

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 22 DECEMBER 1920

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 22 DECEMBER, 1920.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 11 o'clock a.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES,
1919-1920, 1920-1921.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor transmitting the Supplementary Estimates for 1919-1920, and Supplementary Trust Estimates for 1920-1921.

Ordered that the Estimates be printed and referred to Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—FIFTEENTH
ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. Pollock, Gregory, one of the Temporary Chairmen, in the chair.*)

LANDS DEPARTMENT—CHIEF OFFICE.

Question stated—That £104,495 be granted for the "Lands Department—Chief Office."

Mr. MACGREGOR (*Merthyr*): In the course of the discussion the previous evening a challenge was thrown out by the Premier that no one could find in the leases granted under the Act passed last session any special words limiting the assessment of rent of pastoral lessees to not more than 50 per cent. of the rent for the previous period. That was so. They did not find those particular words in any lease. If the Premier meant the challenge in that sense, it was a silly challenge. It was like a game which was played by children, when they asked a person to discover the words "Christmas Greetings," or any similar words in a document. In all cases dealing with leases under the Crown Lands Act, the Act was the governing agreement. It had been stated in court that the agreement between the Crown and its tenants was contained in the Act. Under the Real Property Act a person might have a lease which did not refer to the power of re-entry, but in the Real Property Act itself they would find the conditions which were deemed to be implied in every lease. So it was with the Crown Land Acts. In the Act of 1884 there was no provision for limiting the assessment; the third period was to be determined by the board, but in the 1886 Act there was a limitation introduced, and it was worth while recording the words of the Minister, Mr. Dutton, who introduced that section. He said—

"Ever since the Act of 1869 became law, one great objection of the pastoral tenant has been that no rent is fixed for each recurring period of the fifteen or ten years of their leases, and it has also been represented that this is a very grave objection in the eyes of money-lenders. . . . If it is thought desirable that they should know the utmost limit to which the board (land board) can increase their rents, the Government have no objection to their knowing it. It is, therefore, proposed in this Bill to fix a limit, and put the maximum rent for each of the periods after the first one at one-half of the rent payable for

the preceding period. That is the most that can be added to the rent, and I think that ought to satisfy the lessees, as well as the moneylenders. They will know now the utmost length to which the board can go in extracting rent from them."

From 1884 to 1886 leases were granted without containing any reference to the conditions. After 1886, if the form of lease was examined, it would be found that it contained a reference to the Act of 1884, and also a reference to the Act of 1886, and said that the lease was granted "subject to the reservations, conditions, stipulations, and provisos in the Acts contained," thereby, by inference, incorporating the Act.

The PREMIER: It could not incorporate an Act which had not then been passed.

Mr. MACGREGOR: The Act of 1886 was then passed.

The PREMIER: But the Act of 1902 contains the same reference that you quoted.

Mr. MACGREGOR: He had not come to the Act of 1902 yet; he was dealing with the various Acts in turn. He did not know what document the Premier referred to the previous evening, but he (Mr. Macgregor) went back as far as the Act of 1886, and he found that leases issued under that Act stated that the lease was granted "subject to the reservations, conditions, stipulations, and provisos in the Acts contained"; and one of the provisos contained in the Act of 1886 was the limitation as to the rent. Section 8 of the Act of 1886 provided—

"In determining the rent payable under a lease under Part III. of the principal Act for the second and subsequent periods of five years or seven years, as the case may be, the following provisions shall have effect in addition to the provisions contained in the 30th section of the principal Act, that is to say—

The annual rent for each period after the first shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period."

So that, after 1886, anyone who looked at his lease would be driven to the Act of 1886, where he would find that one of the terms of the lease was that there was a limitation of rent for the second and subsequent periods. That went on until 1897, when another Land Act was passed dealing with different country from the country that was dealt with by the Act of 1884. It purported to repeal the Acts of 1884 and 1886, but it reserved and preserved all rights, obligations, etc. All country taken up under the Act of 1897, however, had no limitation with respect to the rent, because, under that Act, the rent for the second and subsequent periods was to be settled in every case by the Land Court, which took the place of the Land Board. Then came the Act of 1902, granting an extension of tenure to pastoral lessees. That was an amendment of the Act of 1897, and was to be read as part of that Act; and, in leases issued under the Act of 1897 as amended by the Act of 1902, no reference would be found to any limitation of the rent. Then came the Act of 1905, in which the provision limiting the rent for the second and subsequent periods was again inserted. Section 2 of that Act read—

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"The following provision shall be added to section 64 (4) of the Act of 1897:—

"The annual rent for such period after the first shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period."

It was therefore provided in the 1897 Act that the lease should be held subject to the reservations, stipulations, and provisoes in the Act contained. Then they came to the 1910 Act. That was supposed to be a consolidation of all the Land Acts right up to date. It brought them all under the one Act known as "the 1910 Act." Although the 1897 Act was repealed, all rights were preserved. An important provision would be found in section 6, which stated that all leases hitherto granted would be deemed to be granted under the 1910 Act. It was laid down there that all reservations in all grants and leases were valid. Part III., Division I., of the 1910 Act related to pastoral leases, and section 43 under that heading provided for the payment of the rent. Section 43 stated—

"Provided that, with respect to all pastoral holdings mentioned in the second schedule, except when otherwise expressly stated in the said schedule, the annual rent for each period after the first shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period."

In conformity with that section there was a schedule containing hundreds of leases that were granted, and they would find the limitation in the rent stated in exact words. It said—

"Shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period."

Then section 44 stated—

"(ii.) The annual rent shall be the sum per square mile respectively stated in the first part of the third column of the said schedule during the period expiring on the date respectively mentioned in the second part of the said third column, and thereafter the provisions hereinbefore contained with respect to periods shall be applicable to the residue of the term."

Then it continued—

"Save as varied or negated by the express provisions set forth in the said schedule, all the provisions of this Act shall extend and apply to each of the pastoral holdings mentioned in the said schedule, and the least of each of such holdings shall be deemed to have been granted under this part."

That was an important piece of legislation because it stated that, no matter what was legislated, the provisions relating to the pastoral holdings remained the same. Then section 109, dealing with grazing selections, provided—

"Provided that with respect to every grazing selection which was applied for prior to the twenty-sixth day of December, one thousand nine hundred and two, the annual rent for each period after the first shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period."

[*Mr. Macgregor.*]

That was the form of lease in the 1910 Act. In all cases that came before the court, they would find that the court always turned up the Acts which governed the leases. It was elementary law that the lease itself was not of any effect without the Act. If some clerk in the Lands Office, in making up a lease, made it for thirty-five years, when the Act provided for thirty years, it would not permit the lessee to have a term of thirty-five years, because there was no power to allow the clerk to put in the thirty-five years. So they had to go by the Act. The lease was in the form provided by the Act as was shown in Form III. Under Part III., Division I., of the 1910 Act, it said that the lease would be subject to the stipulations, reservations, and provisoes herein-after contained in the Act. One condition—it was called a condition in section 43—was the proviso limiting the increase of rent on reappraisal to 50 per cent. of the rent for the previous period.

The PREMIER: The leases under the 1902 Act were issued before the concession was made in 1905, and therefore the 1905 Act cannot be said to modify the 1902 leases.

Mr. MACGREGOR: Why not? Of course it could. The 1902 Act was an amendment of the 1897 Act, and the 1897 Act with its amendments was altered in 1905 so as to include the limitation. At any rate, he did not think that mattered. The 1910 Act expressly said that you would find all the rights and obligations of all leases, granted under whatever Act, within the four corners of the 1910 Act. Not only was it a consolidating Act but it was a clearing-up Act, to get rid of all the other Acts. Under the 1910 Act they would find the form of the leases under which, he took it, the Premier was making this challenge. He said, "Keep your eyes on the lease."

The PREMIER: This is what I said: "We have not broken any agreement or any specific contract or any undertaking written or implied."

Mr. VOWLES: Implied! Oh!

Mr. MACGREGOR: All he could say—and he did not say it in any nasty way—was that either his mind or the Premier's was defective.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): Unfortunately, the old argument about repudiation and Philp, Cowley and Company had come up again, and they had not been able to get any discussion of benefit to the Lands Department or those interested in land settlement. He would like to deal with the pear question. Unfortunately, no Government had yet found a solution. Something more should be done to encourage pear selectors to go on the land, and to encourage them when they were on the land. At the present time it was costing pear selectors something up to 5s. annually to keep their freehold land clear, and at the same time they were under the obligation of paying land tax to the Government. They had Crown lands all round them, pear infested. Of course, they knew that the pear was beyond the control of the Lands Department, but it was only fair that the pear selector should have some consideration on account of the proximity of that pear-infested land. If he found it possible to clear the pear, the department should give him the freehold. (Hear, hear!) He knew that was not the policy of the Government. If he got the freehold, he

would then come under the control of the local authority, which would see that he kept his land clear.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The local authorities are not doing it now.

Mr. COSTELLO: They were in his area. The shire council there compelled everyone with pear on the freehold to clear the pear off, and if they did not do so, they put the gangs in. It would be a great encouragement to the selector if he was given the freehold of the land when he had cleared the pear. He thought that he should not allow the vote to go through without saying something about soldier settlement, if he was in order in doing so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is not included in this Estimate.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be in order in discussing soldier settlement on this vote.

Mr. COSTELLO: Then he would reserve his remarks till the opportune time, as it was unfortunately at this juncture against the ruling of the chair to discuss the matter.

Mr. CORSER: There is an understanding that we can discuss the whole vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member may discuss the matter of soldier settlement so far as it refers to the Lands Department.

Mr. COSTELLO: He would try and keep within the Chairman's ruling. The question of soldier settlement was very important, but the Government were not giving it fair and reasonable consideration. The Lands Department was doing its best, but the Government had been very neglectful in this respect. They had thousands of able-bodied men—sons of the State—willing to go on the land; but he was sorry to say that suitable land was not being made available for them. He could speak with some knowledge on this matter. There were soldiers on land that was not sufficient in area for them to make a living on—on prickly-pear selections, small grazing farms, and fruit areas. He could state with some authority that at the present time these men were being put on land, the area of which was not adequate to make a living on, and the department should see that, in future, land made available for selection should be of sufficient area for a man to make a living for himself and his wife and family.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS rose to a point of order. The vote would be drawn out to an interminable length if the whole question of soldier settlement was discussed. They had already dealt with that in the Chief Secretary's vote.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the point of order raised by the Minister for Lands, I would again point out to the hon. member for Carnarvon that he can only discuss that phase of soldier settlement which has to do with the settlement of land as it comes within the administration of the Lands Department.

Mr. COSTELLO: He would bow to the ruling of the Chair and reserve his remarks on this question to a later stage.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*) endorsed the remarks which had been made with reference to the policy of the department in regard to forestry. The policy of the department in this respect was most creditable.

but it was not on a sufficiently large scale. It was only in its infancy, but the Government could not do things in too big a way in connection with reforestation, and the building up of forests for use in the future. They should be planting the timber faster than they were using it, because it took a long time for timber to grow. They must look to the future if they wanted to develop this country as it should be developed. He hoped the Minister would do all he could to press forward with this work. He noticed there had been an increased revenue from the Forestry Department last year of £30,000. He thought that any money derived from the Forestry Department should be spent in that department. A complaint had been made to him that the smaller sawmills and smaller people interested in the timber business did not get the same opportunity as the bigger sawmills of securing timber; they were outbid every time when the timber was put up at auction. He hoped the department would see that the smaller man had that opportunity. It was the duty of the Government to help the small man to advance, and he thought the Minister would be favourable to that course.

He also wanted to make a few remarks with regard to the prickly-pear problem, which was of such great importance to Queensland. He knew it was a most difficult thing to eradicate, but the Government should take steps to see that it did not spread any further. On the big holdings on which the pear was only just starting, the lessees should be compelled to clear it and keep the land clear. That could be done, and it was not being done. Some lessees kept their land clear, but others did not. That was not right. The further it spread, the greater would be the difficulty in eradicating it. He was interested in being shown some insects with which Mr. Temple Clerk was experimenting. He was very sanguine of success. Whether his experiments were successful or not, they should go on experimenting, and exhaust every means until some solution of the problem was found. He was pleased to see that the Government were collaborating with the Commonwealth in the endeavour to find some solution.

There was another small matter with which he wished to deal, and yet it was a big matter. Within the last month or so he had had brought under his notice two instances of persons holding land of such an inferior quality that they could not get any advance from the Government. It was wrong that the Government should cut up land and allow people to take it up on selection, when it was not fit for selection, and not good enough to justify the Government advancing on it. The inspectors, who viewed this land with the object of deciding whether an advance should be made, reported that it was of such inferior quality that the men could not make a success of it. Those men who had been given such land should be recompensed by being given better land. They had plenty good land in the State without cutting up in small areas inferior land on which men would be ruined. He hoped the Minister would remedy the matter.

On the previous day he had dealt with the big problem of overcoming droughts. He wanted to deal with the question now from the standpoint of the Lands Department. He wanted to deal with selections around Winton, Longreach, Hughenden, Richmond—

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all that vast area of country comprising several thousand square miles of probably the very best sheep land they had in the State. It was most remarkable country, and would be a revelation to anyone who had not had the opportunity of passing through it. It was all open downs, undulating plains, with little patches of broken timber here and there, and in a good season was grassed with Mitchell and Flinders grasses, and herbage which grew to a height of about 18 inches—one thick carpet of it—suitable for the very best haymaking. Of recent years hundreds of selections had been opened up in that country, varying in size from about 5,000 acres to 12,000 acres, according to the quality of the land. For those selections there had been hundreds of applicants.

At twenty minutes to 12 o'clock a.m.,

Mr. F. A. COOPER, one of the Temporary Chairmen, took the chair.

Mr. FLETCHER (continuing): It would vary from 20 to 1,500 applicants for each block, and a very small proportion indeed of those people were satisfied. Only a few people succeeded at the ballot, the great majority being disappointed, and after trying again and again, they eventually gave up in disgust. Those men who were disappointed were most suitable as settlers. They were usually small men who had gained their experience on the stations. Some of those men who were successful had sufficient means to adequately stock the blocks they drew; others had sufficient backing behind them to enable them to stock their blocks; others had sufficient means only to partially stock up, while others again had insufficient means, and they let the country out on agistment. If there was no demand for agistment country, they went out to work, and held the land until their residential or other conditions were fulfilled, and then sold.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I suppose you know it is illegal to let country on agistment before the tenant obtains a lease without the permission of the Minister.

Mr. FLETCHER: He was dealing with selections taken up under old conditions as well as those taken up under the later conditions. The land in those selections was not being made full use of on account of the area being too large in many instances for the men to operate them to the fullest extent, taking into regard the conservation of fodder. The whole of that vast area of country in an average season was estimated to carry about one sheep to three acres, but in a season like the present it would carry one and a-half to two sheep to the acre. But in a drought season it would not carry more than one sheep to 10 acres. The selectors were afraid of droughts, and only stocked lightly, so that the losses would not be too great when they had a bad season. Notwithstanding the fact that there had been vast resumptions and many selections taken up, the number of sheep in Queensland had declined since 1910 by 3,000,000. That had not occurred through exporting sheep, as their exports had been at the lowest possible ebb. It was simply on account of droughts that the sheep had died. They wanted to minimise those losses as much as possible.

Mr. PAYNE: And losses through the dogs and foxes.

Mr. FLETCHER: The dogs and foxes only accounted for a very small percentage of the losses as compared with the droughts.

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Something should be done to overcome those losses, so that they should instead be exported, and thus help to make for permanency of employment. They might have a season when they would have to export sheep in fairly large numbers, and then they did no more exporting for three years, and during that time the men engaged in the industry had to search for work elsewhere. They wanted to stabilise the industry as much as possible. In a season like the present, three parts or more of the grass went to waste. It would dry up, and in November big fires would go through the country, and then, if they got a sparse rainfall, the grass did not grow sufficiently well to carry the stock through the next season, and there were heavy losses. When they had a good season like they had at present, they should lay a foundation by conserving fodder, and he would like the Minister to make a start in that direction. He recognised that you had to make a start in everything, as you could not get the fullest results all at once. The Mitchell grasses and Flinders grasses out there made splendid hay. He had seen a stack of hay remain for twelve years, and then seen horses fattened on it and cattle kept in good condition, and that could be done throughout that country if they had the means to do it. Nature had been most lavish, and had given them a great heritage in this country, but it had left them certain things to do. It was necessary to improve the position, as Nature would not do everything. There had been no conservation of fodder in those parts owing to the fact that the areas were so large that the lessees could make sufficient money during a good season to tide them over the losses in a dry season. Then there was the question of labour. They had to try and overcome that difficulty. He would suggest that if the Minister made a resumption of, say, 20,000 acres in a suitable area in that Downs country, instead of cutting it into two or three blocks, if it were cut into eight, ten, or twelve blocks of 2,000 or 2,500 acres, according to quality, with permanent water on it, three or four blocks could be so arranged that the stock could water there. If no permanent water, they would have to put down one or two bores, which would meander in their flow through the country, and the blocks could be so arranged that the stock could all water from those bores.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How many sheep would 2,000 acres carry?

Mr. FLETCHER: If the Minister waited he would see what he meant. The great point was that the people with small areas could conserve fodder according to the season. In a good season they could conserve a large quantity, and a lesser quantity in less bountiful season; in a fair season they might get through without using any, and in a bad season they would have to rely on the stocks which they had accumulated during the good seasons. Someone might say that the labour difficulty was going to be very great, but, the blocks being close together, they could help one another; they would also probably help to employ the same labour, and instead of the labour being nomadic, it would be permanent, because the different work would happen at different seasons. Shearing, lamb marking, fencing and general work, and harvesting would all come at different times, so that the men could be kept in permanent work. They could be given the very best

housing conditions, and, if necessary, there could be profit sharing. Regarding the quantity of sheep which these blocks would carry, they would have to start at a low level and gradually work up according to the amount of fodder they conserved.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What would be the utmost limit?

Mr. FLETCHER: It depended on the quantity of fodder conserved. That was a question for the department to decide. They had an inexhaustible supply of water in that country, and if they had fodder conservation they could carry infinitely more sheep to the acre than at present. The carrying capacity could be increased, and gradually they would be able to advance in other directions. Stock would fatten better in smaller areas than on the big areas, and would probably make the industry different from what it was at present. When the Minister for Lands considered the great waste of fodder that occurred year after year; when he remembered those vast plains containing millions of acres of beautiful grass, could he imagine that nature intended that it should go to waste? He (Mr. Fletcher) considered it was wrong altogether, and he suggested that the best way was to divide up one resumption to see how it would work. The Government might have to provide the very best harvesting implements at a nominal cost, or they would, perhaps, have to provide them free to the selectors for a trial. They could carry more sheep in the smaller areas by having the assurance of fodder. Fodder was the trouble. If the Government did as he suggested, they would be making for permanency of occupation in the meat industry and throughout the whole country. It would be just a start. Like everything else, they had to start somewhere to make the whole of their industries more permanent, and to stabilise them so that they would advance instead of getting to a point and then receding. They would also be encouraging the small man, because the smaller men would be able to start on those blocks. They would be able to settle more men on the land and make it pleasanter and more sociable to go to those far distant parts than on the larger areas at great distances from the railway. He had had some practical experience in this business, and had thought over the matter for a long time; and he believed it would be a success, provided the inspector placed in charge of the work had his heart in it. Once the scheme had a start it could be gradually extended to the larger runs. He submitted the suggestion to the House because he viewed the matter with great seriousness. He asked the previous day that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the best means of combating droughts, so that they could lay something like a solid foundation on which they could build in the future. They must have a big population in Queensland if they were to hold the country, and they were not going to get a big population of millions in the country unless they stabilised their industries.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): The hon. member for Port Curtis stated that droughts had been the cause of the decline in the number of sheep in Queensland. He was not of that opinion. His view was that the cause of the decrease in the number of sheep was to be found in dingoes and the blowfly. In the

Hughenden and Winton districts, of which the hon. member spoke, a large number of holdings had got rid of their sheep, and were now stocking only cattle—not because of the drought, but because of the pests he mentioned. He was referring particularly to the country on the Prairie and Torrens Creek, and a large tract of the surrounding country which was infested with dingoes. The same remark applied to the country in the Winton and Boulia districts, where some of the best lands in Queensland were located. A deputation of pastoralists in his district had approached him with regard to a proposal to erect another rabbit fence to cope with the evil, which was met with in the country from Boulia to the border, and from the border back to Kynuna and Winton. While he was willing to give the hon. member for Port Curtis credit for introducing to the House new ideas which might help the progress of Queensland, he was afraid that the idea mentioned that morning was not a new idea. The matter had been under discussion for many years in the West. While he had not condemned the proposal, he did not see how it was going to prove successful, because the country in the Mitchell and Flinders districts was not sufficiently even to enable a reaping machine to be employed to get the fodder off the land.

Mr. FLETCHER: At Rodney Downs you will see dozens of stacks of fodder of 100 tons each.

Mr. POLLOCK: Of Mitchell grass?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes.

Mr. POLLOCK: In the Gregory district they had so far not been able to discover any invention which would enable lessees to reap the Mitchell grass. The country there was so uneven that there was no reaping machine which could be employed to reap the Mitchell grass in sufficiently large quantities, and at a sufficiently low price. Mr. Campbell, who was a man of considerable capital, and was prepared to sink a number of bores, went to Carandotta to experiment in conserving fodder, but so far he had not made a success of it though Carandotta had some of the best Mitchell-grassed country to be found in Western Queensland. It was equally as good country in that respect as the country around Hughenden and Winton, but the ground was of such an uneven nature that if a man wished to go in for fodder conservation, he would have to cut the grass with a reaping hook, and he did not see how fodder conservation could be made a success under such conditions. But the real trouble in those districts was the dingo. A large number of lessees in the Winton, Prairie, and Torrens Creek districts had gone out of business as producers of wool and raisers of sheep, and had turned their attention to the breeding of cattle. Men who had been a lifetime in the business, and knew all there was to be known about pastoral work, had not so far been able to devise any remedy to cope with the excessive number of dingoes. Some persons were of opinion that fencing might meet the difficulty, but fencing was an expensive proposition, as it would cost well over £100 per mile to erect dog-proof fences, and there was no prospect of getting it done at a cheaper rate in the near future. Posts in those districts were very scarce, and it was not at all probable that the remedy of fencing would be resorted to. The only other process of getting rid of the dingoes that had been tried so far was that of scalping, and scalpers were not

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receiving very much encouragement. The result was that the country was literally overrun with dingoes, while blowflies had been the cause of the death of countless thousands of lambs. He had been a considerable time in the West, but he must confess that he had no idea as to how to get rid of this destructive pest, and did not know any method that was likely to be successful. He believed that if the Dingo Board would give fairer treatment to the scalpers they would get more scalps. He did not wish to refer to the action of a certain person in Boulia representing the Dingo Board who had prevented a scalper in the district from receiving payment for fifty scalps that he had collected; but he would suggest that when dingo boards proposed to refuse payment to a man for any scalps collected, they should be compelled to prove, before they refused payment, that the scalper did not get those dingoes in Queensland. It was not a matter that closely affected the Lands Department, but it was a matter that affected the lands of the State. That man McCaw, of Urandangie, had gone out and spent a considerable amount of time in collecting fifty dingo scalps; and, after getting those scalps and sending them in to the Boulia Dingo Board, the board refused payment on the ground that, in their opinion, the dingoes were killed in Northern Territory. The man had no opportunity of proving that he got the dingoes in Queensland, and his only remedy was to sue the board for the recovery of £50 for the scalps. The onus should be on the dingo board of proving that the scalps were obtained outside their own district or outside Queensland before they could refuse payment, and he hoped an amendment of the Act in that direction would be made before long.

Mr. COSTELLO: They could collect scalps from anyone and anywhere.

Mr. POLLOCK: If encouragement was not given to scalpers they would not stick at the game.

Mr. COSTELLO: But we must protect the taxpayers.

Mr. POLLOCK: They must protect the taxpayers, but the onus of proof that the scalps were not obtained in the district should be on the board. A scalper had to go into a given area, and no one might see him for two or three months; and when he came back with his scalps surely he was entitled to payment, or at least the onus of proof that the scalps had not been obtained in the district should be on the board. Unless that was done, there would be considerable difficulty in getting rid of dingoes. Each pastoral lessee in the board's area was taxed, and the Government gave a certain subsidy to pay for scalps caught in the area. If dingoes were not caught in the area and the board had to pay for those scalps, it was obvious that the taxpayers were being unduly taxed in having to pay for dingoes that were caught outside their area, and the taxpayer would have a justifiable grievance; but he should be compelled, through his representatives on the board, to prove that the scalps were not obtained in the district before taking the bread out of the scalper's mouth. In almost every instance the manager of a station was a receiver of scalps under the board, and the scalps that he spoke of were received by the manager of either Walgera or Carandotta, which was situated

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in the Boulia Dingo Board district, but the manager said that they came from Northern Territory 60 or 70 miles away. He hoped that the Minister would introduce an amendment that would throw the onus of proof on the dingo board.

A matter that he was more vitally concerned in than the conservation of fodder was the opening up of land for selection. He was not going to indulge in any captious criticism of the department, but he would like to get some information from the Minister. He had compiled the following list of stations, mainly in Gregory North district and Gregory South district, that were due for resumptions during 1920, 1921, and 1922:—

THE GREGORY ELECTORATE.

Compiled from the "Queensland Statutes,"
Vol. IX., 1916.

Name of Holding.	Area. Sq. miles.	Rent per sq. mile.	Lease Expires.
		<i>s. d.</i>	
<i>Gregory North District.</i>			
Amaru	635	3 0	1922
Coorabulka	1,521	4 11	1922
Coorabulka South	57	5 0	1921
Currawilla	1,119½	6 0	1922
Glengyle	1,008½	5 5	1922
Herbert Downs	1,697½	5 0	1922
Inglewood West	174	8 6	1922
Kaliduwarry	800	2 11	1922
Marion Downs	1,181	6 6	1922
Monkira	1,324½	7 0	1921
Mount Merlin	1,067	6 1	1922
Palparara	2,566½	5 7	1921
Sandringham	2,397	3 0	1922
Springvale	1,351½	6 7½	1922
<i>Kennedy North District.</i>			
Amarra	67	12 0	1920
River View	8	40 0	1920
Glenrock	32½	51 0	1921
Milwarpa	29	30 0	1922
Powlathunga South	20	20 0	1922
<i>Cook District.</i>			
Gamboola	440½	17 7½	1922
The Springs	26	20 0	1922
<i>Gregory South District.</i>			
Mooraberrie	304½	5 7½	1922
Morney Plains	1,323½	6 8½	1922
Mount Leonard	886½	5 7	1921
Naryilco	942½	7 6	1921
Yanco	242	7 6	1921
<i>Bourke District.</i>			
Coolullah	315	21 7½	1920
Donor's Hills	335	24 3	1920
Edithville	100	17 6	1920
Jenny Downs	161	23 8	1920
Pompaet	65	23 8	1920
Vena Park	250½	17 6	1920
Wooddoola	84	23 8	1920
Coolibah	52½	106 8	1921
Rocklands	1,056	5 1½	1922
<i>Leichhardt District.</i>			
Bengegang	34	13 6	1920
Ingle Downs	164	13 6	1920
Stephenton	121	26 8	1920
<i>Darling Downs District.</i>			
Ballon	16½	30 0	1921

The resumable areas comprised a tremendous area of country that ought to be opened up for selection.

Mr. COSTELLO: What areas should they be cut up into?

Mr. POLLOCK: He would be quite frank about it; he did not know. There were portions of the land—for instance, land in and around Hughenden and Richmond—that had permanent water, and would require very little expenditure on the part of the incoming selector. It could be very easily opened up at very small expense, and 4,000 or 5,000 acres should be sufficient to enable an ordinary selector to make a decent living. There were other portions of the country down towards Bedourie and Boulia where probably 60,000 acres would be required. He had no prejudices in the matter, but he knew that in many of those places, where the ground was partially sandy, where there was a good deal of waste country, and where there was only a very small proportion of Mitchell and Flinders grass, it would require a very much larger area to enable a man to make a decent living than on country that was exceptionally well grassed with Mitchell and Flinders grass and that had permanent water.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The surveys would have to be very carefully carried out.

Mr. POLLOCK: The department usually relied on the advice of responsible experts, and, as a rule, a fair thing was done in the division. But a selector who took up 60,000 acres of poor country would have to be financed by someone unless he had from £5,000 to £10,000 of his own. The ordinary selector was generally a poor man, and he would find it very difficult to make a success on poor country unless he had from 40,000 to 60,000 acres, as he would have to conduct boring operations, fence his land, put up a homestead, and buy stock before he could earn one penny. Where there was permanent water, which obviated the necessity of going to any expense in boring, a [12 noon] selector could make a success on a smaller area all round. He wanted to know what the Minister for Public Lands intended doing with that country? He did not say that it was all ready for resumption; but one-fourth of it was, and in some cases one-half of it would soon be due for resumption. He would like to see all that country opened up, as it would mean a considerable increase in revenue for the Government. A holding like Amaru paid something like 3s. per square mile, and if it were cut up into grazing selections the Government would receive four or five times that amount in rent. The rent had not been reappraised on most of these areas, and the incoming selector could afford to pay a much bigger rental than was paid at the present time. If he were to read out the rentals paid by these big runs, it would prove the greatest justification that ever existed for passing the Land Act which hon. members opposite were pleased to refer to as repudiation. Coorabulka holding contained 1,520 square miles, and paid a rental of 4s. 11d. per square mile. There were others with areas of 800 square miles which paid a rental of from 2s. 11d. up to 24s. and 50s. per square mile. That was totally inadequate.

Mr. JONES: A lot of that country is not worth 4d. per mile.

Mr. POLLOCK: A lot of the country was worth much more than was charged for it at present, as some of it was equal to the good country near Winton and Hughenden, where the rental on selections was over £5 per square mile. In his opinion, the Lands

Department could do with an overhauling in one direction at least, and that was in the direction of securing reports from its officers. He (Mr. Pollock) had numerous complaints from different persons about dummyming. He admitted that dummyming was one of the hardest things to have to prove, but when one went to the Lands Department with a grievance about dummyming, he was always referred to the Land Commissioner or land ranger for the district. He was not going to cast any aspersions on the land rangers, but he was convinced that the department should have one or two reliable men who could go out to the places he referred to and make a report independent of the Land Commissioner or ranger as to whether dummyming was taking place or not. He was satisfied that in certain parts of the Gregory electorate, during past years, dummyming was being carried on in such a way that some of the Lands Office officials must have known of it, if they had not been asleep or worse. It must have gone on with their knowledge, if not with their connivance. He was not blaming the Minister for Public Lands for that. He recognised, also, that they must have a body of rangers who were free from graft and corruption; but the incentive was there for the men who owned the large holdings to "square" the officials not to make a report to their detriment. Although he did not blame the Minister for that, he certainly blamed the department for not having independent persons to go out to these places and make an independent report and see what was going on under the administration of the Land Commissioners and land rangers. He did not intend any reflection on the Lands Department officials in his electorate, but, in order to stop the scandal from going on, he would like to see other men get an opportunity of making a report. He knew that, boiled down, it came to the same thing—that if they sent an independent man out they would have to rely on his honesty just as they had to rely on the honesty of the land officials. He hoped the Minister would give some attention to the matters he had referred to, particularly that of dummyming, and see if he could discover dummyming where it was believed to exist. He knew that one or two cases that were brought before the department were submitted to the Land Commissioner and land ranger. He thought, perhaps, they might get a man out of the Criminal Investigation Branch to make an inquiry, and it would be for the benefit of the officials, the department, and everyone else.

Mr. GILDAY: Mr. Chairman, he had no intention of stonewalling the vote, but he would like to refer to some of the matters mentioned by the hon. member for Port Curtis. The hon. member for Gregory mentioned a number of holdings that were falling due for re-umption within the next two years. It would be a good thing for the State to cut up some of those holdings and provide closer settlement. He (Mr. Gilday) had travelled over the whole of Queensland during the last five years. At one time he thought that grazing selections should not be more than 5,000 acres each block, but he had come to the conclusion that larger areas were needed in many cases in order to be productive. In many parts of the Western country the small grazier could not make a fair living on 5,000 acres, and there were other parts of Queensland where it

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would take 100 square miles of country for a selector to make a living. Owing to the climatic conditions, the raising of cattle could not be carried on successfully year after year, and the growers would have to contend with bad conditions sometimes. There was no doubt that if they divided the large pastoral holdings into smaller areas then they would make progress in Queensland, and they would greatly increase their herds. The grazing selectors should go in more for the conserving of fodder. One of the greatest stock-raisers in Queensland, the late Hon. James Tyson, always made provision for bad seasons. People used to laugh at him when they saw the large stacks of grass that he had stored up for many years, but they came in very handy when they were wanted. Mr. Tyson was one of the pioneers in the cattle-raising industry, and he had shown the pastoralist what should be done in that respect. Those engaged in the pastoral industry were always asking that the Government should do all classes of work for them, but there was no industry in Queensland that had done so well during the last seven or eight years as the pastoral industry.

Mr. FLETCHER: We are not asking them to do it.

Mr. GILDAY: According to the hon. member's speech, such things should be done. He did not know where it would end. Some of the industries in the towns passed through bad times, and he might use the argument that some of them should be subsidised by the Government.

A good deal had been said with regard to the alleged repudiation Act, more properly termed the Pastoral Leases Act Amendment Act. He drew the attention of hon. members to the fact that section 114 of the Commonwealth Constitution provided—

"A State shall not, without the consent of the Parliament of the Commonwealth, raise or maintain any naval or military force, or impose any tax on property of any kind belonging to the Commonwealth, nor shall the Commonwealth impose any tax on property of any kind belonging to the State."

The Commonwealth Government had taxed the leaseholds belonging to the State; in fact had raised more money from them than the State had got in rents, but hon. members opposite did not raise the cry of repudiation or say one word against the Commonwealth. The Labour party had been the protectors of the small grazier ever since they had been a party, whereas hon. members opposite were at the beck and call of the big pastoralist. In 1902—and he happened to be in the game at the time and knew a good deal about the prices obtained by pastoralists—wool was 4d. per lb. and cattle £1 15s. per head. In those days pastoralists did not make the huge profits they made to-day, but there was no doubt they got a living from the land they occupied. There was then no limitation on the Land Court in respect to pastoral rents. In 1905, when the limitation was imposed, wool was 4½d. per lb., and cattle £2 per head. Compare those figures with 28½d. per lb. for wool and £16 per head for cattle in 1917. Surely to goodness there was nothing wrong with asking men who were getting those prices to pay a little more towards the revenue of the State. Furthermore, he found that rents paid by the squatters and the selectors on

the resumed portions of the holdings mentioned were respectively—

	Pastoral Lessees.	Grazing selectors.
Welltown ...	1½d.	6d.
Landsdowne ...	1½d.	3d.
Nive Downs ...	1d.	3d.
Cambridge Downs ...	1d.	3d.
Alice Downs ...	1½d.	3d.
Total ...	1d.	3d.

They found that under existing custom—for it was only a custom—the squatter was making large sums of money, and yet was paying very small rentals in comparison with the grazing selector. The total incomes of individual pastoralists—not companies—in the successive years mentioned were as follows:—

	£
1915 ...	2,191,405
1916 ...	3,382,651
1917 ...	3,628,461
1918 ...	4,683,043

Those figures showed an increase of £2,500,000 during the period from 1915-18, and yet they had hon. members opposite criticising the Government for passing one of the most humane pieces of legislation ever passed, which merely asked those gentlemen to pay a little more towards the revenue of the State. The time had arrived when the people of Queensland should understand the position in regard to the Act, and he was satisfied that they would realise the necessity for it.

A lot had been said about the burden of taxation, and he had figures which showed that although there were approximately a little over 400,000 electors on the rolls in Queensland, 375,000 paid no tax at all. Of the remainder, the average taxation of the numbers of persons specified was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
14,000 ...	0	17	0
4,650 ...	4	7	9
3,000 ...	10	3	1
2,500 ...	84	0	0
13 ...	3,291	6	0

What was wrong with that so far as the small man was concerned?

The Labour Government had done more for land settlement than any other Government. One of the best pieces of legislation ever enacted in Australia was the land tax introduced by the Fisher Government for the purpose of smashing large unproductive holdings. He admitted that many things should be done in the interests of land settlement, but they had to come by evolution—gradually. To get the best results from their land it was necessary to have water conservation and irrigation, and there was no doubt that the Government were doing everything in that direction that the available money would permit. He desired to pay a tribute of appreciation to the late Under Secretary for Lands, Mr. Gordon Graham, whose good work in the capacity of Under Secretary they all realised, and to wish him great success in the future. He was pleased that Mr. Board had been appointed Under Secretary. Although he had not had a great deal to do with the Lands Department, he had always received the utmost courtesy and civility from the officials. It was not because the Minister for Lands happened to be a colleague of his, but he could honestly say that the Minister had at all times, while in that office done his utmost for land

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settlement. He had heard it stated in many parts of Queensland where he had travelled that the Minister had done everything he possibly could to develop the State in connection with land settlement. He thought that, by taking the Forestry Department over, the Lands Department were doing a good thing. He was satisfied that a lot of the criticism of hon. members opposite was not conscientious, and that they did not really mean in a sense what they said, because many of them, particularly the new members, must realise that the whole aim and object of the Government was to encourage the small settler to make a living on the land.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I have been listening to the debate, and I have been of opinion, for some little time, that a discussion on the merits or demerits of legislation in Committee of Supply will be out of order. I find that "May" on page 486 says—

"The action of a department is open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply."

I hope that hon. members will observe that the merits or demerits of legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Mr. SWAYNE: He thought it was a rather late hour in the debate to give such a decision as that. After all, the chief topic which had been discussed was legislation.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I am very sorry, but you cannot discuss it now.

Mr. SWAYNE: It seemed hardly fair to those who had something to say on that burning question of unemployment which was rife in Queensland to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What!

Mr. SWAYNE: They could not get loan money owing to the amendment of the Land Act. Perhaps the whole position was that very large sums of money were lent in Great Britain to Queensland on the strength of the land legislation of Queensland. Of course, Parliament was within its legal rights in altering any Act which it had passed, but there was such a thing as honour.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not discuss that question.

Mr. SWAYNE: When large sums of money had been invested in the belief that the Queensland Legislative was honourable, he thought it put quite a different aspect on the subject.

There was another matter which he wished to speak on in connection with land settlement, and he would also incidentally touch upon forestry. At the back of his electorate, there was a very large area—something like 13,000 acres—designated, of rich scrub land, which was eminently adapted for dairying and fruitgrowing. When this Government took office that land was on the point of being settled by a group of dairymen from New South Wales. Owing to the change of policy in regard to land tenure that settlement fell through, and Queensland lost a most desirable addition to its producers. It came home to them living in that portion of the State most acutely, because, owing to the stoppage of shipping, the probability was that they would be without dairy

products for some weeks. But for the mistaken policy of the department that area would now be one series of waving fields of artificial grasses stocked by high-class dairy herds supplying that portion of the State with butter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where is that?

Mr. SWAYNE: He was talking of the Eungella Tableland. It was a splendid district as far as dairy products were concerned, and would have rendered them independent of the Southern States, and, therefore, the shipping hold-up would not have affected them. Again, within the last few months another effort had been made to settle that area, and nearly every block left was applied for, and again deserted. The reason for the abandonment was because the Forestry Department had reserved at the front for forestry purposes 3,000 odd acres out of the 13,000 acres. They had done nothing to make roads through that reserve to the area which was still open for settlement, and the consequence was that the people who went on the backblocks found that between this large area held by the Forestry Department and their selections there were no means of outlet.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I suppose they also found there was a shire council there that would not keep that very expensive road in order.

Mr. SWAYNE: They found themselves cut off from the rest of the world by a belt of scrub through which no means of inlet were provided, and that it was impossible to carry on their settlements; so the holdings were again abandoned. It was, of course, a matter of opinion as to whether the area of 3,000 acres which had been reserved should not be cleared and cut up into dairy farms or maintained as a State forest. He thought himself that some other area should have been chosen as a State forest; but whether that was correct or not, as far as the administration of the area as a State forest was concerned, it was a dead letter. It had been locked up for five or six years, and during that time it had blocked settlement on the area behind. It was stated that it contained the finest block of cedar that was left in Queensland, but he very much doubted whether the cedar estimated was there. It was absurd to think that the finest cedar belt in Queensland was locked up in that small area; but, if it was so, the ordinary procedure in connection with forestry should be followed, and the trees that had attained their prime and were beginning to decay should be marketed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is that a new way you have discovered of having a road made up there—that the Forestry Department with their 3,000 acres shall make a road, which your council wants £20,000 for?

Mr. SWAYNE: Something like £20,000 had been spent in making a road through the State forest.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And the shire council did not spend a dollar.

Mr. SWAYNE: Because they deprived the local authority of all revenue in connection with it. They paid no rates for the State forests. The Government had offered them a paltry grant of a few hundred pounds towards keeping the road, and it was the final grant. In the course of years that

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would be a mere drop in the ocean as compared with the cost of maintaining the road if ever they did go into that State forest. He was not dealing with that particular question. What he wanted to point out was that this land had been locked up for five years, and not a single stick of timber sold off it. Every year a cast should [12.30 p.m.] be made of what trees had reached maturity, in order that they could be sold. The public would derive the benefit, and they would be put to some useful purpose. That had not been done. Anyone who went there would see the trees rotting. Would it not be better to allow the people to have the benefit of the timber, especially when it was so scarce, than to allow it to decay? Every year the rot extended further, and more timber was lost. Trees, like animals, reached their prime and then went into decay. It was a bad policy to allow valuable timber to rot. With regard to the high price of timber, he had a letter from the Mackay Chamber of Commerce to which he wished to draw the Minister's attention. It was dated 4th November, and stated—

"Herewith I beg to attach a copy of a letter sent to the Director of Forests with reference to the price of pine timber in our district. I think the text of the letter will fully explain our wants, and I am instructed by my chamber to ask your good offices in approaching the Minister in having our requests acceded to.

"As you will recognise, the prices named are beyond any hope of our local merchants being able to do business.

"I have also sent a copy of my letter to Mr. W. Forgan Smith, M.L.A., and would ask your co-operation."

The letter to the Director of Forests was as follows:—

"The following matter was brought forward at the usual meeting of the above chamber last week, and I am instructed to bring the matter under your notice with a view of favourable consideration.

"The prices or royalty fixed for pine timber at the following places are as follows:—

At Mount Martin—17s. 6d. per 100 feet, with a haulage of 3 to 4 miles.

At Pine Vale—11s. 3d. per 100 feet, with a haulage of 14 miles.

At Doves Creek—13s. 11d. per 100 feet, with a haulage of 6 miles.

"This, my chamber would beg to point out, is so prohibitive that the timber-getters and sawmillers who are prepared to cut the pine withdrew and are having nothing to do with it.

"My chamber has been informed that a quantity of the pine has matured, and if allowed to remain will decay and be valueless to anyone.

"My chamber would respectfully beg to request you to take these facts into consideration and make the price available at a reasonable rate. The haulage is a very costly matter, and the country is very rough and rangy, and the distances, as before-mentioned, are from 3 to 4 miles.

"My chamber would ask your early and favourable consideration of this matter."

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He was not advocating the sale of immature timber. On a cattle station, when bullocks became fat, they were sold. In forestry, when trees were fit for sale, they should be sold. It would be bad policy for the manager of a station to allow the bullocks to die of old age. That was what the department was doing in regard to the forests in his electorate. He hoped they would see a change of policy in that regard as far as this particular locality was concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He was very pleased to hear hon. members speak so nicely about the late Under Secretary and about Mr. Board, the present Under Secretary. His experience was, there were no more honest and conscientious officers to be found in any other department of the public service or in any other State in Australia.

In regard to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition respecting the prickly-pear in the Dalby district, he would refer him to the report of the department, page 121, where he would see the Commissioner for the Dalby district said—

"The condition of destruction of prickly-pear had, unfortunately, to be relinquished to a large extent in consequence of the drought, as it was absolutely impossible to poison the pear whilst the cattle were so largely dependent on it as a means of subsistence, and selectors could not afford to pay wages or purchase poison during such bad times."

To use the pear was practically a saving. He knew it was not confined to the Dalby district. The pear had saved, probably, thousands of head of cattle. Hon. members spoke about the destruction of prickly-pear as though the Government encouraged its growth, or that they had a magic wand to wave over the pear and make it disappear. They tried to make out that the Government were doing nothing at all. As a matter of fact, the prickly-pear problem was of the greatest concern to the Government, and had been since they had been in power. If hon. members looked up the reports, they would find that the Government contributed £2,500 a year to the Commonwealth Government towards the maintenance of the Bureau of Science and Industry, and Professor Hervey Johnston was now in America making investigations to try and find some means of destroying the pear other than by the very costly methods adopted at the present time. Up till the 30th June last the Lands Department had spent £1,200 on arsenic for the destruction of pear, that being the difference between the actual cost of producing the arsenic and the price at which it was supplied to selectors. He also had a Mr. Radameyer, from South Africa, experimenting in connection with the destruction of pear. That gentleman had been very successful in destroying pear in South Africa, and he had visited Gayndah, Dulacca, and Dalby, and he had also carried out some private experiments on his own on the Sandgate line. He had sent Mr. Temple Clerk a month or so ago to ascertain the results of those experiments, but, unfortunately, they were not at all successful. That system was much cheaper than the Roberts system, and he was very hopeful, from what Mr. Radameyer had done in South Africa that

he would discover a reasonably cheap method of destroying the pear.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Let us know about the work done on the Suttor River.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Mr. Temple Clerk was very successful in destroying pear on the Suttor River.

Mr. CORSER: That was by the cochineal insect?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Quite so. As a matter of fact, he kept a few plants there to keep the insects alive. He had also been experimenting with another kind of cochineal insect at the University, and he had been keeping them alive by feeding them. Mr. Clerk had shown him a letter which he had received from Professor Hervey Johnston about a fortnight ago, warning him that he must not on any pretence whatever take those insects from the University. He (Mr. Coyne) had given him authority to take some of those insects to Sydney in order to ascertain from some of the professors there, whether, in their opinion, the sending out of those insects would be injurious to other plant life. He wanted to make sure of that, but Professor Hervey Johnston had blocked the whole thing and the possibilities were that owing to carelessness or neglect those insects would die.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are living still.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He was not too sure they were being attended to as well as they would be by Mr. Temple Clerk. If, after investigations, it was found that those insects would attack the pear in earnest, they would be very valuable. He did not intend to say very much about the alleged repudiation on the part of the Government, as so much had already been said on the matter. The hon. member for Merthyr said there was something implied in the lease, and he had secured a copy of a lease issued in 1904, which read as follows:—

“Subject to the said rights, powers, privileges, terms, conditions, provisions, exceptions, restrictions, reservations, and provisoes in the said Act, and the regulations thereunder now or hereafter to be made.”

It would be seen from that lease that the Government had done nothing that was wrong. The 1902 Act then provided—

“The rent payable for each period shall be determined by the court.”

That was repealed in 1905, and that was as much an act of repudiation in 1905 as was the so-called repudiation Act passed last year. There was absolutely no difference in the world.

Mr. SWAYNE rose to a point of order. When he was speaking on that question the Chairman pointed out that he was not in order in discussing legislative matters on that vote. He noticed that the Minister was doing so.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ruled a little while ago that a discussion of legislation on the Estimates could not be allowed. I thought the Minister was going to discuss the issuing of leases. If he is going to discuss the merits or demerits of legislation he will be out of order.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It did not suit the hon. member for Mirani to hear argument. The hon. member for

Burnett inferred that the Government were trying to rob the farmers in connection with the arsenic supplied by the department.

Mr. CORSER: I merely quoted a certificate of analysis.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Just so, without saying whether it was Government arsenic or not. All they could do was to take a fair average sample at the mine and have a test made. However, he would have the strictest inquiry made into the matter. The hon. member for Burnett also said that the Upper Burnett land should be thrown open, yet the hon. member must remember that he, a couple of years ago, was a main factor in preventing that land being thrown open when he opposed the Many Peaks to New Camindah Railway. Did the hon. member not do that?

Mr. CORSER: I deny having objected to those lands being opened. You voted £2,000,000 to open them up as against £150,000, which would have been sufficient.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Only for the opposition to it, the line would probably have been built to-day. All sorts of obstructions prevented them from opening it now, similar to the opposition to it a couple of years ago.

The hon. member for Normanby referred to settlers being penalised with regard to payment of their rents. Section 129 of the 1910 Act provided for that; but the department had been generous with people who had been behind with their rents if they knew their failure to pay was legitimate and not due to any fault of their own. He could not reduce the penalty, but in serious cases he had given them time to pay, and they had not dealt harshly with the people in any case.

The hon. member for Port Curtis had made a very interesting speech about small selections. He (Mr. Coyne) had a distinct objection to small selections. Anyone who knew our climatic conditions would never put more than 500 sheep on 2,000 acres.

Mr. FLETCHER: But you have to overcome that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He quite agreed with everything the hon. member said about conserving fodder. He recognised that it was a crime to see millions of tons of fodder being blown away by the wind each year. If they did conserve fodder on a 2,000-acre block, and kept conserving so much every year, how would they get on if there were three or four years of drought?

Mr. FLETCHER: They did not have droughts lasting so long as that. For nine months of each year you can feed your stock on natural grasses.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: At one time in the Paroo district he knew of a station where they suffered from drought for eight years.

Mr. FLETCHER: I was not talking about Paroo.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The same climatic conditions prevailed right throughout the whole of Queensland.

Mr. FLETCHER: I would like to have a private chat with you about it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He believed they would not lose so much stock if the fodder was conserved. With

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regard to the small sawmills, they were doing everything in the direction the hon. member referred to. They had thrown open one-man blocks so that the small man would have a chance, and if they failed in that they themselves would sell to the small sawmiller. They were doing everything they could in that direction.

The hon. member for Gregory referred to the great area of land that could be opened for selection. If they referred to page 31 of the report, they would find that last year they resumed 6,631 square miles, and the area open for selection was 5,316,683 acres. They were most anxious for closer settlement, but there was so little demand for country in the dry area the hon. member had spoken of that even on 60,000-acre blocks they could not get people to settle. When they found people would not take that land, they were either letting someone have it on an occupation license, which was absolutely the worst form of tenure—but rather than have the cattle-duffers getting on to it they let those people have it because, so long as someone was on it, it would be kept fairly clean—or, in order to give everyone an opportunity, they were throwing open the country to preferential pastoral leases and making residence one of the conditions. By that means they were getting settlers on those areas under the preferential pastoral lease, which was a good form of settlement, and encouraged people to go on the land.

The member for Mirani should have been ashamed to refer to the Eungella Range road. There was a sum of £20,000 or more spent on it, and later on, when the cyclone came and blew down the trees—

Mr. SWAYNE: It was to open land for settlement, and you shut it up.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He did not shut it up. He had nothing to do with it. After the Government spending £20,000 out of consolidated revenue, the shire council would not spend a farthing on repairing the road, and when the hon. member asked the Government a couple of years ago for assistance to clear the debris away, the Government gave £300 on condition that that would be subsidised by the shire council, and they did not lift a farthing of it.

Mr. SWAYNE: That did not nearly cover the necessary expenditure, and they get no revenue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They never would get revenue if they did not look after the place. He thought he had replied fairly fully to the criticism of hon. members.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*): He had been waiting for an opportunity to speak with reference to the land policy of the State. He did not intend to say much upon it, as he thought all that could be said had already been said by the members who had spoken, and he did not think the Opposition had abused the Minister in that regard. He wished to refer to the Forestry Department. On looking through the report, he found that they had a certain number of acres of forest reserves, and it was pointed out that there were 4,000,000 acres under reserve, both permanent and temporary, and yet for the requirements of the State, both at present and in the future, something like 12,000,000 acres of forest reserves were necessary. Another factor was that from their surplus revenues for the last fifteen years they had accumulated £845,000 odd.

[Hon. J. H. Coyne.

(*Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m.*)
(*Mr. Kirwan in the chair.*)

Mr. FOLEY (continuing): They had 1,122,129 acres of permanent forest reservation and 2,671,139 acres of temporary reservations; but, according to their forestry experts, they required about 12,000,000 acres to supply the present and future requirements of the State. The Director of Forests pointed out in his report that, if a penny stamp were placed on the map of Queensland, it would represent the area that it was necessary for the Forestry Department to control, and yet they only had about one-third of that area. There was quite a lot of country that could be reserved for forestry purposes, but there were not too many members in that Chamber, nor too many Ministers, who recognised the possibilities of the Forestry Department, and, consequently, sufficient areas were not reserved. At the same time he recognised that the present Ministers had done more to reorganise the department than any Government during the last twenty years. According to the report of the Director of Forestry, the revenue amounted to £845,228 in the last fifteen years, and the estimated capital value of the present reserves was about £8,000,000. With proper organisation, and if a little more attention was paid to the advice of the Forestry Department, instead of an annual revenue of £120,000, they would be drawing at least £400,000 per annum. Another thing he would like to touch upon was the amount of waste that was going on in the Northern forests—from the Herbert River to Port Douglas. His reason for touching upon this matter was that, although there was a Country party in the House, not one member of that party had alluded to the possibilities of the country districts, and, being a country member himself, he considered it his duty to point out these things to the Minister. About ten years ago he had the pleasure of travelling through the Northern scrub country, from Innisfail right through the Atherton Tableland and on to Herberton, and he found that, compared with the forests of New South Wales and Queensland, those Northern areas were the paradise of the Commonwealth. Yet there was less revenue derived from that part of the State than from any other. The revenue derived from the Southern districts was 87 per cent. of the total receipts, and amounted to £180,937; the receipts from the Central district represented 6 per cent., and amounted to £7,816; from the Northern district, from which their supplies of maple and silky oak were obtained, the receipts represented 7 per cent., and amounted to £8,910, although for variety of timber it was the richest part of the State. The trouble was that, although there were one or two forestry officers in the Northern district, there was absolutely no organisation to assist them to carry out the necessary work. On page 57 of the report, the Director of Forests touched upon the inadequacy of the shipping facilities and the undue waste in their timber resources in the North. He said—

“The solution of the road transport problem, however, will still leave untouched the supreme difficulty of the Northern timber trade—viz., lack of export facilities. Great areas of valuable timber land have been thrown open to selection, and great masses of timber must either be marketed or destroyed forthwith. The handling facilities at Cairns, however, are obsolete, and the

shipping outlet is continually congested with log accumulations. Thousands of pounds' worth of material is being lost to the community annually because of export holdups, which subjects the log stacks of maple and kauri to the ravages of summer swarms of woodborers. During the past year the situation has been aggravated by two shipping strikes, which involved timber traders and the Forest Service itself in heavy losses. Meanwhile, the North has colossal stocks of prime timber for sale, and the South is entreating delivery. The District Forester at Atherton quotes a timber buyer as having said: 'Give me the shipping to send unlimited quantities of timber to the Southern markets, and I will quote you for all timber over 5 feet girth of any species.' Timber could be cut in a face if this 'shipping problem' could be solved. As it is, forests are being sacrificed vainly in North Queensland, whilst Melbourne is obtaining log supplies from Borneo."

If proper organisation were adopted, and a proper percentage was received from the forest reserves in the form of surplus revenue, and that revenue could be reinvested in the direction of providing organisation and facilities for shipping the timber in the Northern districts, that was all that was needed. In another paragraph of the Commissioner's report he found that the amount of revenue reinvested in forestry was £165,532 for a period specified. He claimed that in the interest of forestry a little more of the revenue obtained from that source should be invested in forest reserves and reforestation. In the past, the Lands Department, being anxious to open up land for selection, and having no forest organisation, had allowed the timber capital on those selections to be squandered and burnt to ashes. The Minister for Lands of New South Wales was taking up an attitude which would be worthy of imitation in Queensland. He thought the present Minister for Lands should follow the same lines as those adopted by Mr. Loughlin, the Minister for Lands of that State. The following paragraph was taken from the "Australian Forestry Journal" for September, 1920:—

"As a result of the visit to the Batlow Soldiers' Settlement, made by Mr. Loughlin, Minister for Lands, and Mr. Fleming, ex-Director of Soldiers' Settlements, the Minister stated that he had decided to curtail the scheme of soldier settlement, which, it was originally intended, should be followed at Batlow (said the 'Sydney Morning Herald' of 13th September, 1920).

"The land is of the highest value for forestry purposes,' continued Mr. Loughlin, 'being a portion of the Bago forest, which is regarded by many timber people as being one of the finest hardwood areas in the world.

"One of the saddest scenes which has crossed my vision for some time was the spectacle of the valuable timber on the settlement area being blown to pieces by gelignite, in order to make way for apple trees, which could be as well grown on millions of acres in the State where the value of the timber is nominal.'"

This system of the destruction of some of the best capital of the State had been going on all over Australia, and it was about time that a live Minister, such as he thought Mr.

Coyne was, should pay a lot more attention to this particular matter, and try to give the Forestry Department facilities to remove the timber from areas of thickly-timbered country that was thrown open to selection. Six months was not sufficient time to give the present organisation to remove such timber. Another point he wished to raise was one in connection with the by-products which could be derived from our forests. In Victoria, there was a chemical industry established for dealing with various by-products from timber. The industry he referred to was one established at Britannia Creek Valley, and known as the Wood Distillation Works. Those works dealt with a timber known as eucalyptus regnans, from which they obtained charcoal. The gaseous portion of the timber was used as fuel under the retorts, and the liquid portion produced water, acetic acid, wood spirit tar, and creosote oil, known as pyroligneous acid. Such a plant as that installed at those works cost about £60,000, and he claimed that it would be a good thing to earmark a certain portion of the revenue for each year, so that, in the course of a very short time, they would have sufficient money to establish a wood-pulping plant, which would enable them to utilise many timbers to the best advantage. He would advise the Minister to insist that a portion of the waste lands in various places which were overrun by unmarketable timber, such as silver-leaved ironbark, should be planted with the species of pine and the narrow-leaf ironbark, both of which were marketable timbers. The expenditure in connection with such a policy would amount to only a few thousand pounds, and it would prove a profitable investment for the State. The present system of railway management in connection with the Birrigan Forest Reserve was unsatisfactory. The Railway Department was doing absolutely nothing to assist the present generation in the matter of forestry. He would advise the Minister to take over the milling plants at Birrigan and work the forest on similar lines as the system in operation at Imbil, Brooloo, and Fraser Island, so that they might be used for the advantage of the State in connection with the operations of the Forestry Department. At the present time, instead of a continuous supply of timber from various parts of the State being provided for at Birrigan, there was only an intermittent supply; and men were thrown out of employment because no more railway sleepers were required by the Government, while, with proper organisation, hardwood supplies of all descriptions could be produced for the Central, West, and Rockhampton districts, ensuring continuous employment for 150 workers. He thought the Minister should pay a great deal of attention to that aspect of the subject.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): He would congratulate the Minister on the increased revenue that was obtained from the Forestry Department, as shown by the report. As soon as the railway was completed to the Bowen coalfield, there would be a large area of land in that particular district which would be available for settlement. On page 68 of the report of the Forestry Branch, there was the following paragraph:—

"Strong attempts have been made by the Forest Service during the year to secure the utilisation of previously unmarketable woods. The visit to Bowen of Forest Ranger Arnold resulted in the

Mr. Collins.]

subsequent satisfying of a keen local demand for fruit-case timber by the furnishing from the Atherton forests of secondary timbers otherwise unsaleable. The logging of the knotty 'tops' of hoop-pine was increased greatly during the period. Whilst in 1917 this class of material was wasted utterly, in 1918 the Forest Service disposed of over 4,000,000 superficial feet of it. In 1919 the sales had risen to 7,513,600 superficial feet, and for the period of the financial year 1919-1920 the quantity marketed was 8,158,183 superficial feet."

He drew the Minister's attention to the fact that in the Proserpine district there was a large quantity of timber that was suitable for making fruit cases, and he made special reference to the ti-tree. He had received a letter from the Minister a few days ago informing him that he had placed the matter before the Forestry branch of the Lands Department, and asked them to report on the matter. His (Mr. Collins's) idea was that, seeing that they had a sugar-mill at Proserpine which seldom worked more than twenty weeks in the year, they could establish a sawmill there in conjunction with the mill. They could then supply the Bowen fruitgrowers with fruit cases much cheaper than those received from the South. He understood that inquiries were being made into the suitability of the ti-tree and other woods that grew in that locality for fruit cases. He did not want to take up the time of the Committee, and he would not use the full time allowed him by the Standing Orders. In fact, he had only taken his full time once during the session. He pointed out that there was no need to go South for timber to supply the North with fruit cases, because they could make them right on the spot. If they made the fruit cases in the North, it would be of benefit to the fruit-growers and to Queensland generally.

Question put and passed.

DISTRICT OFFICES.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved—That £72,760 be granted for "District Offices." The vote showed an increase of £8,356, and was chiefly due to increased salaries of officers in accordance with awards, and the increased cost of printing, stationery, postage, and telegrams. The salaries of officers showed an increase of £6,166, and railway fares, printing, etc., showed an increase of £1,500, while £800 increase was allowed for travelling expenses for Land Commissioner and land agents. There were a few small decreases in allowances to officers in distant parts and expenses of rabbit inspectors.

Question put and passed.

LAND COURT.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved—That £3,005 be granted for "Land Court." There was a slight increase in the vote for salaries and contingencies amounting to £444.

Question put and passed.

SURVEY OFFICE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved—That £98,625 be granted for "Survey Office." The vote showed an increase in salaries in accordance with awards, and also increases for the rates to survey work, cost of printing, stationery, etc. The salary increases amounted to £4,540, the fees to

licensed surveyors increased by £5,000, railway fares increased by £2,000, and £1,150 was provided for the Bartley's Hill Observatory. The decreases amounted to £750 in the staff camps, £500 for camp equipment, and £135 for a gratuity granted last year, which left the total increase on the year's vote of £11,505.

Question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS (SUBDIVISION).

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved—That £22,445 be granted for "Miscellaneous (Subdivision)." The vote was a decrease of £2,500 as compared with last year. There was an increase of £8,000 to the public estate improvement, and an increase of £1,100 for rabbit netting. There was also an increase of £2,700 for the destruction of prickly-pear. There was also an increase of £500 for the improvement of roads leading to Crown timber areas.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*) suggested, with the permission of the Committee, that he should move the whole vote instead of taking each item separately. In that way they would save time.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION moved—That £1,254,942 be granted for "Department of Public Instruction." There was an increase of about £267,000 over the amount voted last year. Most of the increases were brought about by increases in salaries and increased expenditure generally. If he dealt with the whole vote it would take him some time, so he suggested that if a member wanted any information he should ask for it, and he (Mr. Huxham) would reply to him. If that would meet the wishes of hon. members opposite he would simply move the vote and reply afterwards to any criticisms that were raised.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: It was generally recognised that education in Queensland was pretty well catered for, and they could hold their place in Queensland in that respect amongst the States of the Commonwealth. Every facility in reason was given to the young for education. The only thing he had to cavil at was that those facilities were not sufficiently distributed. It was one of the ideals of the Country party that there should be decentralisation in every possible way, and in no department was that more necessary than in the Education Department. If one looked through the votes he would see Chief Office, inspection, medical and dental inspection, from which both the cities and country benefited, but when they came to the Queensland University Training College, Women's College, secondary education, etc., they would find that the persons who participated in those institutions mostly lived in the larger towns. It was the policy of the Country party to advocate that in the future children living in the country should [2.30 p.m.] receive better consideration than they had had in the past. From time to time the department pointed out the beautiful buildings erected in the metropolitan area and other centres, and also the facilities for education and relaxation provided for the pupils attending those institutions. They found buildings costing

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between £19,000 and £20,000, and the buildings were amongst the most up-to-date probably in the Commonwealth, with gymnasiums, swimming-pools, and so on. That was perfectly correct, and it might be truthfully said that they had to walk before they could run; but he was more concerned with conditions in country places, and it was regrettable to find that almost on every occasion when application was made for what was absolutely necessary, the reply was that funds were not available. He had had occasion—and no doubt many country members had had occasion—to ask for the expenditure of money on one of the most necessary things at country schools, that was, fencing, in order that the children might have security for the horses and ponies that brought them to school, but they had not been successful. It was not that the department had been starved; there had been a fair amount of money at its disposal, but, unfortunately, those funds were spent in the cities and big centres. They must increase production and induce the people to get out of the cities; but the very first thing asked by a married man when he went into a remote place was how far it was from a school, for his first care was for the future of his children.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Of course, that is not a new question.

Mr. VOWLES: It was not, but it was one they had to face, and with expenditure going on year after year and none of it being applied towards overcoming difficulties in the country, it was only a fair thing that they should bring it before the Minister.

Then, they did not get the best class of teacher in the country districts. It was only natural that the department should put them in the best areas; but, what was more, they did not even get a sufficient number of teachers in proportion to the number of pupils. He could point out country schools with a large number of pupils, from the lowest to the highest standard, where, maybe, one or two hands had to cope with their requirements.

Application had been made in respect of some country schools that bookkeeping lessons should be part of the curriculum of every school, more particularly on account of the tremendous amount of bookkeeping people in the country now had to do. He had seen correspondence between a member and the department in which such an application in connection with a school pretty close to a large town had been turned down. Unless classes were available on Saturdays and at such other times when people from the country could obtain the benefit of teaching in those subjects, the department should make it its duty to send out teachers when application was made—that was, if they had teachers capable of doing the work.

Speaking from a parochial point of view, he wanted again to bring before the department the necessity for acquiring more land in Dalby for State school purposes. When he was a youngster in Dalby, many years ago, there were two schools where there was one now, although they were respectively for boys and girls, and there was a teacher's residence on the same site that was now being used for the requirements of the children. He did not know how the roll now compared with the roll then, but he would imagine that it was at least three times as great. He had frequently made

application himself, and supported applications from the committee, for additional grounds, and the regrettable thing was that there was land adjacent which was wrapped up in a trust and could be acquired. He got so far once as to get the Minister to inspect and agree to purchase it, and the only question blocking him was the question of price. He suggested that the land should be acquired under the Public Works Land Resumption Act, under which the Land Court would determine the value. The land was being used as a saleyard, and, during school hours, there was a stallion serving mares, and the children could see what was going on. Quite recently they had had additions in the form of a high school, and they were looking forward to what they were entitled to in the way of a technical college. If the Government did not take the land now, it would be acquired by other persons and built upon, which would make it all the more difficult for the Government in the future. The children had not even got a playground. What they had was about as rough as the ground outside Parliament House, and so small that in their play they could not help bumping into one another.

He had been asked to speak largely on behalf of his party, and they wanted to instil into the mind of the Minister what was contained in the programme of the Country party, and, as they, unfortunately, were not there to put it into operation, they hoped the Government would listen, not to their complaints, but to their suggestions, and try to remember that they were not catering for the children of electors who had returned a Government representative, but for the children of all their opponents in politics as well. When the vote was before the Assembly last time, a certain member from the Central district spoke about the amount of money that had been spent in his electorate on education matters. He said then it was a terrible mistake if electorates were going to be favoured merely because they had a political representative in sympathy with the Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not so.

Mr. VOWLES: He said he had never had an application refused, and the regrettable thing was that there were members on the other side who were able to say that they had never had an application accepted. He asked the administrator to deal out even justice to electorates irrespective of their representation.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: He was glad that the Minister had given them an opportunity of dealing with these Estimates as a whole, because it permitted of a broad discussion on the whole question of education. He wished to call attention to the increase which the Minister was asking for, as compared with last year, namely, £267,000. For the five months ending 30th November, the increase was already £169,000. If they continued at that rate, it would mean that the increased expenditure in this department would be £468,000, as compared with last year. If the Minister could show them that that was not going to be the increase for the whole of the year, they could get some comfort from that assurance; but on two or three of the votes they had had occasion to call attention to in this regard, it was evident that the departments were going to spend much more during the current financial year than the provision which was being

Mr. Elphinstone.

made. One matter which struck him most forcibly in reading the report of the department was that, whereas there were 138,000 pupils in the primary schools, there were only 2,820 in the secondary schools. He thought most hon. members were convinced of the necessity of the State taking control of education from the primary to the secondary schools, and finally to its culminating point, the University, and as they seemed to be practically unanimous in that direction, it was regrettable to see the tremendous dropping off in the number of pupils in the secondary schools compared with those receiving education in the primary schools. He wished to call attention to the matter of technical education. There was a factor there which was dealt with in the report, upon which he would like to hear some remarks from the Minister. He saw that in the year 1919, as compared with 1918, the number of individual students showed a slight decrease. There was nothing very wonderful in that; but the significant part lay in the fact that the number of passes with honours was 100 less than last year, and the number of mere passes was 100 more than last year, from which it would appear that there was some deficiency in the attention which the pupils were paying, or in the tuition which was given to them, to cause an increase pro rata in the number of passes and a decrease pro rata in the number of honour passes. He would like to know whether the Minister could throw any light on that fact. Another important matter dealt with in the report, on page 19, was the lengthening of the average period of school life. He thought he was right in saying that embraced in the Labour party's platform was the increasing of the school age to sixteen years, and although they might not be unanimous on this side of the House, nevertheless, many of them thought that that would be a very wise thing for the future welfare of Queensland to increase the age during which the children were kept under school control. But nothing definite was stated in this regard by the Minister so far, and he would be interested to hear what were the intentions of the hon. gentleman in that direction. It was not necessary to jump from fourteen to sixteen years, but it was possible to take it by easy stages, and if the Government was sincere in its intention to increase the school age he would like to see some indication of a gradual increase to show that that was going to be consummated. Another point he was particularly interested in was with reference to rural schools. That read very encouragingly to those who wanted to see education, not only of an elementary but also of a practical nature, introduced into the country districts, and the extent to which the rural school proposition appeared to be receiving attention was quite gratifying. The necessity existed in the country just as in the towns for technical education for our rural children, and technical education in that direction would lie undoubtedly in the teaching of agricultural and domestic pursuits, and so forth, all of which were closely associated with rural life. Passing on to a matter that was perhaps not quite so pleasing, the Minister on page 321 of the report made use of this expression—

“Secondary schools act as feeders to the university, regarding which our ultimate aim is to open its doors to all who are intellectually competent to enter—

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*

not with the primary object of creating additional wealth or material productivity, but with the higher purpose of elevating the outlook upon life, readjusting standards by which the conveniences and enjoyment of living are measured out, and, having in view the steady advance in democratic power, educating men and women for leadership in social and political development.”

That was all right from a theoretical point of view, but they were not going to instil into their children the necessity and desire of developing their business intellects, and of competing with one another for business and economic advancement by enunciating such doctrines; they were simply going to create in the coming generation a body of idle dreamers, such as they frequently saw represented on the other side of the House. They could not do their duty, neither could they advance the State of Queensland by dreaming; they had to do it by practical methods, and by so educating themselves and their children that they could compete with other parts of the world. One expression used was, “Educating men and women for leadership in social and political development.” There was no suggestion about educating these boys to become commercial magnates, no suggestion about establishing industries in the State so that they could become self-dependent, and not have to rely upon other countries for the majority of the manufactured articles which they used. No reference was made to that, but simply leading them off into some dreamland of political development. A little less political development and a great deal more commercial development would be of great benefit to the State. He noticed that, on page 23 of the report, some comprehensive references were made to the effect of the application of the Arbitration Court to the teachers. He did not think there had been a single speech made in the House on either side which had denied the school teachers an advance in salary. They must all admit that the welfare of the youngsters in the stage of primary education was so important that they could hardly overpay the men and women to whose care they were entrusted. Money spent in that direction should and would produce excellent results, and he would like to see a competition among those who were anxious to join the staff of teachers; competition which would be helped and fostered by making the emoluments and comfort of the teachers such in the way of residence and conditions that they would be anxious, and consider it an honour, to be associated with the State teaching staff in Queensland. He was not saying that was not the case at the present moment. Proper payment to and consideration of the welfare of those teachers was of the greatest possible importance in this State. There was, however, the usual stain that modern-day unionism introduces. These teachers went to the court and obtained what unquestionably was their due in an increase of salary. Then they found introduced the finger of compulsion—that rigid exasperating feature which hon. gentlemen opposite had introduced of compelling men and women to belong to unions before they were allowed to enjoy the increase in salary which everyone admitted was their due. They found thirty-four or thirty-five of their staff of teachers who, not believing in the principle of compulsion as applied by the

unions, preferred to stand outside it and enjoy a lesser salary. He said "good luck" to those people whose principles were sufficiently strong to permit of their doing that. Probably, if the remainder of the teachers had been allowed freedom of action in the matter and had not been compelled to join the union before they received the increase in salary, they would have had a very much larger percentage who preferred to stand outside the union ranks. He had no objection to unionism; it was an excellent thing. But he did object to compulsion in any shape or form in a democratic country like Queensland. To say to the teachers, "We admit you are not receiving a sufficient emolument for your services, but we will give you this only if you subscribe to the doctrines and the preachings of unionism" was a scandal and a disgrace.

The HOME SECRETARY: You do not discuss it quite fairly, you know.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. gentleman could give the other side of the question later. He was giving his view. He wanted to refer briefly to a remark made by the head teacher of the Maryborough school at the breaking up of the school quite recently. He, or she, made use of these remarks—

"Year after year they had at the school, boys who obviously had been crammed for the examination and who, in a very short time, had found themselves quite out of their depth. Finding themselves in an uncongenial atmosphere, after six months or a year, they had drifted away."

That was a question to which he would seriously direct the attention of the Minister. Following out the State policy of secondary education, he presumed they placed in the Maryborough school those scholars who, in the primary school the previous year, had gained scholarships. If the principle existed in certain schools of cramming these boys and girls to such an extent that their minds were made only temporary receptacles for the storing or knowledge which rapidly passed from them, the object for which those scholarships were granted was missed entirely. If those children, when they were granted secondary education at the grammar schools, found they were not qualified to mix with other pupils on a common basis, and found that the foundation of their education had been neglected, he was quite sure the Minister would agree that it was a very undesirable state of affairs. They should aim, not at making the numbers as large as possible, but at making those who qualified for the secondary education sufficiently fit for and able to take their part amongst others in the secondary schools, so as to make their outlook in life a promising one, instead of a disappointing one such as would be conveyed to them by the remarks of the head teacher at Maryborough.

He wanted briefly to refer to another matter. In educational matters he took particular care to read the remarks of the head teachers of schools at breaking-up time, because they generally got a brief summary of their opinions regarding secondary education. He noticed the head master of the Rockhampton Grammar School complained—and it would appear that he had reasonable grounds for complaining—that the State had established a High School in Rockhampton to the detriment of the Grammar School. The State aided that school to the extent of £1,000 a year. It seemed a pity, when

there were so many opportunities of establishing high schools throughout the State, that it should be thought necessary to establish one in Rockhampton, to the detriment of the existing Grammar School, which enjoyed a subsidy. Of course, he was merely giving the views of the head master. The Minister might give them other views on the matter which might put a different complexion upon it.

He was very interested in reading of a deputation which waited upon the Minister quite recently in connection with the all-important question of sex hygiene. He hoped the Minister was not going to agree to the recommendations of that deputation. He thought it would be highly injurious to entrust to the doctors, by lecturing or by pamphlets, this very important question of teaching the problems of sex hygiene to their State school children. He was one of those who believed that that kind of education should be carried on in the home and not in the school. Admitting, as he did, that it was not a general practice in the home, and that the education of the parents was necessary, nevertheless he thought that was where they should direct their energies to impressing upon the parents the necessity for educating the children in that particular direction. The things a child learnt at home were far more enduring than those they learnt in school. He hoped the Minister's views coincided with his in that regard.

He wanted briefly to refer to the Technical College and what was transpiring there. He had been much impressed with the remarks of Archbishop Duhig recently on this important question. That gentleman's views in that regard coincided entirely with his own. His contention was that from the Technical College they were rather prone to turn out an army of bookkeepers and typists, and not to educate boys and girls in the broader conception of their duties in life. They knew quite well that the opportunities for the typist and bookkeeper were considerably curtailed; there was an army of boys and girls at the present moment looking for an occupation of that description. That was not the education which was going to advance Queensland. They wanted, in the first place, to turn out girls who were domesticated and educated to their duties in after life, and they wanted to turn out boys who were tradesmen. There was no disgrace in being a tradesman—it did not matter in what calling it might be. They wanted to turn out boys well equipped for commercial pursuits, and who would help in building up the industries of Queensland. The views expressed by Archbishop Duhig—and endorsed, he was sure, by a number of members in that Committee—were well worthy of consideration. The question of apprenticeship had been very largely touched upon during this brief session. It was a very important matter, which was, to a large extent, wrapped up in this question, and he was glad that a committee had been formed to carefully study the whole thing. One must admit that the system prevailing to-day, which permitted a boy to enjoy practically a man's wage when he ought to be an apprentice, was an actual deterrent to a boy apprenticing himself to any craft or trade which would be of value to him in after life. It was a most dangerous principle.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I thought you wanted the commercial side of our life developed?

Mr Elphinstone.]

Mr. **ELPHINSTONE**: Did the Minister think a boy of fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years of age who was enjoying nearly a man's wages was developing the commercial side? He thought it was developing the worst side of life, because it put into that boy's possession wages which were out of proportion to his earning power, and, therefore, were driving him into temptations and weaknesses which he would not have the opportunity of drifting into if his time were occupied in equipping himself mentally and in every other sense for the battles of

after life. He wanted to pass [3 p.m.] to another question of minor importance, and that was the allowance which was given to parents in connection with scholarships in the matter of books. The scholarship allowance for books was limited to parents in receipt of less than £156 per annum. That limit had remained at that figure for a very long time, totally regardless of the increased cost of living that had eventuated. The department would be wise to consider the question of increasing that limit and make it at least £200 per annum. They must admit that an allowance of books to parents who were in receipt of less than £200 per annum was not stretching their generosity in the least. There was one dangerous element that he wanted to refer to, and that was provided by the agenda paper which was before the Labour convention at Townsville quite recently. He wanted to read one or two of the resolutions which were submitted to that convention to show the trend of things. He sincerely hoped that hon. members had got sufficient ballast and sufficient spine to cast those things aside as being the product of a diseased mind, but in case they had not he would read some of the resolutions. Several resolutions had been submitted with a view to reorganising State school education, and the South Brisbane Workers' Political Organisation suggested "the elimination of the capitalistic economics and ethics, also of all history which tends to glorify war." You could imagine the great brain that put that forward. They also suggested "the discontinuance of the teaching of the Bible in State schools." You could imagine the mind that conceived that. Then the Australian Meat Industrial Employees' Union proposed—

"That every apprentice in any calling shall go to the Technical College at least two afternoons per week."

An excellent thing, but—

"In his or her employer's time and expense; that all reference in school books to wars be eliminated; and in place thereof the working-class history of the greatest industrial upheavals be printed to educate the workers' children of their positions."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. **ELPHINSTONE**: "Hear, hear!" said hon. members, and they were able to put the red label on them without any difficulty whatever. He presumed that they would like to see produced in the literature which was placed before the school children, was, not the deeds of valour which men had written on the pages of history, but the deeds of the Bolsheviks as practised in Russia. That was the kind of thing hon. members opposite wanted to see taught the children, but members on that side of the House wanted inculcated in the minds of

the children the deeds of their forefathers when they were fighting and spilling their blood for the maintenance of freedom and liberty such as that which they enjoyed at the present moment, and which hon. members opposite did not seem to appreciate.

Mr. **BRENNAN**: He thought it was about time they put an end to the high-flown speeches such as that delivered by the hon. member for Oxley. Of course, he could quite appreciate what the hon. member wanted in the school books. No doubt he would like to see an essay written by the hon. member for Oxley on "How we won the war," or "How we collected war bonds." The rest of the Opposition faded into insignificance after the hon. member had spoken. The hon. member spoke about the necessity of educating the children to being keen business men. His class had been fifty years in power, and what had they done? They certainly had done nothing at all for the middle classes. They had made no effort at all to raise the middle classes. They were told by the "Courier" that the hon. member for Oxley usually raised the tone of the debate. The "Courier" seemed to be pushing his barrow with all the exertion they could—why, he did not know. The hon. member did not appear to have done very much to help Queensland forward. He did not know that the hon. member had ever put forward one useful suggestion. He called members on that side of the House dreamers, and he (Mr. Brennan) said it was a pity that they had not more dreamers in Queensland, because, after all said and done, they, at least, had made an effort to extend education. The hon. member for Oxley referred to the fact that a High School or a Technical College was established in Rockhampton. At the Technical College in Rockhampton there were hundreds of children being educated who would otherwise get no secondary education at all. They had a Grammar School at Toowoomba, and at that school there were a limited number of scholarship holders who were receiving a higher education, but hundreds of other children would not get the benefit of a higher education were it not for the fact that they had a Technical College there too. The Toowoomba Grammar School was not serving the purpose for which it was established, and it would be far better for Toowoomba if the Grammar School were closed down and they extended the Technical College system by having rural schools. As far as the Labour party were concerned they were out to inculcate in the minds of the children something nobler than being keen business men. Every man had a natural ability for business. (Opposition laughter.) Speeches made by members on the Government side of the House were not all "I." When the Federal Government started the Commonwealth Savings Bank they were told that they were only miners and carpenters who were going to establish the Commonwealth Bank, yet the Commonwealth Bank was the biggest thing they had in Australia to-day, and that emanated from the minds of the working class, and not from those high-collared gentlemen who had had a superior education according to the statements of the hon. member for Oxley. They wanted those dreamers or the children of those people to get a better education to fit them for a walk of life where they could do better work for Australia.

[Mr. Elphinstone.

Mr. GREEN (*Townsville*): Anyone reading the report of the Department of Public Instruction must be impressed with the educational advantages given to the children of Queensland. They must all admit that the children of Queensland had advantages that very few children in other parts of the world enjoyed, and, notwithstanding what the hon. member for Toowoomba might say, the working man's children had evidenced their power by reaching the higher positions in life. Whilst they recognised the advantages which the children possessed, they must also realise that the teachers were largely responsible for the development of the young minds. Into their hands the most impressionable portion of the child's life had been placed. From five years of age till sixteen years of age the destinies of the child were placed in their hands, and not only the destinies of the child, but the destinies of this great Commonwealth; and he regretted to see that the teachers in the schools were not rewarded as adequately as they might be. He regretted that the Arbitration Court evidently set a greater value on muscle and brawn than it did on brains, as it was prepared to give a higher remuneration to those who laboured with their hands than to those who laboured with their brains. He had gone carefully through the report of the Department of Public Instruction, and had picked out haphazardly certain schools, and he would give the remuneration which was paid to the head teachers of those schools. The head teacher of the Longreach West school received £178 per year; the head teacher of the Alligator Creek school received £205 a year; and the head teacher of the Kuranda school received £229 per year. Would anybody say that the men who were educating their boys and girls were being adequately rewarded when they were getting from £3 10s. to £4 per week? He ventured to say that it was not a living wage. As a matter of fact, those who worked with their hands were paid from 50 to 100 per cent. more than was paid to the teachers. Take the Alligator Creek school. The boys from sixteen to eighteen years of age, during the meat season, earned more than the teacher who was entrusted with the important duty of training the mind of the young child. No one could stand up and justify a position like that. Instead of the educational work being attractive to teachers, it was otherwise. There was nothing to inspire the teachers to go on with their work. They found in the report that the average attendance at the schools had increased, while there had been a decrease in the number of pupil teachers by 126. He ventured to say that the rewards which were held out to the pupil teachers at the present time were not such as to induce them to adopt that calling. He wished to refer to the diversity with regard to the number of pupils to each teacher in the various localities. On looking through the report, he found that the general average ran somewhere about twenty-three or twenty-four scholars in the country schools. He did not say there was any favouritism towards the city schools as against the country schools, because the city schools, including Brisbane, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, and Townsville, practically worked on a higher average than the country. He thought the average was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight scholars per teacher. He was not condemning the

department, because he thought they were striving to act honestly, justly, and fairly. But there was something wrong—something that wanted looking into—and he would like an explanation from the Minister. He had made an analysis of the attendances at the different schools, and would like to quote some of them. They had worked out as follows:—

Schools up to 200 Scholars.

	Scholars.	Teachers.	Average.
Capella	63	4	16
Wondai	120	3	40
Pittsworth	103	6	17
Laidley North	121	7	17
Ravenswood	121	4	30
Winton	148	5	30
Croydon	87	3	29

The Minister must recognise that there was something wrong somewhere, and it was not fair that the teachers in one locality should be placed at a disadvantage when compared with teachers in another locality. If in any part of Queensland teachers should have any benefits it should be in North Queensland. Some of them were in places where not many would be desirous of going to work; they had the tropical climate in the North, and they were working under many disadvantages. Yet at Ravenswood, Winton, and Croydon, they had an average of thirty scholars—

Schools from 200 to 400 Scholars.

	Scholars.	Teachers.	Average.
Toowoomba			
North	229	13	16
Cloncurry	211	6	35
Childers	231	14	16
Brisbane - Enoggera	226	13	17
Mackay	300	10	30
Charters Towers - Richmond Hill	381	13	30

He thought the Minister, having regard for the comfort and the health of the teachers, would realise that it should be remedied as soon as possible, and that a fair average should be distributed to each teacher. In schools where the attendance was from 400 upwards, they found that the average was fairly well maintained, being from twenty-seven to twenty-eight scholars per teacher.

They were pleased to see that the department were endeavouring to protect the health of the children. It could only be done by giving them ample accommodation, by ventilating the schools and having them built in healthy localities. The department within recent years, particularly with kindergarten schools in the North, had realised the health question, and practically made them open-air schools, the whole of the walls being practically allowed to open up. He thought it would be a very wise thing if some of the old schools with large attendances were altered in that respect.

Mr. RIORNAN: How many children go to the Croydon school? Why don't you look after your own electorate?

Mr. GREEN: There were eighty-seven at the Croydon school. He was talking about the whole of Queensland, and he was discussing the Education Department, and would not permit any hon. member to take that right out of his hand. He was pleased to see that the medical officers in the West were

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working very satisfactorily. The medical officers had reported thoroughly in connection with trachoma. It had been remarked to him by medical men that the children should get up-to-date and proper attention for their eyes, and parents should see that their children were attended to, so that they would not be a source of danger to others.

With regard to the supply of drinking vessels, he thought the department should arrange some means by which the drinking vessel after being used by a scholar should be at least washed out before another scholar would use it. He understood some such system was in vogue in other parts of the world, and he thought it could be overcome here. He hoped the department would see that it was overcome as far as possible, and thus prevent the spread of disease.

With regard to the sanitary arrangements, they knew that was in the hands of the headmaster or, perhaps, the school committee, but a medical officer had told him that in many of the country schools the sanitary conveniences were used by practically everyone travelling in the district, and were left open, and that he had had cases where disease had been transmitted to children through the unhealthy circumstances of the sanitary arrangements. He thought it should be impressed upon the headmasters and the school committees that those conveniences should be kept clean and locked outside school hours, which would help to safeguard the children's health.

With regard to future returns, he thought it would assist them materially if the returns of schools were placed under their classifications, and not alphabetically. It would assist in getting a comparison, and one could see at a glance if fair treatment was being meted out to the schools, and that was the aim and object of every member of the Committee.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He felt he would not be doing his duty if he did not give a word of praise to the schools which were teaching trades in the country districts, and he wished to congratulate the Minister upon the efforts they were making in that direction. The hon. member for Toowoomba had said that it was left to the Labour party to bring out the system of education for the children, but that was only typical of the expressions which usually came from that hon. member. Before the Labour party got into power scholarships were extended, and were practically the same as they were to-day, and so were the allowances, so that while the Minister had no doubt done everything possible to carry out the work and extend it in some little way, there was very little extension. He thought the Minister had done very well in carrying out his duties as he had done. He was sure that the teachers and the children had his sympathetic administration. The extension of the trade classes to other schools could be done with very little expense to the department. But if they insisted on sending an instructor, perhaps, 20 or 30 miles by train, and paying him 15s. allowance for having to board out for the night, they would have a very expensive workshop system, and it would not be of much assistance. He found that the best returns were given by tradesmen who lived in the district who took an interest in the children and the work. Those men gave instructions for two hours a night, for which they were paid by the department. The best work he knew of had

come from Ma Ma Creek. Some of the boys who attended rode 14 or 15 miles a night to get instruction in their trade, and they had been able to make very useful citizens. They were trained to be handy men, and could assist themselves when they went into the bush. Considering that some of those boys rode 14 or 15 miles a night to attend one of those trade schools, he thought the Minister would agree that they should be extended.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION interjected.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He could give the Minister the name of one place already to which he could extend the trade school, and that was Wyreema. He knew of a tradesman there who would take the classes, and it would not be as expensive. The reason they had such a great shortage of [5.30 p.m.] schools was owing to the heavy cost of building them caused by day labour. The cost under day labour was really prohibitive, and he thought that, in some cases, three schools could be built if they called for tenders for the same price that two schools cost built by day labour.

Mr. SIZER: He did not know if the Minister was aware that the Education Department were purchasing leather from New South Wales for boot repairing in connection with the vocational training, and that leather could be bought in Queensland for 9d. per lb. cheaper and of just as good quality. As this was a time when they should economise, he hoped the Minister would take that into consideration, and, if necessary, he would agree to supply him with as much leather as he wanted of good quality at 9d. per lb. cheaper than the department were paying at present. The question of education in Queensland was fairly well catered for at present. The officers of the department had always treated him courteously, and he considered they carried out their work efficiently.

Mr. KERR: Just recently he had been around a number of schools, and one outstanding fact he noticed was that very few pupils reached the sixth class. On turning to the report of the Senior Inspector, he noticed that he said—

“The sixth class is dying out in the schools in my district. The total number of pupils of this grade in the sixteen schools in which a sixth class is found is only thirty-six, and these, as a rule, work with the fifth class in all subjects except arithmetic and, perhaps, reading. In all the large schools in and near Brisbane which are on my list, the fifth class is the highest, and from it the children generally leave to go either to a secondary school or to some employment. The few who reach the sixth class owe their position more to effluxion of time than to superior attainments.”

He asked the Minister to explain the meaning of the two last lines of that paragraph. That meant that people were going out into the world who were not getting the education they were entitled to. They left the school as soon as they reached the age limit. Out of a total of 130,000 pupils, only 2,000 attended the secondary schools. He did not think that cramming came into the question at all. The other day when he asked the Minister to supply him with a return showing the number of scholarships

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that were being taken advantage of, he got the figures, which showed that in 1916 there were 681 scholarships, of which 670 sustained that instruction longer than nine months. In 1917 there were 855 scholarships, and 831 remained after nine months. In January, 1918, there were 797 scholarships, and 759 sustained the scholarship for nine months. In July, 1918, there were 585 scholarships, and 569 sustained them for nine months. In 1919 there were 1,400 scholarships, and of that number 1,344 sustained that instruction for nine months. When they saw the few that reached the sixth class and the few who received scholarships, they could say that the standard of education was not increasing, but rather that it showed a retrograde step. He referred the Minister to the conference of educational directors held in Sydney the other day. That conference decided that thirteen years was the right age to retire from primary schools, but the child required a further two years in a technical or secondary school to prepare the child for the career he was going to follow. That showed that the children were not getting the full education they were entitled to. There was also a conference of directors of education held in Sydney on the 4th and 15th October, which was attended by Mr. Kennedy, the Acting Under Secretary for Public Instruction, and Mr. O. Radcliffe, of Queensland. It was stated at that conference that the sum of £800,000 had been provided for the Commonwealth for the education and training of the children of the deceased, wounded, and maimed soldiers of Australia. The scheme provided for full time attendance at school or University, ages thirteen to sixteen—living at home, £26 per annum, living away from home, £52 per annum; from sixteen to eighteen—£52 per annum if living at home, and £78 if living away from home; and over eighteen years—£78 if living at home, and £130 if living away from home. Under scheme B allowances were made to children appointed to skilled trades. He would like to know from the Minister how the scheme was progressing.

Mr. EDWARDS thought that great care should be taken in the selection of teachers to go out and take charge of schools in newly-settled districts. He knew young girl teachers who were sent into new districts and there was practically no place for them to stay.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is the fault of the people of the district.

Mr. EDWARDS: He knew it was the fault of the people of the district themselves, but they could not remedy it by dictating to the people. The trouble was that the people thought that their homes were not fit for boarding the teacher. In many cases the people did not like the teacher to share their humble homes. On several occasions he (Mr. Edwards) had seen lady teachers living in a slab hut, and he said without hesitation that that was not the proper accommodation to provide for a teacher. That sort of thing made a teacher discontented, and made her want to go back to the big centres of population.

Mr. RIORDAN: That is a reflection on those who promised to board her.

Mr. EDWARDS: He suggested to the Minister that male teachers should be sent to newly settled districts. He knew that

education was making great strides in Queensland, and that it was a big organisation to arrange for schools and teachers all over Queensland; but, still, they should always try and do better each year. He always noticed that when the lady teachers were transferred to the country they always wanted to get back to the big centres of population. The education of the country children was just as important, if not more important, than the education of children in the cities, but it happened that the children in the cities had more advantages than the children in the country. The teachers in the country would have classes of about forty, but in the city the classes averaged between sixteen and seventeen. He thought that education was a most important matter, and he hoped the Minister would see that the country got every consideration so far as his department was concerned.

Mr. PETERSON congratulated the Minister upon the attitude he took up recently when he informed the teachers in the city that if they were not prepared to go out into the country they would have to put up with the consequences. (Hear, hear!) That was a step in the right direction. (Hear, hear!) He put in a word for the teachers out back because they had much more to put up with than those in the big centres. The teachers who lived in the metropolis had a big advantage over their brother and sister teachers, as they could always go to the department at any time and have any of their grievances redressed on the spot. He thought on that account that more consideration should be given to teachers in the country. It was only fair that the places of those who had gone away outback should be taken from time to time by those who were in the cities. He wished to bring under the Minister's notice a complaint that he had made on several occasions. For over two years he had been endeavouring to get a residence for the school teacher at Stanwell, Mr. Munro, who had, at present, to live at North Rockhampton, and travel 32 miles every day to the Stanwell school. He left very early in the morning and did not get home until late at night. Mr. Munro was a highly efficient officer and the people would be very sorry to lose him. The Minister would agree that it was hardly a fair thing for a teacher to have to travel those distances, and he trusted that during the coming year, when money was available, the Minister would do his utmost to have a dwelling erected as quickly as possible. The school committee were quite prepared to accept an ordinary cottage, with reasonable conveniences, at a cost of from, say, £450 to £500.

Mr. COLLINS congratulated the department on the good work being done. In his electorate they were having a rural school built which would soon be in operation. The Department of Public Works was not able to think big enough in connection with the building of schools, so that, later on, the people had to apply for an increase in the size of the schools. A large portion of his electorate was without schools, and he hoped that an itinerant teacher would be appointed to travel there. The hon. member for Oxley seemed to take umbrage at certain resolutions which were submitted at the Townsville Labour Convention with the object of doing away with the glorification of war in the school books. The Labour movement, not

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only in the Commonwealth, but right throughout the civilised world, stood for the abolition of war. The hon. member for Oxley talked about accounts of deeds of valour being excluded from the school books, but there were many deeds of valour being performed every day outside those performed in war. He had seen, on more than one occasion, men risking their lives in mines to save their mates. No one wanted their school children to be taught that the ideal to strive after was war. It was a pity that Shelley's writings were not included in the school books. There were some beautiful extracts which could be taken from the "Mask of Anarchy," some of the finest in the English language. There was also a song for the men of England, which could equally as well apply to Australia.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Did Shelley fight for his country?

Mr. COLLINS: Shelley was a man who would live as long as the English language endured, while the hon. member for Drayton and himself would be forgotten. The Labour party stood for the abolition of war, and they wished the children to be taught to abhor war.

Mr. FLETCHER: Nobody can stop war.

Mr. COLLINS: The workers of the world would stop war—(Hear, hear!)—and they were seeking to educate the children against it through the medium of the schools. As a member of the Labour movement, he was opposed to any teaching in the State school books which would glorify war.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He had listened carefully to the suggestions of hon. members, and would deal with them as briefly as possible. The leader of the Opposition referred to the necessity for more facilities in regard to high schools and teachers, and both those matters would receive the very close consideration of the department. It was generally a young teacher who went out to country schools, and, as he acquired greater knowledge, and was ready to go in for a higher classification, he would be able to get back into the city. The teachers in country districts had certainly not got the advantages appertaining to those in the towns. They were endeavouring to encourage young teachers to advance in their classification, so that when the time came to assume responsibility they would gradually go back to the city, and the children would get the advantage of higher education. The question of the difficulty of getting proper accommodation for teachers was referred to, and that applied to men as well as women. A young man, when he was sent out to the country, might not like the place where he had to board; but when it came to young girls, he had been absolutely shocked by letters received by the department as to the callousness of certain people in the country who wanted the teachers but were not prepared to house the young ladies who went out. He got a letter once a week, on an average, from country districts wanting a school teacher, but they could not provide accommodation for a lady teacher, and, considering that the proportion of lady teachers to men teachers was two to one, they could see the difficulty the department had in staffing schools properly. The interest which he had taken in the country schools would, he thought, be recognised by hon. members. He had visited the outlying parts of the State

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to see the conditions under which children were being taught, and to judge the building and the type of teacher, and as to whether it was necessary to remove him as soon as they could put a better teacher there. They were improving the conditions under which the country children were being taught, and, as years went by, he felt satisfied that the conditions in the country would be well up to the standard of those in the cities. It was simply a question of big schools as against small schools. Reference had been made by hon. members to secondary schools, and he would be quite prepared to do anything in that connection that he possibly could. They should have secondary schools, and even university teaching for their children, but they wanted the money. The department had not been able to do all that was desired, but it would meet the demands as far as possible.

Mr. EDWARDS: We made a suggestion how to meet the difficulty to some extent—that is, by the contract system.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He would refer that to the Works Department. A great deal had been said as to the money which was being spent in the town schools as compared with those in the city. As long as he remained in the department he would look after the country schools. Of £154,728 spent in the schools, £105,000, or 84.3 per cent., was spent in the country, and only 15.7 per cent. in the cities. He wished to point out that although they had a few good schools around Brisbane they had a great number of bad ones, and some shocking residences. He had paid a visit to a school teacher's house, adjacent to a metropolitan area, and it was so bad that he had had to close it up and give the teacher an allowance so that he might board elsewhere. Although country people complained, country schools were well off compared with those in metropolitan areas. He had paid a visit with the hon. member for Nundah to a teacher's residence at Sandgate, and it was so bad that he would not have lived in the place.

Mr. SZER: I did not mention that, but I hope you are going to rectify it this year.

At ten minutes to 4 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN relieved the Chairman in the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: They could not get the accommodation which was required for teachers in connection with country schools. Even in the township it was not good. At one town he visited he met a young lady whom he had met previously in a North Queensland school. The conditions under which she was living were such that, after she had had a talk with Mrs. Huxham, he took the earliest opportunity of seeing that she was transferred to a place which was more congenial to her, and a man was sent there in her place. It was not often they could put a man in those places. He recognised that many teachers, when they had been in the metropolitan districts or in the Southern parts of the States, wanted to remain there. There was a case in which they had difficulty in getting a school teacher to go to Burketown. He tried once or twice and finally, when an appointment was made, the teacher jibbed at going there and said he would send in his resignation. He (Mr. Huxham) said, "Send it in. I would rather have it than be bothered with teachers who

will not do what they are told and will not observe the contract they entered into when they joined the department." As far as he was concerned, country members could rest assured that a fair deal would be given in seeing they had the services of the more highly-classified teachers. The point was raised of the duties of teachers. Next to the home life, the teacher was the most important factor in bringing out the very best that was in their children, and the question of money should not be taken into consideration if they had the necessary money to do the right thing by those men and women. If it came to a question of raising the necessary money by taxation for the benefit of the children, there should be no hesitation in providing it. The question of bookkeeping in schools was raised by the leader of the Opposition. He thought hon. members would recognise that the curriculum was sufficiently large at present, and to add further subjects was out of the question. If parents were desirous of getting those subjects taught to their children, they should send them to the Technical College and not expect the teacher to teach one or two scholars.

The hon. member for Oxley raised two or three very interesting questions, but he made no practical suggestions. It was all very well to talk in a high-falutin' way about what things should be done. Let something practical be put before them. The hon. gentleman spoke about sex hygiene. When some of the leading physicians in the community, who were interested in child life, brought suggestions before him which should be fairly well considered, he was not going to turn them down at the suggestion of the hon. member for Oxley. If they had these things properly laid out, there was no question of its being beneficial to the young life entrusted to the teacher. He was not going to say that the male teacher should teach the girls, or vice versa; but, as far as possible, the male teacher should teach the boys that which was necessary to their growing life, and the same in regard to the girls.

The question of war also had been raised. When they considered that the League of Nations was formed to stop war, hon. members need not for a moment imagine he was going to be an advocate of it. When they saw evidence of war all about them, and realised that for many years to come they would continue to see those evidences, they need not expect him to do anything which would be likely to make him feel that any phase of that question was being lightly set aside. He would like to see less acrimonious discussion in that Chamber. Often, after the prayers had been read, he felt disgusted that they should be at each other like dingoes. He had often thought it would be a good thing to move that the prayer should be abolished. He would rather see the money put into other industries than those relating to war, and they would then have less unemployment and a more happy community. There were other suggestions which hon. members had made. He would take those matters in hand with the department, and do the best he could to meet the needs of the schools. Members need not fear coming to him and discussing matters which they thought would be beneficial. All he asked was that they should not bring forward any suggestion that they knew was likely to be put aside. He wanted something practical. If they knew he had no

money, let them not ask for expenditure. When he had plenty of money, they could rely upon it he would spend it fairly.

The hon. member for Drayton was interested in rural schools, and referred to the Ma Ma Creek school. That was an adjunct to the rural schools, and was a most admirable school to which they were giving all encouragement they possibly could. It was only a question of more money to make it a centre of a great deal of activity. He could assure the hon. member that the reports which they had would induce them to look very favourably on that school when they had the necessary money.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES.

The HOME SECRETARY moved—That £101,913 be granted for "Department of Mines." In this there were increases which were applicable to all departments in regard to salaries. Also, there was a departure, inasmuch as the vote "In Aid of Mining" had been reduced from £24,600 to £16,000. This was really a transferring of the amount to "State Mining Operations." They would notice that "State Mining Operations" had increased from £17,400 to £31,850. All the operations now were placed under that heading, including the arsenic works, the boring for petroleum at Roma, and the Government drilling operations.

Before resuming his seat, he wanted to deal with the question raised by the hon. member for Burnett on the previous evening in regard to arsenic. It was a great pity that members did not go to the department and make their complaints. On this occasion, it was apparent that the hon. gentleman thought he was scoring a point against the Government by taking the action he did. There might be some degree of truth in the statement made by him. It was for him (Mr. McCormack), as representing the Minister for Mines, to see that people got what they purchased and to investigate a case like that, and see if a mistake had been made. It was a remarkable thing to him how such a mistake could occur. The hon. member sent along to the Mines Department for analysis a sample of arsenic. He, first of all, misled the department into believing that the sample was arsenic ore, showing that he was not acting fairly and honourably. At the outset he tried to lead them to believe that it was a sample of ore found in his district.

Mr. CORSER: No; I did not say that.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had his letter, which said: "The Mount Perry end of my electorate," which would naturally intimate that he had a sample of ore found in his district. The letter said—

"I attach a package of arsenic from the Mount Perry end of my electorate from a Mr. Allen, who wants it tested for its arsenic content.

"Would you please let me have result on his behalf at an early date, and oblige."

This man was regarded as a prospector; the sample was sent to the Government Analyst and assayed free of charge. If a prospector had a piece of ore which he desired to have tested, and sent it to the Mines Department, the Mines Department very rightly did it

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for nothing. But in the case the hon. gentleman quoted it was simply a check upon a purchase, and the hon. gentleman should have said so. At any rate, the sample was analysed and it turned out to be arsenic, and it was alleged by Mr. Corser that Mr. Allen purchased the arsenic from the State arsenic mine. He (the Minister) did not know whether he had done that or not; neither did the Mines Department. Mr. Allen got 4 cwt. from somewhere. He sent a sample to the Mines Department to be assayed, and the result was the following report:—

"I, the undersigned first Assistant Government Analyst for the State of Queensland, do hereby certify that I received, on the 16th day of September, 1920, from Mr. Bernard H. Corser, M.L.A., Wetheron, one sample of 'arsenic' from Mr. Allen, near Mount Perry, and have analysed the same and declare the result to be as follows:—

"The sample contained only 19 per cent. of arsenious oxide (white arsenic).

"There was 70 per cent. insoluble in caustic soda. This consisted principally of crushed stone containing arsenical pyrites (probably fluedust)."

That was the assay of the sample submitted. He did not know whether the hon. member for Burnett knew anything about sampling.

Mr. CORSER: I know how to analyse arsenic as well as sample it.

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not profess to know anything about an analyst's work.

Mr. CORSER: Well, I do.

The HOME SECRETARY: And he was prepared to say that the hon. gentleman did not know much more.

The PREMIER: What does it prove if he does know anything about it?

The HOME SECRETARY: Analysing is a profession. If the hon. member said it was his profession he would accept his word. The sample was secured, and it was only fair for the hon. gentleman to say how it was secured. Was it a fair sample? Was the arsenic interfered with between the time of sending it from the mine and the man receiving it? Sampling was a very ticklish business, and anyone who knew anything about it knew that the ore must be watched by the interested party when being sampled. He (Mr. McCormack) certainly would not sell ore unless he had an agent watching the sampling.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Aren't you pleased it has come under your notice?

The HOME SECRETARY: He was pleased; but he wanted the hon. gentleman to be fair. He got a sample without any knowledge of how the person came by it.

Mr. CORSER: I have taken more precaution than that. I am going to make my own statements. I am not going to allow you to make them.

The HOME SECRETARY: He knew what the hon. gentleman had said, and he was going to show that he was unfair in his criticism and was attempting to destroy the reputation of the arsenic. On the one hand he alleged that his whole interest was for the prickly-pear selector, and yet he

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would endeavour to turn the people against arsenic. The hon. gentleman was prepared to defame the fair name of the State, or to do anything at all, no matter how unscrupulous, so long as he could score on the Government.

Mr. CORSER: That won't bluff me from saying it.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was just as well to know where the hon. gentleman stood. He must know how the sample was secured. It might be all right and above-board, but the least the hon. gentleman could do was to explain how he secured the sample, and where the arsenic came from. It might not be State arsenic at all. That was only the second complaint that had been received regarding the arsenic sold by the Mines Department, although 305 tons had been sold to the people. They had numbers of testimonials from people who had used it, and orders had been repeated again and again. They had supplied it to men who were manufacturing dip. Would the hon. gentleman say that those people did not understand their business?

Mr. CORSER: Did I say they did not know their business?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman had dragged the matter into the House, thinking to damage the Government.

Mr. CORSER: I am not going to drag it out, either.

The HOME SECRETARY: It would be as fair for him (Mr. McCormack) or the Minister for Mines to block arsenic altogether from going to the hon. gentleman's electorate because of his statement as his statement was to the Government.

Mr. CORSER: That is what you do.

The HOME SECRETARY: The bulk of the money spent on the vote for his department for the clearing of prickly-pear had been spent in the hon. gentleman's electorate, irrespective of his politics, and he knew it was true. The hon. member should be fair about the matter.

Mr. CORSER: We do not owe you anything for that.

The HOME SECRETARY: All he was asking for was fair treatment. The hon. gentleman was trying to score against the Government, but he had not scored.

Mr. CORSER: I am shaking you up.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member had never shaken anybody up. However, he had asked the police to secure the arsenic. He was going to see that the whole of the arsenic in the hands of Mr. Allen was going to be sampled; and if the hon. gentleman was right, then the matter would be attended to.

Mr. CORSER: There you are. "If he is right?"

At twenty minutes after 4 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

The HOME SECRETARY: They had sold over 300 tons, and had no complaint. So, surely, it was reasonable to suppose that a mistake had been made either by the gentleman himself or by the arsenic mine, and they wanted to know where it had been made.

Mr. CORSER: That is a bit more reasonable.

The PREMIER: It might have been deliberately "faked."

Mr. CORSER: That is a charge against the man who sent it. You say it outside.

The HOME SECRETARY: They wanted to nail those misleading statements of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. CORSER: Don't you say "misleading."

The HOME SECRETARY: Only a few days ago they had had a sample from a gold mine. Assays were made which went 3 oz., 4 oz., 5 oz., and some 50 oz. They sent the Government Geologist to investigate. He did not take one little bit showing gold, but he sampled the mine, with the result that the whole thing was a frost. He just mentioned that to show what care should be taken when supplying samples before a complaint was made in the House. Arsenic was soluble in caustic soda. Had the gentleman been experimenting with the arsenic?

Mr. CORSER: I suppose you imagine he dissolved it first and gave you the grit. I suppose that is the tale you will tell.

The HOME SECRETARY: The gentleman might have sent the sample in good faith. He was not accusing him at all. He might have been experimenting, trying to dissolve it, and, maybe, he dissolved the free arsenic and sent the residue to the hon. gentleman for assay. That might have happened.

Mr. CORSER: It might have happened.

The HOME SECRETARY: If such was the case, there was no blame on the Mines Department. He had probably been experimenting; and if the residue were sent down, did the hon. gentleman say it was fair to accuse the Government of selling something alleged to be arsenic that was not arsenic at all?

Mr. CORSER: Did I say he sent you the residue?

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not tell them how he got the sample.

Mr. CORSER: He got it from the Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman had admitted straightout that he did not care how wrong it was so long as he injured the Government.

Mr. CORSER: I did not make any such statement.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman did not care whether the settlers got arsenic or not.

Mr. CORSER: That is not true.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman would defame the good name of a State enterprise product without thinking who might suffer; he did not care if the show shut down and arsenic was unprocurable. He cared not at all for anything which would benefit the State, or the settlers, so long as he scored at the expense of the Government.

Mr. CORSER: So long as the settler got a fair deal. I have shaken you up, anyhow.

The HOME SECRETARY: When he had finished with the hon. gentleman, the hon. gentleman would be prepared to say "Kamerad." (Laughter.) He would give an illustration of an assay value of the ore that was in the arsenic mine—not the arsenic

produced. The following was an assay of a sample taken from a shaft and sent to the Government Analyst:—Sample from shaft: Gold, trace; silver, 1 oz. 18 dwt. per ton of ore; copper, 0.1 per cent.; arsenic, 21.5 per cent.—more arsenic in the crude ore before it had been treated at all than was in the hon. gentleman's sample.

Mr. CORSER: It just shows what you sent out. I would believe that settler before I would believe you.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, well; we took the arsenic out and sent them the ore. (Laughter.) The samples that he was referring to which they had assayed were not taken like the hon. gentleman's sample had been taken—they were taken during the course of the everyday operations of the mine. The following was the result of a further assay:—Sample from drive: Gold, trace; silver, 4 oz. 14 dwt. per ton of ore; copper, 1.0 per cent.; arsenic, 18.5 per cent. Both of them contained as much arsenic as the hon. gentleman's sample. He had an average sample of shipments of arsenic sent away from the mine, and the assay was interesting. The complaint made by the hon. member was the only one they had out of all the arsenic they had sent from the mine.

Mr. VOWLES: You told us there was another one.

The HOME SECRETARY: There was another complaint about delay.

INTERRUPTION OF BUSINESS.

At thirty minutes after 4 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN said: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 306 and of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on the 16th instant, I will now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again at a later hour of the day.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1920-21.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor forwarding Supplementary Estimates for the financial year ending on the 30th June, 1921.

Ordered to be printed and referred to Committee of Supply.

QUESTION.

Mr. KERR: I would like to ask the Secretary for Railways without notice—

"When will the return asked for by me yesterday in regard to closing down of railway construction be tabled?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

"The return asked for by the hon. gentleman contains questions of a varied nature, and I am unable to say when the information will be available, but some of it will be available on the discussion of the Railway Estimates."

Mr. KERR: Seeing that the discussion of the Railway Estimates will probably come on to-night—

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

PAPER.

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

Annual report of the Under Secretary for Mines.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

CONTINUATION DURING RECESS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council, inviting the concurrence of the Assembly in a resolution to the effect that the Buildings, Refreshment Rooms, and Library Committees should continue their functions during the recess.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was ordered that a message be returned to the Council, intimating the concurrence of the Assembly in their resolution.

PROMOTIONS OF TEACHERS.

On the motion of Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*), on behalf of Mr. Fry, it was formally resolved that there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—

"1. (a) The names of all teachers who, from December, 1918, to December, 1920, had received promotion to the office of head teacher of metropolitan schools; (b) the names of head teachers transferred from one metropolitan school to another; (c) the names of head teachers promoted to the inspectorate.

"2. What promotions were made on the recommendation of—(a) the Under Secretary or Acting Under Secretary; (b) those made without his recommendation; (c) those made contrary to the Under Secretary and Acting Under Secretary's recommendation."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SIXTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

MINES DEPARTMENT.

CHIEF OFFICE.

Question again stated—That £13,830 be granted for "Chief Office."

The HOME SECRETARY (continuing): At the adjournment he was dealing with the charge made by the hon. member for Burnett against the Mines Department for supplying arsenic that was not up to the standard. He was going to read to the Committee the average assays of the arsenic sent out from the Arsenic Works that were sold to consumers of arsenic. That would show the House that the arsenic sold was up to the standard. He had received the following letter from Mr. J. B. Henderson, Government Analyst:—

"To the State Mining Engineer,
Mines Department, Brisbane.

"I, the undersigned, Government Analyst for the State of Queensland, do hereby certify that I received on the nineteenth day of September, 1919, from you one sample of white arsenic marked 'First product from State Arsenic

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Works,' and have analysed the same, and declare the result to be as follows:—

	Per cent.
"The sample yielded—	
Moisture	0.5
Arsenious anhydride (AS ₂ O ₃)	90.2
Insoluble in caustic soda (ore-dust, etc.)	8.6
	99.3

"(Signed) J. B. HENDERSON,

"At Government Chemical Laboratory
Brisbane.

"20th September, 1919."

That was an average sample of the arsenic sold to people in the State. Numbers of manufacturers were buying the arsenic, and if there was anything in the charge of the hon. member—that the Government were attempting to defraud settlers, or purchasers, of arsenic—surely it would have come under the notice of the Government before now! The settler was a man who used arsenic as a chemical, and he was always sure to test it. He would find out the percentage of arsenic by using it in the dipping pit. If the material had only got 19 or 20 per cent. of arsenic in it, then his cheap mixture would not be up to the standard. A good amount of arsenic had been sold to manufacturers for chemical purposes, and not one complaint had been made by those people. He had here several testimonials, but he would not delay the House by reading them all. This was from a farmer, a typical case, as mentioned by the hon. member—

"Dear Sir,—I desire to thank you for obtaining deliverance of the arsenic ordered by me from the State arsenic mine. I am using it in exactly the same manner as I used the imported arsenic, and I am pleased to be able to say that the State arsenic is equal to the imported arsenic in every way.

"Yours faithfully.

"P. RYAN."

That was one letter. What he wanted to say was that, if any hon. member had a grievance such as this, if he intended to act fairly both by the person who purchased the arsenic and by the seller of the arsenic, he would have gone to the department and made his complaint.

Mr. CORSER: I did something else.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member did not do that. He thought he was going to score, but he did not. He thought it was another "dud." The hon. member had not given them time to get full information. He had the arsenic which the hon. member sent a sample of.

Mr. VOWLES: That is all right. You were told yesterday that it was at your disposal.

The HOME SECRETARY: This was the point which he was going to stress. The hon. member, and hon. members of the Opposition generally—particularly hon. members of the Country party—were quite willing to use any arguments to destroy the Government irrespective of the fairness of them, and the hon. member was candid and fair in saying that he did not care who suffered as long as he scored. He had said that in an interjection to him (Mr. McCormack) that afternoon. The hon. member also said that he had a knowledge of assaying. He would like to

know where he got that knowledge from? Was it when he was handling that plough at Gatton College that he had spoken of sixteen years ago?

Mr. CORSER: That one you gave to the soldiers? Nobody handled it in my time.

The HOME SECRETARY: When did the hon. member get knowledge sufficient to analyse arsenic?

Mr. CORSER: I will make my own reply to you.

The HOME SECRETARY: He thought the hon. member did not know anything about it.

Mr. CORSER: I will give you my authority in Brisbane. The laboratory at Gatton College is where I got my knowledge.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member had secured this sample, and he had not given information to the House as to how he secured it.

Mr. CORSER: Yes, I did.

The HOME SECRETARY: Fancy a person going out in the bush and getting a stone, and sending it in and saying that it was a sample! They should find out the correctness of the sample, first of all, and the least the hon. member could have done for the Mines Department, and the least the man who bought the arsenic could have done, was to acquaint the Mines Department that the arsenic was not up to standard. It showed how dangerous a little knowledge was. The hon. member had apparently a little knowledge. He knew how to dissolve the arsenic. Perhaps he got some caustic soda and dissolved the arsenic, and then sent the residue to the Mines Department. He thought the production of arsenic by the State was going to be a good thing for the prickly-pear settlers, and he did not want to see any person, for the sake of a little political kudos, endeavour to destroy the good name of the product. The product had a good name at present, and people who had bought it had repeated their orders. If the hon. member made the same statement outside the House about any other manufacturer's product, without proving it, he would be liable to prosecution. The hon. member was prepared to destroy without investigation the good name of a State product; he was prepared to let it go forth broadcast that the State was "taking down" the people to whom it was selling arsenic—that was the gravamen of the charge. He denied that, and he accused the hon. member, for the sake of a political gain, of attempting to destroy an industry which would be of great use to the farming community.

Mr. CORSER: If the Home Secretary had his way in handling the Mines Department, or anything else, he would prohibit members from taking up the case of any individual outside, particularly a primary producer, who was a man who had to be satisfied in the backblocks with anything he got. He was not to take up the grievance of such an individual, because, if he did, he would be put down as a criminal, or accused of doing something wrong which would injure the fair name of the Government. That was what the hon. gentleman's charge came to. He told them that police investigations were going to be made—the same way as when the Premier tried to destroy the fair name of the Opposition when he said that there had been some

tampering with an aeroplane, and he said he would sooner keep out of it than get in. They had also heard of police investigations in connection with a certain reprint. He attempted to defend the actions of his department by saying that the police were going to take possession of certain supplies of arsenic held by an individual. Last night, in dealing with the State arsenic, he (Mr. Corser) complained that a certain quantity of arsenic which went from the mine was not up to standard, and he showed that, when that complaint was brought to his knowledge, he took some action in trying to prove whether the individual was correct. The individual concerned—Mr. Allen—told him that he had on one or two occasions reported to the arsenic people, or the department, that this arsenic was insoluble in caustic soda, and the reply from the department, or the mines, was that it contained an amount of fluedust, which was put in as a colouring matter. But they told him, as the Minister said, that this was the first complaint, and that it was only fluedust, and that the man ought to be satisfied that the arsenic was good. When the individual supplied him with a sample of the arsenic, he sent it to the Government Analyst in Brisbane. He did not say, "Here is some of your Government arsenic"; he would not be such a "melon" as that! The Minister would have got hold of it. In the interests of fair play, acting between the man who had to buy that arsenic in good faith and the department which supplied it, he wanted to do the fair thing. He sent a letter to the Government Analyst stating he was sending this sample of arsenic that he had secured in the Mount Perry district. The Government Analyst imagined that it was a sample of ore, and the Mines Department wrote that it was a sample of arsenic ore which was supplied by the hon. member for Burnett from the Mount Perry district. When the Government Analyst's report came along, it was as stated in the House last night, and it showed that a lot of the discoloration was probably fluedust: that was to say, the statement of the gentleman who told him was admitted by the department which was running it—and God knew who was running it! He did not know whether it was the Mines or the Lands Department, or the arsenic people at Stanthorpe. Whoever was running the business wrote to say that it was fluedust. He supposed that Mr. Allen could show the letter in which the manager said it was fluedust. Later on, they had an analysis showing that there was fluedust in it, and that 70 per cent. of it was probably crushed stone. That was what the Minister did not like. He was trying to make out that he (Mr. Corser) had insinuated that all the arsenic which had left those arsenic fields had been bad, and only contained 19 per cent. No such statement could be attributed to him, and he was not going to take it. His statement was that a particular parcel of arsenic was sent to a man, and he had given his name and told what he had to say about it. He had the certificate in his hand now, and when he received that certificate he was not such a "melon" as to come here and be subjected to the argument which the Minister would make—that it was a crude sample. He took the precaution to write to Mr. Allen and tell him that very probably it would be said that this was not a true sample of the arsenic that he received, and he said, "What evidence

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can you give me that this is the correct sample and a true one," and his reply was that it was a sample taken from the keg; and the whole of the balance of the keg was in his property, plugged up, at the present time, and at his (Mr. Corser's) disposal, and he offered it to the Government last night. When he received this complaint from an individual who had had to pay for this arsenic, the Government would have him say nothing about it; they would say, "Let the individual outback pay all he likes, but do not make a charge against the Government, because the credit is so good."

The HOME SECRETARY: We will have you for £2 2s. for assay.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman had to get it. They would have him, the hon. gentleman, for a few guineas, too, if it came to use the State facilities for certain purposes. He would certainly pay £2 2s. before they made a settler pay it.

The HOME SECRETARY: You will have to.

Mr. CORSER: Well, he would see if he would pay it. Let them try and make him pay it. This selector told him the keg was available. He had offered it to the Government on the previous night. Now they were going to try and make a sensation in their own interest, and say, "We will get the police to take possession of it."

The PREMIER: You are very scared.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentlemen were pretty scared. They had been scavenging the department to try and refute this statement, but it could not be refuted, because he had a copy of the certificate authorised by the Government Analyst in this State.

The PREMIER: Of your residue.

Mr. CORSER: How did the hon. gentleman know it was residue? That man was more honest than he was.

The PREMIER: How do you know it is not?

Mr. CORSER: Because, after the election, all they had on the other side was residue, why should this be residue? (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. gentleman to proceed with his speech, and not to reply to interjections.

Mr. CORSER: He would endeavour to do so. But hon. gentlemen opposite did not like anything which was done in the interests of fair play. He had taken this up in the interests of the settler. They had proved that the arsenic this man had sent, and a sample taken from the supply, was a sample the Government should never have claimed this amount of money on. That man had saved—he had taken the precaution to find out that he would save—the whole of the keg so as to enable a further analysis to be made if the Government desired. They found themselves in a hole; they had to proceed with it, and they tried to claim from him that he had criticised and condemned the whole of the arsenic that had come from those works when he knew he had used some of it. If it was arsenic, it was pure. Where they got arsenic at all at the one end, they had to get the best arsenic, and at the other end they might get anything. It was a fair thing for everyone to protect the individual outside, and he would do it again. He would

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sooner trust this individual than the whole of the Government put together.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is not his word; it is yours. What did you do with it?

Mr. CORSER: He had up his sleeve what he did. (Laughter.) One thing he did not do—he did not tamper with it like the hon. gentleman would if he had it in his possession for a few moments. The gentleman from whom this arsenic was received was an honourable enough man to have taken a fair sample. He was prepared to abide by the sample he took.

Mr. GLEDSON: This was a very important vote. As every hon. member knew, at different times in the history of the State it was the prosperity of the mining industry which had saved Queensland. He did not intend to pursue the subject of the charge made by the hon. member for Burnett. That hon. member's arguments had been knocked sky high by the Home Secretary. It showed what some members of the Opposition were prepared to do, and what tactics they were prepared to adopt for political purposes. The hon. member had admitted that afternoon that it was for political purposes that he had raised the question.

Mr. CORSER: I did not admit it.

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member said, by way of interjection, to the Home Secretary—

Mr. CORSER: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member correct in misquoting me when I deliberately deny his statement that I used it for political purposes?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Burnett denies having made the statement, and the hon. member for Ipswich must accept his denial.

Mr. GLEDSON: He accepted the denial of the hon. member, and left it to the people of Queensland to take it for what it was worth. The statement had been made deliberately by the hon. member in an interjection to the Home Secretary that he was prepared to use it against the Government. He was not going to pursue the matter further. The Home Secretary had given an effective answer to the member for Burnett and to other members who might bring forward things like that for their own particular ends.

There was only one thing he was sorry about in connection with the production of arsenic by the Government, and that was, that they were not getting a proper price for it. Why should the Mines Department, or any other Government department, produce arsenic and sell it at less than cost to people who abused them for doing it?

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: What is the cost?

Mr. GLEDSON: He supposed the Mines Department and those producing it would be able to tell what the cost was. If he knew what was the outlay on the mine, what it cost to produce the arsenic, crush it, and manufacture it into a saleable article, he could tell what was its cost. He knew it was impossible for them to produce arsenic from the ore at £10 per ton. He did not think they would find a place in the world where they were mining solely for the production of arsenic. All the other arsenic came from by-products of other minerals mined. Here, the Government established a mine and mined purely for arsenic, without obtaining any recompense from any other

minerals, and they sold the arsenic a long way below what it could be produced for. He advised the Home Secretary to immediately amend the scale of rates, and see that these people who abused the Government paid the value of the product. If they went outside, instead of paying £10, they would pay £80 per ton for it. All the thanks the Government and the Mines Department got for doing this was abuse from the people who were being served in that way.

There were one or two other matters he wanted to bring before the Minister. The first was in connection with inspectors of mines. The men who took up this work throughout Queensland were paid a miserable wage. In fact, if it were not for the fact that he liked the work to a certain extent no inspector would stop at it for five minutes, because he could get double the wages for managing mines and not having half the responsibility he had as inspector. The inspectors should be paid a wage which would induce competent men to stop on the job instead of leaving it and going out, as so many inspectors had done during the last year or two. Another question was that, in the Southern part of Queensland, they had a mines inspector doing the work of the whole of the south-eastern division in addition to office work. That man was not able to do the work he had to do from away on the border of New South Wales down to Brisbane. If another inspector could not be put on, some assistance should be given in the office to allow that man to devote his time to inspecting work. The same thing applied in some of the Northern districts; the inspectors were not able to get round and inspect the mines in the proper way. He would ask that the Minister take into consideration the question of inspectors seeing that proper bathing and clothing facilities were provided at the various mines. In some of the older mining centres of the world they had up-to-date baths, lockers, change rooms, and drying rooms for the miners, so that when they came on top they were able to have a bath, change their clothes, and leave them to dry. There was provision in the Act for that to be done in Queensland; but, so far, it had been a dead letter, and many mines had not made any provision at all.

There was another matter he wanted to refer to in connection with the ventilation of their mines. When they amended the Act and gave increased powers to the inspectors in regard to the ventilation of the mines, they thought the conditions would be very much improved for the miners who have to earn their living in the bowels of the earth. They found that some owners of metalliferous and coal mines were not doing what they should in connection with ventilation. Some of the places were not fit for men to work in, and the Mines Department should keep them up to the mark and see that proper ventilation was provided.

Mr. VOWLES: He would like to point out that the reports from the different mines had been tabled only that afternoon by authority of the Speaker.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were tabled in the Upper House about two months ago.

Mr. VOWLES: During the recent election they called for the Auditor-General's report, but that document could not be given to the public, because it had not been authorised

by Mr. Speaker. Why should there be any differentiation?

The HOME SECRETARY: There is a reason, and I will give it to you later.

Mr. VOWLES: In the absence of that report, which was before them officially only to-day, he had had to fall back on the Auditor-General's report on the Mines Department. They would find that on page 52 of the report reference was made to the way the books were kept in the Mines Department, and he trusted that it would be remedied. The report stated—

"The inspector's report for the year ended 30th June last, which has been forwarded to the Secretary for Mines through the Treasurer, indicates that there is room for improvement in the method of keeping the accounts generally. The Minister proposes, however, taking immediate action to remedy the present unsatisfactory state of affairs."

Mining enterprise was a subbranch of the State enterprises, and it was strange that in dealing with the State enterprises there should always be difficulty about the book-keeping. As to coalmining at Baralaba, Bowen, and Styx River, the Auditor-General said they had not reached the producing stage yet, so little comment could be made upon that. When they realised that they had only recently given consent for the manager of the State iron and steel works to utilise large sums of money if he thought necessary, the Committee should take into consideration the conditions that prevailed both on the labour market and on the market where the ore was sold. It was common knowledge that private enterprise throughout the whole of Queensland—he might say as far as the mineral areas were concerned—were closing down, because it was impossible to get a reasonable price for a certain class of metal, and yet the present was the time that the Government proposed to launch out. Referring to labour conditions, only recently the Minister for Mines visited the North and complained about the "go-slow" tactics which were adopted to such an extent that it was impossible to get a proper result from the ore treated in Chillagoe. Hon. gentlemen on the Government side of the House were always accusing members of the Opposition of maligning the workmen, so he would like to quote the remarks of the Minister for Mines. When they had such an authority as that hon. gentleman speaking in such strong terms, no one could believe that those workmen were doing their work properly. In the "Daily Mail" of 3rd April, 1920, the Minister for Mines was reported to have said—

"I was very agreeably impressed with the operations of the smelters at Chillagoe under Government supervision," said the Minister for Mines (Mr. Jones), in an interview with a "Daily Mail" representative on his return from the North this week.

"Mr. Jones said there would not be any difficulty, he felt sure, in the matter of supplies of ore, provided proper encouragement was given to mining development, and traction engine facilities given to places in the district removed from railway centres. That encouragement he was prepared to give immediately. The fact must not be overlooked that the great attraction which

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brought men and money to colonise Australia was its mineral wealth. Furthermore, metals formed the basis of all modern industries, and were necessary for the welfare of a country."

He would like to know whether the department had taken into consideration all those facilities in the way of traction engines as suggested by the Minister. Continuing, Mr. Jones said—

"Since commencing as a State concern from the middle of January last, there had been produced at Chillagoe metals valued at £60,000."

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the hon. member that he is not in order in dealing with State enterprises under this vote.

Mr. VOWLES: He was dealing with the batteries and the Labour question.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out that there is no State battery at Chillagoe.

Mr. VOWLES: He would leave Chillagoe out of the question. However, in that article the Minister spoke about "the spectacle that presented itself of 120 men turning out 40 tons of ore per day under the 'go slow' movement, whereas 50 tons of ore per day was now being turned out by thirty-five men." That was the quality of work they got for which high wages were being paid. If the same sort of labour or value was being given in other departments where the Government was concerned, it was no wonder that things were in the condition in which they found them.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are doing better per man at Chillagoe than in the Cloncurry district.

Mr. VOWLES: Then they must be doing badly in Cloncurry, because the condemnation made by one of their own supporters in the article he was reading was very strong. He said—

"There was a class of loudmouthed men in Queensland to-day who, by insidious methods, were foisting themselves on to employers of labour—men devoid of a conscience, who would not work, but went from place to place stirring up industrial strife. They were going to be stamped out. They were obliterated at Chillagoe, and unless they desisted in their pernicious efforts to destroy industry they would be rooted out wherever they went. With the direct action and go slow movements there was no sympathy. The 'go slow' method, in his opinion, was a most contemptible business. In all cases organisations must seek for reform and their right in a constitutional way; constitutional Government must, and would, be upheld. For a fair day's wage a fair day's work must be expected."

He would like to refer to the arsenic plant at Jibbenbar. A good deal had been said about the arsenic produced from the mine, and more particularly about a consignment sent to Mr. Allen. That was a matter between Mr. Allen and the hon. member for Burnett and the department; but why should the Government suggest that there had been trickery?

The PREMIER: Why do hon. members on that side suggest trickery on the part of the Government?

Mr. VOWLES: Because it was customary to find that was so. They had an offer made

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to them yesterday by the hon. member for Burnett. He said the whole of the arsenic was available to the Government to take in hand and see whether the report the analyst had given was correct or not, and whether it was a fair sample. The offer was made, and now they said they would take it, under what authority they did not know.

The HOME SECRETARY: The authority of the hon. member for Burnett.

Mr. VOWLES: They talked about putting the police on to it. They had no chance of getting it from the man who had it without his consent.

The PREMIER: Don't you want us to have it?

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member for Burnett has been upstairs to square "Hansard."

Mr. VOWLES: They did, and they offered it to them yesterday, and now they tried to make people believe that they would be particularly clever and invoke the aid of the Police Force—that they have been very smart in sending a wire and seizing something.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why misquote?

Mr. VOWLES: Why should the hon. gentleman misquote? The Minister had attempted that afternoon to put up a story about the matter, and he wanted to display his cleverness.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no cleverness about it.

Mr. VOWLES: But that had been exploded. They accepted the offer of the hon. gentleman, the material would be taken, and in due course they would have an analysis of the bulk as well as the sample. That was the position. Was not that offer made to them yesterday?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member did not think it would be available.

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member for Burnett has been up trying to square "Hansard" to alter his proofs.

Mr. VOWLES: He was up trying to get some letters which he handed in to "Hansard" yesterday, so that he could read them in the House, but the letters were not available to him.

Mr. POLLOCK: I caught him trying to square "Hansard" just now.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman was in the Chamber now, and he would tell them that his own private letters which he sent to "Hansard" yesterday were not available to him that afternoon. They should have been delivered to him that morning with his proofs. They were sent to the Chief Parliamentary Reporter, and Mr. Corsor went up to get his own private documents in order that he could refer to them, and he has been deprived of getting them. (Interruption.) The hon. member for Ipswich spoke about the Government and the department producing arsenic under cost price and giving it to the selector, and he insinuated that it would be a good policy on the part of the Government to charge the selector full cost price for the future, merely owing to the fact that the representatives of the country people were criticising the Government. He could assure them that the Government were not going to bluff them. When they found them threatening they knew they were weak; that was their method. They talked about their policy, and about the powers of the

Government, but it was all bluff. They were told that they supplied arsenic at £10 per ton for certain purposes, and £23 for cattle dips, and they said that was below the whole cost of production. What was the cost of production? The Auditor-General could not find out. It was one of those mysterious departments where the books must be kept in a shocking way when the Auditor-General said—

“No provision for a costing system having been made in the accounts in connection with the mine and treatment works, the department was unable to arrive at the cost of production of arsenic.”

They said it was below cost, and yet they did not know what the cost was.

During the time of the last election he noticed that the Roma bore came suddenly into prominence; the problem of supplying the West of Queensland was solved, and traffic was going to be revolutionised. They could picture oil pouring in pipes all the way down to Toowoomba. Since the election there had been a silence, and on an occasion like this, if they had struck oil, which they were supposed to have done in the West, one could have imagined the Minister taking credit to himself and putting it on record in “Hansard”; but, instead, there was complete silence. At the same time, they found the expenditure of money was going on merrily. Up to 30th June last £3,526 had been spent; since then six months had elapsed, and an election had taken place, and no doubt, like every other department, they crowded men on there. He asked that the House get a report, or some information, from the Minister as to the real position—not the electioneering position—and what prospects there were of any results coming from the bore. He agreed with the hon. member for Ipswich that everything possible should be done for the betterment of the conditions of persons engaged in mining. They hoped mining would revive in Queensland, although it was wrapped up altogether in world's prices, and if they were going to have the wages and conditions so harsh, and so unsuited for that particular business that it was going to compel people to close up altogether, then if it could not be done privately by prospectors there should be a revision of the wages and the conditions applicable to the trade. It would not do to “kill the goose that laid the golden egg.” If they could not make a profit, private companies and private individuals were not going to carry on mining ventures, and if wages were the cause of the trouble they must be revised, otherwise unemployment must continue.

Mr. DUNSTAN: How much would you reduce the wages in order to make it pay?

Mr. VOWLES: There must be a margin of profit. If they wanted these ventures to continue, there must be a margin of profit.

Mr. FORDE: On reading through the annual report of the Under Secretary for Mines, he was sorry to observe that there was a falling off in revenue from mining in the Rockhampton district [5.30 p.m.] during the year. In 1919 the value of the mining products from the Rockhampton district totalled £43,928, as against £52,569 in 1918; showing a falling off of £8,641. Anyone who knew anything about the history of mining in Central Queensland knew that some of the greatest mines in the world existed there. There

was no greater mine in Australia than the rich Mount Morgan mine, and it was gratifying to know that the famous mountain yielded £896,120 in 1919. There were other small mining ventures also carried on there. He hoped that mining would look up in Central Queensland in the future, and that greater profits would be made by those individuals engaged in that industry. He noticed there was a vote of £5,000 for Government drilling operations. Drilling operations were being carried on at the Styx River, Baralaba, and at Bowen. He knew something about the Styx River and Baralaba, because he had visited both places, and he knew that when the Government had fully proved both of those coalfields, there would be hundreds of men employed, and it would absorb all the unemployed in that district and produce the unlimited quantities of coal that existed there. The Rockhampton Gas Company purchased the whole of its coal from the Styx River, and he noticed that the net proceeds for the purchase of Styx River coal amounted to £2,111. He hoped the Government would work those fields without delay, because one of the greatest mining men in Queensland told him that the Styx River was one of the greatest coal propositions in Australia, and if he were in the position of the Government he would have hundreds of men put on there, and have the field properly worked. He was sure that the Government would do all it possibly could to open up the mines, and give work to the unemployed in Central Queensland. With regard to Chillagoe, he had the privilege of visiting that district with the Minister for Mines. They also visited Einasleigh and the State battery at Bamford, and thus had a good opportunity of seeing the great mineral resources of North Queensland. The State venture at Chillagoe had been an undoubted success. The Auditor-General praised the manager for the efficient way he had carried out his duties at Chillagoe and worked it as a State enterprise. It was interesting to hear what had been said that afternoon about arsenic. The hon. member for Burnett, however, made several false statements, which were ably replied to by the Home Secretary.

Mr. CORSER: I made no false statements.

Mr. FORDE: The hon. member tried to mislead the Committee and the people outside. The hon. member for Gregory told them that the hon. member for Burnett went upstairs and was trying to “cook” “Hansard.”

Mr. CORSER (rising): Is the hon. member for Rockhampton in order in telling a deliberate lie with regard to what he just said—in insinuating that I was upstairs “cooking” “Hansard”?

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member state his point of order?

Mr. CORSER: Is the hon. member for Rockhampton in order in saying that I was trying to “cook” “Hansard” in connection with something that was said last night?

The HOME SECRETARY: You went somewhere upstairs.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask hon. members who wish to raise points of order to state their point clearly and definitely. The hon. member for Burnett denies that he went upstairs to “cook” “Hansard,” and the hon. member for Rockhampton must accept his denial.

Mr. Kirwan.]

Mr. CORSER: You should make him withdraw it. What about stealing my letter?

Mr. FORDE: He did not say that the hon. member for Burnett went upstairs to "cook" "Hansard."

Mr. CORSER: You did.

Mr. FORDE: No. He said that the hon. member for Gregory said so.

Mr. POLLOCK: I accept the hon. member's denial; but I saw him there.

Mr. CORSER: You don't think much of your Principal Shorthand Writer, anyhow. It is a bit of a slur on the Principal Shorthand Writer.

The HOME SECRETARY (rising): Is the hon. member for Burnett in order in saying that some members over here stole some letters of his?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. member for Burnett is in order in accusing any hon. member of stealing his letter. If the hon. gentleman did make such an accusation he must withdraw it.

Mr. CORSER: If he did. I say that the letter was asked for by the "Hansard" staff, and it has never been returned to me.

The HOME SECRETARY: You said that we stole it, and I want that statement withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member for Burnett made that statement he must withdraw it.

Mr. CORSER: If I said it in that way, then I withdraw it.

Mr. COLLINS: If you said it? Don't you know what you did say?

Mr. FORDE: He was sitting in the Assembly before he got up to speak, and he did not know anything about the hon. gentleman's papers.

Mr. CORSER: They went up to the "Hansard" staff last night. You might know where they are.

Mr. FORDE: That was one of those insinuations which the hon. gentleman made which he could not substantiate. He saw bad in everybody but himself. At any rate, he (Mr. Forde) knew nothing about the hon. member's papers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The incident is closed and I hope the hon. member will not pursue the matter any further.

Mr. FORDE: The hon. member for Burnett said that hon. members on the Government side had something to do with his letters. That was an unfair statement to make. He was speaking about the arsenic when he was interrupted. He considered that the Government had done a great deal for the farmers in Queensland by establishing the State arsenic mine at Jibbenbar, near Stanthorpe. As the hon. member for Ipswich pointed out, arsenic was being supplied to the farmers at £10 per ton by the Government for the purpose of clearing prickly-pear, whereas if they had to purchase it outside they would have to pay £85 per ton for it. It redounded to the credit of the Queensland Government that they were so generous to the farmers. It showed that the Government helped the farmers in a way that they had never been helped by any other Government.

Mr. GLEDSON: They do not appreciate it.

Mr. FORDE: The farmers appreciated it, but their alleged agitators did not appreciate

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it. Members opposite would not give the Government credit for doing anything for the man on the land. The hon. member for Burnett tried to make out that the Government were not sincere in assisting the people who were struggling to make a home in the country. The Government were also supplying arsenic at £23 a ton for dips and other purposes. If it were not for the Labour Government these people would be paying from £80 to £85 per ton. Members opposite were following the lead given by Mr. Hughes, the Nationalist Prime Minister of Australia, who, speaking at Toowoomba before the Federal election said that the least said about the arsenic mine the better. Mr. Hughes was opposed to the State enterprises.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will keep to the vote.

Mr. FORDE: He was pointing out that Mr. Hughes objected to the State arsenic mine, and they knew that Mr. Hughes was no friend of the farmer. He could hear the hon. member for Oxley interjecting. He could tell that hon. gentleman that he was told by people interested in the Darra cement works that it would have been better to have put the hon. gentleman in a nursery instead of making him manager of the Darra cement works. He did not want to be led away by men who aspired to govern Queensland, but who could not manage a fruit business. He (Mr. Forde) had the privilege of travelling through North Queensland with the Minister for Mines, and he heard many people inquiring for arsenic from the State mine, and the official from the Mines Department took some orders for it. He knew that the people appreciated getting cheap arsenic. He heard the Government being praised for establishing the battery at Bamford, because it was a great boon to the gougers and ore-producers there. The cost of transport to the private batteries was prohibitive. The nearest battery was at Wolfram, and the establishment of a State battery was a great boom to that district. Both tin and the rare metals were dealt with at Bamford, including wolfram, bismuth, and molybdenite. Last year the Bamford battery dealt with 1,070 tons of tin ore, 253 tons of ore containing wolfram and molybdenite, and the value of the recoveries was, approximately, black tin £3,308, wolfram and bismuth £6,172, molybdenite £9,783, bismuth £112, and concentrates £19,915, making a total of £39,830 distributed amongst the miners of that district. This money was distributed amongst the gougers and miners working in a small way, and in that direction the Government had assisted very materially that class of men to carry on mining in North Queensland. Then, at Chillagoe, a lot of small men sent in ores to the smelters, and that would be quite impossible if it had not been for the intervention of the Government. He wished to refer briefly to the necessity for putting into operation the provisions of the Act with regard to shower-baths and dressing-rooms in the mines throughout Queensland, which had not yet been done. Furthermore, the ventilation in the mines was not all that could be desired. They knew that men who were working in the bowels of the earth did not work under hygienic conditions, and it would obviate the risk of the miners getting dreadful diseases: such as miners' phthisis, if the companies were to go in for better ventilation

in the mines, particularly in metalliferous mines, of which there were a great many in Central and Northern Queensland. He hoped the Minister would do something to make the conditions under which these men worked brighter and more congenial, because they had invariably proved themselves men of the highest type, and well worthy of the sympathetic consideration of this Government.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He wished to make a few remarks before this vote went through. The National party were always out to do anything in the direction of making the conditions of the men who were working and developing mining as satisfactory as possible. He rose more particularly to express his very great regret—and he spoke from a national point of view—that it appeared from the returns and reports that mining seemed to be in many cases falling off: In discussing these Estimates, they should get away from mere details, and see if something could not be done to assist to get at the cause of the trouble. In years gone by Queensland had been right up against it, and no one could say now that there were not some phases of their life which indicated again that they were up against it. He was prepared to admit that they were gathering in a very large wheat crop, and in that regard his arguments might not apply, but they knew that financial conditions were exceedingly unsatisfactory, and it was therefore to be regretted that mining was falling off. It was certain that if prices of minerals went down any further there was going to be a bigger slump. No company could carry on and spend £1 for the sake of getting 17s. No one would say that casting men indiscriminately on the labour market was a good thing for the country.

The HOME SECRETARY: It may be only temporary.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He sincerely hoped that it would only be temporary. He remembered that at the commencement of the great war the Denham Government were face to face with very serious difficulty in regard to some of the mines. They had either to relieve the situation by giving certain concessions, which were afterwards honourably met, or by allowing men to be thrown out of employment. There had been times in the past history of Queensland when everything was black. A revival took place when Gympie broke out. Mining in Gympie had now fallen off, and had been supplanted by something else. No National party could be satisfied with anything which did not go in the direction of gathering together the various enterprises of the State and trying to make them all go.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do not forget that at Cloncurry some of the men are accepting half wages.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He quite understood that the men probably realised that it was better to become copartners in mining under those conditions rather than to close up. He hoped the day was not far distant when copartnership would increase more and more in Queensland. It was going to be one of the factors which would help them to deal with some of the difficulties they were up against in other walks of life to-day, and if copartnership would assist in that direction it was their duty to encourage it. Would it not be better to-day if they had copartnership in connection with the shipping industry, in which the position was unsatisfactory

in the extreme, and as the result of which many persons were going to go hungry? At a time when mining was falling off, would it not be wise for the Government to go a little slower in some of their other State enterprises, and offer a reward for the discovery of a good mining field? That would probably stimulate men who were out of employment.

The HOME SECRETARY: The cities are too attractive.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Their duty was to make the country so attractive that they would increase the number of people in the country. With reference to the question of deepsinking in mines, he remembered that the question cropped up with regard to Charters Towers when he was in the Cabinet. He noticed that the Estimates showed that, in connection with deep sinking, whilst the amount put down last year was £10,000—he did not know what was appropriated—this year it was only £6,000. That would seem to indicate that, instead of encouragement being shown, it was going to be withdrawn. Was not that in keeping with some of the actions of the Government in other matters?

The HOME SECRETARY: Only £6,000 was claimed last year.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Probably that was the reason for only putting down £6,000 this year. They must all admit that the big question that they were up against in Queensland to-day was the financial question, and they had to see if they could bring together the various forces, whether in the agricultural, mining, pastoral, or secondary industries, as such a combination of forces would help towards achieving the prosperity of this great country. The duty was cast upon them at a critical time like this, instead of indulging in pinpricks, to deal with higher and bigger things in the interest of the community.

Mr. COSTELLO: He would not like the vote to go through without saying something with regard to mining, as he represented a district which was rich in minerals. He wished to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that they had along the borders of New South Wales extensive silver mines. He might mention the Silver Spur. They had been asking for industries to be opened up to give work to the unemployed. Unfortunately, they had mines lying idle at the present time, principally through lack of railway communication. They realised that they could not expect the Government to find money to build railways to every part of the country where they would like them; but he would ask the Government to carry out the promise which the Minister for Mines made some time ago in his district, when he promised to give liberal assistance to prospecting parties as an encouragement to the opening up of new mining fields.

[Sitting suspended between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.]

Mr. COSTELLO (continuing): He quite realised the possibilities which the Minister for Mines saw in the direction of opening up new fields. He was encouraged by what he had seen, and had given a promise that when time permitted he would make an official visit with the idea of encouraging prospecting. He welcomed the idea of the department sending along a geologist with a thorough knowledge of prospecting for minerals.

Mr. Costello.]

He thought it was the duty to make reference to the charges made by the hon. member for Burnett. He claimed to know something about the arsenic which the State mine was producing, and it was only fair to the Committee that he should voice his views. He had a two-fold duty. First of all he had to conserve the interests of those prickly-pear selectors who used arsenic—to see that they got the article represented to them and not a “faked” article. Also he had the interests of the mine to guard. The mine had been a benefit to many settlers in pear-infested districts, and they had been able to get it at a very much reduced price. He had used the arsenic himself with most satisfactory results.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COSTELLO: They appreciated it. It was incorrect for the hon. member for Ipswich to say that the farmers, or settlers, did not appreciate it. He was speaking to the people who had made use of it, and he could assure the House that even though they did not know what it cost to produce it, the cost must be more than £10 a ton, and it would be only fair, and as much as they could expect, for the Government to supply it to them at what it cost.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government will accept that suggestion; it is a very good one.

Mr. COSTELLO: The hon. member for Ipswich knew nothing about the conditions with which the pear selector had to put up. He was the hardest pushed man in Queensland to-day. He had to contend with Crown lands, which were overrun with pear.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is used not only by the pear people, you know.

Mr. COSTELLO: He was thinking of the man who made use of it for pear destruction. They did appreciate it, and he really believed it was being supplied to them at much less than it cost to produce. He hoped the hon. gentleman in charge of this vote would accept the challenge of the hon. member for Burnett and take possession of that cask in possession of the selector. He (Mr. Costello) had in his possession a certain quantity of arsenic from the mine which had never been opened, and the Home Secretary could send an agent to take any quantity he liked and have it tested.

The HOME SECRETARY: We will do that and have it tested. It is a very good offer.

Mr. COSTELLO: They could have it analysed and see if it were the general article. If the arsenic which was being supplied was only flue dust, of course it was a most serious thing.

The HOME SECRETARY: My complaint is that instead of bringing the matter here and making a song about it, the hon. member should have gone to the department.

Mr. COSTELLO: It had been made a song about, and it was up to the hon. gentleman in charge of the vote to see that it was cleaned up and something definite arrived at. He would not suggest what might happen, but would leave it to the hon. gentleman to find out. In the interest of the mine, and of those who used the arsenic, he trusted that the hon. gentleman would not leave any stone unturned in an endeavour to get at the bottom of this matter.

[Mr. Costello.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: He wanted to make one or two brief observations on this vote. He had listened with some interest to what had been said. If members opposite generally had taken up the same attitude as the hon. member who had just sat down it would have been much more satisfactory. The question was repeatedly being asked by hon. members opposite, “What have the Government done for the primary producer?” When the Opposition were told what the Government had done the answer came back, “Well, it is their duty to do it.” Everybody did not do their duty. In what the Mines Department had done in supplying arsenic to the farmers, it deserved commendation rather than condemnation of members sitting opposite. It seemed to him that one of the things most conspicuously displayed by some hon. members opposite was their desire to score against the Government. They certainly were not concerned about the methods they adopted if they could score a point and make it appear that the Government had been remiss or had done something they ought not to have done. He thought the method adopted by the hon. member for Burnett was anything but creditable to himself and the party to which he belonged.

Mr. CORSER: No.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: If he had had the interests of the primary producers at heart, or had any desire at all to play the game and be fair, he would have adopted different methods in connection with that arsenic business. It was a well-known fact that members often were more anxious to score a point in debate on the floor of the House than to put things right and get what they considered were the rights of their constituents or give a fair show to any department with which they were dealing. Any fair-minded individual must admit that the arsenic was being supplied at much less than it could be produced for, or purchased anywhere else, and it was a commodity which was a good deal used at the present time. For that reason the Government should be given credit for making an honest and a successful endeavour to supply primary producers with an article of which they were very much in need. Members opposite sometimes, in candid moments when they were dealing with State enterprises, stated they were not concerned whether they were run at a profit or a loss, whether they supplied a long-felt want or did not. They had often stated they were opposed to them root and branch. When they said that one could understand it, but the methods adopted in this instance ought not to have been adopted and the matter should not be left where it was at the present time, but should be cleared up so as to have it proved who was in the right and who was in the wrong. To put it in the mildest form, it looked very suspicious when samples were submitted that yielded only 20 per cent. in comparison with the ordinary sample which showed 90 per cent. white arsenic supplied by the mine. It would be interesting to know what were the actual facts of the case. It might not be the fault of the hon. member for Burnett.

Mr. CORSER: I did what I contend was my duty.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: In his opinion, the person for whom the hon. member was acting was not playing the game. He would not

care to be in the hon. member's position and taking the stand he had.

The report of the Under Secretary for Mines was not very inspiring on the present occasion. It must be remembered that gold and copper mines had not had a very easy time in the last three or four years. A good deal had been said about London parity and world's prices. It was a well-known fact that immediately the war broke out the producers of minerals in this State had a price fixed which remained stationary throughout the war. A price that was certainly a good deal below what the ordinary market price would have been had they sold their products in the open markets. Since the war there had been a surplus of metals on hand, and the lack of explosives and other circumstances which had taken place, over which the miners had no control, had all tended in the direction not only of decreased production but also of a reduced price for the commodity produced. The returns showed a falling-off of minerals, and that was because of the reduced price and the fact that work had been intermittent and men had not been kept on steadily for any length of time during the past year. It looked rather serious at present, not only for the copper-mining centres but for some other centres. The miners of Charters Towers had been getting their living in the Western districts and Charters Towers had to suffer. It was to be hoped that when the holidays were over and things got more settled they would obtain a fair price for those who were engaged in the industry as well as those who had their money invested in it. The present position went to show that immediately they got anywhere near the line where it was unproductive—whether it was copper, molybdenite, or anything else—there was little or no concern shown in regard to the workmen. The consequence was, out they went, whether they could earn a living elsewhere or not. They were not wanted and they were thrown on the scrap heap to do the best they could. Sometimes they could get into other things, but sometimes they found it difficult to do so.

As far as the money voted for the mining industry was concerned, it was desired to economise and keep things down to bed-rock. There was a reduction in the vote for deep sinking. He did not think there was much lamentation in regard to that reduction. For the reason that it must be apparent to anybody who knew anything at all about deep sinking that if the deep mines had kept working there would have had to be some radical alteration in the working of the mines, otherwise they would be better closed up, for the simple reason that numbers of men were sacrificing their lives in working under the conditions that prevailed in deep ground work, and anyone knowing the conditions under which men worked had no regrets that—in some fields, at any rate—deep sinking was a thing of the past. He thought that, if possible, some encouragement should be given for prospecting. One regrettable thing in connection with the industry was that the prospector was becoming extinct. They found nothing in the shape of new mining fields, because no prospecting had been done. The prospector of twenty or thirty years ago worked faithfully and long and diligently for the reward he was always expecting, and, consequently, in days gone by the mining

industry was a standby for the State when necessary. It was a pity that the industry looked so gloomy. As a general rule, the life of the goldmining field was not very long. But, notwithstanding that, there was an abundance of mineral resources in Queensland untouched, and in some cases unknown. Everything possible should be done to encourage prospecting, and any money spent in that direction would be well spent. The price received for gold was nothing like sufficient compensation for the increased cost of mining and materials, and everything else connected with it, and in quite a number of cases it had been very difficult for those working in the mining industry, and those who had invested their capital in it, to carry on. There was a vote on the Estimates for roads and bridges to outside mining fields which were isolated from the mining centres—to bring them in closer touch with the other places. Mining men in Charters Towers who had invested their capital, and a number of practical miners working in outside fields, had on several occasions asked for a vote to repair a road from Charters Towers to the tin fields at Ewan. So anxious were the people directly interested in mining that they themselves promised to subscribe £250 if there was a possibility of their getting help to make the amount up to £1,000. He certainly thought it would be money well spent if the Mines Department could find another £500 or £750 to put the road in decent order. The road served half a dozen centres, and he recommended the idea to the Mines Department and hoped they would give it definite consideration.

He considered the department deserved great credit for the way in which the "Mining Journal" was got up and the useful information supplied both by extracted matter and original matter. He was glad that the journal was not going to be cut out altogether. He felt satisfied that no man interested in mining wanted to lose it. It served a very useful purpose, and he had often sent copies to people interested in mining, and in return he received from them letters of appreciation of the journal. It was a pity that the "Mining Journal" and publications issued by other departments were not made better use of than at present. Some of the people who received them simply put them into the waste-paper basket, while he knew lots of people outside who would be glad of them.

He had noticed in the Press that changes were to take place in connection with the School of Mines, which was to be transferred to the Education Department. Until details of the changes were to hand it would be premature to say too much about it. He wanted to say, however, that the Mines Department had controlled that institution very well. It served a very useful purpose. He should be sorry to think that, in the interests of economy, it was to be crippled. It turned out some exceptionally fine men, and from the director's report he noticed that during last year ten students from the School of Mines had secured exceptionally good positions—some in Queensland and some in other parts of the Commonwealth. It was a well-known fact that young men trained there had no difficulty in getting exceptionally good positions at tip-top salaries. He trusted that the lecturers and demonstrators and others engaged on the staff would not suffer by the change proposed, but

that their interests would be looked after. The institution had been run as economically as possible with efficiency, and it would be a pity to see its usefulness curtailed. He thought it would be a very wise thing if the institution were boomed and advertised a bit more, and people were given to understand the advantages of it. In that way they would find more persons taking the opportunity of sending their boys to the school. He trusted that next year the mining industry, as a whole, would have a brighter outlook, that things would be again prosperous, and the industry in Queensland in the future, as in the past, might come to the assistance of the Government when needed.

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*): He did not think it necessary to refer any further to the incident of the analysis of that parcel of arsenic, because he was satisfied the House was already convinced that the hon. member for Burnett was full up of his own arsenic. (Laughter.) When a man admitted in the House that he sent a letter to a Government officer that was not straightforward—

Mr. CORSER: Who made that admission?

Mr. DUNSTAN: The hon. member admitted that he would be "a melon" if he told the truth in the letter he sent to the Government Analyst.

Mr. CORSER: You are a contortionist, but you are not worth taking notice of.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The hon. member had said that he should regard himself as being a "melon," to use a local term, if he told the truth to an officer of the department.

Mr. CORSER: You are a contortionist.

Mr. DUNSTAN: As a matter of fact it was a reflection on the officers of the department.

Mr. CORSER: Base your arguments on my statement.

Mr. DUNSTAN: The officers of the Mines Department were capable, honest, and straightforward men, and they were entitled to more respect than was contained in a statement such as the hon. member for Burnett had made. In his (Mr. Dunstan's) dealings with that department, he had always met with honesty, courtesy, and straightforwardness with regard to any requests he had made on behalf of his mining constituents.

He was pleased to see that the Mines Department was at last emerging from that "Cinderella" position it had held under Governments in the past, and he welcomed the advent of more mining members on the Opposition side of the House, because they remembered, not so long ago, a prominent front bench member of the Opposition declaring that assistance given to mining in the State was an absolute waste of public money. He believed the Mines Department at present represented some of the most important enterprises in the State, and if the mining industry was at present suffering from a decline it was no more the fault of the Government, or the department, than of private enterprise that had been so largely engaged in the industry. When they considered the arsenic mines at Jibbenbah, the Roma oil bore, the proposal in regard to the Styx River, the Bowen coalfields, and the Chillagoe mines and such enterprises, he thought members on both sides would admit that the Mines Department was performing most important functions in the affairs of the State and that it was entitled to support

from not only the mining members but every member of the House. In regard to the arsenic mine at Jibbenbah, he maintained that the policy hitherto followed of providing cheap arsenic, even for those engaged in the destruction of prickly-pear, and in providing tick dips, should be amended, and that some advantage should be taken of the high

[7.30 p.m.] targe should be taken of the high market for arsenic to-day. If that were done, there would be more scope for the department in that industry. The arsenic mine at Jibbenbah was one of the best, if not the best, arsenic mine in the world. If they could show a profit on that industry, as well as sell it at a cheap rate for the benefit of those on the land, then they should give the manager credit for that, no matter on what side of the House they sat. The Mines Department were doing good work at the Styx River, Bowen coalfield, Roma oil bore, and at Chillagoe, and it was better for members to give all the assistance they could to the department, instead of trying to deceive officers for political purposes. He was happy to say that, so far as Gympie was concerned, they had no complaints to make about the department. They received every assistance possible from the officials and the Minister of that department. He regretted that goldmining was on the decline in Queensland. That was due to the falling off of the gold contents and to the higher cost of commodities and other factors which militated against fresh discoveries. It was well to recognise that the mining fields preceded settlement on the coastal slopes of Australia. In every case the discovery of a mining field was largely a matter of accident. He hoped the day would come when the Mines Department would start boring in auriferous areas, just in the same way as they were boring for coal at the present time. He was pleased that the Minister proposed to bore for coal near Gympie, and he hoped that they would soon have coal within easy access of that town for the benefit of manufacturing industries there, as well as for the mining industries. Members opposite would admit, in spite of all their criticism, that the Government deserved every support in endeavouring to make the Mines Department one of the most important departments in the State. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. TAYLOR: He had a few remarks to make in connection with the State arsenic mine. He recognised, with other members on the Opposition side, that in the present Minister for Mines they had a most capable gentleman. (Hear, hear!) He was inclined to think that unless the optimism in connection with the arsenic mine was explained there might have been a very serious loss to the State. For that reason he drew attention to the amount of money spent on the State arsenic mine.

Mr. HARTLEY: We have not produced enough arsenic to kill pessimists yet.

Mr. TAYLOR: According to the Auditor-General's report, the sum of £40,000 had been spent on the arsenic mine and treatment works. Of that sum £25,000 was spent on the plant, and £15,000 went in stores, wages, and other necessary expenses. On that expenditure up to 30th June last, the mine produced 181 tons of arsenic. They were told that arsenic was worth £80 per ton, and he did not see why they should not get that price for it. What was the use of selling it

[*Mr. Winstanley.*

at a cheaper rate than it cost to produce. They were told that the Mines Department estimated the value of the arsenic produced at £10,874. That worked out in the vicinity of £60 a ton. Up to 30th June, the sales of arsenic realised £3,042. They were told that the Government were selling it at £10 a ton for prickly-pear purposes, and £23 a ton for other purposes. That was not good business. If it cost £40 or £50 a ton to produce where was the sense in selling it at £10 to £23 a ton. Without going to all the expense of starting the works at Jibbenbar, they could have bought all the arsenic at £80 a ton cheaper than it cost to produce at the State mine. He noticed they had 48 tons of arsenic in stock. If the department were being rushed how was it they had so much arsenic in stock. He would like the Minister to give some reason for that. The Auditor-General told them that 133 tons of arsenic were sold for £3,042. That worked out at an average of £23 a ton. They were told that arsenic was sold at £10 a ton, so that those figures wanted some explanation. If £23 was the highest price received and the figures worked out at £23, where did the £10 a ton come in? He did not agree with those people who thought the arsenic mine was of great benefit to the State as those figures did not prove it to be a paying proposition.

Mr. DUNSTAN: They are selling it too cheap.

Mr. TAYLOR: He could not conceive anything more annoying to the manager than to have those figures quoted in the House, and in the Press, that he was running the arsenic mine at such a dreadful loss to the community. If the manager was making a profit in running the works and producing the arsenic it is only fair that he should get credit for it. The figures did not give him credit.

Mr. FOLEY contended that the Mines Department were justified in continuing the arsenic mine, because it had been of great benefit to the pear farmers who received the arsenic much less than it would cost them to get it overseas. It had been amply proved by speakers on the Government side that the arsenic mine had justified itself.

But he was more concerned about the gem fields in the Central district. It was quite an extensive field, as Mr. B. Dunstan, geologist, pointed out in his report in 1902, but it had been neglected by past Governments. The gem branch of the mining industry had been absolutely left to the mercy of the overseas gem Jews to exploit to whatever extent they chose. The gem industry had been manipulated by the Jewish rings overseas, and it was time that their operations were frustrated. Since he had been a member he made representations to the Minister for Mines to carry out investigations and see if something could be done for the gem industry. He was hoping that a system would be inaugurated in the near future whereby the miners on the gem fields would receive a safe advance on the gems they produced and exported to the overseas market. This was practicable, as the matter had been gone into and investigated. It was quite possible to break down the rings that had been formed by the Government taking the matter in hand. About June last year, he understood that there were from 1,000 to 1,400 miners working on the field receiving for blues of first-class quality from £14 to

£20 an oz. This was brought about by the breaking of the German ring which controlled this particular field before the war broke out. After the breaking of the ring, English and American buyers operating on the field got to work, with the result that the miner who once had to take £4 or £5 an oz. for his gems received from £14 to £20 an oz. for first-class blues. These sapphires were equal to any sapphires in any other part of the world. They did not profess them to be the fine cornflower blue that was produced on the Burnmah fields, but they produced something for which there was quite a big market in oversea countries. The records for the past twenty-two years—and that included quite a number of periods when buyers were not operating—showed that £374,309 worth of gems had been produced. That, in his opinion, was not a true estimate of what had been produced there. The last statistics appearing in the report of the Under Secretary for Mines showed that stones were produced equivalent to £42,000 worth of gems for year 1919. He had made it his business to work the figures out. There were something like 10,000 oz. recorded, which came to about £4 an oz. Seeing that for the best part of that year they were receiving from £14 to £20 an oz. for their first-class parcels, you could strike an average of £10, making the estimate in the vicinity of £100,000 worth, instead of £42,000 worth, as recorded in the mining statistics. He was confident that in the near future something would be done with this field. He would like to impress upon the Minister the necessity for taking steps to assist the miners operating on that field by advising the Cabinet to bring in legislation for the purpose of combating the "brummy" industry in Brisbane and other places. Many of the jewellers' shops in this city were marketing their "brummy" jewellery as real rubies, sapphires, etc., quoting the price as somewhere about from 30s. to £2. It was impossible to produce a ruby at that price, but those who were not conversant with the gem trade were carried away with the brilliancy of the article, and left the shop persuaded that what they had bought was a perfect gem. If they passed legislation compelling jewellers to mark their gems real or artificial, as the case might be, they would, to a great extent, assist the miners upon that field to sell their products. He had a sample on his finger of a green sapphire; it was only one degree less hard than a diamond, and equal to any imported gem that could be bought in Brisbane in reference to brilliancy or colour. Personally, he valued the stone at £50. Other hon. members had stones of different colours; one of 1½ carats, equal, if not better in beauty and brilliancy to any diamond of the same size which could be bought in this city. Yet they found that when miners brought a stone of such quality to Brisbane they were offered by the jewellers about 10s. a carat, because artificial stones were produced at about 3d. a carat and sold by the dealers at an enormous profit. Much could be done to assist this industry by introducing legislation to combat this evil. There were thousands of ounces of this "brummy" artificial jewellery brought into the Commonwealth every year from overseas, while they were producing some of the finest gems about 500 miles from Brisbane equal to those produced in any other part of the world. Whenever he had gone to the Minister for Mines to request him to

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assist miners by the establishment of wells or by putting roads in better condition, he had received every assistance and courtesy from him. He had a party of prospectors in an outlying portion of the sapphire fields continually working in different parts, so that miners would get a claim which was worth while operating. He would point out, for the benefit of those who were not conversant with the sapphire fields of the State, that there was absolutely no danger of the industry dying out in the event of the Government stabilising the field. They had Mr. Dunstan's report on the field. He said—

“Let it be known that the field is a large one, that the extent of sapphire wash is second to none in the world, and that a constant supply of stones could be maintained—facts which will be established in the following pages—then there will be no cause for complaining that markets cannot be found for the stones. The greater demand for the sapphires will be met by a great production, and with a greater production the dealers will not be contented to wait for consignments to be forwarded to them, but will themselves visit the field periodically, and buy direct from the miners, a condition of things satisfactory to all concerned.”

That was a forecast in 1902, and it came right. It was almost impossible at one time for a miner to get rid of a parcel of sapphires, yet last year there were no fewer than twelve or fourteen sapphire dealers, representing Parisian and other European firms, and paying a maximum price. He did not think that prices would touch the limit reached in March, 1919, but with the inauguration of a system of buying stones from the miners and selling them on the oversea markets, a greater degree of stability would be brought about in the field; and, instead of a few isolated bag shanties, and the miners being forced to live in tents, there would be some encouragement for people to invest and establish boarding-houses and other facilities on the field, which would guarantee to those who were already established, if they went on with their operations, that there would be no fear of the field slumping. There was a slump about three months ago, when something like 500 men had been compelled to leave the field and compete for work in other industries; but with the inauguration of a scheme such as he had suggested, they would be able to go back to the field, and it would ease the position with regard to unemployment.

They also had in the Leichhardt electorate some great coal deposits, and operations were being carried out by several companies, which had been hampered in the past by lack of accommodation on the Port Alma wharves in getting it put into boats to carry it to oversea markets. There was an area of 80 acres, which had recently been increased to about 188. He had made a request, and later an application had been made to the court that this area should be granted to a body of miners, who were each willing to throw in £300 or £400 of their hard-earned savings for the purpose of opening up this deposit of coal. Surely, the Government could see the possibilities which were ahead. It was possible by using modern and up-to-date methods of stripping the overburden, which was somewhere in the vicinity of from

40 to 60 feet, to produce coal on that field, and supply it to oversea markets at a price which would compare with any other countries of the world. He hoped that, if the Government could not go in for the venture, some steps would be taken to grant the request of these miners, so as to give them a chance to operate on the field.

Much had been said in reference to the fluctuation of the metal market, but that was something which the Government had very little control over. It would be a good idea if, in conjunction with the sapphire industry, a man was sent overseas with the view of marketing direct to the consumers certain metals, which they had no occasion to send through refineries which were in the hands of metal rings in the Commonwealth. He trusted that with a capable Minister like Mr. Jones, and his colleagues, these things would be brought into operation. In conclusion, he wished to again emphasise the remarks of the hon. member for Gympie. Courtesy had always been shown to him, and any request he had put forward on behalf of the mining centres had always received the utmost consideration from the Minister.

Mr. MOORE: He hoped the Minister was not going to take any notice of the suggestions made by the hon. member for Ipswich and the hon. member for Gympie—that the arsenic should be charged at the price it cost to procure it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Carnarvon made the suggestion that the arsenic should be charged at the cost of production.

Mr. MOORE: He did not think it should be. They had to recognise that the spread of prickly-pear was due to the Government, and it was up to them to assist the settler in connection with its eradication. He would like to know how the cost was arrived at. They had a lime pulveriser in that district, and knew what the cost was. When they tried to compete with private enterprise they made a ridiculous mess of it. They wanted to know that a proper costing system was put into operation. The Government must stand up to their responsibilities and help the settlers to clear the pear by giving arsenic at a reasonable price.

The TREASURER: Are not we doing it? We are giving it at £60 per ton below the market price.

Mr. MOORE: He did not know what the market price was. He knew that arsenic was a by-product at Stanthorpe, and for a considerable time past was being sold at £11 per ton by a private company. He quite agreed it was up to the Government to supply arsenic at a reasonable rate to clear the pear, but the taxpayers' pocket should not be dipped into more than was necessary; they should have an effective costing system, and it should not be run on the principle disclosed by the Auditor-General's report, where it was stated they did not know what the cost was. If an ordinary individual started an enterprise, he wanted to know how much it was going to cost, and whether it was going to pay. Here an enterprise had been going on for a considerable time, and the Auditor-General pointed out that there was no system of costing, and he did not know how much it cost per ton. Surely that was an extraordinary way for the Government to conduct an enterprise such as that, and there was no occasion

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for continuing it. The arsenic ought to be produced in the most economical way and distributed, because the Government were partially to blame for the spread of the pear. Private individuals and shire councils were compelled to clear their lands, while the Government were allowing it to grow and infest areas that were clean. It was not a question of whether it was going to pay to supply arsenic at the present price. When land was cleared, it would be an asset to Queensland. Yet they had two hon. members on the other side getting up and suggesting that the Government should charge cost of production.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was the hon. member for Carnarvon who suggested it.

Mr. MOORE: He would tackle the hon. member for Carnarvon, too, if it would be any satisfaction to the hon. gentleman. The first hon. member who suggested it was the member for Ipswich. He was very glad he had done so, because it would make a nice pamphlet at election time to put before the people.

Mr. PETERSON: He does not represent my view on the matter.

Mr. MOORE: He hoped the hon. member would come over on that side and vote in that way. Members on the other side talked, but when it came to a question of action they were over on the other side instead of being where they should be—amongst Opposition members.

One other thing he wanted to mention about was the position of the Roma bore. They had the Minister going about shaking a bottle with a little petrol in it, and saying it was the finest aviation petrol produced. That was as far as they had got. The bottle seemed to have been lost since the election, and they had heard nothing further. A great deal of money was being spent, and they would like to know whether there was going to be any result. It was no good hiding anything and bringing it out at election time and saying what was going to happen. They had heard nothing further than the obstruction in the bore. They had been told that gas blew the obstruction up 300 or 400 feet. They found that a man was constructing a tool to catch hold of it, and, when he caught hold of it, he could not let go. (Laughter.) What was the position to-day? Had he managed to take hold of it, or was he still pulling on the rope? Surely the Minister would be able to give them some information.

Mr. WEIR again directed the attention of the Committee to the statement of the Auditor-General, which said—

“No provision for a costing system having been made in the accounts in connection with the mine and treatment works, the department was unable to arrive at the cost of production of arsenic.”

He quoted that because he thought, apart from the fact that it was always well in any industry—particularly a new industry like this—to have a complete system of costing, there was also this aspect, that the other night they spent hours in discussing the question of the cost of production of butter, on which hon. members opposite were very keen; yet they did not want to know anything about the cost of production of arsenic. There were hours of “slang-wanging” about London parity, but there

was not so much heard on this occasion on the question of London parity for arsenic, which he took to be, roughly, about £70 per ton. The present price to the farmers in Queensland was £10 per ton. He was one who believed that an industry which turned out a product should be credited with the full cost of production, although there might be an adjustment of accounts afterwards to encourage the men to clear pear-infested country. He believed there was a good deal in favour of that argument. They were doing a service to the State in providing good land, and they should be assisted. It was unfair to credit this industry only with the amount of £10, when they knew that the cost of production must be somewhere in the vicinity of £40 or £50, judging by the world's market. They had people criticising the instability of State enterprises and the fact that they were not paying, when they had the bare-faced effrontery to ask that they be charged £10 for an article which was costing £50 to £60. If that was to be the system, the merest boy in the street could tell anybody that State enterprises could not pay. He was glad the member for Carnarvon, in whose district this mine was situated, could say it was not fair to the men engaged in the industry, that they were not getting the full results of their efforts. He did not see how anyone representing a district where miners were working for arsenic, where there was a plant installed and a certain amount of capital expended, could do other than support the system he was laying down and the views he was advancing, that the cost of production should be the full cost, and not the cost according to the person to whom they were supplying it. There was no business in crediting an industry with £10, when it ought to be credited with £40 or £50. It was the same with all other industries.

Mr. MOORE: We are in that position to-day.

Mr. WEIR: They were in a very healthy position, as far as arsenic was concerned. There was no semblance of comparison in the argument put up on this vote and that put up the other night. He wondered that anyone could expect 2s. 4d. for butter knowing that production was much less. They were prepared to argue that way on account of the stringent times they had passed through; but, on this occasion, Opposition members would not discuss the cost of production. They wanted a product at £10, and they knew perfectly well it must be costing the State at least £40 or £50. Let them lay down the basis of the cost of production. They had given way to the man on the land because of the drought, because the labour movement stood for the man in any industry getting full value for his labour. They observed that principle in their treatment of the women and children concerned in the dairying districts, and that system must also stand as far as the men were concerned in the Carnarvon electorate, who were producing arsenic for the people in the country.

Mr. HARTLEY: Mining used to be considered one of the main industries in the State. It ought still to be so considered, but, unfortunately, it had gone back last year. It would be a good thing in the future if the Minister for Mines held a portfolio in that Chamber, as he would then be in touch with the general expression of opinion of hon. members and others who

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were interested in mining. He was not going to talk much about the arsenic mine. He thought the Government had done well to provide arsenic at all. During the time they had passed through, when arsenic was practically unprocurable, if it had not been for the State arsenic mine stockowners—particularly in the tick-infested areas—would have been in a very bad position. What he wanted to say was that the Mines Department seemed to have gone to sleep lately. There were two things that should happen to this department to make it a little more profitable to the State. Either they were suffering from sleeping sickness, and needed the attention of the institution at Townsville, which made a study of latent diseases, or they should not be hampered in regard to their expenditure. They heard a lot about the wonderful coal resources of the State, which was quite correct, but the resources were no good underground, and the sooner they got them up in big quantities the better for themselves and for the development of the State. In the North and Centre of Queensland there were coalfields of various extent, with practically unlimited supplies of coal, and the railways were depending upon privately-owned coalmines for their supply, which supply was anything from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. inferior in quality. With such a bald fact staring them in the face, they should come to the conclusion that their chief duty was to develop the State mine, or, if not, to assist the other mining companies to develop their mines so as to make coal of high quality available at a decent price. He noticed on page 2 of his report the chief inspector said—

“At the Styx River coalfield a shaft near the railway has been sunk to the coal seam which proved to be of exceptionally good quality. Although the shaft was sunk in a portion of the field where the country is much disturbed by faulting, the coal has been so much in demand for the railways and gasmaking that a small output has been kept up from this first prospecting shaft while boring is going on to prove a site where the country is less disturbed, and where the permanent shafts and mining operations will be located.”

The Government Geologist, in his report, had said, “At 770 feet a seam of excellent coal quite undisturbed was passed through.” The chief inspector pointed out that the coal, although in undisturbed country where they had a little prospecting shaft, was of such fine quality that they kept supplying it to the gas company for gasmaking and to the railway. The railway were not getting much at present, because the gas company were out-bidding them and taking all the coal the Government could supply them with at £1 10s.—higher than any other coal in Queensland, if not in Australia. He showed that, in 1919, 579 tons were made available from that mine. Why dismiss it in a few lines, as had been done in the chief inspector's report? It was evident that there was not much enthusiasm about the Styx River coalfield, and he wanted the Minister and the Government to become enthusiastic. If they would investigate their other deposits on the Central railway—particularly in the vicinity of Blackwater, of which they had data in their office—it would go a long way towards solving the big problem of the running cost of their railways, because they would obtain coal at a price equal to what they were

paying at present, with at least 15 per cent. higher steam efficiency. He noticed that on another vote £26,500 was provided for the Bowen, Baralaba, and Styx River coalfields. Looking through the Auditor-General's report he found that £4,756 had been spent at the Styx, and £17,000 at the Bowen coalfields, so there did not appear to be much left for the development of those two fields. He wished to point out to the Minister that at Styx River there was a mine already opened right on the line, 80 miles from deepwater, and 60 miles from a centre like Rockhampton. Without wishing to decry the Bowen venture, he thought it would be a better method of expenditure at the Styx River at present, seeing that there was no railway at Bowen, and it was not likely to get to its terminal point for the next six months. He would ask the Minister what amount of money was going to be provided for the purchase of machinery for the Styx River field and for the development of the field? He would remind the Government that the wealth of Queensland's coal resources was practically untold, both in the Centre and the North; and from data he had seen it should be so in the South. If their geological reports and data were correct, they should be able to develop as big fields in the South at present untouched as in the Centre and the North. He hoped the Minister would tell him what amount of money was to be made available for machinery on the Styx River field, and what amount he expected to expend in the development of the field.

At twenty minutes after 8 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. F. A. COOPER relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. COSTELLO: With regard to the arsenic mine he quite agreed with what the hon. member for Maryborough had said, although he did not often agree with him. They were anxious to know what the arsenic exactly cost to produce. The settlers who were using the arsenic wanted to know the actual cost. It was not a matter between the arsenic mine and the settler, but between the Lands Department and the settler. Any concession the settlers were getting would be from the Lands Department. The mine should prove to the public what it could produce arsenic for. When they accused the State Enterprise Department of bad management, etc., the Government said, “Look what we have produced from our State enterprises, and given to the poor pear farmers—arsenic at £10 a ton.” Any concessions the settlers got they got from the Lands Department.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In reply to the hon. member for Carnarvon, he would point out that that hon. member had led an agitation requesting that the Government should base the cost of arsenic to the farmer and the pear selector on the cost of production.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: He did not.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He did.

Mr. COSTELLO: I said any concessions the settlers got they got from the Lands Department.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Carnarvon not only asked for a costing system, but he made a request to the Government that the pear selector be charged for the arsenic on the cost of production, and he (Mr. Larcombe) wanted to emphasise that point, because, if later on any change were made in the basis of the

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charge of arsenic to the pear selectors, he wanted the selectors and the farmers of Queensland, generally, to know that it had been the result of an agitation led by the member for Carnarvon. (Opposition dissent.)

Mr. RIORDAN: He had not too many bouquets to throw at the Mines Department and no bricks. (Laughter.) He thought the Government had made an effective effort around Chillagoe in the mining industry and had done their best. In looking over the vote he saw that the amount for "Aid to mining" had been reduced from £24,600 to £16,000. He wanted to know from the Minister in charge if that was independent of, and outside the grants made to men in the Chillagoe district. About a fortnight ago he had gone to the Mines Department and saw the Minister personally. He had left a note asking him to give particulars of the mines under exemption, the mines held on lease in the Etheridge and Chillagoe fields, and the mines fully manned and fulfilling labour conditions. Up to date, he had had no reply. He was not surprised, because he knew it took some time for the Mines Department to collect that information, because the Etheridge fields were far distant from Brisbane. The mines in Queensland, and several mines around the Etheridge that had been closed down since 1916, while metals were at a good price through the companies asking exemptions when they could afford to work the mines, considering the price of metal at the time, had been successful in getting exemptions from the warden at the different courts, while other men were prepared to work the mines. The Minister said there had been no objections raised. He (Mr. Riordan) had seen the warden, and it was hard for men depending upon a master for their crust, and for the living of their wives and families, to go and fight a combination like the Etheridge gold mines, the Chillagoe Company, or other companies with such powerful strength.

If these men went to the court and objected to the exemption, then the mineowners would howl them down from field to field. The owners would use their influence on the different fields to such an extent that the man who opposed exemption might [8.30 p.m.] just as well put up his swag and walk many a mile before he would get occupation as a miner in Queensland again. It was the duty of the Mines Department to step in and see, now that the Chillagoe smelters were working, that every mine on the Etheridge field now held under exemption was either forfeited or worked to the full working capacity. Mining in North Queensland had only been scratched up to the present as compared with Gympie. Money had been wasted in the past on the different fields. Take the Iguana Mine at Croydon, where it cost £49 a foot to sink a shaft. That was one of the mining scandals that should have been inquired into further. Mr. Ferry made an inquiry up to a certain stage, but his report had never been tabled. He did not know why, but he thought that that report should be made public, so that they could see what the findings were. If the principle were wrong, then there was nothing wrong in whoever was responsible admitting his mistake and taking the blame. They knew that the hon. member for Albert resigned before he would sanction or sign the grant to the Iguana Mine, but the new Minister taking office made the grant to a company which involved

the expenditure of £17,000 of public money. The present Minister for Mines was not responsible, and the officials may have been misled. An inquiry often cleared things up, and it would be advisable for the Minister for Mines to let the public know how far that inquiry went. He congratulated the Minister on his assurance that the Croydon field would be tested by a diamond drill which would be sent to Croydon as soon as a drill was available. He hoped the drill would be under better supervision than was the case a few years ago. He understood the Government were drilling holes at about £1 2s. 6d. a foot when the drilling stopped, and a private individual went on with the drilling, using the Government drill, and continued the work at a cost of £3 2s. 6d. a foot. When things of that kind happened, it made him suspicious and think there was something wrong. On going through the papers, he saw that up till 1915 the sum of £45,000 had been granted to Croydon. There had been different Governments in power, and they had been friends of the party opposite. They knew that an individual in Croydon had been allowed to sink a shaft outside the line of any report by a geologist of the department. The report about that mine was taken from a newspaper man named Real. This man's report was taken in preference to that of the geologist. What was the use of keeping their officials if they accepted newspaper reports in preference to them? The gentleman he referred to was granted £17,000 to spend at Croydon. He spent £9,000, and there was £8,000 left. The Minister might well direct his attention to the Croydon field and other fields in the Burke electorate. They knew one mining magnate who took advantage of an old mining Act. He had a man working for him, and while there were any dividends the magnate drew those dividends, but when they started to make calls, this chap, who had previously collected the dividends, had his dummy in the mine in the person of a hard-working miner. Many miners were made insolvent in that way.

Mr. COLLINS: Get rich quick.

Mr. RIORDAN: That was the way that some of the big men got rich quick. Talking about getting rich quick, he would rather put his dollar on the Golden Casket than follow some of the mining methods adopted by the friends of members opposite. At Kidston the Government were going on with the State battery. They had started a good while ago on a battery that was going to be erected at a certain cost. The cost, however, kept mounting and mounting up. A geologist's report was obtained and the practical men on the field said that the geologist's report was all right. However, they had a mines inspector up there who said that the geologist's report was all wrong. If they followed the inspector's advice the battery would be moved too far away from where the gold was produced. It was not a rich field, but the gold was easily treated. The geologist proposed to put the battery on the ground where the gold could be shovelled down into the battery and treated. The mines inspector was the intelligent man who wired down during the discussion on the Chillagoe Bill that there was not enough copper in Chillagoe to make a kettle, yet on the year's working there was a profit of £10,000 after paying many thousands of pounds in wages. That was the same inspector who said that the

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geologist was wrong. The inspector said that the battery could be built for £6,000, and the amount had been increased to about £9,600 since then.

The TREASURER: You don't think that the mine should be shifted over to the battery?

Mr. RIORDAN: The mines inspector thought that the mine should be shifted to the battery. That might solve the problem. Perhaps the mines inspector had in his mind some idea that by waving a magic wand he could shift Wise's Hill down to the battery. At any rate, the inspector told him that he intended to shift the mine to the battery by motor transport. (Laughter.) The inspector thought it would be a good proposition, and he (Mr. Riordan) was not going to put his opinion against the mines inspector's. The geologist was right in the first place, when he said it would cost £10,000 to put up a battery. Then the inspector of mines came along and said he could do it for £6,000. Then the price was raised to seven, eight, and then nine thousand. It was like the auctioneer—going up all the time, and they did not know when it was going to stop. When he was saying that the price went up to seven, eight, and nine, he was nearly saying "out." That was what should happen to the official who made the estimate. He should be out of the department, and the department would be well rid of him.

At twenty minutes to 9 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. COLLINS: There were a lot of interesting figures in connection with the Mines vote. He noticed from the report that the production of minerals had decreased in Queensland. He was satisfied that they would have to make some more discoveries in regard to mineral deposits. He was not carried away by any deep-sinking proposal, because they had experience of deep-sinking votes during the last twenty-five years. They all knew that the mineral deposits in the North and South did not improve at a depth. In other words, experience showed that, as a rule, they disappeared at a depth. Ten years ago he advocated assistance to deep sinking, but since then large sums of money had been expended in some of the older fields on deep sinking, but the result of such had not been satisfactory. He would urge the department to assist men in trying to discover new fields. They had a large mineral wealth in Queensland as yet unexplored, and they would see great discoveries made in regard to gold, tin, and other minerals. Quite recently there had been a discovery made in his own electorate, 5 miles from the old Normanby Goldfield, according to Geologist Morton. He did not remember ever reading a better report, so far as gold deposits were concerned, than the report by Mr. Morton, published in the "Mining Journal" of June and July. Had a similar discovery been made ten years ago, they would have had 500 miners on the field prospecting. He did not know what had come over the rising generation? He was quite willing to admit that the Mines Department had done their part, inasmuch as they had granted two subsidies to the "Billy Hughes" mine. (Laughter.) He lately had received a letter from the person who was most interested in the mine, who said they had reached a depth of 80 feet, and the reef was going strong and carrying a fair amount of gold. He would like to see

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the spirit of their forefathers exhibited by the present generation. They could only develop a goldfield by work. There were five different lines of reef—the lowest, according to Mr. Morton's report, giving 12 dwt. and the highest went up as high as 5 oz. He saw one report to the effect that a reef had been showing over 8 oz. on the same field. While other minerals had decreased in value, gold had not decreased in value. He wished to draw the attention of men who had been miners in the past to the fact that that field was in existence, and there was a large area further south which still remained to be prospected. During the 1902 drought, Gympie, Charters Towers, and other goldfields saved the State from disaster. Not only should the man on the land be considered, but the miner also. So far as deep sinking was concerned, the money poured out in Gympie and Charters Towers had not turned out satisfactorily, either to the companies engaged in it, or to the State generally. Hon. members opposite who talked about an arsenic mine paying knew very little about mining. He had been engaged in mines that had been worked for a period of twenty years. There was one on Gympie which had been working for twenty-three years, and the company spent £100,000, but the shareholders never earned a dividend. Hon. members who represented purely farming districts thought that they were the only people who risked their labour. Dozens of men on Charters Towers and Gympie had spent scores of thousands of pounds, and yet the shareholders had never received any return. When the Government started a coal or arsenic mine, hon. members opposite seemed to think that it should be a profit-producing concern in the short space of two or three years. When the arsenic mine was started, he had said that, if it proved a payable proposition after five years, it would do very well. It took time to develop mines. There was a coalmine in his electorate, which it would take time to make a payable proposition, and it was the same with the Styx Coalfield. Queensland was large enough for half a dozen State coalmines. In regard to the production of arsenic, he would draw the attention of the Mines Department to the fact that, in the Port Curtis electorate, there was just as good an arsenic deposit in the various lodes as there was in the Stanthorpe mine; they also contained a percentage of gold, silver, lead, and copper. He hoped that, in the near future, instead of the mineral production declining, they would see it increase. The leader of the Opposition referred to mines in North Queensland closing down. He might refer to the great Cloncurry mines, which closed down on very slight pretences at times. If the owners were the patriots they made themselves out to be, they would try to carry on their mines, although there was a slight slump of copper, with a view of the market improving. They all knew that capital was very sensitive. With the least slump in the market, the owners immediately closed down the mines. They cared nothing for the miners working the mines. As a rule, mining companies put very little to reserves; they generally paid their profits out in dividends, and did not provide for the time when there would be a slump in the metal market. The first to suffer were the workers. They had not as yet had a geological examination of the State that they ought to have had. At a place 8 miles from

Woodstock, which was about 26 miles from Townsville, an iron ore deposit had been discovered. Mr. Saint-Smith, the geologist, stated that one of the lodes of iron ore there contained double the quantity that was in Biggenden, where there was computed to be 500,000 tons. The reef required further exploratory work to find out if the lode continued, and if it did, there might be a large iron ore deposit close to Townsville, and right alongside the railway. With a closer geological examination he thought they would find iron ore deposits nearer to Bowen than the one he had mentioned. The Mines Department should send out geologists to make a thorough examination of the State. He had tried for years to get a thorough geological examination made of all the islands from Iron Island right up to Cape York for the discovery of minerals. They knew that there was a shortage of money; but in a great State like Queensland the position must improve, and when that improvement took place they should have a thorough geological examination made. He had referred to deep sinking. What the Mines Department should do was to look for new fields. They knew that old fields would work out. They could see them all over the Commonwealth gradually working out. They should look for new fields in Queensland, and, if they did that, new discoveries would be made.

Mr. DASH: He noticed that £7,000 was available for prospecting. He hoped the miners would take advantage of that, and do some prospecting, because in

[9 p.m.] the west of Queensland they had one of the richest fields in any part of the Commonwealth, and, as one who had been working there, he could say it had only been scratched so far. The Government ought to send prospectors into that territory. The leader of the Nationalist party had stated that immediately the war broke out the Denham Government had come to the assistance of the mining companies in the State. As far as the Cloncurry district was concerned, he had never heard of the Government at that time coming to the assistance of the companies on that field. The assistance to the companies on that field was given by the miners and the smelter hands. When the price of copper was uncertain, the company put a proposition to the employees whereby for the first month they would receive half wages until the first month's product was sold, when the remaining half would be paid. A very significant thing happened. Although the miners were prepared to assist the company, they afterwards had to prosecute the company for the overtime those men earned during that period, and the companies fought them through all the courts. It showed how generous private enterprises were when it came to the question of paying up after their turn had been served. A very significant thing had happened quite recently in that district. Immediately the workers, through the Arbitration Court, served a claim on the companies, a conference was held in Townsville, and shortly afterwards the companies gave notice that they were closing down. Those were some of the things the Opposition wanted to remember. They knew that, through the activities of the Government, they were able to keep the mines going in Chillagoe to-day. They did not hear the Opposition talking about retrenchment so far as the mining industry was concerned. They

were very much alarmed in connection with a few men who were put off by the Railway Department, but that was nothing in comparison to this putting off by the mining companies in the Cloncurry district—closing down at short notice. He was satisfied the mines were rich enough to be made payable. He was quite certain they closed down so as to try and intimidate the court, which would have given its decision this month as to the rates of wages to be paid in that district. He hoped the Government would see that the mining conditions were enforced on that field. Some of those freehold lands were held and were not manned as they should be. Whether it was repudiation or not, it was to be hoped that the Government would introduce some legislation to force those companies to open up the mines or to forfeit them and allow somebody else to work them who was prepared to do so. If the mines were handed over to the Government, they would not have to worry much in connection with unemployment for the next three or four months, because they would carry a good many men, as they had been only henpecked, the companies having worked as shorthanded as they possibly could. He hoped no exemptions would be given, but the companies would be kept right up to the mark.

The HOME SECRETARY: Before dealing with the several matters that had been brought up, he would like to refer again, briefly, to the question of arsenic. Hon. members might think he was attaching a good deal of importance to this, but a statement made by the hon. member for Burnett had gone out through the Press, and he was trying to catch it up so that the public would not be misled. He had a letter from the manager of Surgical Supplies, Limited, Brisbane, which was a fairly good testimonial as to the arsenic produced. It was as follows:—

"The Minister for Mines,

"Treasury Buildings, Brisbane.

"Sir,—We wish to tender our thanks to you for facilitating the delivery of 5 tons of gray arsenic which we are using for the manufacture of 'Keltic' sheep and cattle dip. It is essential that nothing but high-grade arsenic should be used in this preparation, and we were pleased at finding, on submitting the arsenic to analytical test, that it came up to 98.99 per cent.

"We would, therefore, thank you to place a further order for 5 tons for us, to be delivered to Brunswick as previously.

"Yours faithfully,

"Surgical Supplies, Limited,

"(Signed) F. G. PROSSER,

"General Manager."

In the face of this, he hoped the public would not be misled by the rambling statements made by the hon. member for Burnett. The hon. member for Windsor had asked how the difference was made up when arsenic was sold at £10 per ton for the clearing of prickly-pear. The Mines Department received £23 per ton. The purchaser of arsenic for prickly-pear clearing paid only £10 per ton, and it was subsidised by the Lands Department to the extent of £13 per ton.

The hon. member for Burke had brought up the question of prospecting in the Chillagoe

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district. Arrangements were being made with the general manager in Chillagoe, and, instead of people working small shows asking for advances from the Mines Department, a sum of money would be set aside by the manager, so that he might advance money from time to time. Help in the form of machinery and pumps to enable men to work small areas in that district, to carry them below the water-level, would be supplied. The arrangement was that when ore was secured and sent to him at the smelters, he from time to time stopped the money he had advanced, and replenished the fund. They found it much better to allow the manager to do that locally, and he had the repayment in his own hands if he were successful in getting ore. He did not want to deal with Chillagoe at present.

The hon. member for Fitzroy had brought up the question of coal. A considerable amount of money had been spent in boring operations throughout the State, and they had located coal in several centres. He thought Queensland could congratulate itself on having coal in almost every district throughout the State. In that respect, they were in a remarkable position compared with such States as Victoria and South Australia. They should develop their coalfields, and he hoped that that would result in subsidiary industries being established from North Queensland to the South. A certain amount of work had been done at the Styx River, but only of a temporary nature, and the equipment was not very up to date. It was only really a prospecting shaft, but they had done excellent work considering the facilities they had for carrying on that work. The shaft was sunk in a disturbed area, and, of course, the seam was very jumbled. While they were working that seam—and they had worked it properly—there had been 3,500 tons of coal produced, some of which had been sold to the railways, but most of it was sold to the gas company at a profit. He wanted to point out to the hon. member that, while that work was going on in a small way, the Mines Department were also boring in the vicinity, because it was necessary to establish a permanent seam in an undisturbed area. The seam on the Styx River was supposed to contain some of the best coal in the Commonwealth, and preparations were being made to sink a permanent shaft and proceed to getting the coal. It would take some time to sink a shaft 400 feet or 500 feet and to equip the mine. Shafts were not sunk and mines equipped in a day, as only a certain number of men could be employed in sinking a shaft, and only a certain number could be employed on a seam of coal, or ore of any kind, unless it was well opened up, and that would take a considerable time.

Mr. HARTLEY: They know it is there now. How much are they going to spend?

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not know what it would cost. The seam had been sunk 500 feet, and before any coal could be got there must be another shaft sunk for ventilation, and these things could not be done in a day. He considered it wise, in spending a large amount of public money upon a mine, to first of all determine whether the expenditure was warranted. That had been done at Bowen and the Styx River, and after the initial prospecting had been successfully carried out, the Mines

Department should proceed with all haste to get the mine in such a condition that it would be a payable proposition. Great work had been done at Bowen. Everyone admitted that that field was probably one of the best in Australia. Almost everything that could be done had been done at Bowen pending the completion of the railway.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What about Blair Athol? It has a very large seam.

The HOME SECRETARY: The coal was not as good, and it was further from the coast.

Mining to-day was under a cloud to a large extent, and had been since the war. Extraordinary prices ruled during the war, because metals were the main essentials in warfare. Metals also played a very large part in civilisation. They could not enjoy many of the modern comforts and facilities they enjoyed to-day were it not for metals. Australia, like every other country in the world, was suffering from the aftermath of war. He read a good deal of literature dealing with mining in other countries, and his opinion was that the disturbed industrial conditions existing in Europe were closing—only temporarily, he hoped—the large industries. Reconstruction work was not going on as fast as they had expected. Shortage of money was preventing cities and great industries from again re-establishing themselves. Unless the large electrical manufacturing works were in full operation, copper, for instance, was not needed in the quantities it would be if they were at work. He thought the trouble was temporary; but he did not think copper could be produced anywhere cheaper than in Australia, excepting in the United States, where their method of handling large ore-bodies enabled them to produce copper at a much lower price than they could in Australia. But against that, the wages in the United States were double what they were in Australia. It was remarkable, but true, that Australia was producing coal to-day at a lower price than any other country in the world. With all the talk of industrial trouble and high wages, Australia produced coal at a less cost than in Europe. That said something for the Australian workmen and for the Australian methods. (Hear, hear!)

The hon. member for Bulimba made a very sensible speech dealing with mining. It was a great pity he did not always think as he spoke that afternoon. (Hear, hear!) He had a very vivid recollection of waiting upon that hon. gentleman in company with Mr. Theodore and some of the North Queensland mining people just after the outbreak of war, urging that he should give the Chillagoe company some assistance to enable them to carry on. The company at that stage was in a bad way, and prospects of higher prices were looming. The outlook, as a result of war continuing, showed that metals would increase all round, and they urged the hon. gentleman—who was then Acting Premier, because Mr. Denham was absent at the time—to help the company, but he turned a very deaf ear to that request.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: He had very good reasons for doing it.

The HOME SECRETARY: He turned a deaf ear to the appeal, and he believed that had the hon. gentleman helped the

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company at that stage the Government would not have the Chillagoe Company's works to-day, because the company would have got on its feet again.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Don't you know they have been helped again and again, and finally the Government had to take them over

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman never helped the Chillagoe Company. That company did not owe the Government one penny. If he had been generous on that occasion, as he said he was to-day, he believed that millions of pounds' worth of copper, lead, and silver would have been produced in that Northern Queensland country during the war. The price of copper during the war was £120 per ton, the price of lead £50 per ton, and the price of silver 6s. per oz. The price of copper previously had been £56 per ton, the price of lead £13 per ton, and the price of silver 1s. 9d. per oz. The hon. gentleman was pleased to say in that House that he believed in private enterprise; but while he and his friends did not believe in private enterprise, they supported that appeal, because they thought it was a foolish thing to allow a great industry like that in such a district to die for want of a few thousand pounds. But the deputation got the cold shoulder from the hon. gentleman, and the interview finished in a brawl.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Oh, no!

The HOME SECRETARY: It was not altogether the fault of the hon. gentleman, but it finished up in a very unsatisfactory manner. One member of the deputation lost his temper, and he was ordered out of the room. The hon. member for Bulimba now professed that he wanted to help the mining industry, but he never carried out that policy when he had the power to do so. The shame of it was that, although the company had their mines opened up, unwatered, and working to a certain extent, they could not get money to carry on. He believed that had they got the money at that time Queensland would be at least £2,500,000 richer than it was to-day. But the Government were not taking any interest in mining at all at that time. One of the troubles in connection with mining was that it was more or less a speculation. The reason mining fields were not developed to-day in Australia was that other industries were much more profitable. There was not the same risk in investing money as there was in mining. Money could be made easier by men of wealth floating big concerns in the city, which did no good to the State, but merely bought and sold things. Industrial concerns requiring capable management were, of course, a great benefit to the State; but, during the last few years, other businesses offered a more profitable investment to the man who had money than mining, and the result was that their primary industries, especially mining, suffered. The drapery industry and other industries of a similar character offered a splendid field for the investment of the money of men of wealth. Men would put £500,000 in a business which bought stock and sold it again. They did not hesitate to put their money into the ironmongery business or a drapery business, but industrial concerns were stationary, and there was no security for the investment of money in that direction,

owing to the effects of the war. Men could make their money easier by investing in concerns like those he had mentioned, and did not, as a consequence, put their money into mining. The hon. member for Bulimba mentioned that at one period of the history of Queensland the mining industry pulled the State out of a hole. He believed that at that time other industries were not so profitable, with the result that money went into mining. The mining industry was not as prosperous as it was, and the result was that mining was going down.

Mr. VOWLES: Couldn't you help it under the Income Tax Act?

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not know that they could; but he thought that every inducement should be given to people to establish industries in Queensland. He had always thought it was bad policy for the Government to spend all its money in building railways. While building a railway, they might have a thousand men employed, but immediately that railway was finished, those thousand men were unemployed, whereas if the money was invested in permanent industries, they would have a large number of men permanently employed.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman made reference to a certain thing which happened while he was Acting Premier. As the thing happened some five or six years ago, and he had not access to the papers, anything he might say on the subject now might not be strictly accurate.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will correct you.

HON. W. H. BARNES: His fear was that the hon. member's correction might not be an accurate one, but he was quite sure that the hon. gentleman would correct him if he thought it would suit him to do so. He might have been wrong in saying that the Chillagoe Company had received help from the Government. But he knew that the company had met with difficulties again and again, and that those difficulties were thoroughly gone into by competent officers, and the Government arrived at the conclusion that it would be disastrous to Queensland if they attempted to touch the business. Those people spent a lot of money on their enterprises, and if the Government had stepped in at that juncture and made the advances they were asked to make, he did not believe that would have helped the company in any way. It would only have put a little further ahead the difficulty which was then facing them. In going through the report of the Mines Department, which he read during the tea adjournment, he came across certain references to the Chillagoe proposition. He hoped that venture would turn out well, as it had involved the Government in an expenditure, according to the Auditor-General's report, of £470,000 in the shape of promissory notes or debentures. He wanted to say here and now that much of the country's troubles to-day were brought about by following the example of Micawber, who said, "I will sign a promissory note, and then the matter will be settled." The promissory notes he referred to were maturing, and still the Government were leading the community to purchase with promissory notes State stations which would return $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

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HON. W. H. BARNES: With regard to the application made to him on behalf of the Chillagoe Company, his memory was now quite clear upon the subject, and he believed it would have been exceedingly unwise for them to have undertaken to advance money to the company at that time, knowing the very great difficulty they had to face and the difficulties they had had to face for some years previously. [9.30 p.m.] And the hon. member merely brought it up to try to make out that some utterances of his during the afternoon were not sincere.

The HOME SECRETARY: Very fine sentiments!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Any sentiment he expressed in the House was carried out in what he sought to do outside in the interests of the community. The hon. member tried to sidetrack something. He was an adept at sidestepping if he believed it was in his interests and the interests of the Government.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. member for Bulimba said the Government of that day would have had no security for the desired advance to the Chillagoe Company, but the company was prepared to give any security at that time.

HON. W. H. BARNES: What about their debenture-holders?

Mr. RIORDAN: Mr. Torpy, who had spent a good many thousands of pounds up there, and the leader of the Nationalist party got a little annoyed with one another; and Mr. Torpy, a more practical man than the hon. member, had to leave the room. He was ordered to leave the room, and thought it wise to do so. The Acting Premier of that time did not even control his temper long enough—

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is not correct. Were you there?

Mr. RIORDAN: No; but he knew that the £70,000 did not go to Chillagoe, and he was prepared to take Mr. Torpy's word and the newspaper reports against the hon. member's.

The HOME SECRETARY: You are quite correct in what you say.

Mr. VOWLES: Trying to make friends with him? (Laughter.)

Mr. RIORDAN: He could not control his temper long enough to allow practical miners, who had spent over a million of money in that district, to state the case. The hon. member laughed, but he saw him the other morning practically in a state of collapse trying to explain away some of his expenditure. After that, when the present Government had a contract for copper and the metal was at £112 per ton, they saw the Chillagoe Purchase Bill continuously hung up by the friends of hon. members opposite, and when the war was over and the Government had lost their contract, the Upper House said they really thought that a Royal Commission should go up and inspect the mines. One of the gentlemen asked him if he thought it was a good thing, and he replied, "Yes; if they could get half a dozen diving jackets with which to go down the mine, it might be a good thing to inspect mines that had been closed down for at

least four or five years." (Laughter.) One hon. member, to show his knowledge of mining, said that he had heard that one mine—the Lady Jane—was flooded and on fire—thinking, of course, that it was not practicable for a mine to be flooded and on fire at the same time. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Bulimba knew nothing outside of potatoes, but he set his knowledge up against that of Mr. Torpy, a good, practical man, who was on the Broken Hill field and went right through the mining industry from a boy.

He had really risen to ask the Minister what his reply was in regard to the diamond drill for Croydon. He did not quite catch his reply in regard to the Etheridge leases; but one of the things he wanted to know definitely from the Minister was the attitude of the Mines Department towards the diamond drill. Another question he asked was when the State battery at Kidston was likely to be finished. Those were the two things he wanted to know—the two questions to which he wanted replies. He had sent objections to the Mines Department to any further exemptions being granted on the Etheridge field.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed to him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. HARTLEY: He would like the Minister to explain more clearly in reference to the matter in respect to which he asked him a question. He knew that it took time to bore a field, and nobody knew better than the hon. member for Normanby and himself the insistence and the pressure that had to be exerted with the Mines Department to bother about the field at all. Thrice they condemned it after boring holes, and then they put the prospecting shaft down in disturbed country. He knew that at least two bores had shown absolutely and definitely that the coal was there in undisturbed country and of the highest quality in Queensland, if not in Australia. The grounds of his apprehension were that there was only £26,000 for the development of the Bowen, Styx River, and Baralaba fields, and he wanted to know whether there was any likelihood of any more money being available, because it would cost more than that to put one decent development shaft down on the Styx. They had about 3,000 unemployed in Queensland at the present time, and a great many miners would probably be out of work if the drop in the price of copper went on. The way out for the Government might be in the development of those three fields. He hoped that the Minister would be able to assure him that the £8,000 for the Styx was not the only vote, because it would work out at about £800 per month, whereas his knowledge, gained from men who spoke with authority, showed that it would take about £800 a week to put down a decent development shaft on the Styx River field. The department proposed to send the machinery lately in use at Warra to the Bowen field. The Bowen coalfields could not possibly get railway communication under nine months. At the Styx River they had the coal right on the railway, and that was one reason why the field should be developed. He hoped the Minister would give him the assurance he asked for.

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Mr. PETERSON endorsed the remarks made by the hon. member for Fitzroy. Both Baralaba and Styx River coalfields were in his electorate, and he knew that the sum of £26,000 provided on the Estimates would be utterly inadequate for developing the coalfields. It looked as if the rate of progress would be the same as that of the last three years. He did not want to be an old man before the coalfields were developed. At present thousands of tons of coal were leaving Newcastle every year for different parts of the world, and, if they had their coalfields developed in Queensland, they could get some of that trade. At Baralaba there was a railway which was a dead loss—on which the Treasury had to pay interest—and they could make it a paying railway by developing it, because the Mount Morgan Company wanted the coal, and so did the different gas companies in the district. He thanked the hon. member for Fitzroy for the assistance he always gave him in getting the mines opened up in the Normanby electorate.

Question put.

Mr. HARTLEY: He hoped the Minister was not going to allow the vote to be passed without giving the information that had been asked for. He knew the financial position was tight; but if the Minister looked at it from the point of view of providing work for the unemployed, he would see that an opportunity was provided by opening up the coalmines. If they did not open up the Styx mine quickly the railway would be through to Mackay. He hoped the Minister would state the intentions of the Mines Department.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman knew quite well that he was not the Minister running the Mines Department, and he had no access to the Minister at present. He did not know the Minister's intentions in the matter. All he knew was that the money was on the Estimates, and the Mines Department officials told him that they were going to press on with the work until they got the coalmines to a productive state.

Mr. RIORDAN: What about the diamond drill?

The HOME SECRETARY: The officials of the Mines Department told him that there was no diamond drill available, but as soon as there was one available it would be sent up there.

Question put and passed.

RAILWAYS.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppele*) moved—That £4,802,424 be granted for "Railways." The vote showed an increase of £845,000 over the vote for last year. The increases were made up, approximately, of increases in the railway award, automatic increases, increased cost of fuel, etc. The increases seemed substantial, but they were due to circumstances over which the Government had no control. The awards of the court must be met and honoured, and the increased price of fuel must be met. The increased cost, necessitated by increased traffic, had also to be met; and the increases, generally speaking, could not be avoided by the Government. He would show the improved position of the Railway Department for 1919-20 as compared with 1918-19,

and he was going to give the improved position in statistical form. It was as follows:—

RAILWAY POSITION.

PLEASING IMPROVEMENT—STATISTICALLY EXPRESSED.			
		<i>Cash Receipts.</i>	
1918-1919	£3,983,000
1919-1920	£4,936,000
Increase	£953,000
		<i>Train Miles.</i>	
1918-1919	9,942,700
1919-1920	10,443,600
Increase	500,900
		<i>Train Miles per Man.</i>	
1918-1919	602
1919-1920	621
Increase	19
		<i>Net Earnings.</i>	
1918-1919	£294,152
1919-1920	£636,758
Increase	£342,606
<i>Percentage of Profit to Capital Invested.</i>			
		£ s. d.	
1918-1919	0 14 6½
1919-1920	1 10 2¼
Increase	0 15 7¾
<i>Percentage of Working Expenses to Earnings.</i>			
1918-1919	92.62
1919-1920	87.16

He thought that was a fine result, considering the embarrassing and difficult condition under which the Railway Department had been labouring.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You have a loss of £5,000,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The difficulties the department had to contend with were unparalleled in the history of the State. The hon. member for Bulimba talked about losses, yet he was a member of a party that had had an accumulated deficit of £8,500,000 in the Railway Department. The hon. member belonged to a party which had deficits amounting to £8,500,000 in the Railway Department, and the same party had thirty deficits during the time they were on the Treasury benches, resulting in the accumulated deficit mentioned. During the same period the hon. member's Government robbed the teachers and robbed the railway servants. Their railway bill had increased, but the railway service was literally starved before the present Government took control. (Opposition interjection.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that hon. members will not interject. The Minister is making a very important statement, and I appeal to hon. members to allow him to make that statement.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Minister is just sticking it out till 10 o'clock.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Opposition passed a Railway Guarantee Act, imposing a burden on the farmers. This Government had repealed that Act, and wiped off a debt of £225,000 immediately they came into office, and they would have been receiving £400,000 extra revenue to-day

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if they had continued the Railway Guarantee Act in operation. (Uproar.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask hon. members to restrain themselves, and uphold the traditions of the Committee.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (to the Minister): You have been fooling the House. You will not fool the House any more. (Continued disorder.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Drayton had been doing nothing but fooling the House ever since he had been there. In the days when the predecessors of hon. members opposite were in power there were nothing but deficits. Under a Tory Government in Victoria the accumulated railway deficiency was over £2,000,000 since 1913. In the United States, under a Tory Government, the deficit was £45,000,000 last year. In England, under a Tory Government, £41,000,000, and in South Africa, under a Tory Government, £600,000 last year.

Mr. CORSER: What about your Government in Russia? (Opposition laughter and interjection.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was no good trying to dispute the fact that Tory rule meant deficits on the railways and otherwise. He wanted to deal briefly with the question of employment. A good deal had been said lately of an unfair nature about the employees in the railway service.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Many of them wonder where they are just now.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It had been said that the employees had increased enormously under the regime of the present Government. Hon. members opposite had insultingly said that the Railway Department was a kind of benevolent asylum for the friends of the present Government. Let them test that statement by actual figures—

“COMPARISON OF EMPLOYEES—TORY RULE AND LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

1911-12	...	...	12,900
1914-15	...	...	14,936
Increase	...	...	2,036
1914-15	...	...	14,936
1919-20	...	...	16,823
Increase	...	...	1,887 only.

Increase in employees—Tory Government, three years ... 2,036
Increase in employees—Labour Government, whole period ... 1,887

Difference ... 149 less
One hundred and forty-nine more in three years than the whole period of Labour administration—five years up to 30th June, 1920.”

Hon. members opposite had the effrontery and audacity to talk about a wholesale increase of the employees in the railway service under the present Administration. It showed how hollow and insincere they were, and that their statements had no relation to fact. Hon. members opposite said that there were too many employees in the Railway Department. He would read what the “Daily Mail,” the

organ of hon. members opposite, said on 29th October—

“Our taxation is imposed in order to allow political spendthrifts to wallow in extravagance; to foster an army of State parasites.”

Those were the men who professed solicitude for the construction workers. Hon. members, and their Tory Press, designated the railway employees as parasites—offensive and slanderous statements. The “Courier” also had something of a very offensive nature to say concerning the railway service and the public servants, which he was not going to quote, but hon. members opposite, and their Tory organs, had slandered and insulted the railway workers and the public service generally, and now expressed solicitude because a few of them had been given notice on account of curtailment of loan expenditure.

Mr. VOWLES: Did not Mr. Hunter say there were 3,000 too many employees in the railway service?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member said that. He had a copy of the speech delivered by the leader of the Opposition at Gatton, on the 4th of October, 1920, when he said that there were 3,000 too many men in the railway service doing unproductive work.

Mr. VOWLES: I said that Mr. Hunter said so.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The “Queensland Times,” an anti-Labour paper reported the hon. member as he had stated. The hon. member went on to say—

“We are paying two men to do one man’s work, and we are demoralising the two men in doing it.”

The hon. member for Oxley had also made remarks regarding the railway service. The hon. member made false statements concerning the margin of increase of the employees under the present Government. The following was a comparison with regard to employees and train mileage:—

EMPLOYEES—TRAIN MILES.

KIDSTON-DENHAM-BARNES ADMINISTRATION.			
<i>Employees.</i>			
1912-13	...	...	13,982
1913-14	...	...	14,965
Increase	...	...	983
<i>Train Miles.</i>			
1912-13	...	...	11,464,084
1913-14	...	...	11,346,334
Decrease	...	...	117,750

He would compare that briefly with what took place last year. The increase in the number of employees for 1919-20 was 262, and the train mileage increased by 500,000. That record showed how infinitely superior Labour control was in regard to the railway policy of the State. He had been collecting the charges made by hon. members, but time would not permit him to go through with them. He was not responsible for having taken up undue time to-night. (Opposition interruption.) When hon. members on the Government side were in opposition, they mapped out certain days for the Estimates, giving more time to the important Estimates than the unimportant ones. Hon. members opposite had simply

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wasted the time at their disposal, and now they were complaining. (Opposition dissent.) He thought that the squeals of the hon. member for Drayton and other Oppositionists indicated that his remarks had gone home.

At 10 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN said: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 306, I will now proceed to put the remaining votes.

The following items were then put and passed:—

- “Railways,” £4,802,424;
- “Trust and Special Funds,” 1920-1921, £3,041,778 2s. 6d.;
- “Loan Fund Account,” 1920-1921, £4,003,484;
- “Supplementary Trust Funds,” 1920-1921, £400,000;
- “Supplementary Estimates,” 1919-1920, £1,040,530 8s. 11d.;
- “Supplementary Trust Funds—Estimates,” 1919-1920, £117,287 5s. 9d.;
- “Supplementary Loan Fund Estimates,” 1919-1920, £644,069 10s. 11d.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, and the resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the day.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1921-1922.

The TREASURER moved—That £1,150,000 be granted on account of the service of His Majesty for the year 1921-1922 towards defraying the expenditure of the various departments and services of the State. That was merely an extra month's supply.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a further resolution, and the resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

RECEPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the resolutions from Committee of Supply be received to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

INCOME TAX ACTS AMENDMENT BILL, No. 2.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

The TREASURER, in moving—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend in a certain particular the Income Tax Act of 1902 as amended by subsequent Acts”—

said: In order to anticipate the discussion on various stages of the Bill, he might inform the Committee that the Bill follows the recent High Court decision. It was well-known under our taxation laws the interest derived from State and Commonwealth securities was free of taxation but under the same Act, where the tax was payable, they used the total income from all sources to arrive at the rate of the tax. As the decision of the High Court had put Commonwealth securities beyond their power in

that matter, they thought Queensland securities ought to be placed on the same basis, so they were relieving those who were holding Queensland securities from that tax. It would mean a loss to the revenue of about £6,000 a year.

Mr. CORSER: We advocated that when the Bill was going through.

The TREASURER: Well, now you have got it.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, and the resolution was agreed to.

ALL STAGES.

The Bill passed all stages without amendment or debate, and was ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

The House adjourned at fifteen minutes past 10 o'clock p.m.