The hon. member had no right to quote a letter in the House casting a reflection on such a respectable body of men.

Mr. CORSER: He did not do that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did do it. There were plenty of safeguards in the Bill, should, unfortunately, dishonest men become scalpers, to protect the cattle-owners from the scalpers. Sub-clause (6) of the same clause was as follows:—

"If a board are satisfied that a holder of a permit has failed to comply with any material provision of this Act, or is not bonâ fide exercising his rights under such permit, or is guilty of any wrongdoing under such permit, they may suspend or cancel such permit."

Surely that was a sufficient safeguard to those very honest owners of paddy calves whom the hon. member seemed to regard as very much superior to anybody else. He did not think because a man owned bullocks that he was any better than the man who did not own bullocks.

Mr. CORSER: It was not his intention to rise at all, but he wished to correct a misapprehension of the Minister. The hon. gentleman took exception to the wording

of the letter quoted by the hon. member for Carnarvon, and wished to claim that members of the Opposition had cast a slur on that body of men who were termed "scalpers." The hon. member quoted an extract from a letter which pointed out that by including scalpers they would also make possible the inclusion of men who would go there for purposes that were not legal, and probably for the purpose of securing calves that were not branded. The Minister himself knew that that sort of thing existed. If it did not exist, how did the hon. gentleman account for the shortage at Mount Hutton? Why should the hon. gentleman try to read into the letter something that was never inferred and was never meant? Those people inside wire-netting fences were able to look after their own marsupials.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And look after their "clean skins" too.

Mr. CORSER: If the Minister was not going to accept the amendment, then he was going to do an injustice to those who had expended a lot of money in wire-netting their runs in order to protect themselves, and protect their neighbours also to a great extent.

Mr. GUNN: He had not a word to say against the scalper. The scalper was just as good as anybody else, but the extract that he had quoted bore out his own contention—that if they passed the Bill in its present form they would have bogus scalpers—cattle-stealers—coming in under the protection of permits issued by a board, and stealing cattle. That was what he was afraid of—not the scalper, but the bogus scalper.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Minister had overlooked the letter from the Lands Department quoted by the hon. member for East Toowoomba, which clearly showed that in connection with some State properties the Government were against something which they were seeking to insist should be carried out by other persons. It was simply carrying out what they had found in connection with every piece of legislation this session—the Government on the one hand saying to the ordinary citizen he must do certain things, but when they themselves were concerned they conveniently contracted themselves out of it. Was that a fair deal? Were the Government driven to such straits that they could not manage to succeed in any venture without on the one hand penalising the individual or on the other hand contracting themselves out?

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. GUNN moved the insertion of a new subclause (6z)—

"No permit for dingo or marsupial destruction shall be issued in respect of any holding, the owner of which satisfies the board that he has taken such action as will keep the holding free from such pests."

He said he knew it would not be accepted, but he thought it was right and just to have it inserted. It merely meant that if the owner took all the required precautions and got rid of all the pests, with the approval of the board, he should be exempt from those people trespassing on his runs under the guise of a permit.

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The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: As the hon. member anticipated, he did not propose to accept the amendment. He did not want to make the Bill look ridiculous. The hon. gentleman was so averse from coming into contact with a common scalper that he wanted to be able to erect all sorts of imaginary barriers against him. That was not the purpose of the Bill. Any such provision as that proposed by the hon. member for Carnarvon would certainly interfere with the objects of the Bill.

Mr. GUNN: How about your own cattle stations?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He had no cattle stations, he was sorry to say.

Mr. GUNN: You will not allow people to shoot marsupials on them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He had not said so.

Mr. GUNN: The manager says so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. gentleman quoted a letter from someone asking the manager for permission. If he were a scalper, he would apply to the board for permission, and not to the manager of the station. Subclause (7) had a bearing on the matter. The board itself, if it were of such an aristocratic character and so blue-blooded as the hon. member for Carnarvon, coming from the old aristocracy of England, and did not want to associate with scalpers, could employ its own wages men and deal with the marsupials itself. He suggested that to the hon. member as a way out.

Amendment put and negatived; and clause 10 put and passed.

Clause 11 put and passed.

On clause 12—"Power of police to search, &c."—

Mr. MOORE moved the omission of lines 45 and 46, namely—

"(a) Any dingo or marsupial, or the carcass or skin of any dingo or marsupial."

He could not see what object the Minister could have in placing in the Bill provision whereby the Police Force could go in and search, and a man would be committing an offence if he kept any portion of a carcass or skin. Plenty of people had fox or dingo skins on the floor of their house. Plenty of men had them on the floor of their camp. Some even had the leg of a wallaby. He could understand the police going and looking for cyanide of potassium and finding out breaches of the Act in keeping that. Half the ladies of the town would have the Police Force searching their premises for fox furs and dingo furs under a clause like that. There was not going to be any advantage in it. It was not going to affect the killing of marsupials or dingoes in any way whatever. If they were found, the police could arrest the person who apparently was in occupation, who would be charged with a breach of the Act. What was the good of it? There was hardly a place in the country which had not a fox or dingo skin on the floor. According to that clause, anybody who had those on the floor would be committing a breach of the Act. Surely that portion might be deleted. In some places in the country, people had a tame wallaby.

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Under that, they would be committing a breach of the Act. He would ask the Minister to delete those two lines

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not propose to accept the amendment. The hon. member had only just read the lines in clause 12. Clause 12 was to be read and construed in conjunction with clause 11. The preceding clause set out to deal with the use of cyanide of potassium in the killing of marsupials and the finding of skins—not the pet skins, such as the hon. member had pictured, but skins as evidence of the use of cyanide of potassium in the destruction of the animal. They wanted corroborative evidence. The mere fact of finding cyanide of potassium, perhaps, would be punishable to a certain extent, but it would be conclusive proof that cyanide of potassium was used for the destruction if they found the skin bearing proof of it. The hon. gentleman pictured a romantic case that suited his turn of mind. He did not think such a case was likely to occur, or that the police were such fools as he pictured them to be. They would not prosecute a man because his wife had a little pet fox skin on the hearth. (Laughter.)

Mr. GUNN: He thought the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill was the champion of the scalp-hunter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I would increase the penalty for the use of potassium.

Mr. GUNN: He did not think they would thank him for that provision. He did not see why a scalp-hunter should not have skins in his possession or even the flesh. He could not see why a man's house [9 p.m.] should be hunted through, even if the police were looking for cyanide, because he happened to have a marsupial skin on his floor. This would give the police power to go into anybody's place, and take a rug away to some chemist to decide whether the animal had been killed by cyanide or not. It was a cumbersome provision, and would be very irksome and trying to honest trappers working under the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was more than astonished at the attitude of the hon. member for Carnarvon, who was a cattle-owner, and posed as the representative of the cattle-owners of the State in the House. The careless use of potassium, not only for the destruction of marsupials, but by opossum-hunters, had led to the destruction of very valuable stock. It had been reported to him over and over again during his short term of office as Minister that a large number of cattle had been killed through it. Even in to-day's paper reference was made to the fact. It was astonishing to hear an hon. member who posed as the representative of the cattlemen call this an unreasonable provision.

Mr. GUNN: No one wanted to keep down the people who used cyanide of potassium more than he did.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You ought to commend me for putting the provision in the Bill.

Mr. GUNN: It killed cattle, sheep, and a lot of fur animals, and they got no fur at all scarcely, but this provision had nothing to do with that. It was a foolish and ridicu-

lous provision, but the Minister had made up his mind that he would not alter a line in the Bill if it was proposed by any member of the Opposition.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is indispensable to this clause.

Mr. GUNN: They could not tell by the skin as to how the death of an animal came about. It was no use of protesting against the absurdities in the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE called the attention of the hon. member to a subsequent part of the clause which said—

“And if such person does not give an account to the satisfaction of such magistrate,”

when he was brought up on the charge that he had the skin in his possession—

“or court of such animals, things, or cyanide of potassium being in the place where they were so seized or of his possession of them, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds.”

What did the hon. member mean by saying this was a ridiculous thing? Everyone knew the gravity in connection with the use of cyanide, and they were seeking in the Bill to effectively cope with the danger; but the hon. member tried to pour ridicule on it.

Amendment negatived, and clause 12 put and passed.

Clauses 13 and 14 put and passed.

On clause 15—“Assessment”—

Mr. CORSER: The Bill included all stockowners with twenty-five head of cattle, which was going down fairly low, considering that the present Act included them from fifty.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: From fifteen—be truthful.

Mr. CORSER: In special districts; but how many special districts were there in the State?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Five or six.

Mr. CORSER: Five or six out of twenty-eight. The Act provided for fifty head of cattle, but this Bill made it twenty-five head. Clause 15 partly made it possible for two assessments of 6s. each to be made in one year in connection with twenty-five head of cattle, or 12s. a year. The maximum last time was 7s. 6d. The Bill gave the Minister power to make it £5 if he liked on every twenty-five head of cattle. He moved the omission, on line 20, of the words “Unless with the approval of the Minister.” The subclause would then read—

“No assessment or assessments in any one year shall in the aggregate exceed six shillings or be less than one shilling on every twenty-five head of cattle or one hundred and twenty-five sheep.”

That took away from the Minister the possibility of assessing at an exorbitant amount every twenty-five head of cattle in the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member would find the existing Act was the same as this Bill with regard to the matter.

Mr. CORSER: It did not provide for two assessments in one year

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, it did. It would be foolish to tie up the Minister in this regard, because it might happen that in some districts the limit of assessment allowed by the Bill would not meet the needs of the district. There might be a large incursion of dogs into the district. They knew that dogs had come from South Australia to the Western portion of Queensland. He would not accept the amendment for the reason he had given.

Amendment put and negatived; and clause 15 put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 21, both inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 22—“Regulations”—

Mr. CORSER: The reason why the Opposition had not moved amendments on the previous clauses, including the endowment of £5,000 as being the maximum, was not because they believed in everything included in those clauses, but because, as the Minister did not intend to accept any amendments they realised the futility of moving any. But he wished to move an amendment in the present clause. He moved the deletion of lines 54 to 57, as follows:—

“All such regulations shall upon being published in the ‘Gazette’ have the same effect as if they were enacted in this Act, and shall not be questioned in any proceedings whatsoever.”

with a view to inserting—

“Such regulations and any amendment thereof shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen sitting days after such publication, if Parliament is in session, and, if not, then within fourteen sitting days after the commencement of the next session

“If either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing any such regulation or amendment thereof, of which resolution notice has been given at any time within fourteen sitting days of such House after such regulation or amendment thereof has been laid before it, such regulation or amendment thereof shall thereupon cease to have effect, but without prejudice to the validity of anything done thereunder in the meantime.

“For the purposes of this Act, the term ‘sitting days’ shall mean days on which the House actually sits for the despatch of business:

“Provided always that if such regulations and amendments thereof, if any, are not duly laid before Parliament as hereinbefore prescribed, they shall thereupon cease to have any force, effect, or operation whatsoever.”

That amendment, in short, was the amendment which the Government accepted on the night before last on the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill. That amendment was placed there by the Legislative Council, and accepted by the Government, and he was merely asking that similar words should be inserted here.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The argument of the hon. member had no weight with him at all in that regard. The hon. member must realise the quality that

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he possessed, and which he valued so highly—that of consistency. He refused exactly the same amendment in the State Produce Agency Bill, and consequently he could not consistently with self-respect accept it here. He would ask the hon. member to remember what he said on that occasion about the lady who was a typewriter, who caused 150,000 in Manchester to go without margarine because of something she had done an hour late. Such an absolutely drastic regulation as was sought to be introduced here was one that should not appear in any Act of Parliament, and, so far as he was personally concerned, he would try to keep it out of every Act with which he had to do.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Was the hon. member the Government of this country?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am in charge of this Bill, at all events.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Was the hon. member speaking for the Cabinet? It seemed rather strange to hear the Minister as a law unto himself like that. They had some idea of what Parliaments were, and what the privileges of Parliament were, and when it was recognised by the Government of which the hon. member was a member that such a clause was a usual and reasonable one, and it was accepted by both sides of the House, why should the hon. member give a lecture like that, setting out his own individual opinion?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have every bit as much right to lecture as you have.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was perfectly absurd. He did not know what they were coming to. It looked like a dictatorship. However, he had no doubt that the amendment would yet find its way into the Bill, and the hon. member would live to accept it.

Amendment put and negatived; and clause 22 put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FREE CONFERENCE—MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Council:—

“ Mr. Speaker,—

“ The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, of date 1st August, relative to the free conference on the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that 12 o'clock noon on Friday, the 2nd instant, will be a convenient hour and day for the managers of the Legislative Council.

“ W. HAMILTON,

“ President.

“ Legislative Council Chamber,

“ Brisbane, 1st August, 1918.”

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past 9 o'clock p.m.

[*Hon. W. Lennon.*