

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 1922**

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my part, have failed to secure a 'pair' during the period of two weeks from the date hereof; and I hereby further notify you that I desire to vote as a member at every sittings of the House and of every Committee of the Whole House by means of a proxy—namely, the Honourable Edward Granville Theodore, member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Chillagoe, or, if the said the Honourable Edward Granville Theodore is not present, by another proxy—namely, the Honourable Alfred James Jones, a member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Paddington.

" Given under my hand, at Brisbane, this fifth day of September, 1922.

" W. McCORMACK,

" A member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Cairns."

DECLARATION BY MR. SPEAKER

The SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of the Legislative Assembly Act Amendment Act of 1922, I declare that I am satisfied that the matters stated in the notification received by me this day from the Hon. W. McCormack are true.

TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER, 1922.

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

APPLICATION TO VOTE BY PROXY.

The SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have this day received the following medical certificate from Drs. Morgan Lane and Ellis Murphy, and a notification under the provisions of the Legislative Assembly Act Amendment Act of 1922 from the Hon. W. McCormack:—

" To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

" We, Morgan Lane and Ellis Murphy, legally qualified medical practitioners, hereby certify that the Honourable William McCormack, member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Cairns, is in such a state of ill-health, through no fault on his part, that he is unable, and in our opinion will, during a period of two weeks from the date hereof, be unable to attend any sittings of the House without gravely endangering his health.

" Given under our hands, at Brisbane, this fifth day of September, 1922.

" MORGAN LANE,

" A legally qualified medical practitioner.

" ELLIS MURPHY,

" A legally qualified medical practitioner."

" To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

" I, William McCormack, member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Cairns, hereby notify you that I have endeavoured to secure, and, through no fault on

[*Hon. W. N. Gillies.*

APPLICATION TO VOTE BY PROXY.

The SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have this day received the following medical certificate from Drs. Morgan Lane and Ellis Murphy, and a notification under the provisions of the Legislative Assembly Act Amendment Act of 1922 from Mr. J. T. Gilday:—

" To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

" We, Morgan Lane and Ellis Murphy, legally qualified medical practitioners, hereby certify that John Theophilus Gilday, a member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Ithaca, is in such a state of ill-health, through no fault on his part, that he is unable, and in our opinion will, during a period of two weeks from the date hereof, be unable to attend any sittings of the House without gravely endangering his health.

" Given under our hands, at Brisbane, this fifth day of September, 1922.

" MORGAN LANE,

" A legally qualified medical practitioner.

" ELLIS MURPHY,

" A legally qualified medical practitioner."

" To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

" I, John Theophilus Gilday, member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Ithaca, hereby notify you that I have endeavoured to secure, and, through no fault on my part, have failed to secure a 'pair' during the period of two weeks from the date hereof; and I hereby further notify you that I desire to vote as a member at every

sittings of the House and of every Committee of the Whole House by means of a proxy—namely, The Honourable Edward Granville Theodore, member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Chillagoe, or, if the said Honourable Edward Granville Theodore is not present, by another proxy—namely, the Honourable Alfred James Jones, member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Paddington.

“Given under my hand, at Brisbane, this fifth day of September, 1922.

“J. T. GILDAY,

“A member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland for the electoral district of Ithaca.”

#### DECLARATION BY MR. SPEAKER.

The SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of the Legislative Assembly Act Amendment Act of 1922, I declare that I am satisfied that the matters stated in the notification received by me this day from Mr. J. T. Gilday are true.

#### SUPPLY.

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

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

#### HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

#### OUTDOOR RELIEF.

Question stated—

“That £52,072 be granted for ‘Outdoor Relief.’”

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I would not have spoken on this vote this morning were it not for the statement made by the hon. member for Flinders on Friday last, when he said that the Opposition had been stonewalling for two or three days. I have looked up “Hansard,” and counted how many times members on the Government side spoke, and how many times members on the Opposition side addressed the Committee. I also noticed how much space each side occupied during the debate. I find there were fourteen speakers on the Opposition side and their speeches covered 297 inches of “Hansard”; on the Government side there were twenty-three speakers, who occupied 602 inches. (Laughter.)

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: It shows we were doing our work.

Mr. SWAYNE: Yet an hon. member opposite had the effrontery to get up and say that we were stonewalling. If hon. members opposite only confined their remarks to the truth, they would not be able to make speeches at all, because I find, on perusing their speeches, that they are nothing but misrepresentations. If the Government would only do justice and give a little more encouragement to employers, and leave them alone, it would go a long way to doing away with unemployment. All the talk we have had on the question will not make another day's work for the unemployed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): It is not my desire to prolong the debate, although it is a very important question, because hon. mem-

bers on this side of the Chamber have effectively replied to any criticism that came from the Opposition side.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Why were the unemployed outside Parliament House this morning? There were 160 of them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I will deal with that question before I sit down. I think it is incumbent upon me to deal with one or two phases of this very important question. The hon. member for Leichhardt put the question correctly when he said that the Opposition had taken up a “Yes—No” attitude on this question of relief and unemployment. In one breath hon. members opposite condemn the Government for not spending sufficient money in relief, and in another breath they castigate us for spending too much money.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is not correct.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is correct, and nobody knows it better than the hon. member. I have listened for three days to every speech delivered by hon. members opposite, and they brought to my mind the doggerel verse—

“You can if you will,

You can't if you won't;

You'll be damned if you do,

You'll be damned if you don't.”

That is the attitude of hon. members opposite on this question—whatever we do is wrong in their eyes.

On Friday the deputy leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Aubigny, mentioned the case of one Thomas Willis. I regret very much that an individual case has been brought up, because I think it is our duty as parliamentarians, no matter on which side we sit, to deal with the system rather than introduce individual cases, which can be ventilated in the various departments. Had the hon. member taken the trouble to come to the Home Department he could have seen the whole of the papers and got all the information he required. But I am not going to listen silently to the hon. member's accusations against the Government, and, although I very much regret to have to deal with an individual case, I intend to do it. The hon. member stated quite definitely that relief rations were refused to Mr. Thomas Willis because of his expressed political opinions. I say that that statement is without any degree of foundation.

Mr. MOORE: I only quoted his own letter.

At 11.12 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is what I complain of. If the hon. member had called to see me, or the Under Secretary, or some other officer of the department, he could have ascertained the whole of the facts. The person referred to has been receiving relief rations from this Government since they came into office in 1915 till they were stopped on 6th August, 1922—last month—with the exception of the time when he was out of the State, and, as Acting Home Secretary, I take full responsibility for stopping them.

Mr. POLLOCK: Were there not other reasons?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes.

Mr. MORGAN: All the police reports except one were in favour.

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The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes—except one. The hon. member for Aubigny was not prepared to quote both reports—but I think we had better leave that alone. I deny that the Government refused this person, his wife, and his daughter—who has two little children—any assistance in any way because of their expressed political opinions.

Mr. KERR: How long was he away from the State?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think about twelve months or two years—not very long. Filed with the papers in the department are various letters, which have appeared in the "Courier" over his signature. For instance, here is one of 3rd September, 1921, and the fact that it is filed with the papers shows that his accusations were known to the department—

"If the Theodore Government continues to pursue this policy, it will find itself in the plight of Lenin and Company—repudiation, trifling with the electoral rolls, broken promises, stuffed rolls"—

These are some of his expressions.

Mr. BRAND: He is quite right.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Those statements are in keeping with the statements of members of the Opposition, inasmuch as they are characterised by mendacity and misrepresentation. It is an answer to the hon. member for Aubigny that these letters had no effect on the Government or the department, because we continued the relief up to 6th August, 1922. Willis also wrote a letter over his signature to Cairns, abusing the Home Department and the Home Secretary. To put it mildly, he was biting the hand that fed him. It has been stated that we refused the two little children the assistance of the State Children Department. That is not so. The papers prove that the daughter of Thomas Willis called on the Director of the State Children Department and received a sympathetic hearing. He gave her the forms and showed her how to fill them in. She went immediately to the Under Secretary and said she would not fill in the forms because there was too much "red tape" about the matter. Had the forms been filled in, the mother would have received an allowance for the children. Even when I refused to grant further assistance in this case, I offered Mrs. Willis a home in either a Salvation Army Home—to which she objected because she belonged to the Church of England—or in a Church of England Home. During the administration of our predecessors the hon. member for Bulimba, who was then a Minister, offered Mrs. Willis the same home that we offered her—and only one—the Salvation Army Home. While we have every sympathy with deserving cases—the genuine unemployed—we have no sympathy with the malingering and the person who will not endeavour to do some kind of work—especially when he has the ability to do it. I am of the opinion that there are not in Australia very many unemployable persons. There are, probably, two classes of unemployables; there is the poor, degraded "down-and-out" who, probably through some fault of his own—and sometimes through no fault of his own—has to be provided for by the State in some way or another; and there is the class of

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persons who are parasites on the producer. I believe that the "white-shirt" loafer or parasite is a greater menace to society than the poor old "hobo."

Mr. KERR: Why didn't you bring in that Bill to regulate racing? That is the class to whom you refer, more or less, isn't it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: My remarks are fairly intelligible.

Mr. SIZER: Whom do you mean by the "white-shirt loafer"?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The parasites on all industries.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Minister does not want to be personal. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is just as well to get right down to bedrock and examine the causes of unemployment and the necessity for the granting of relief. Under the most prosperous conditions and under any form of government there will always remain with the Government certain deserving persons who will require relief, and who deserve sympathetic consideration from the Government, whether that Government be Conservative or Labour. I prefer to use the word "Conservative" rather than the term "National party" or "Country party," because I do not see any difference between the two parties. We only regard them as opponents to progressive government. The difference between the Country party and the Nationalist party is similar to the difference between the crocodile and the alligator—one bites with the lower jaw and the other bites with the upper jaw. (Laughter.) There are certain persons who are unable to work, and it is the function of a Government to care for that class. The persons receiving relief are divided into ten different classes—the aged and sick men, the wives of same, widows, deserted wives, wives of men away, children, families, able-bodied men, wives of same, and adults. Seven out of the ten classes are always with any Government, and always will be with any Government. We shall always have aged and sick men and their wives; we shall always have widows, deserted wives, wives of men away, children deserving of sympathy, and families deserving of sympathy. There is then the question of able-bodied men and their wives, and adults. Our present method of dealing with the matter may not be the best method. I do not think that it is. I think the best method is to provide work for the able-bodied men and employ as many as can be employed in our industries. I think that the system of insurance against unemployment and sickness, which the Government are considering at the present time, is probably a better method than any form of ration-giving. Had the present Opposition been in office during the abnormal time of the duration of the war, they could not have cared for the needy by spending only the amount spent by their Government when they were in office. Comparisons are useless. For the last seven years we have been living through abnormal times. As I previously stated, we should get right down to bedrock—right down to the cause of unemployment and relief. It must be remembered by the people of Queensland that we have had four years of war, and three years of its very serious aftermath.

Mr. MORGAN: And four years of prosperity during the war period.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How delighted we all were on the night of the signing of the armistice; but I think that all students of history, all statesmen, all sensible politicians, all commercial men and business men know that the signing of the armistice was only the beginning of a great trade war. We know that the cessation of war was happy only in so far as it meant that bloodshed would cease. We all know that we had to face war's great aftermath, and we are suffering to-day because of the dislocation of trade. War has always brought forth evil; and just as war has brought about crime, it has certainly brought about unemployment. Then there are other causes for unemployment, and unemployment of course necessitates relief. The ordinary channel of loan money was silted against the Government, and I ask the leader of the Nationalist party and the leader of the Country party, will they deny responsibility in that direction? No answer.

Mr. TAYLOR: We absolutely deny it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They cannot deny responsibility in that direction. I am going to quote some figures presently which will be significant and which will verify this statement. Our public works necessarily had to be closed down; we could not proceed with public works during a certain period, as a result of that delegation which prevented the Government from getting loan money. I repeat the statement—that delegation silted the only channel we had for obtaining loan money to carry on the public works policy of this State, and hon. members must know that a considerable time had to elapse before other provision could be made.

Mr. MORGAN: The only thing that stopped you from getting loan money was your own legislation.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have heard a lot about that.

Mr. MORGAN: Other States got loan money.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I could deal with that question very fully; but I know very well that I would be out of order if I attempted a discussion along those lines. I have always denied that we have brought about any form of repudiation. Hon. members opposite cannot deny their responsibilities in that direction.

Mr. BRAND: Shoulder your own responsibilities.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member for Enoggera asked what we were doing in regard to returned soldiers; he also asked how many returned soldiers were getting relief from this Government. My answer to that is that we do not discriminate in providing rations for the deserving poor. They are not asked whether they went to the front or whether they stayed behind; they are not asked whether they are returned soldiers or not. We only satisfy ourselves, so far as we possibly can, that the case is a deserving one; if it is, relief is immediately granted.

Mr. KERR: My complaint was that it was stated that returned soldiers and soldiers' widows were getting relief, when the number was infinitesimal.

Mr. MORGAN: Will you give us the figures showing the number of able-bodied men and women who have received relief during the past twelve months?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hon. members opposite again endeavour to bring in the war question, and to know what we have done, almost hinting that we have not been sympathetic towards the returned soldiers who were out of work; when it is well known that the Government have done more for the returned soldier than any other Government in Australia. I do not want to raise the returned soldier question, because I did not serve at the front and I did not try to win the war from the Post Office steps.

Mr. MOORE: It would not have been any crime if you had. What did you do to assist?

At 11.32 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I did my duty as a Minister of the Crown; and I did my part for the Australians when they came back. I have already stated that there are ten classes of people who have had to be provided with relief, and I want to give the figures to show how the position has improved. There was a certain period during which we were denied loan funds through the action of our opponents.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Nonsense!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It matters not whether they were inside or outside the House. We were denied the loan money that we required to carry on our public works. That necessitated a great deal of unemployment. The greater the amount of unemployment which exists the more we have to spend in relief. Our most serious time was from 1st January to 31st July, 1921. I will give the figures to show how our position is improving. I am also going to quote the March figures, because something has been said about the speech I delivered in Paddington.

Mr. EDWARDS: There was a big deputation of unemployed at Parliament House this morning.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Who organised the hostility against this Government? I am of opinion, and always have been of opinion, that the statements made on the other side in regard to unemployment are greatly exaggerated.

Mr. TAYLOR: You are spoiling your speech. Play the game! I had no more to do with the deputation than you had. I know no more about it than you do. Be fair!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am fair, and I am quite sincere in saying that the hon. member is responsible for that deputation.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am not. You are making statements which are absolutely incorrect.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do hon. members opposite deny that they were responsible for the delegation going home?

Mr. TAYLOR: Of course we do.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have a table showing the number of persons in the metropolitan area who were in receipt of Government relief in July, 1921, March, 1922 (I take that month as being the month in which the Paddington election took place), and June, 1922. That covers the last financial year, which was the worst period during

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the term of office of this Government. These are the figures—

*Persons in Metropolitan Area in Receipt of Relief.*

	July, 1921.	March, 1922.	June, 1922.
Aged and sick men ..	69	28	32
Wives of aged and sick men	58	23	22
Widows .. .. .	301	163	115
Deserted women ..	136	61	51
Wives of men away ..	176	133	83
Families .. .. .	2,011	927	558
Able-bodied men ..	1,440	547	282
Wives of able-bodied men	1,208	317	268
Adults .. .. .	3,588	1,472	853
Children .. .. .	3,473	1,638	968
	12,460	5,509	3,432

Hon. members will note that the numbers in receipt of relief decreased during the period covered by the figures from 12,460 to 3,432. That is because we are now living under more prosperous conditions, and because the Government have passed through the most trying period, in which they were denied the necessary loan money that every Government is entitled to, and which every Government in Queensland previously had access to.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Have you not cut out a lot that were given rations previously?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: As far as we can we have cut out the undeserving. If the hon. member had been in the Chamber he would have heard that. We have every sympathy with the genuine unemployed—the men who want work and cannot get it.

Mr. KERR: Sympathy is easily given.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We give them work. We have every sympathy with sad cases of distress, but no sympathy at all with the malingerer and the person who desires to live on the State. There was a period in the history of the Government when there were numerous unemployed workers, but I have given the reason for the cause of that unemployment. It was not the fault of the Government. The Government was blameless in the matter. Had our policy not been interrupted and we had been allowed to carry on our policy, there would have been no person willing to work who could not have got work.

Mr. J. JONES: At other times you have blamed the war.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not blaming the war, but I know that the war creates unemployment. Everyone knows that war causes a lot of misery and suffering. It caused all the evils that followed the great war. The period when the number of unemployed was at its highest was from the end of the last financial year to the beginning of this financial year—that is, from 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922. The hon. member made reference to my speech in Paddington, and I intend to quote exactly what I did say in that speech.

Mr. KERR: I think some of your constituents were outside this House this morning.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You brought them there.

Mr. KERR: I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: My constituents have every confidence in me. The hon. member for Enoggera had better look after his own electorate. At any rate,

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I am going to look after Paddington. I am going to quote what I said during my opening address in connection with the last Paddington election—I am not going to leave out something, like hon. members opposite do. This is what I said—

“They had only had a majority in the Legislative Council during the last eighteen months. The unavoidable difficulties caused by the war were surely enough for the Government to contend with, but they had had those other difficulties to contend with, and still had managed to pull through in spite of all opposition. They could now see the silver lining ahead, and within two months there would not be one unemployed man in Queensland who was willing to work.”

The registered number of unemployed in Queensland about that time was 3,000, but about 3,000 more unemployed came to Queensland because of the seasonal industries in which we engage in this State.

Mr. FRY: That is not correct.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is quite correct. They all came to Queensland during that period.

Mr. BRAND: Were the whole 3,000 looking for work?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes. If we only had our own unemployed to deal with, we could look after them all right. If there was a wall between New South Wales and Queensland, and we were left entirely to our own resources, my remarks would have proved that I had some foresight, because there would have been no unemployed at the time I predicted. It is quite true we were not able to absorb all the unemployed that came from New South Wales in that period.

Mr. CATERMULL: How do you account for the fact that there are names of unemployed which were on the Bundaberg register last March and they are still unemployed?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The unemployed question is greatly exaggerated.

Several OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I will give the official figures, showing the number of unemployed at the Central Exchange on 21st August, 1922.

Mr. KERR: Those figures are not correct. I know a lot of unemployed who are not registered there.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The number of unemployed in different parts of Queensland to 21st August, 1922, according to the Central Exchange, is: Brisbane, 525; Ipswich, 60; Toowoomba, 32.

Mr. KERR: Those figures are not correct.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You quote figures from “Knibbs,” and when I quote official figures you say they are not correct.

Mr. KERR: I know that they are not correct.

Mr. SIZER: The numbers are much greater than you are giving.

Mr. KERR: There are a lot of unemployed who are not registered at the exchanges at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And there are also a lot of duplications; we

cannot avoid that. A man may register at Ipswich, and two days later he may register at Brisbane. I will read the figures that I have got here—Brisbane, 525.

Mr. KERR: There were over 900 unemployed in Brisbane. There were a lot of returned soldiers out of work.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I sympathise with the Minister. He has a very difficult task.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I could refer the hon. member for Albert to another case. We were accused of turning a man down, but the hon. member himself turned him down. I will give the whole of the figures showing the number of unemployed at the Central Exchanges on 21st August, 1922:—Brisbane, 525; Ipswich, 60; Toowoomba, 32; Bundaberg, 41; Rockhampton, 88; Townsville, 65; Charters Towers, 6; Cairns, 19; Mackay, 141; Gympie, 19; Maryborough, 110. Total, 1,106.

Mr. FRY: Do you believe those figures to be correct, or is this just a political statement?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe them to be correct.

Mr. CATTERMULL: What was the date?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have already given the date—21st August, 1922.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SIZER: Those figures do not coincide with your Paddington speech.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I know cases where passes were issued to men in New South Wales right to the Queensland border. Passes were even issued to women and little children by the officials in New South Wales right to the Queensland border. They were told that they would get 10s. a week for each child under fourteen years of age, and that they would also get Government assistance themselves in the way of rations.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have called hon. members on my left to order several times. We had an instance this morning of an hon. member having to correct a statement which appeared in "Hansard." It is no wonder the "Hansard" reporters find it difficult to hear what is said when there are so many interjections. I hope hon. members will allow the Minister to make his speech without any further interjections.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In March last—which was the time when I spoke in Paddington—the total number of unemployed in Queensland was 6,522. In July the numbers were reduced to 1,462, or a decrease of 5,060. These figures may not be very interesting to hon. members opposite, but they are interesting to the public outside. Those were the figures at the end of July or the beginning of August.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It does not make much difference to you what dates you give.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What do you insinuate by that?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You said "the end of July or the beginning of August."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The figures were made up on 21st August, but

they are really the July figures. I do not say for one moment that because I was elected member for Paddington the number of unemployed decreased; but I do know that we, as a Government, passed through a most serious and trying period, and we passed through it successfully. The figures I have quoted show that the number of unemployed is decreasing.

Mr. MORGAN: You made rash statements then, just as you are making now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not making rash statements now. We have a public works policy to carry out, and we are giving effect to it, and certain railway works are being proceeded with.

Mr. EDWARDS: Do you know that hundreds of men have been turned down in the Nanango electorate?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I know that the people of Nanango have always regretted that I am not their representative instead of the hon. member—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And the hon. member knows that is true. (Disorder.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn hon. members that if I have to repeat my call to order I will take such action as will give some of them an opportunity of saying something somewhere else.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I wish to emphasise these figures, not for the benefit of hon. members opposite, who do not give credence to any statement I make, but for the benefit of the people of Queensland. The figures are authentic and are compiled from the records of the department; and, if hon. members opposite can conceive of a Minister of the Crown coming into this Chamber with faked figures, they have very suspicious minds and are unfit for public life.

Mr. MORGAN: They are not faked, but they are not reliable; they are worth nothing.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Are not "Knibbs's" figures correct? Hon. members opposite are never tired of quoting the Commonwealth Statistician.

Mr. SIZER: On the question of unemployment they are unreliable.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We as a Government recognise that we shall always have more or less unemployment—a certain number of persons who must be provided for by any Government—and if we have erred we have erred on the side of humanity. If we have spent more money than hon. members opposite would like us to spend, we have spent it in the belief that we were relieving the necessitous condition of some poor persons in the State; and it is very difficult for any Minister—as the hon. member for Albert will remember—for any Minister or officer in that department to discriminate at all times between the deserving and the undeserving. Hon. members opposite who condemn and criticise the Government, offer no remedy, but we do not need their assistance in that direction. We are providing the remedy. We have passed through a period when, through no fault of ours, we have had a large number of unemployed; but the figures I have quoted prove that the number is diminishing month by month, and we are hoping that in a very short time there will not be one person out of work who is willing to work. I was one of the disappointed

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citizens of Australia when our big scheme which would have employed every man in Queensland who needed work had to be, if not abandoned, at any rate, deferred till times were more prosperous, and that just at a point when people were in need of employment. It was because of the actions of our opponents, who interrupted our policy and interfered with the London money market, that we could not go on with those works.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Your policy of repudiation deprived you of the benefit of the credit of the State.

Mr. MOORE: We had the Premier saying that it was a good job that you could not get the money.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It was not a good job, nor did the Premier say that. I cannot conceive of any man in public life condemning the parent of all industries—the iron and steel industry. Whether it is done by this Government or in this generation, I know that Australia is destined to become an iron and steel producing country, and that it will never be what it should be until we do manufacture our own iron and steel.

Mr. SIZER: Why is it hanging fire now?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have already given the reason. We shall always—no matter whether we are able to employ every available man or not—have to deal with a certain class of persons who are sick, or needy, or helpless. It will be our endeavour to reduce the number of unemployed, as my figures show we have been doing, and we shall continue in our own way. We shall continue sympathetically to administer the policy of the Government and provide for deserving cases, seeing that no person who is in need is turned away, and that no person who wants food goes hungry.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*): I had no desire to speak on this vote, but I must refute the remarks of the Minister regarding unemployment at Bundaberg. I find that at the present time 500 persons are getting relief in Bundaberg, including 421 travellers and 80 residents, and approximately £750 was spent last month in relief. There are registered at the labour bureau 360 men, some of whom have been registered since last March.

Mr. COLLINS: Why do you not employ them, if you have the means?

Mr. CATTERMULL: Employment has been given to every possible man. What is the reason why employment cannot always be given? It is very often because of the Arbitration Court awards. There is no doubt that the Government are deliberately preventing a lot of men from getting work. Instead, they say to them, "We will give you a dole on which you can exist"; and, very often, when work does come along, they are not in a condition to do it, and the employer has to let them go because they cannot give value for their wages.

Mr. BRENNAN: You want low wages and black labour.

Mr. CATTERMULL: What happens in a cancutting gang of half a dozen men, one of whom has been on the verge of starvation and cannot do the work? His mates turn him out; they do not want him, because he cannot do the same amount of work as they are doing. I think the Minister has quoted figures which are not in accordance with facts.

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): We have listened to a very long speech from the Minister—one very largely repetition from start to finish. The main point of the criticism of the Opposition on this vote has been that outdoor relief or doles are being given to men who are able-bodied and fit to

work for which no return is [12 noon.] coming to the State. The Government should evolve some scheme to be worked in conjunction with the local authorities. Work is waiting in every local authority area throughout the State for able-bodied men. The Minister has referred to what is done to assist widows, orphans, and deserted wives. Not a single member on this side has voiced any objection to that.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: We all realise that we shall always have a considerable number of people in our community who will have to be assisted by whatever Government may have the reins of office. We claim that a considerable number of able-bodied men are out of employment to-day on account of the administration of this Government. We do not think that the number would have been as great had the Government administered the finances in a proper way. The Minister said we have passed through an unprecedented period. Quite true. It is also true that the Government have had an unprecedentedly large revenue to tide them over that period. They cannot tell us that the revenue has fallen off by hundreds of thousands of pounds; it has increased by millions of pounds. The money was there, if it had been rightly spent; but millions of pounds have been wasted.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Look at the State cattle stations alone.

Mr. TAYLOR: On cattle stations, rail-ways, State enterprise after State enterprise, money has been frittered away and wasted by thousands of pounds. How can the people stand up to the taxation necessary to maintain such a system? The Minister has lost tens of thousands of pounds on the mining ventures which he has been controlling. I am pleased to see, by the reports, that there is a likelihood of some improvement. There is necessity for a lot of improvement in the administration of the hon. gentleman's department before we shall be able to get on an even keel. The money lost in administering the Mines Department could have been far better spent on permanent developmental and reproductive works. The people's money should not have been put into mining ventures. No one knows better than the Minister the precarious nature of the mining industry in this or any other country; it is, perhaps, all right to-day, and to-morrow it is "gone a million." That is what our criticism has been directed against—not against the giving of relief in deserving cases.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The hon. member for Musgrave said that 360 persons were registered as unemployed in Bundaberg. I do not know where the hon. member got his figures from. I stand on the figures of the Director of Labour, and they show that the registration in Bundaberg at 21st August last—less than three weeks ago—was forty-one. It is no good the hon. member trying to deny official figures.



Mr. SIZER: Whose figures are we to believe?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am quoting official figures.

Mr. SIZER: So was he.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The leader of the Nationalist party knows that, as a result of the war, the bottom dropped right out of the metal market, and that the Government had to contend with the complete closing down of all mining operations in the Cloncurry district.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The State should not engage in mining operations.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Am I, like the hon. member for Albert when he was Secretary for Mines, to sit still and do nothing? We came to the assistance of working miners, companies, syndicates, and every legitimate mining enterprise.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: We would not touch Chillagoe.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: During the year Mount Morgan closed down, and at that one place 1,500 men were out of work because of the lockout.

Mr. MORGAN: The Government closed Chillagoe at one period.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We closed down the smelting works for a period, but we encouraged mining development, and to-day we are reaping the benefit. On the figures which are published this morning, even if there is no rise in the price of silver and lead, in twelve months Chillagoe will wipe out its loss.

Mr. MORGAN: You are very optimistic.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The leader of the Nationalist party accused me of mispending the State's money in mining ventures. Does he expect a coalmine to pay before it has been developed? Always there has to be initial expenditure before a company or an individual can get any return from mining or any other industry.

Mr. SIZER: We do not agree with your going into these enterprises.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Will the hon. gentleman say that we have mispent money in our coalmining ventures, and where? I invite hon. members to reserve all the criticism they may have until we are discussing the Mines Estimates.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: What about Warra?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Warra was not my mistake; I had nothing to do with it.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Your Government had.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The loss on Warra has not been so great as the Opposition try to make out; it has been only about £4,000.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: It is indicative of the whole system.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not. We have not one unprofitable coalmine working in Queensland to-day; and they bring profit to the Railway Department. I invite the fullest discussion on the mining enterprises when we come to the Mines Estimates and I have the official figures.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*): I am not going to allow the remarks of the hon.

member for Musgrave to go unchallenged. That hon. member quoted figures from Bundaberg, and stated definitely that a certain number of men were unemployed because of Arbitration Court awards. He said that if these awards had not existed those men would have been found employment. I want this Committee to realise that this is the most critical period with which the sugar industry has been faced since we did away with black labour. The hon. member for Musgrave is one of the men who are asking the public of Australia to pay a higher price for their sugar than is absolutely necessary so that we may give to the grower of the sugar-cane a fair return for his labour. The wages in the sugar industry to-day are regulated by an agreement under which we attempt to give a fair return to every interest connected with that industry. By his speech to-day the hon. member has lessened his power as an advocate for the grower in that particular industry. He sends it out broadcast that, while he would maintain a fixed price which would mean to the consumer a higher price than might otherwise be necessary, he desires to secure that price for one section of the community at the expense of another section. It shows the fallacy of Country party representation in its true form. Even the "Brisbane Courier" contends that sectional representation, such as that of Country party members, is a system of representation that cannot live in any sane democracy. The hon. gentleman definitely stated that, when the men who had been on the unemployed list in Bundaberg presented themselves for work, through their privations and starvation they found that they were too weak to carry out the arduous labour set for them. The hon. member objects to those men receiving a fair rate of wages for the work. He makes contradictory statements like that in connection with one of the most stable industries in this State. The hon. member in his remarks admitted that the unemployment in that particular industry was of an artificial nature. His remarks are sufficient justification for the granting of relief in the Bundaberg district. The amount of relief granted, which is more generous than would be granted if the Opposition were in power, is admitted by the hon. gentleman to be insufficient to keep men in such a physical state as to enable them to do the work when it is provided. The leader of the Opposition says that it is the duty of the Government to provide work instead of issuing what he terms doles. His constructive idea of the solution of the difficulty was that we should work in connection with local authorities. The hon. gentleman must have had his tongue in his cheek when he made a statement like that to this Chamber. I recollect, a session or two ago, one of the best measures ever introduced into a British Parliament to solve the unemployed question was introduced by this Government in the form of the Unemployed Workers Bill. Provision was made in that Bill to compel hostile local authorities to accept money for progressive schemes, thereby safeguarding the health and well-being of the people. I have in mind Maryborough. Owing to the activity on the part of the member for that district, the Government came forward with a proposal to lend certain money which would have had the effect of dealing with the unemployed problem, but it was declined by the local authority in that district. Then the Bill was

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introduced, the parties opposite unanimously got together, dropped all their differences, and attempted to defeat the Bill.

Mr. WEIR (*Maryborough*): I was particularly surprised at the want of logic on the part of the hon. member for Musgrave, and I think his statement, taking the full text of it, absolutely condemns his argument. If we want to take our minds back to the olden days, to the many incidents which were responsible directly for the wretched state of existence in Queensland which brought about a lot of the unemployed and unfortunate circumstances of this country, we only want to take our minds back to the time when men with minds similar to that of the hon. member for Musgrave dominated every institution in this State. I particularly desire to draw attention to the black labour mind. The old black labour mind is still present to-day. The same mind exists, but circumstances have been altered and the danger is not so great, because the people have put those persons in their place. The danger is there, none the less. The hon. gentleman knows that the sugar industry, which he professes to know something about, has been put on a stable footing because of the fact that high wages have been paid. In the Lower Burdekin area, as a boy, I recollect the Macmillans, who then employed kanaka labour, and they were of the same mind as the hon. member for Musgrave. Finding that white labour in the industry drove out the kanaka to outside districts, just as white settlement drives the kangaroo into the wilderness, enabling healthy and happy Australians to live in those districts, which were once black labour settlements, the hon. gentleman now says that we should relegate the Arbitration Court to the scrap-heap, or, in other words, that we should allow the employing class to apply the pruning knife to the basic wage, which is now too low, and bring it down to less than a decent standard of living. If an industry is going to prosper only under such circumstances, I hope that industry will never prosper. If it is going to prosper at the expense of the sweat and blood of the "kiddies" of this State, let the hon. member take the responsibility. I will not. He says there is something wrong with the ration system. I said so the other night. We are not paying sufficient to keep people's bodies and souls in a decent state of existence. He says that men on the ration list are not physically fit to work. That is a fact. When the Maryborough City Council decided to improve Anzac Park, certain men were given employment. I was on the committee. I know from the ganger on the work that he had to be particularly lenient with some of the unfortunate chaps—many of them honest, decent chaps—for about a week until they got bodily strength to do a decent week's work. The hon. member said that there were 400 men in Bundaberg who were unemployed, and that £700 per month, or, in other words, 35s. per man per month, was spent on relief. He wants to cut that down. The amount of 8s. 9d. per week is not sufficient for any man, particularly if he has a wife and family; yet this advocate from the Bundaberg district says that it should be cut down. To keep a man and his wife and family in anything like a decent standard of existence, to enable the "kiddies" to go to bed at night feeling that they have got sufficient of this world's good things to satisfy their internal requirements, and to

enable them to be free from the trials of winter, they must receive more than the miserable pittance of 35s. per month. The hon. gentleman wants to cut that down. My argument has always been that these people should be given a standard of existence which will enable them to keep body and soul together so that they can do work when they get it. I would ask the Government seriously to consider increasing the ration standard. The men and women are entitled to it. In my own district I am prepared to take my share of the blame in the matter of increasing expenditure in that direction.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*): I have never stated that the amount granted for relief is too much.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You did.

Mr. CATTERMULL: The figures that I quoted I obtained yesterday afternoon from the police office, showing that 420 outsiders and 80 residents were obtaining relief, causing an expenditure of £750 a month.

Mr. GLEDSON: Did the hon. member quote those figures as representing the unemployed registered at the Labour Bureau?

Mr. RIORDAN: Yes.

Mr. CATTERMULL: I said the men who were drawing relief rations. Some men who were unemployed as far back as March last are on that list, and have not yet obtained work. I would like to deal with the black-labour question and low wages. I have never been an advocate of low wages; I have never been an advocate of black labour. I was one of the first to support a "White Australia" policy.

Mr. WEIR: Do you think £4 a week is too much?

Mr. CATTERMULL: I do not think the hon. member is worth it. I claim to be one of the first who advocated a "White Australia" policy. I believe in paying a man a good wage, but I want results. Nature has not made us all alike. We have no say in our coming here, and we are not endowed alike. We should be allowed to use what nature has given us, and, if a man who is endowed with intellect and strength can make his £6, £8, or £10 a week, more power to him; but at the present time, under our Arbitration Court awards, the competent man is carrying the incompetent man on his back. That is the trouble. What is the reason for so much unemployment to-day? You only want to go back—

Mr. COLLINS: Go back to the kanaka days.

Mr. CATTERMULL: In 1919, when an award was made in connection with the pastoral and grazing industry, the judge said that the higher rate was granted because of the prosperous condition of the industry.

Mr. DASH: He did not.

Mr. CATTERMULL: There were men working in the industry at the time who were getting £1 15s. a week and rations—men well up in years, who were quite willing to continue at that rate. The result was that the whole of those men were thrown out of work, and to-day the work that they were doing is not being performed because the pastoralist cannot afford to pay the present high rate of wages. As a result the country is being overgrown with undergrowth, and it has not the carrying capacity it had previously. It would be far better for these

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men to get work at a lower rate and have a constant job than to take Government doles. It would be far better for themselves and far better for the country.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The hon. member for Musgrave is in an unfortunate position. He got up without considering the effect his remarks would have on the country, and, having been exposed in those remarks by the hon. member for Mount Morgan and the hon. member for Maryborough, he now tries to apologise to the people of Queensland for what he has said. There is no doubt that behind his remarks he had in his mind that the Arbitration Court should be abolished, and that there would be no unemployed if wages were lower.

Mr. CATTERMULL: You say that; I did not.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is the only interpretation that can be placed on his remarks. It is far better to have unemployed on rations than that we should smash the system of the Arbitration Court by reducing wages to what they were in the old black labour days.

Reference has been made to the question of the local authorities finding work for the unemployed. Some time ago I arranged with Mr. Randolph Bedford to approach certain financial institutions in America to secure loan money for improvements in the city of Toowoomba, and I have received a cablegram from Mr. Bedford stating that he could obtain money from certain financial institutions. I submitted the cable to the city of Toowoomba, and the town clerk replied, "We do not want the money." Just fancy a city like Toowoomba, with roads in a shocking state and requiring trams and a water supply and all these things, saying they did not want loan money! The city council did not even have a meeting over it. The mayor said, "We can get as much money as we want from the Commonwealth Bank"; but the Commonwealth Bank turned them down. In an important matter such as this, the hon. member for East Toowoomba did not come along and give any assistance. We know that the City Council of Toowoomba is composed of interests the same as the Opposition, and, because the proposal came from a Labour member—a proposal for something progressive—no further steps were taken, and no steps have been taken by the Toowoomba Council to find work for the residents—hard-working men, who would be only too glad to accept employment. Money could have been obtained in America for necessary improvements, but nothing was done, and the hon. member for East Toowoomba did not trouble about it. Yet we find the hon. member repeatedly asking the Government, "When are you going to open the Willowburn works?" He is not serious. There is nothing progressive and nothing statesmanlike about him. The Opposition ask, "What are the Government going to do for these people?" But when something has been done in a big way they sit silent because the Labour member for Toowoomba might have got some kudos for the efforts he has made to assist the unemployed. What has the whole discussion been about? It is all a question of getting votes and trying to blind the workers. The real position is never explained in the capitalistic Press, and, except in "Hansard," the workers never get the truth. If last week's "Hansard" were sent to every worker in Queensland, the

workers would wake up and find a different story altogether to what the "Courier" and other newspapers are publishing against this Government.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): The hon. member for Musgrave made a remarkable reference to the hon. member for Maryborough, and said he was not worth the basic wage. The hon. member for Musgrave is one of those who puts himself on a pedestal and thinks he is superior to the rest of mankind. In other words, he says to himself, "A thousand a year for me; but you belong to the working class, and less than the basic wage for you." There are a lot of people like that, and they do not seem to realise that a change has come over the scene. Men have changed, and the workers might say to the hon. member for Musgrave, "Who are you that you should receive a thousand a year and then get up in your place in Parliament and say that the remedy for unemployment is to reduce the basic wage fixed by the Arbitration Court?" Hon. members opposite do not realise that this is the age of progress. The leader of the Nationalist party said that a remedy could be found for unemployment if the Home Department co-operated with the local authorities. Does he not realise that the local authorities can deal with the unemployment problem at the present moment if they so wish? Who controls the local authorities of this State? Our friends opposite.

Mr. MOORE: They were put there by the electors.

Mr. COLLINS: Of course they were put there by the electors, and I hope the electors will not be so dense next time. The hon. member for Aubigny knows that they can solve the unemployment problem if they so wish. The hon. member for Musgrave also knows it. I have been through his district, and in no other part of Queensland have we such high land values as there are in the Bundaberg district. According to the Registrar-General, the unimproved value of land in connection with local authorities is £68,401,342. What is to stop the local authority in the district of the hon. member for Musgrave, or the local authority in the electorate of the leader of the Nationalist party, putting on a higher rate than they have at the present time, and so solve the unemployed problem?

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Quite easy. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: Of course, it is quite easy. The hon. member for Albert belongs to the same class as the hon. member for Musgrave. He puts himself on a pedestal and thinks he is a superior kind of person. He does not realise that man is man, and that these unemployed are equal to him, and, maybe, would be more than equal if they had had the same opportunities that the hon. gentleman has had.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: They are certainly equal to the hon. member who is speaking.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Aubigny knows that the local authorities can solve the unemployed problem.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: We cannot collect the rates now.

Mr. COLLINS: You do not try to collect them. You do not try to tax the wealthy class in your shire.

Mr. J. JONES: You try to sell your State stations.

*Mr. Collins.]*

Mr. COLLINS: That is not the solution of the unemployed problem. In this morning's "Courier" I read that a supporter of hon. members opposite said that in the event of the Nationalist party ever getting into power they are going to do away with all State enterprises; and, considering that the gentleman in question stressed our State railways and the loss in connection with the railways, I take it that the hon. member for Albert is in favour of getting rid of our State railways.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I never said so. You cannot compare the two enterprises.

Mr. COLLINS: It is time the hon. member for Musgrave and others were put in their places. They want to get back to the good old days. I remember in the old black-labour days I worked in the canefields round about Pinalba in the year 1883 for 2s. 6d. per day and my food.

Mr. J. JONES: Were you worth it?

Mr. COLLINS: This is the first time my work has ever been questioned. Two shillings and sixpence per day and tucker was the wage paid in the good old black-labour days. I was physically fit at that time. The hon. member for Musgrave wants to return to those conditions.

Mr. CATTERMULL: No.

Mr. COLLINS: He thinks that would be a solution of the unemployed problem.

Mr. CATTERMULL: No.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Albert knows that there were thousands of men unemployed in 1883. We landed 26,000 people in Queensland that year. The workers were treated like slaves then, and that is what hon. members opposite want to return to and begrudge what hon. members opposite call "doles." It gets on my nerves when I hear members on the other side talking about "doles." They need to realise that this is an age of liberty, and that the workman is coming into his own, and that they will have to live on a lot less than the £1,000 per year which they get now, and which they have only exploited from other people who have done the work.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): There has been a fair amount of discussion on this vote, which I thought would have gone through after the Minister had replied; but hon. members opposite wanted to get in something more, and I do not see why they should not be accommodated with a reply to what they have said. The vote for outdoor relief looks a simple thing; but, when you come to analyse the reason why the money is being expended, it goes down to one of the fundamental principles of modern civilisation—that is, the question of whether a man has the right to live and work. Some hon. members opposite, by the way they talk, would lead us to infer that they actually think that if a man cannot work he should be allowed to starve to death. I have heard hon. members opposite, when they sat on this side, say that the spur of hunger was one of the greatest incentives to make men work, and I have heard them quote figures from the reports of the Labour Bureau as to the number of unemployed in Queensland, and assert that they were accurate. But the quotation which the hon. member for Musgrave gave this morning was deliberately intended to mislead the Committee and the people outside with regard to the number of unemployed in Bundaberg. One would

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imagine from hearing hon. members opposite that previous to the advent of this Government there was no such thing as unemployment; but everybody knows that the unemployed, like the poor, have always been with us. Even in normal times, when things are fairly good, there is always a number of unemployed. I remember a Minister in a previous Government showing an unemployed deputation the door, because they did not talk as courteously as it was thought they should have done. It used to be said that unemployment was a problem that no Government could solve, and I agree with that to a certain extent, because the unemployment problem goes much deeper than most people imagine. Hon. members opposite say that the present Government are responsible for the unemployment which exists to-day. Such a statement is absolutely untrue, and it has been refuted times without number, but those hon. members keep on making the statement. If the hon. member for Musgrave said anything, he said that the present Arbitration Court awards were responsible for unemployment. The only inference to be drawn from that is that, if men are prepared to work for less wages than they are getting, there would be more employment. That statement is backed up by the hon. member for Murilla, who said that the same thing applies to the mining industry, and that, if men were prepared to work for less wages than the award rate, they would find work. That is absolutely untrue. I am of opinion that in some mining districts, even if men offered to work for their tucker, it would be impossible to make the industry a paying concern at the present time. Whenever there is a necessity for economy or retrenchment it is wages that are first reduced by friends of members opposite. We know what happened in the old days, and hon. members opposite want to get back to the conditions which obtained then, but they will never be able to do so. The hon. member for Windsor has had something to do with local authorities, and he said that the unemployment problem could have been solved if the local authorities had been utilised; and the hon. member for Murilla said that the whole of the expenditure from this vote and a great deal more should have been concentrated in one spot, and the unemployed collected there.

Mr. MORGAN: No; my idea was to have a lot of places.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Unemployment is not confined to one particular place, and the money should be spent in different places, perhaps in clearing land and preparing farms; but that has been dealt with by the Minister. If one local authority was granted a portion of the vote for relief work, other local authorities would require to be treated in the same way, and the consequence would be that a vote of three or four times as much as the present amount would be necessary. The hon. member for Windsor denied most emphatically that the unemployed in Brisbane had been organised to form a deputation, but it is a remarkable fact that, when demonstrations can be made to cause injury to the Government, the unemployed are always organised. We have repeatedly seen the local unemployed in Brisbane organised when they could be of use to the Opposition, and the papers have given ample reports of all they have said in denunciation of the Government. It is a matter of common knowledge that the friends of hon. members

opposite are responsible for the unemployment which is brought about from time to time, and there is nothing strange about the unemployed being up to the House this morning in this deputation.

Mr. MORCAN: You are very suspicious.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member for Windsor said that the unemployment in the mining industry was due to the recklessness of the Secretary for Mines, which is a deliberate misstatement. The recklessness is due to hon. members opposite, whose reckless statements have again and again been refuted, and it has been shown that there have not been the losses which those hon. members assert. During the present depression in the mining industry, very few able-bodied men have been getting rations on the mining fields. The Department of Mines has found them money to do prospecting work. In hundreds of cases the miners have been kept at work in that way, which is infinitely better than having men doing nothing. The great difficulty is in finding work which has any chance of being remunerative, particularly in places like Brisbane. The hon. member for Pittsworth made a comparison between the present conditions and those which existed in Rome previous to its fall. The hon. member also interjected when the hon. member for Bowen was speaking that he was getting in good propaganda. The hon. gentleman was quite wrong in what he said about the Roman Empire. History teaches us that, when the citizens of Rome owned and worked small areas of five acres and under and the generals left the plough to lead their armies in battle, they conquered the world; but, when the land was held in large areas by the wealthy few, and the great bulk of the people were landless, working and living as slaves, while the patricians lived in luxury and profligacy, then came the downfall of the Empire.

I am satisfied that the unemployed problem is a difficult problem. Hon. members opposite have spoken on this vote, yet when they sat on the Government side of the House they made no attempt whatever to solve the unemployed problem. We brought in a Bill to solve the problem, and it was worthy of more consideration than it got. At the present time we have a Bill on the business-sheet to deal with the question. A man who has never had to roll up his blankets and start out to look for work does not know what it is to be unemployed. There is no more humiliating position for a man than to feel that he is strong and healthy and well qualified to work but he cannot get work to do. It is a part and parcel of our present-day system, and it is going to take something radical and something which will go right to the root of things before the question is solved. I think the Government have made an honest attempt to solve the problem, and at the present time they are doing the best possible under the circumstances to solve it. Hon. members opposite made reference to the State enterprises, and said they would do away with them. It is something to have that statement from them. They have said on previous occasions that, no matter whether the State enterprises were profitable or unprofitable, they were against them, and would wipe them out when they got the chance of doing so. It is just as well that the electors should know that. If the Government have made any mistake in connection with this vote at all, it has been

in the direction of making it too low. Anyone who knows anything about the position at all must know that, although the State allowance is much more liberal than it was before, it is still not sufficient to provide enough stamina for a man to enable him to go out straight away and do a hard day's work. We are going through trying times, and the conditions are such that we have not only to provide for our own unemployed but we have unemployed coming from the other States, and we have to look after them as well. Instead of blaming the Government we should really commend them for what they have done in dealing with the problem.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): It is a regrettable thing indeed that a man has to apply for relief, because no man likes to think that he has to depend on relief for existence. The average man desires employment. The Opposition stand for that. We do not say that, because a man is out of work in Queensland, he should be allowed to starve. We say that every man, woman, and child must have the means of existence. We say that it is up to the Government to find employment for men who are married, so that their wives and children can be kept in good health.

Mr. COLLINS: Why don't you do it through the local authorities?

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: What did the three members who have spoken from the Government side tell us? They said that the local authorities should find employment for these people.

Mr. COLLINS: That is so.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Does that mean that the credit of the local authorities is better than the credit of the State? I think it is the duty of the Government to find employment for the people. I recognise that there is some obligation on the part of the local authorities, too, but the State Government are the first who should have the responsibility for dealing with the unemployed. Notwithstanding that we spent two days last week and one-third of to-day already in discussing this vote, it does not give any more work to the people who want work. We know quite well that the dele given to those men does not keep them in sufficient condition to take up honest toil straight away. When I returned to Toowoomba last Saturday eleven or twelve men waited on me at my office to impress on me the seriousness of their individual positions. They were all men registered at the Labour Bureau, and I know that some of them have been registered there for some weeks, because they have been calling on me for some weeks. These eleven or twelve men told me that they could not find employment. A woman called at my office yesterday. She was quite a stranger to me. She told me that she and her husband and child walked from Warwick, and she gave me a very scathing account of the unfortunate position of the man on the land between Warwick and Toowoomba. Yet we have the hon. member for Bowen talking about putting more taxation on the land.

Mr. COLLINS: On the unimproved value of the land.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: It is all very well to talk about the unimproved value of the land. The present Government, by their

*Mr. T. R. Roberts.]*

actions, have reduced the value of land since 1915 by 40 per cent.

Mr. COLLINS: You used to advocate a land tax in the early days of the Labour movement.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The taxation imposed by the present Government is making many people hesitate to invest their money, or perhaps they might be able to do something in the matter of unemployment. The industrial position is such that it makes it impossible for men to find employment. I am not going to say that I would abolish the Arbitration Court. We know that there is a large body of men in Queensland who can only be classed as unskilled labour. It is so in Toowoomba, at any rate. We know that most of those who register at the Labour Bureau are unskilled.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is untrue.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The Minister in charge of the Public Works Department says that my remarks are untrue, but it certainly applies to Toowoomba, at any rate. If the Minister will obtain the report of the Public Works Department he will find that there is a large number of young men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one years who are unable to find employment in Queensland to-day. They do not go to the Labour Bureau to register their names, because they have homes, and they can get food at home. It is only right and fair that their parents should see that they are kept in food in their own homes. These people never register. The industrial position is such that we are producing more and more of these unskilled men. As these young men get older they will not have an opportunity to learn a trade at all. I do not blame the Government altogether for the position that exists. We have to recognise that the men who make these conditions are the masters and men themselves, and I want to say a word to them. Is it not time to review the whole position as we find it to-day? If these boys and young men are unable to get an opportunity to learn a trade, then we shall only add to our unskilled labour. In Toowoomba to-day we could give employment to skilled men, but unfortunately, owing to the seasonal conditions, that is not possible. We have not got the opportunity to employ a great body of unskilled workers. I might say a word or two to the Home Department in particular in this matter. I know that the Home Secretary made an excellent proposition some time ago, and I referred to it last session, where he proposed to come to an arrangement with the local authorities in regard to finding employment. The local authorities were going to find the tools and the material, and the Government were going to find a certain amount of money. I would like to know why the scheme was not put into operation—whether the men sitting behind the Government and the unions interfered. It is all very well to say that the Government had not enough money to go round. We should not wait till we have enough to give every man employment; we should see that we get the best results we can for the money we have. I say it would have been a good thing if the Government had accepted the suggestion of the Home Secretary and found fifty men work, even if they had to provide relief for the other men.

[Mr. T. R. Roberts.]

The City Council of Toowoomba had an interview with the then Treasurer, Mr. Fihelly, and made £1,000 available for work on the Toll Bar road. The mayor—and I am sure no man in that position would have made the statement without reasonable cause—reported that he had the authority of the Treasurer to say that the money would be refunded to the council. It has not been refunded. I know it has been said that it cannot be done, but it is unfortunate, and the mayor has promised that if the £1,000 is refunded it will be made available for work for some of the men who are idle at the present moment.

I think the hon. member for Toowoomba associated my name with others who he said had taken no interest in the proposition which he had the check to put up to the City Council. The men who were concerned were the hon. member himself and Mr. Randolph Bedford. Imagine those men talking about American loans of a quarter of a million! It is sufficient for me to treat it with contempt.

Mr. GLEDSON ( *Ipswich* ): I did not intend to say anything on this vote, but I listened carefully to the debate on Friday, and I have heard the Minister reply fully, and I thought the debate would have been closed, but evidently the Nationalists are not satisfied. They have resurrected the matter, and I think it is only fair that hon. members on this side should reply to their misstatements. One of the misstatements is that the financial transactions of the Government have caused the unemployment. If that be so, then the financial transactions of the Nationalists and Country party Governments in the other States must have caused the great amount of unemployment there. The leader of the Nationalist party said that the bulk of the unemployment on the mining fields was caused by the action of the Minister. That is just the opposite of the truth, more particularly on the coalmining fields. The cause of the unemployment is the failure of the friends of the Opposition, the failure of private enterprise and of the capitalists, to provide for the men they engage in their industries and throw on the scrapheap when they are done with them. That is the cause of unemployment, not only in Queensland but in every other country in the world; and there will be no remedy till we alter the system altogether and wipe out private enterprise and the capitalistic method, and till we have—as many of my friends have told hon. members opposite before—production of foodstuffs and the necessaries of life for use and not for profit.

Take the older countries of the world and see what they have done with the unemployment problem. Take Britain and her Allies who won the war, and Germany, whom they defeated. Germany, in her reconstruction, set out to find work for every man and woman.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Ten and twelve hours a day.

Mr. MORGAN: At very low wages.

Mr. GLEDSON: I am prepared to show that they are not working ten or twelve hours a day, but they are working the hours necessary to keep everyone employed.

Mr. MORGAN: For what wages?

Mr. GLEDSON: For higher wages than they have ever received before or since the war. In the textile industry, in which we

work forty-eight hours, they work forty-six as the maximum. The number of hours they work is sufficient to keep every man and woman employed, and we have to reach that stage here. We have to work the number of hours required to give the production necessary. When we work more it means unemployment. Reports from Germany are to the effect that official statistics show that of 70,000,000 people, only 19,000 are unemployed.

Mr. FRY: What is the date of the report?

Mr. GLEDSON: It is about a fortnight ago. Those figures are from the labour bureaux in Germany, and are lower than ever before in her history.

Now, let us come to Australia. The cause of unemployment in my own district has been the failure of the friends of hon. members opposite to keep their works going. Something like four mines have closed down within the last three or four weeks.

Mr. MORGAN: Coal is too dear to enable them to keep going.

Mr. GLEDSON: Coal here is cheaper than in other parts of the world. The price in Great Britain is £1 7s. 6d. a ton; at Ipswich it is 16s. 6d.; in New South Wales it is 19s. 9d.; and in America, £2 5s. We have mines there which have done no work since last Friday, and will do none till next Friday. That will be a full week without work. The men are thrown out of work, yet people say that they should not receive assistance. How are they to do without assistance when they have probably not been working for the last six months, or their average has been less than three days a week? Would that keep them and their families? Then they are thrown out altogether, and after a week or two they have to seek assistance from the Government. Yet they are condemned by hon. members opposite.

The leader of the Nationalist party blamed the Secretary for Mines for causing unemployment by his action in connection with the Government mining ventures. Let us analyse that statement and see whether there is any truth in it at all. When the slump took place in the metal industry, pretty well all the metal concerns were under

[2 p.m.] the control of private enterprise—Mount Morgan, Cloncurry, Mount Elliot, and Duchess. Instead of showing any consideration to the thousands of men who have honestly and faithfully worked for the purpose of providing dividends for those companies, the works were immediately closed down and the men dismissed. Compare that with the action of the Secretary for Mines in regard to Chillagoe. Instead of closing down the smelters and throwing the men idle, the Minister kept the smelters going, and 3,000 to 4,000 souls in North Queensland were able to provide for themselves instead of receiving Government relief, as was the case on many other fields. In the coalmining industry, directly the slump occurred and vessels were not taking the coal, the mines were closed down and the men thrown idle. Hon. members opposite have told us that it was because this Government were in power that no new works could be started. The hon. member for East Toowoomba said that it is not the local authorities' place to find work—the Government should do it. Yet they tell us they would immediately close down all State enterprises.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLEDSON: How can hon. members reconcile those two statements? How can the hon. member for Albert say we should close down the State enterprises and then argue that it is the duty of the Government to find work for these men? How can the Government find other than governmental work?

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Use legitimately the money which is wasted in these enterprises.

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member for Albert does not want State enterprises to be closed down; he wants the money to be used in a legitimate way in State enterprises which will not show a loss.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: You are misinterpreting what I said. I said, to use the money that is being wasted in certain enterprises.

Mr. GLEDSON: When the slump occurred the Secretary for Mines immediately started to develop new works in places where other people did not go. He sank a certain amount of money in Baralaba; and in the electorate of the leader of the Opposition, I think something like £47,000 was the outlay. Some of that money was recovered by the sale of the machinery. I suppose £12,000 or £15,000 was spent in the electorate to ascertain what coal was there. That money has gone there.

Mr. VOWLES: We knew beforehand in Dalby.

Mr. GLEDSON: The people did not know anything of the sort. They do not even know yet what coal is there. Owing to the amount of water the Government were unable to ascertain what coal existed. There was not sufficient money available fully to develop the mine at the time, and probably in a few years, when coal is required there, the mine will be further developed. Money was spent at Baralaba to ascertain what coal existed there, and money was spent at the Styx River for the same purpose. Money was spent in places that were never investigated before. The Bowen coalfield was developed and a railway constructed. Hon. members opposite say that the Government have not done anything to create employment. We know that there are thousands more men employed in Queensland to-day than were employed when the Liberal Government were in power, and still hon. members opposite say it is our duty to find work for the unemployed. I agree that it is our duty to find work for them, but it is also our duty to prevent private enterprise exploiting the workers and then throwing them upon the scrapheap. It is our duty to find work for them when private enterprise refuses to find it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And get value for the money, too.

Mr. GLEDSON: Yes. Apart from what the hon. gentleman says, I believe that the men working for the Government in Queensland are giving value for the money.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member for Drayton did not suggest that they were not.

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member, by innuendo, said they were not. Hon. members opposite never speak straight out.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If a bootmaker is put on to make a watch, can he give value for the money?

Mr. GLEDSON: Can any hon. member say that the men employed in the coalmines

*Mr. Gledson.]*

to-day working for the Government do not give value for the money? Hon. members opposite endeavour by innuendo to assert that the men do not give value for the money.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The men are not supplied with up-to-date machinery. They are expected to carry out the work with an old plough and scoop. Give the men a chance.

Mr. GLEDSON: If the hon. member knew what he was talking about, he would know that men do not fill coal with a plough and scoop.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am talking about employment generally.

Mr. GLEDSON: If the hon. member who is attempting to woo the electors of the Rosewood district tells them that they will have to give up getting coal with a plough and scoop, they will wonder who is coming along to talk to them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I would tell them that they should not try to pull out a stump before cutting down the tree.

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member for Enoggera asks what is being done to assist the returned soldiers. When the men returned from the front, private employers said that they were unable to give them their jobs back again. If they did give them work, it and wheel this wagon." The wagon would perform. If a man returned from the front with a crippled arm or leg, practically unable to walk, the employer would say, "Go down and wheel this waggon." The waggon would contain from 10 cwt. to a ton of coal, and would have to be wheeled up an incline of one in four or one in eight. Because the man was unable to do that, the employer would say, "We have not got anything for you to do. You cannot do the work you did before you went to the front, and that ends our liability. We cannot do anything for you." That is the way they treated them. But what did the Government do? In my own district alone, during the first year that these men were returning, there were nearly 100 returned soldiers who were unable to work in their old employment, and who had not previously been employed by the Government, who were put in the workshops in Ipswich and given work. In addition, every returned man who had previously been in the workshops was given work, and the Government did not say to him, "If you are not able to stand there and use the sledge hammer on the rails, or if you are not able to stand with the hammer in the blacksmith's shop, we have nothing else for you to do." If they were not able to do their old work, the Government instructed the foremen to find work that the men were able to do. Private employers have not done that.

Some sneering remarks have been made by hon. members opposite in connection with what Germany has done. The German Government—which is practically a Labour Government—passed an Act which provides that every employer of labour must take a percentage of maimed and wounded soldiers into their employ and provide for them. What would the employers here do if we attempted to do that? If the Federal Government, who have control of these matters, attempted to do that, the employers would be up in arms and would close their works, as they are doing all over Australia to-day.

[Mr. Gledson.

I find that the "Labour Call," which was published on Thursday, 31st August, contains the following:—

"CAN SUCH THINGS BE IN SUNNY AUSTRALIA.

"20,000 Destitute in Newcastle.

"Unemployment Rife in every State.

"And still the Immigrants come."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: A communistic paper.

Mr. GLEDSON: I do not know if the hon. member knows what communism means, but, if he does not, I would advise him to ascertain what it does mean, because the hon. member represents a communistic community at the present time. The Farmers' Union and the Primary Producers' Union are the greatest communists we have to-day.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We are co-operationists—a different thing altogether.

At 2.13 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. GLEDSON: The quotation reads—

"Mr. B. Deramore-Denver, special commissioner for the 'Sunday Times,' writes thus to his paper from Newcastle—

This is a city of destitution, of poverty and suffering; a city of desolation and agony. It knows to-day children blue with cold and emaciated from lack of food; it knows homes denuded of furniture sold to buy food; it knows hundreds—yes, thousands—who huddle in bags, in rags, in old newspapers, in the pitiful effort to keep themselves from pneumonia and death.

It knows all this, lives all this, and must endure, all because the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, Limited, shut down its plant nearly three months ago, and deliberately threw out of work something like 6,000 men.

Because each worker was supporting an average of three persons, it means that the shut-down of the biggest steel plant in Australasia has sent close to 20,000 on to the Government bread line.

And that is the number of humans in Newcastle who have been forced on to the Government bread line, declare city officials. If it were not for Government aid, they would have starved to death weeks ago.

"That is a nice picture of Australia. In the twentieth century, a young, empty land. That is something for the war fanatics to cogitate over. Here is a city in a state of destitution, and we were continually told by 'patriots' that Australians were fighting to make this country a land fit for heroes to live in."

Listen to what the mayor of Newcastle has to say on the subject:—

"I wish to God that the steel works never had been located in Newcastle. It lured thousands here, gave them work, and now, in its shut-work, has forced the legion of workers and their families into suffering and woe such as Newcastle never has known before in its experience.



"But this is only one city in the Commonwealth where unemployment, misery, and starvation exist. From Brisbane to Perth we hear the same cry, and there are more unemployed in Tasmania than was ever known before. Men are starving in Hobart and Launceston. Mr. M. Page said at a meeting of unemployed recently, that the struggle to-day was worse than the fight against the Hun.

"Unemployment stalks through the land, showing in grim reality the farcicality of our present system, when one side of the road people roll in riches and luxury, and on the other men, women, and children are absolutely starving. It is a nice picture to put on the film, and show intending immigrants from the old country, who are themselves on the verge of starvation, brought about by greed and credulity of capitalism. All this misery, cupidity, and starvation is the direct result of the system under which we live to-day."

That sums up the position. That extract shows the failure of private enterprise and the cupidity and greed of the capitalist, who makes big profits, and who, if the profits are not forthcoming, throws the workmen on the scrapheap. What do they care whether the women and "kiddies" are starving in the cold, or whether they are taken to the cemetery or not? All they have to do is to put an advertisement in the paper, and they can get thousands of men to flock to them every week. The capitalistic system is built on unemployment; the capitalists will see to it that they keep the unemployed there. They throw the responsibility on the Government and ask them to keep the unemployed. They say that the Government should keep them by supplying them with relief, so that, when they want them, all they have to do is to advertise for them and they will get them. That is the position in Newcastle, Hobart, and other places. Although we are discussing a vote of £52,000 for outdoor relief, I am sure that every member of the Labour party would not mind if the amount was £500,000 so long as it relieved distress and kept women and "kiddies" from starving. Not one penny of the vote will be begrudged by the Labour party if it is for the purpose of relieving genuine distress, no matter how much it may be increased.

There is a personal matter I wish to bring up, to show that this Government is not the only Government in the world which gives unemployment relief. The day before yesterday a man came to me in the lobby of the House, and said he was told to come to me. He was a miner from the old country. He said, "I come from Lancashire, where I tramped about for weeks and months and could not get a job. I was forced to come out here, and I want to know if you can get me work." I said, "Where have you last come from?" He said, "From New South Wales. I could not get anything there, and I came up here." This morning another man came to me and said he had just landed from the old country. He was starving there, and had nothing to do, and he came out here, and he is looking for work. These men are brought out to Victoria and New South Wales. There is nothing but starvation there for them, and they come to Queensland because they know there is a

sympathetic Government here who will not allow anyone to starve, no matter where he comes from. The Government are going to do their best to provide these men with work, and, if they cannot find them work themselves, they are going to assist private enterprise to establish works for that purpose. They have spent thousands of pounds in helping the Chillagoe Company to keep the mine going, and to establish works for coking purposes. The Government not only provide work themselves, but help private enterprise to find work for the relief of distress in the State.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (Hornwick): We have listened to remarks from the other side of an extremely extravagant character, to the effect that hon. members on this side of the Chamber are entirely adverse and antagonistic to helping people who are out of work and who are really in need of relief. I claim that members on this side have shown a generosity that may possibly be non-existent except in lip language on the opposite side of the House.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There is not much evidence of it.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Every day almost, where there are genuine cases, those cases receive generous treatment, no matter whether it is the present Government who are in office or any other Government. We know that where there are cases of genuine necessity those who are associated with us in the National government of the country are ready to see that relief is given. It is an unworthy charge to make against this side or against the capitalistic community generally. I for one feel strongly in that direction, but at the same time I think that you can go too far. A great deal of money has been expended, but men would have been far happier and truer citizens if, instead of having doled out to them certain sums of money, they had work given to them. No one can accuse the Government of the day of being responsible for all the unemployment that exists. As the hon. member for Queenton said, no such charge can be made against this Government or any other Government, but a mighty charge can be made against this Government of being directly responsible for a great deal of the unemployment that exists to-day in Queensland. I do not see that they should have to put up with the unemployed who come from other States, but we know they are invited to come from the other States as a result of the generosity of the Government. It is unwise to invite people here under such circumstances, but it is due to the stupid administration of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Who is making charges now?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: One of the measures that has to receive the early consideration of this House is the Tramways Bill. How long have the Government been tinkering with that matter? They have been tinkering with it and they have been disturbing things, otherwise a great deal of work would have been given to men in making extensions in every direction. This city has been kept back as a result of the tinkering administration of the Government and of the way they have been dealing with the Tramways Company.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to the question before the Committee.

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am dealing with unemployment. The Minister asked me to give an instance where unemployment could be dealt with, and I am giving him an instance. I am giving him one of the causes of unemployment, and I could give any number of them. That is one of the causes of unemployment to-day. I mentioned the extensions of the tramways as a means whereby we could give employment to labour because extensions would be made in every conceivable direction and men would be employed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: It is not in order to deal with the tramway extensions on this vote.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am dealing with the question before the House.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is dealing with the Brisbane Tramways Bill.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Every member of this Committee who has spoken has been allowed latitude in dealing with this matter. I was asked by the Minister where the Government are to be blamed for the unemployment that exists to-day, and I am giving an illustration. Those extensions would be going on to-day but for the Government, and employment would be given to a large number of men, and, as a result, unemployment would be infinitely less than it is to-day. In addition to that, the whole of the Government policy has had an effect on unemployment. There is going to rise up in this land an army of young life that will condemn this Government and every like Government.

Mr. PEASE: They are being converted to it every day.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Others are being converted in another direction. There is an army of men to-day who are simply workers instead of men with trades to fall back on, due entirely to the way in which the Government have inculcated their doctrines amongst the people. Otherwise, young men would have been engaged as apprentices. In almost every walk of life we are allowed to employ only one junior to three adults, and the result is that there is a dearth of tradesmen in many directions, because men have not been trained. That is the curse of the hour. Hon. members opposite will not study the people in the community who would open up avenues for the absorption of these young men.

Mr. FORDE: That is a matter for the Arbitration Court.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Who is at the back of the Arbitration Court? Hon. members opposite know right well that the unions, with their propaganda, have made claims on the court and have thereby largely brought about the result I am quoting. I made inquiries the other day regarding the slow progress of some work in my own town, and I was told that tradesmen for the job could not be secured. We have not been breeding them, because the unions, which are at the back of the Government, have prevented young men from being educated in various trades. The result is that, instead of having carpenters and stonemasons and bricklayers—instead of having men with some trade at their fingers' ends—we have simply working men. (Government dissent.) This Govern-

ment, and like Governments, are directly responsible for a great deal of unemployment. We would have had works going on in nearly all directions had there been a degree of confidence which does not exist to-day. The people will rise up and condemn this Government. They are doing it to-day, and, if the Government had the courage, they would go to their masters, the people, and ask them what they think of it. I am far from thinking that the unemployed are all undeserving men. I know too much about them. How many really deserving men come to us and ask for work and we cannot help them, because pretty well every enterprise has been thwarted and throttled, so that men are unable to put their hearts into it as they would if they had freedom of thought and action! I notice by to-day's paper that the huge sum estimated by one man as the waste in our State enterprises amounts to £7,000,000. If that sum had been put into another avenue which would have made for employment, how different the result would have been! The capital which has been taken from the people by means of taxation would have been expended in enterprise had it remained with those people. The men who possess capital do not put it into glass cases:

[2.30 p.m.] they utilise it in every way. The utilisation of that would have meant employment of a large army of men. I would not care to carry the responsibility which attaches to the Government because of the existing unemployment. The hon. member for Ipswich just now dilated upon the expenditure incurred in the opening up of coalmines; he justified the waste that has taken place in that direction.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I deny that there has been any waste. Every coalmine we are working shows a profit to-day, and we are selling coal at a cheaper rate than any other colliery proprietor in the world.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Government are developing mines and they cannot find a market for the coal.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are not going to take all your misrepresentation lying down.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Government have to justify their existence as conductors of enterprise before they can pose as a high authority in the way in which the Minister is doing now. That kind of bluff is not going to take with the country. It is audacity to say they are not going to take lying down the charges made against them in regard to their maladministration. While they may have given employment for the time being, the reaction has come.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You stated that we had wasted money in coalmines; and the State coalmines are working at a profit.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: What about Warra? Did the Government not expend £48,000 on that mine? By their mismanagement of the finances the Government have brought about such a condition that they have to pay a higher rate of interest for the money they borrow than otherwise would have been the case. One thing which will bring about employment is the cheapening of money. Let money become cheaper, and we shall see a great deal of it being expended in various directions. The years of greatest activity, development, and success were those when money was obtainable at an interest rate of 5 per cent. The issuing of Government bonds

[Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

has made money dear, when otherwise it would have been exceedingly cheaper.

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

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): I think I have a few minutes left of my time. The hon. member for Warwick claims to have great sympathy for the unemployed and for the working class. He says that the capitalists who have money to invest do not want to put it into glass cases. We all realise that they do not put it into glass cases unless they are pretty sure of getting a good return from those cases. Take the hon. member's own firm.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! By a perusal of the records I find that the hon. member has already occupied his full time. (Laughter.)

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): It is difficult to understand the logic of members of the Opposition on this particular question. Some of them have told the Government they spent too much money in giving doles to the workers; others say that, when the unemployed do get work, they are so weak that for some weeks they are unable to do a fair day's work. If, on the rations which the Government find them, they are so weak, it is evident to any man of common sense that they are not getting sufficient to eat.

At 2.35 p.m.,

The Chairman resumed the chair.

Mr. PAYNE: The hon. member for Warwick, with crocodile tears, went so far as to say that his heart bled when members of the unemployed came to him and he could not find them employment. I charge the hon. member for Warwick and the party to which he belongs with being wholly and solely responsible for any man being unemployed in the State. (Opposition dissent.) If the Nationalist party had not interfered with the Government policy by sending a delegation to London to prevent the Government getting the money that it was arranged with the Labour party they should get, there would not have been one unemployed man in Queensland. The Nationalist party say they had nothing to do with it. Yet the leader of the party said that if there had been no legislation there would have been no delegation. What does that mean?

Mr. MAXWELL: Repudiation.

Mr. PAYNE: I want the leader of the Opposition to take special notice of this: If it were possible to allow no man to vote except the man who is settled on the land in the grazing industry in the Mitchell electorate, I would be willing to submit myself for election to those people, and I claim that I would win with a majority of two to one. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: You will not get a walk-over the next time.

Mr. PAYNE: I know what I am saying. Three-fourths of the grazing selectors never had any objection to what is called the "Repudiation Act"; it was only the great big fellow who objected. The legitimate settler says that we did the right thing. These men who are always howling about our legislation are at the back of the great big financial companies. Anyone with an ounce of common sense must realise that they are backing up the great big financial concerns, and not the legitimate settler on the land.

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

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I do not think that any member of this Committee objects to relief being given in genuine cases. This has always been the policy of every Administration which has administered the government of the State. My experience has always been that hon. members on both sides are agreed that relief should be given in genuine cases. I do not think that hon. members on this side have raised any objection to such relief being afforded to the suffering members of the community. In discussing this matter we have sought to arrive at a reason for the unemployment which exists to-day. It is the custom of hon. members opposite immediately to raise that parrot cry, "You want low wages." I have never cavilled at the rate of wages, whatever they were. I am of the opinion that the employers of labour, who are certainly sitting on this side of the House, have never cavilled at the rate of wages that the Arbitration Court has laid down.

Mr. HARTLEY: They are always cavilling.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I have heard that, when any hon. members opposite have had any work to be done for themselves, they have invariably objected to the rates of wages demanded and which they have had to pay. I think it is a case of the cuttle-fish trying to becloud the issue.

Mr. HARTLEY: About £10,000 a year is spent by the employers to fight arbitration cases.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am not a large employer of labour, but I employ some labour, and I have never objected to the rates of wages to be paid, and I have received full value for such wages. This is not a question of what the Arbitration Court says must be the wages, but it is a question of the cause of the unemployment that exists. If you tap the source of a stream, as this Administration have tapped the source of supplies, then it naturally follows that there cannot be that expansion in our industries and general development which affords employment. If you take away the ability of those in the habit of employing labour and thus prevent their spending capital on such employment, you will have unemployment. Every member of the community who looks at the matter in a dispassionate way must realise that many persons who were in the habit of furnishing the means of employment are now unable to do so, and persons who were able to find employment hitherto are now unable to do so. Take the question of building houses for letting purposes in our large centres of population. To-day it is not a payable proposition. I think it is admitted that where a certain amount of capital is expended it should yield a sufficient return on the investment. The State should also receive a certain return for the capital which it invests. The amount to be returned could be limited by law. I do not believe that excessive returns should be permitted. To-day, owing to the excessive cost of timber, it is impossible to erect those small dwellings which hitherto were erected in our large centres of population at such a cost as would furnish just returns for the capital so invested. What is the cause of the increase in the price of timber? Every member of the community knows that the increase is due to the action of the Government in

*Hon. J. G. Appel.]*

charging what is called a "stumpage" on timber. The Government are the largest owners of timber in Queen-land, and by increasing the "stumpage" they have increased the cost of timber, and now it is impossible profitably to erect homes, and men who were previously employed in connection with such work throughout the State are now out of work. I charge the Government with being directly responsible for the increase in the cost of timber, which has caused the cessation of investment of the large amount of money which was previously invested in the construction of dwellings and which enabled tradesmen to obtain employment. We cannot shut our eyes to the cause of unemployment, nor can we shut our eyes to the effect.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We will reply to that when we discuss the Estimates of the Department of Public Lands.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The discussion on this Estimate has been generally as to the cause of unemployment. It has been stated that buildings are being constructed in Brisbane. Who are constructing them? The big companies. Are the smaller retailers constructing new business premises?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Yes.

HON. J. G. APPEL: They are not. Hundreds have been shut out because the State has gone in for trading. Consequently a large number of men who were employed by these small traders have been thrown upon the unemployed market. Did not hon. members opposite when they were in opposition urge upon the people that under the Government then in power a considerable number of men were unemployed, and that, if there was only one member of the community unemployed, that was evidence of faulty financial administration? And did they not urge the people to return them in a majority? It is useless to say that the whole of the unemployment has been caused by the war. We all know that during the war there was a phenomenal amount of employment provided, and that was caused because of the quantity of material required by Great Britain and her allies. During that time the present Government were sapping those who were engaged in private industries. They were taking away capital which should have been and would have been legitimately employed in the expansion of our different industries, and to-day the result is unemployment. You cannot expect anything else.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Is the position not the same in New South Wales and elsewhere?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Of course it is, under a Labour Administration. The Labour Administration of New South Wales was responsible for the position there, but the electors of New South Wales only suffered for a little over two years, whereas we have suffered for over seven years, and consequently our condition is considerably worse than the condition of New South Wales. It does not matter where you have a Labour Administration, you find they make an unholy muddle of the finances. We find that these gentlemen, who profess to know so much about finance—I admit that they were very excellent critics when they sat in opposition—no sooner get possession of the Treasury benches than faulty administration commences. You have only to look at the

*{Hon J. G. Appel.*

financial condition of the State, at the financial condition of the community generally as evidenced by the amount of unemployment existing to-day, for proof of that statement. Why, the whole heart has been taken out of the community. All the Government have done has been to build up large monopolistic concerns; all the big trading concerns are increasing their premises at the expense of the smaller men, whom the Government have closed up by their administration and by their excessive taxation. It is useless to say that the war has brought about the present condition. We know that the smaller trading concerns have had to close down as a result of the administration of the present Government. That applies wherever you go throughout the length and breadth of the State.

Reference has been made to the State mining enterprises. It has been urged, and I quite agree with what has been said, that, had the State not entered into these enterprises, which have resulted in a terrible loss to the State, a large amount of money would have been available for the purpose of carrying out legitimate works which would have afforded a large amount of employment to those who to-day are unable to find employment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do you say we should not have kept Chillagoe going?

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Administration of which I was a member would not touch Chillagoe. Over and over again we were urged to acquire that proposition, and we turned it resolutely down, and my reason for opposing the proposition was this: I said that the Labour party would have just cause to criticise us if we acquired a concern which had proved an absolutely unpayable proposition. But no sooner did the present Administration obtain power than that which we held was an absolutely unprofitable proposition for the State was acquired. What has been the result? It has not been a payable proposition, nor will it ever be a payable proposition, and the Minister knows that quite well.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It will be.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The State stands to lose a large amount of money in connection with that matter. Does the Minister urge that the acquirement of cattle stations has been of profit to the State? Had that money been invested in the construction of new schools and in additions to State schools which are unfit for occupation at the present time—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have spent more money on State schools than you did.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Yes, because it costs you as much money, owing to the present high price of timber brought about by your Government, to build one State school as it cost us to build three State schools. The present Government may have spent more money on State schools, but they have not built as many new schools as we did. If the large amount of money which has been wasted in the acquirement of State stations had been expended in the construction of new schools and in additions to existing schools, it would have afforded a large amount of employment for carpenters and other tradesmen.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do you say that the State schools are unfit for occupation?

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. gentleman knows that all over Queensland there are State schools which should have been renovated five years ago, and every year the committees are receiving the notification "Funds are not available." Why are they not available? Because of the purchase of these rotten State enterprises.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was a good old phrase in your time—"Funds are not available."

HON. J. G. APPEL: There is good evidence as to the funds we expended; but to-day you cannot see that new schools have been built, though you can see evidence of schools that are unfit for occupation. Go into any electorate, even into electorates represented by hon. members sitting on the Government benches, and the same thing prevails. Why? For the simple reason that money has been improperly diverted from its legitimate use and has been expended in those propositions which to-day are involving the State in a very large loss. Can one wonder at the large amount of unemployment? The Minister knows as well as I do that this is the cause of unemployment. Of course, he is in a difficult position, and he has my sympathy. When he was speaking this morning every hon. member on this side of the Chamber could see the difficulty under which he laboured, because he knows in his heart that the position is as I have stated it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was quite at home when I was speaking, and every word I uttered was quite sincere.

HON. J. G. APPEL: It did not look as if such were the case, I am sorry to say. It was a very laboured effort on the part of the hon. gentleman, and, if he had been a listener instead of the speaker he would have judged, as I did, that he was not speaking from his heart. I do not care to get up and criticise the Government. I would prefer to stand up here and say that I had to commend them for the action they had taken in finding employment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why don't you applaud us for the diminishing number of unemployed?

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. gentleman mentioned that the Administration were straining their humanity, and of course, if you strain your humanity and reduce the number that you are assisting naturally, according to the official figures the number of unemployed will be decreasing. If you strain your humanity and say you are not going to afford relief to this man and that man, and then say the number of unemployed is decreasing, that is a very specious argument; nevertheless it does not affect the number of unemployed. I am not going to say that, when a man can get employment and refuses to accept such employment, he should be afforded relief. Relief should be given only to those who cannot find work, or for whom it is impossible to find work. I do not say that it is the duty of the Government to find work for every man who is unemployed, but the Government should so administer the affairs of the State as to give encouragement to those who have hitherto assisted in the development of Queensland.

The parrot cry of "the delegation" is one which I can assure the hon. gentleman is

falling very flat with the electors of the State. Hon. members opposite should examine their own action, and reduce it

[3 p.m.] to the personal equation. If hon. members opposite acted towards a man from whom they had borrowed money and from whom they desired further advances, in the same way as they acted as a Government, they would not require a delegation to persuade such person not to give them any further credit. The Government regarded as a mere scrap of paper the agreement which they had made with the pastoral tenants of the Crown. I am not saying the pastoral tenants paid a sufficient rent, but if you make an agreement you have to stand by it. The Government repudiated the agreement, and gave the State a bad name in the money market of Great Britain; and they cannot complain if those from whom they sought to obtain further advances refused to make those advances. The Government say the delegation was responsible for it. If the financiers of Great Britain had considered the business to be good, the delegation would not have blocked it. The late Sir Robert Philp and those who were with him could not have influenced the financiers of Great Britain. The statement of hon. members opposite is farcical, and it shows either that the Government and their supporters who made that statement consider that the electors are fools, or they are fools themselves to make it. If the Government had acted honestly, as men conducting the affairs of a great State like Queensland should do, they could have obtained all the money they required from the financiers of Great Britain; but by acting in the way they have done they have met the fate which a private individual would meet with if he dishonoured an agreement he made. Hence the unemployment in Queensland to-day. Hon. members opposite, judging from the discussions which have taken place in their party meetings in connection with this matter, know that it is owing to this that there is so much unemployment in Queensland to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We do not know anything of the kind.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The parrot cry of hon. members opposite that we on this side desire low wages is something which they do not believe themselves. There is not one member on this side who objects to pay the wages awarded by the Arbitration Court. I notice that officers of the departments were instructed by the Government to appear and oppose the giving of increases by the Arbitration Court to public servants. Hon. members opposite now try to lead the people to believe that they have never done that. They accuse hon. members on this side of reducing wages when they have done the same thing themselves; they have applied to the Arbitration Court for a reduction of wages of the public servants, and have set a shocking example. If you stop the source of supply, as the present Government have done, the inevitable result is the stoppage of enterprise and the consequent unemployment which exists to-day.

Question put and passed.

#### POLICE.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): I beg to move—  
"That £426,847 be granted for 'Police.'"

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

Hon. members will notice a decrease in this vote of £14,463. I am pleased to note that while this Government have been in power there has been a reduction in the number of people brought before the courts and in the number of convictions. (Opposition laughter.) We know that a well-governed country is due to the policy of the Government. Unemployment causes an increase in crime and wrong-doing and breaches of the law, but in a well-governed country crimes will be minimised. While we have been in office there has been a decided reduction in crime and in the number of convictions.

Mr. VOWLES: Don't you think that is a tribute to the police?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think it is a tribute to the police for the excellent work they do and to our Government. The number of persons in gaols and the amount of crime committed are not indicative of good government; therefore, I am very pleased to mention the decrease in crime.

Mr. KING: We have not got the Police Report yet.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*) (who was received with Opposition cries of "More stonewalling" and laughter) said: No. This is a very important vote, and one in which every member should take a keen interest.

Mr. BRAND: You have promised a lot of them promotion, have you not?

Mr. FORDE: I do not know where the hon. member gets his information from. I have not the power to assure any member of the Police Force of promotion, but I would never stand in the way of any deserving member of the force getting promotion. I know a good number of men who deserve promotion, and if by my telling the Commissioner or Home Secretary of their good qualities they will get promotion, then I will do it; but I do not ask that any man should get what he does not well merit. Those I recommend for promotion are deserving of it. The Police Force is one of the most important branches of the public service, and there is no branch in the public service which deserves greater and more generous consideration from the Government. The members of the Police Force have been comparatively well treated by this Government—much better and more generously than they were treated by previous Governments. Members of the force are not getting any more than they are justly entitled to. The duties of the policemen are onerous and multifarious, and we know that their duties bring them into disagreeable situations at times. The policeman is expected to face all kinds of dangers to do his duty and to protect the citizens of this community. We know that the Government endeavours to protect members of the Police Force. They are deserving of that protection because their duties at times are of a distasteful nature, but they are always carried out in a manner that is satisfactory to the people. Before this Government came into power the life of a policeman was not at all a free one. He did not enjoy the rights of citizenship. They were denied him by previous Governments, as some hon. members opposite know, as they were sitting behind past Governments, notably the present leader of the Opposition. Now the conditions have changed, and members of the Police Force are getting better treatment. The Government allowed the

police to form a union. We were told by certain hon. members opposite that, if we allowed the members of the Police Force to form a union, discipline would be broken down. That has not been the experience. We find to-day that the discipline in the Police Force is as good as ever it was. Previous Governments denied the members of the Police Force the right to vote and to form a union. Until this Government came into power the police could not form a union which both employers and employees formed. Speaking in this House in 1916, the hon. member for Warwick, according to page 2394 of "Hansard," said—

"There should be no attempt at affiliation with any other union. If they wanted their land cursed, let them affiliate with other unions."

Further on he said—

"He hoped the Home Secretary would use his best efforts to keep the Police Force clear of any other unions in the State."

Unions were formed to safeguard the rights of the workers in the copper mines, in the meatworks, and in the shearing-sheds; and why should one also not be formed in connection with the Police Force? Why should not the members of the Police Force have the same right to protect their interests as the Employers' Federation? Why should they not have the same right as the Lawyers' Union?

Mr. KING: There is no Lawyers' Union.

Mr. FORDE: There is, and it is a pretty close preserve, too.

Mr. KING: There is no Barristers' Union, and there is no Lawyers' Union. You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. FORDE: The hon. member is a champion of the Lawyers' Union.

Mr. KING: The only thing required in connection with lawyers is brains.

Mr. FORDE: The present Government allowed the police the right to form a union which they were denied by previous Governments.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: They never asked for it.

Mr. FORDE: They did, but they were told that it was no use pressing it. They knew they had the "sack" staring them in the face if they asked for permission to form a union. The hon. member for Burnett, in a speech he delivered in this Chamber, tried to prevent the police from getting their Superannuation Bill. The Bill provided for pensions for the Police Force, and the hon. member for Burnett moved that the Bill be passed three weeks later than the date proposed for its passage. Then, speaking on the Industrial Arbitration Bill in the session of 1915-1916, as will be seen on page 868 of "Hansard," the hon. member for Burnett said—

"I am particularly sorry to see the police included in this Bill."

Of course, he did not want to see them included. He did not want them to have the same rights as any member of an industrial union. This Government allowed the police to have access to the Arbitration Court where they could apply for an increase of

wages if they so desired. They were denied that right by previous Governments. Yet the hon. member for Burnet said he was particularly sorry to see the police included in the Industrial Arbitration Bill. What would have happened if the police had not been included? They would not have had the right to go to the Arbitration Court and get the increments which the Government are now paying to them, and which increments were denied by previous Governments.

Mr. BRAND: You are making an electioneering speech.

Mr. FORDE: I have a statement here showing the respective wages paid to the Police Force in the years 1914-15, as compared with 1921-22—

	1914-15.		1921-22.		
	Per day.		Per day.		
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
Constables .. .. .	{	8	0	10	0
		9	0	13	5
		9	6	13	11
				14	5
				14	11
				15	5
Acting Sergeants .. .. .		10	4	15	11
Sergeants .. .. .		11	3	16	11
Senior Sergeants .. .. .		12	6	17	11
				18	11
<i>Detectives.</i>					
Constables .. .. .	{	11	0	16	5
		12	0	16	11
				17	5
				17	11
				18	5
				18	11
Acting Sergeants .. .. .		13	0	19	11
Sergeants .. .. .		14	0	20	11
Senior Sergeants .. .. .		15	0	21	11

That is not all. The conditions of the members of the Police Force have been greatly improved under the present Government. Under the Denham Government, all the police were deprived of their automatic increases. They were told that no increments were to be given to them during the first few months of the war, notwithstanding the fact that at that time they were grossly underpaid by the Conservative Government. Since the present Government have come into office we find that increases have been granted to the Police Force to the extent of £140,000 in excess of what they received in 1914-15. Furthermore, their working hours have been lessened. They now have an eight-hour working day. They have time off in lieu of overtime, and a fortnightly rest day. They received twenty-eight days' annual leave and three months' leave on full pay for ordinary illness. They have received the right to six months' full pay for injuries received on duty, an increase in travelling and sustenance allowances, an increase of 100 per cent. in rent allowance, an increase in clerical allowance, an increase in plain clothes allowance, and they have also received first class boat and railway fares. Hon. members opposite thought it was good enough for them to travel second class.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: That is not correct. I approved of first class fares.

Mr. FORDE: It was not a general concession; but it is a very good thing the hon. gentleman did give it in some cases. However, it was denied by Tory Governments

in the past, and it is now given to the police all round, irrespective of rank, by a Labour Government. To-day they get six months' long-service leave, an increase of 100 per cent. in the allowance for work done outside ordinary duty, time off for drill instruction or parade, and a more regular uniform supply, and—what is more important than all—the right to form a union and go to the Arbitration Court and fight for their rights. I think that, in the concessions which have been given, the Government have not done more than they should. They have done something for the police to which they are justly entitled.

The expenditure on the Police Department has been increasing, but one cannot improve the conditions of the members of the force without additional expenditure. In 1914-15 the vote was £269,939, whilst in 1921-22 it was £441,310. But the extra expenditure is justified in giving the members of the force better working conditions, better living conditions, and a greater degree of freedom. The total sum expended in increasing their salaries and wages alone amounts to £140,000, as against an increase of £53,000 during the last six years of the Tory Government.

Then the present Government passed an Act which is amongst the finest Acts ever passed for the betterment of the conditions of the Police Force. I refer to the Police Acts Amendment Act, with its generous pension scheme, which has met with the approval of the police right throughout the State. The men have not been slow to recognise the merits of that Act and speak with no uncertain voice in praise of the humane action of the Government in putting it on the statute-book. It provides that the widow and children of a deceased policeman will now get a pension. Previously there was no such provision. The widow will get £60 per annum for herself and £13 per annum for each child, and, in addition, if the policeman has not taken long-service leave, six months' full pay. Seeing that the members of the Police Force have a very precarious occupation, endangering their lives on many occasions during the week, surely it is only right that some such Act should be put on the statute-book giving them pensions—not in the form of a dole, but as a right, and providing for the widow and little children who may be left in the event of the death of the breadwinner. I have mentioned that the members of the force appreciate that measure. This is what Mr. Talty, the secretary of the Police Union, said after the Police Acts Amendment Act had been placed on the statute-book—

“Notwithstanding the predictions of the doubting Thomases in their midst, the police . . . had won something which stood as the greatest concession granted by a Government whose sympathy for the down-trodden could not be doubted.”

And Mr. Coman, another member of the union, said—

“The police should be for ever grateful to the present Government for this very humane piece of legislation, which specially provided for widows and orphans and gave the satisfaction to every policeman that, when he ‘shuffled off this mortal coil,’ his widow would not have to depend on the wash-tub or the scrubbing brush to earn a livelihood.”

Mr. Forde.]

That is not what an hon. member on this side or a Labour newspaper said; it is the expression of prominent members of the union, which is not slow to recognise that the Government have done more to assist them than any previous Government. Hon. members opposite have endeavoured to detract from what the Government have done to assist the force and the public service generally, and it is well known that someone should give the praise that is due to a branch of the service which is doing good work. The Police Force are doing excellent work, and I am glad that the Government have treated them in a generous and sympathetic manner. I sincerely hope that that treatment will be continued.

I am very pleased to learn from the department that the horse-breeding station at Rewan is doing good work under the guidance of Inspector Campbell, a very fine officer of the department. The station has been established for some time, and is showing a credit balance of, approximately, £16,000, if I remember rightly. I am also pleased to learn that they are breeding horses of a suitable kind for the police throughout Queensland. I am pleased that the Home Secretary and the Commissioner have recognised the good work of the officer in charge and promoted him.

I ask the Home Secretary, as one who has travelled throughout the country districts, particularly during the last twelve months, to continue to give generous consideration for the policeman, because in the multifarious and arduous duties which devolve upon him he is carrying out a very useful work in the community and is deserving of that humanitarian treatment which is characteristic of Labour Governments.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): Queensland can congratulate itself upon the very excellent Police Force which we possess. From the Commissioner to the junior constable I think they can be regarded as a body of men who are carrying out their onerous and various duties with efficiency, and to the benefit of the individuals as well as the community collectively. Speaking personally, I never had any objection to the formation of a union by the police.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: A lot of persons had objections to their having a vote.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Possibly, but they had a vote before I came into office.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Labour party gave it to them.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Labour party did not. If the hon. member wants to know what the Labour party did under the Labour-Morgan regime, I will tell him that they did not give the police uniforms, and the condition of the police then was a disgrace to any Government or community. I had not intended to go back to that period; but, as the hon. member claims to be a member of the only Administration who have ever effected anything for the benefit of the force, it is just as well that the public should know otherwise.

The Minister spoke about crime having been at a minimum under the present Administration. I am glad to hear it. I know that the members of the force do all in their power to minimise it. If this Administration are honest in their desire to assist the [3.30 p.m.] force, why do they not accede to the urgent requests made from

*(Mr. Forde.*

time to time by the Commissioner to increase its numbers? We, in country districts, come more in contact with members of the force than do those who dwell in the cities.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: For what reason?

HON. J. G. APPEL: For the reason that they are of the greatest assistance to those who reside in the country; they act as advisers to settlers and others. We realise that there are many districts in which police are urgently required, but the present Administration, with all their lip service, are not prepared to provide the necessary funds to enable the number to be increased, and the consequence is that the members of the force are overworked. The hon. member for Rockhampton detailed the benefits which had been conferred upon the police force by the present Administration. If the previous Administration had received the same amount of revenue as has been received by this Administration, the police force would have had a very much better deal than they have had. The hon. member for Rockhampton spoke with an air of pride of the amount of salary which was being paid to members of the force. Does he consider that it is adequate? I contend that the increase to the Police Force should have been greater, taking into consideration the increases which it was found necessary to give to other branches of the service by reason of the rise in the cost of living. I would have felt ashamed to mention such a small increase as has been given, considering the amount of revenue which this Administration have handled. When members who are now on the Government side were sitting in Opposition they invariably referred to the number of offices which members of the Police Force had to fill. I have not heard it stated that that number has been reduced. Hon. members opposite claim that the work in all the departments has increased to a large extent; consequently the amount of extraneous work which is being carried out by members of the Police Force must have increased in proportion; yet they claim credit for the small increase which has been given to the members of the force, who have had greater responsibilities thrown upon them.

I sometimes hear members of the Labour party claim as theirs acts which I took some pride in being associated with. When I heard the hon. member for Rockhampton speak of the Rewan breeding station, I marvelled. The whole thing was really the inspiration of the late Hon. J. T. Bell, and was carried into effect by myself.

MR. FORDE: I said good work was being done there.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The horse-breeding station was established by the bad Tory Administration, who gave to members of the Police Force the uniforms which were refused by the Morgan-Kidston Labour Administration, who kept the men on the most miserable wage. Hon. members opposite talk of low wages. Let them consider the miserably inadequate wage which was paid by the Labour Administration, who at that time had very large surpluses. Hon. members come here and endeavour to deceive the public—they cannot deceive the police, because the police know otherwise—by saying, "Look what we have done for the Police Force." They do not tell hon. members and



the electors outside what they did not do. They would not have done what they have done had they not been forced to do it. I was absolutely shocked when I went to the Home Department, following a Labour Administration who had a large majority and overflowing surpluses, and saw the scandalous conditions which they had meted out to the Police Force. From that time on, so far as lay in my power, I endeavoured to improve the conditions. I can confidently leave it to the members of the Police Force to-day to say whether the amount of improvement in their condition under my administration was not greater than the amount of improvement which has been effected by the present Government, who claim to have done so much.

People in the country districts realise the infinite benefit which the police station is to the settlers. The police invariably are men qualified in every way for the position they occupy; they give advice in the most varied circumstances. It is a pleasure for us to see the "man in khaki" or "blue" coming along to our selections and homesteads, because we know that he is coming there as a friend to assist us. Will the Minister deny that the Commissioner has pointed out to him the absolute necessity of increasing the number of members of the force, to enable them to cope with the conditions which exist in Queensland to-day?

Why should the members of the Police Force be overworked in the way they are being overworked? The Government talk about having given the police an eight-hour day. Why, the police sometimes have to work twenty-four hours a day because adequate assistance is not given to them. At some police stations where there should be a sergeant in control of three men he has only one man to assist him, and these two men have to perform the work that should properly be carried out by three or four men. Considering the enormous amount of revenue which has been received by this Administration, the police have not been properly dealt with and have not received that remuneration which is their due. The hon. member for Rockhampton withdrew the statement that it was the present Administration that granted an increased night allowance and first class accommodation for the police when travelling. That was afforded by the Administration of which I was a member, and rightly so. What have the present Administration done for the police? They did only what they were compelled to do, and did it very unwillingly. It was a long time before they would bring forward a superannuation scheme. They were forced to do it. Everything that they have done for the police they have been forced to do. When the police filed a plaint in the Arbitration Court, the Government opposed it, and endeavoured to do everything to prevent them gaining what was justly their due. If I had been Home Secretary—

Mr. COLLINS: They would still be in the same position.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The police know different. When I was a struggling member of the profession, the best friends I had were the members of the Police Force. I shall never forget the friendship which they extended to me. By way of gratitude for what they had done for me, I was only too delighted, when opportunity offered, to repay them for their friendship towards me, and

for what they were doing for the individual and collective members of the State. There is nothing that this Administration can be proud of in connection with what they have done for the police. The amount of remuneration the police are receiving for their multitudinous duties and for the responsibilities which are placed upon them is not adequate, and has not been increased in a like manner with other members of the public service.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): It has been suggested that the hon. member for Albert was a member of the Morgan-Kidston Administration. I think he was.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I was not.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What about the case at Sandgate?

Mr. BRENNAN: That case is sub judice. (Laughter.) If the hon. member for Albert was not a member of that Administration, he must know that it was that Administration that extended the franchise to the Police Force. Which is the more important—extending the franchise or giving uniforms? It was because of the fact that the police were able to vote that they were able to compel the Administration to grant them uniforms. It was a Labour Government that enabled them to do that. The hon. member said the Morgan-Kidston Government was a Labour Government. I, too, say that it was a Labour Government. The Labour Government gave the police a vote, and they were able to force the hon. member for Albert to give them uniforms; and, following on that, the police have been able to form a union, and that union, through its secretary, has been in a position to demand better conditions. The hon. member for Albert said that this Government had taken a long time in bringing forward a police superannuation scheme. The present Home Secretary was responsible for the formation of the existing police superannuation scheme. When the hon. member for Albert was Home Secretary he paid the Queensland Trustees 500 guineas for a suggested scheme which was not accepted.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I prepared the basis of the whole thing. I forgot to say that.

Mr. BRENNAN: The hon. member had not sufficient brains and ability to evolve a scheme. He paid 500 guineas of the people's money for a scheme which was of no use.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member shows a lack of intellect.

Mr. BRENNAN: The scheme was never put into operation.

Hon. members opposite have referred to an incident at Sandgate. Had there been a prosecution, two boys employed in banks, another in the public service, and another in a confidential position would have lost their positions.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member led them astray. Shame on him!

Mr. BRENNAN: They were not in the hotel with me. I am not ashamed of being in the hotel. I have seen almost every hon. member opposite in hotels after hours. The leader of the Opposition tells me that he would not go into an hotel after hours. If it was known every time he was in an hotel after hours in Dalby he would not be in this House. The hon. member for Albert talks about being in hotels after hours. Go down

*Mr. Brennan.]*

to Southport and see what happens on Sunday down there after hours. If the hon. member for Aubigny and the hon. member for Murilla were put on the pillory every time they were in an hotel after hours, where would they be? We all know that it is true that they all go into hotels after hours.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is a habit of the hon. member's.

Mr. BRENNAN: The hon. member for Pittsworth is afraid to have a drink because it would go to his brain, and he is mad as it is. If there had been a prosecution, those poor boys would have been dismissed.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. member threatened to have the policeman sent to Cloncurry if he put in a report.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is in keeping with all statements made by the hon. member. It is a deliberate falsehood.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. member did threaten that.

Mr. BRENNAN: You are a liar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark.

Mr. BRENNAN: I withdraw it. We all know it is true. Under the Labour Administration the Police Force has been raised to a very high standard. Different departments from time to time have not administered Labour legislation in the way that it should be administered. This Government granted an appeal board to the police. The present Commissioner at one time was doubtful about Labour legislation, and he was doubtful about the police having a union, but to-day he is a solid Labour man.

The Commissioner must be very careful in the administration of his office to see that the under-trappers get a fair deal. I do not stand for any person, no matter how high a position he may hold in the service, unless he is prepared to sympathetically administer his department. The Commissioner has not been sympathetic in the administration of his department in some respects.

Mr. MORGAN: That is a brutal attack.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: That is a blackguardly attack.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. BRENNAN: A man who was forced to resign his position in the Police Force, rather than accept a transfer because he would not be granted an inquiry—(interruption)—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I hope hon. members on my left will respect my call to order. If hon. members have anything to say in connection with the remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba, they are at liberty to do so by speaking on the vote.

Mr. BRENNAN: This officer was forced to resign, and, after resigning, his papers were sent to him, and, although he bore the highest character and had the best credentials in the force, the Commissioner refused to fill in the space as to character. He put a line through it. It will only rebound on the Commissioner unless he is prepared to play fair. The Home Secretary is not to blame, because he naturally accepted the advice of the principal officer.

Mr. BRAND: This attack is made because the Commissioner did not take your advice.

[Mr. Brennan.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: He has "gone a million." (Laughter.)

Mr. BRENNAN: As far as I am concerned, he will be "gone a million" unless he alters his tactics. (Interruption.) All other heads of departments who are not sympathetic towards the Labour Administration are equally to blame. We as a Government are doing the best we can for the people and for the workers, and the least we can expect is that the heads of departments will sympathetically administer their departments.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The Minister in charge of this vote took great credit in his opening remarks because the number of convictions under the present Government was less than had been the case in the past. If the same state of affairs is going on in other departments that we recently noticed in the Press, where a person who should have been brought before the court and convicted was, through parliamentary interference, given a privilege that other people cannot get, is it any wonder that there is a falling off in the number of convictions? I think this is the first occasion on which a member of this House has taken advantage of the privilege extended here to make a personal attack on any member of the public service. It is in keeping with the hon. member's usual methods, and he would not do it outside, and I say no man should do it under the privileges of this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): When raids are made on "two-up" schools and you have a man giving a false name, as was the case the other day, when a man gave his name as "Walter H. Barnes," the police would be perfectly justified in retaining that man and making him prove his identity before allowing it to appear in all the papers of Queensland that a man giving that name was arrested in a "two-up" school. It may be very humorous from one point of view, but I do not think it a fair thing that the name should be allowed to appear in the Press when it is obviously a false name.

Mr. DASH: Have you any evidence that it was a false name?

Mr. MOORE: It is so improbable that it is worth investigating.

Mr. COLLINS: There are plenty of "Walter H. Barneses" in Queensland.

Mr. MOORE: It is all very well to get out of it like that, but let a man give the name of "Charles Collins," and it would be a different tale altogether. We had the hon. member for Rockhampton getting up in this Chamber and saying he never recommended an officer for promotion unless it was deserved. What right has the hon. member for Rockhampton to recommend any man for promotion? It is the duty of the Commissioner of Police to do the recommending. I do not suppose that even the Home Department would take upon itself to recommend a man for promotion, and yet we have the hon. member for Rockhampton saying he would not recommend a man for promotion unless he deserved it. The Commissioner of Police is supposed to have full authority over the department, and he is the one to say whether a man should be promoted or not.

Mr. COLLINS: Ask the hon. member for Burnett how many he recommended for promotion when he was sitting behind the Government.

Mr. MOORE: It does not matter who made the recommendation.

Mr. W. COOPER: Did you ever recommend a man for promotion?

Mr. MOORE: Never. It is an improper thing for members of Parliament to go to the Commissioner and make recommendations. We have the hon. member for Toowoomba saying that he is going to see that the Commissioner carries out his duties in sympathy with the Labour platform. That is intimidation.

Mr. BRENNAN: I said I am going to see that the Commissioner sympathetically administers the laws.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member for Toowoomba said we must have a temperamentally fitted Commissioner of Police who must carry out the laws in accordance with Labour ideas. It has nothing to do with the Commissioner of Police who puts the laws on the statute-book. All he has to do is to see that they are carried out effectively, and, if we are going to have the Department of Justice interfering with the police when they endeavour to do their duty, how is it possible for the Commissioner to have an efficient Police Force? We have the Department of Justice interfering when the police put in a report, and preventing a prosecution.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I can assure you that there is no interference with the Commissioner in the execution of his duty, and there will be none.

Mr. MOORE: I am very glad to hear the Minister say that. I am only going on the statements that have been made to this Committee and on the statements that have appeared in the Press. I am very glad to hear that the Minister is going to stand up and protect the Commissioner from unjustifiable attacks.

Mr. BRENNAN: They are not unjustifiable.

Mr. MOORE: They are unjustifiable. The Commissioner is a man who carries out his duties efficiently, and he should not be intimidated by hon. members of this House. He should be put in such a position that he need not be afraid of any intimidation or interference in the discharge of his duties.

I do not think that there is a great deal in all this contention about the marvellous increases given to the police during the regime of the Labour Government. After all, if we take into consideration the increased cost of living, they have not received very big increases. I do not think they are any better off than they were in 1914.

Mr. DASH: Why did you want to prevent them from going to the Arbitration Court?

Mr. MOORE: I do not think they should be allowed to go to the Arbitration Court. The Government should be in a position to fix reasonable conditions for the police without the necessity of going to the court. We have the present Government compelling them to go to the Arbitration Court, and then appearing in the court to fight their own servants.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Do you want to remove them from the operation of the court?

Mr. MOORE: We have never asked to have them removed, but I never approved of their going to the court. I think that the Government should be capable of giving

a fair deal to their own servants, without their having to go to the Arbitration Court.

Mr. FORDE: The Denham Government never gave them a fair deal.

Mr. MOORE: That is a matter of opinion; I think they did. I do not think the police have anything to complain about in regard to the conditions they are working under to-day. They have arduous

[4 p.m.] and responsible work, especially in the country districts, and they deserve to be well treated. I think they are a credit to the force they belong to, and carry out their duties well. I do not want to see any political influence in connection with the Police Force. If a policeman came to me and asked me to assist him to get promotion, I would have nothing to do with it. I look upon the Commissioner as the man who is responsible for getting an efficient Police Force in Queensland, and I strongly object to any political interference.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The hon. member for Albert, in his usual loud voice, condemns the department, or a previous Administration, for not giving uniforms to the police. I happened to be a supporter of the Government which was known as the Labour-Morgan Administration. On very many occasions hon. members on this side have pointed out that we, as a Labour party, were responsible for the Workers' Compensation Act, and we have been told by hon. members opposite that it was the Morgan Government who passed it, and that the Labour party had nothing to do with it. The hon. member for Albert admitted that we were sufficiently influential with the Government to prevent the policemen from getting uniforms. That was a matter for the Administration as a whole; but I want to point out that the Labour-Morgan Government were responsible for giving the police a vote, which they prized more than a paltry uniform, and it is due to the Labour party that the conditions of the Police Force have been materially improved.

The hon. member for Albert made another statement which I desire to correct. He stated that it was while he was Home Secretary that first class railway passes were granted to the Police Force, and he contradicted the hon. member for Rockhampton in that respect. The hon. member for Albert only granted first class passes in connection with transfers to senior sergeants and those above that rank. It was the Labour Government which granted the police on transfer first class passes from constables and their wives and children upwards. It is just as well for this correction to be made. While hon. members on both sides have their individual opinions on these matters, I think it is quite sufficient for the Government to know that the members of the Police Union are satisfied with the work of the Government in bettering the conditions of the force generally, and have expressed their appreciation in no uncertain way. I think that in the Commissioner of Police we have a very able officer; otherwise, the Government would not have appointed him, as we look for merit. He is a gentleman who, apart from being Commissioner, is a good citizen. I have known him for a number of years, and I think he is well worthy of the high position he occupies to-day.

Mr. BRENNAN: Do you say he is above criticism?

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No. I recognise that hon. members on both sides may criticise as much as they like; I am expressing my individual opinion. When I was member for Maryborough, the present Commissioner occupied the position of inspector for that district, and I always found him very approachable and sympathetic; and, when necessary, firm in the execution of his duties. Other members can speak for themselves. The Commissioner received his appointment on his merits from this Government during the time I was a member of the Cabinet, and I can stand up for the appointment.

Question put and passed.

POLICE INVESTMENT BOARD.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): I beg to move—

“That £40,000 be granted for ‘Police Investment Board.’”

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I would like to ask the Minister if, while salaries have been reduced, the superannuation payments are also reduced 5 per cent.?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

PRISONS.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

“That £36,086 be granted for ‘Prisons.’”

Hon. members will notice that there is a reduction of £981 in the vote this year.

Question put and passed.

REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

“That £9,345 be granted for ‘Registrar-General.’”

Hon. members will notice that there is a decrease in the vote of £931.

Question put and passed.

STATE CHILDREN.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

“That £196,915 be granted for ‘State Children.’”

Hon. members will notice that there is a decrease in this vote on the amount appropriated last year of £6,600.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*): Mr. Kirwan—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Another stonewall?

Mr. FORDE: Hon. members opposite, for some sinister reason, want to rush on to a particular Estimate that concerns themselves, but I am going to utilise my privileges in this Chamber. I always address myself to the House or to the Committee on any matter which I consider of importance to Queensland. This one is of great importance. If hon. gentlemen opposite want to rush on to some other vote that concerns themselves it does not matter to me. It does concern the people of Queensland that we should discuss this question, and I am going to discuss it, notwithstanding any point that may be raised by hon. members opposite. The vote for the State Children Department is of great importance, because that department is carrying on very useful work

in the community. While I recognise that the department has done great work, there are one or two suggestions that I would like to make with a view to helping people who are benefiting as a result of the generosity shown by the officials of that department. The children of the State Children Department will be the future men and women of Queensland, and the Government should treat them well. In Central Queensland we have several institutions that are caring for these children, in addition to the thousands of foster mothers and natural mothers who are getting assistance from this department. We have the St. George's Orphanage and the home that is being established at Parkhurst, which were registered as a result of representations made by the hon. member for Fitzroy and myself. All these homes are doing very good work. Then we have the Neerkol Orphanage, an institution which I had the opportunity of visiting during the last six months and which I know is carrying out very useful work. There are hundreds and hundreds of children being cared for in this institution, which is getting assistance from the State Children Department. On reading the inspector's report, I am pleased to know that the report is favourable to this institution, and refers to the progress which is being maintained there and in other similar institutions in Central Queensland. The Director further says—

“The State, however, is caring for 7,786 children in its own quiet way, of whom 300 are under two years of age, and does everything for its children. They receive all the advantages of education granted by the State, and a number of them have secured scholarships and have attended or are attending secondary schools. Several have passed into the teaching profession and others into the State public service. The railway service has several of our boys, and one is the second officer in charge of a country branch of a leading bank.”

I have to thank the State Children Department for the way it assists children who have passed the State scholarship examination. It has been my privilege to come across children which have received assistance from the department while going through their secondary course. I might refer to one child who passed her junior University examination and later her senior University examination, and I hope that she will be admitted to the Education Department as a teacher. That child has shown great promise, and the Director and Home Secretary have both treated her generously. The same consideration should be extended to as many cases as possible, because these children should have the same right in the community as the sons and daughters of wealthy people. The number of children in the care of the State Children Department is on the increase, because the department will not turn any child away. The report states that there were 7,765 State children in Queensland on 31st December, 1921. Of this number, 1,064 were boarded out with foster-mothers and 4,879 with female relatives, while 1,074 are inmates of institutions. I think that there is a great opportunity for wealthy people in the community to show their benevolence towards State children. There are many bright little youngsters in the care of the department, and, if they were only given the opportunity, they would make

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their mark in the community. We know there are many ladies of the wealthy class who patronise poodle dogs and pets of all kinds and spend no end of money on them, whereas, if they extended a little kindness to the State children, and took the little ones out of the institutions in order to give them a chance in life, they would be doing a great service to the community. The present Government increased the State children's allowance from 5s. per week for the first child and 4s. a week for each additional child to 10s. a week all round.

Mr. FOLEY: That is little enough.

Mr. FORDE: The hon. member for Leichhardt says that that is little enough, and I quite agree with him. It is a wonder that some of them can carry on with that amount. I want the Home Secretary to be sympathetic in cases where mothers are waiting for relief, and I would like him to give rations for a short period to the mothers of these children. On some occasions I have been able to get relief for people requiring it, but in other cases it has been refused. I know the work of the State Children Department is very difficult to carry on, but the Director and his officers try to do the fair thing. If the department know of cases where the children are not being properly treated, or where generous treatment has not been meted out to the mothers and foster-mothers, they are quick to remedy it. I think that there are many cases where the older members of a family are expected to contribute too much towards the support of the family. Where a widow is left with a family, and two or three members, say, between the ages of sixteen and twenty years, are working, I think they are expected to pay too much towards the support of the home. A boy earning 17s. 6d. a week will find that it takes all his money to clothe himself, and the same thing applies to a girl earning 22s. 6d. a week. She should not have to pay more than her fair share. I hope the Minister will be sympathetic in these cases, and not expect the members of the family to pay for the full support of the home. It is a good thing to encourage thrift, but in some cases hardship is inflicted because members of the family who are working in offices, shops, or factories, find that it takes nearly all their money to purchase clothing similar to that worn by other persons working at the same place. Furthermore, they have their future to look to. Another matter which came under my notice was that foster-mothers get free medical attention for State children in their care, while natural mothers do not get that privilege. I think that the privilege should be extended to the natural mother, because she is in just as bad a way financially as the foster-mother. I hope the Home Secretary will give that matter favourable consideration, and, if possible, increase the allowance. I find that in some cases where there are five children the mother gets £2 10s. a week. As that is not sufficient to keep the home, the Minister might allow rations to be given for a brief period. The Minister has been generous to these cases in the past, and I ask him to continue that generosity, because it is well deserved. I know cases of absolute hardship, where mothers find it absolutely impossible to find food and clothing for five children on the £2 10s. a week allowed them.

I admit that since the present Government came into power the department has been

more generous than under previous Governments, but we have established precedents in many respects. We have shown our generosity towards the poor and suffering in the community to a greater degree than any previous Administration, but, if we are to prove true to the principles underlying the Labour movement, we should not turn aside these poor unfortunate people, or the little children who are deprived of their breadwinners and have no one to care for them because they have no money or influential friends. It should be the right of every child brought into the world to have reasonably good conditions of life, and it is the duty of this Government to see to the matter. Over the period of six years ended in 1915 the amount paid by Tory Governments to natural and foster mothers was £124,000, whilst for the six years of Labour Government following that period the allowances totalled £666,000. The amount paid to natural mothers alone in 1914-15—the last year of Tory Government—was £31,983; and in 1921 the amounts paid by the Labour Government to natural mothers were £130,861, and to foster-mothers £24,767. Mark the difference! I do not say that the present Government have done too much. In fact, I say they should do even more, but in this period of financial stress I know that they are endeavouring to keep down the expenditure. The expenditure under this head is justified. It is the discharge of a duty we owe to the poor people in the community. The Government have endeavoured to show that they realise their responsibilities in this respect, and I would urge the Minister, instead of cutting down this department in any way, to be even more generous, because by so doing he is giving allowances that go towards clothing and protecting the little ones who are deprived of their breadwinners.

There is another matter I wish to mention on this vote. I refer to the cases where mothers and children are deserted by the husband and father, and the mother is reluctant about taking legal proceedings against the husband. I know such cases where the mother has not been able to get State aid because she would not go into court. Such a one usually does not want to bring a stigma on the family, or she thinks that some little time later the husband may return, and she does not want the children to be told that she had to go to court and prosecute their father in order that they might be maintained. I think there are such cases where the State Children Department should take the initiative. I do not say that any man should be allowed to go scot-free—he should be made to maintain his children if possible—but there are cases such as I have mentioned, and such a mother is denied the right of State aid. If any prosecutions are necessary, the department should make them.

The Home Department has been generous towards the orphanages—much more generous than under previous Governments. The vote has been increased from £10,441 in 1914-15 to £14,331 in 1920-21. In concluding, I ask the Acting Home Secretary to make a note of the points I have raised, and endeavour to extend the department's generous help to the State children, who are as important and valuable to this community as the children of the wealthy.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I regard this as one of the most important sub-

*Hon. J. G. Appel!*

departments of the Home Department, since it deals with what may be termed the very foundations of our community—namely, the children of the State, whose lives it is so necessary to conserve. I observe, however, that there is a decrease rather than an increase in nearly every vote.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do you not know that the cost of living is going down?

HON. J. G. APPEL: I take it that is because of the administration of the present Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I expected the gentleman to say that. (Opposition laughter.) We are glad to hear it. Then, I take it that the inhuman policy initiated by the present Government of depriving a widow with only one child of an allowance for that child is not going to be continued?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not the practice.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I say it is.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It depends upon the circumstances of the widow.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The department admit the condition of the widow by giving her an indigent allowance, and yet they say that it has improved to such an extent that they take away the orphanage allowance from the child. That is a remarkable thing for a humanitarian Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not so.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I can tell the gentleman it is. I can give him a specific case. I say it is an inhuman policy, and it is no credit to an Administration who make a special claim to have done so much for the poor and unfortunate members of the community.

It is claimed that the present Administration have largely increased the total amount of this vote, but hon. members who make that claim fail to tell us that the numbers who are forced to receive these allowances have likewise increased; and you will find that the increase in the amount does not even cover the proportionate increase in the cost of living. What is the good of claiming merit for a thing which is obviously incorrect? In addition to that, we find that just at that point of a child's career when an allowance is more necessary than ever the grant is to be discontinued because the unfortunate woman happens to have only one child. I claim that that is not creditable, and I stigmatise it as an absolutely inhuman policy. If the allowance is to be given, it should be given irrespective of whether the woman has one or more children, because the obligation is proportionately as great in the first case as when the number is larger. I quite agree with the speaker who has just resumed his seat that the benefit should be extended. Considering the vastly increased revenue of the State, I certainly think that the Administration can well afford to consider the claims of the widows and little children, to whom we must perforce look for the future development of our country, and increase the allowances to an extent which will make better provision for them, and make them more able to discharge those obligations which will fall upon them as citizens.

At 4.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, and of the Ses-

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sional Order agreed to by the House on 30th August, I shall now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the sitting.

#### QUESTIONS.

##### INDEBTEDNESS OF BUILDING TRADES GUILD TO STATE ENTERPRISE.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Osløy*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. Is the Building Trades Guild indebted to any State enterprise under his control?

"2. If so, which State enterprises are so affected, to what extent, and at what dates were such liabilities incurred."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Kceppe*), in the absence of the Secretary for Public Lands (Hon. J. H. Coyne, *Warrego*), replied—

"1 and 2. As stated on 30th August last, timber was supplied to the Guild on credit. A debt of £1,189 is due to the Forest Service Sawmills in respect to this timber. The last payment to the mills was made in October last. Action is being taken to reduce this indebtedness."

##### CONTRACT OF FORESTRY DEPARTMENT FOR SUPPLY OF HEWN SLEEPERS TO NEW ZEALAND.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. What are the terms of the contract held by the Forestry Office for supply of hewn sleepers to New Zealand (including quantity, delivery, and price)?

"2. What is the date of the contract?

"3. What quantity has been supplied to date?

"4. What royalty per 100 sleepers has been charged against this contract?

"5. What is the profit or loss on this contract to end of last financial year?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in the absence of the Secretary for Public Lands, replied—

"1 to 5. As this is a purely business transaction, it is not considered advisable to disclose to competitors the terms of the contract referred to. The exact profit will be stated later."

##### APPOINTMENT AND EXPENSES OF ORGANISERS UNDER PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION ACT.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. What was the date of appointment of H. McAnally as an organiser under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act?

"2. What is the total amount paid to H. McAnally from date of appointment to 31st July, 1922—(a) Salary; (b) expenses; (c) other allowances?

"3. What is the amount paid to H. McAnally under the headings contained in 2, from 1st August to 30th August, 1922?

"4. What amounts have been paid, respectively, to W. Purcell, W. Harris, Flood Plunkett, and Holt, in respect of their trip to Syney and Melbourne in April last in connection with organisation of primary producers, under the following headings:—(a) Salary; (b) expenses; (c) any other allowances? What was the rate of—(a) Salary; (b) expenses and allowances paid in these cases?"

"5. Was any report furnished by these gentlemen? If so, will he lay a copy of such report on the table of the House?"

"6. Has any pamphlet, article, or other writing referring to the questioner been issued by or at the instance of any member or members of the Council of Agriculture or any Advisory Board? Has any of the work in connection with the sending out such a pamphlet, article, or other writing relating to the questioner been done in his department."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gilles, *Eucham*) replied—

"1. The appointment of H. McNally as provisional organiser dates from 19th June last, but assent to the Primary Producers' Organisation Act was not given until 15th August, 1922.

"2. The total amounts as provisional organiser—(a) £24; (b) £5 7s. 9d.; (c) £15 15s.

"3. (a) £37 6s. 8d.; (b) £9 16s. 11d.; (c) nil.

"4. (a) Salary—W. Purcell, nil; W. Harris, nil; Flood Plunkett, nil; Holt, £31 13s. 4d. (b) Expenses—£14 5s.; £14 15s. 2d.; £14 5s.; £24 19s. 9d. (c) Allowances—£19 19s.; £19 19s.; £19 19s.; nil. Rate (a) salary—Nil in the case of Messrs. Purcell, Harris, and Flood Plunkett. Mr. Holt was paid at the rate of £600 a year. (b) Expenses and allowance—The first three gentlemen mentioned at the rate of £1 15s. a day. Mr. Holt at £1 5s. a day.

"5. No.

"6. No."

COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO MEANS FOR DESTROYING PRICKLY-PEAR.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Premier—

"Considering the ever-increasing difficulty met with by those who are endeavouring to combat prickly-pear in certain districts, will he, failing direct action, confer with the Secretary for Public Lands for the purpose of securing a commission, with a hope of providing him with first-hand information from farmers and settlers concerned as to the quickest and best means of according reasonable assistance, and providing evidence that the State is lacking in its duty by allowing Crown lands to reinfect the selections and roads of those who are being compelled by the Government to clear?"

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

"The matter is under consideration."

EXPENDITURE ON OUTDOOR RELIEF.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*) asked the Home Secretary—

"What amount has been expended on outdoor relief for the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, and August, 1922, respectively?"

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*), in the absence of the Home Secretary (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*), replied—

"Detailed information will be embodied in a report which will shortly be tabled."

REPORT ON UNEMPLOYED MEMBERS OF FEDERATED SHIP PAINTERS AND DOCKERS' UNION.

Mr. KING (*Logan*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to the report of a union secretary, contained in the July number of the 'Queensland Industrial Gazette,' at page 519, which read as follows:—

District.	Union.	Conditions.	Prospects.	Number Unemployed.	Cause of Unemployment.	General Remarks.
Brisbane ..	Federated Ship Painters and Dockers	Very bad	Gloomy..	Eighty (approx.)	Lack of work	For the want of a bigger dock in Brisbane a great deal of ship repair work is sent to Sydney. At the present time there are three A.U.S.N. Co.'s steamers under overhaul in Sydney, which the Company would overhaul in Brisbane providing there were better docking facilities.

"2. Is such report correct?"

"3. If so, does he propose to make provision for better docking facilities in Brisbane?"

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. I cannot offer an opinion without making full inquiries into the statements.

"3. The matter will receive consideration."

OPERATIONS OF WATER SUPPLY DEPARTMENT'S BORING PLANTS.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. How many of the Water Supply Department's boring plants were operating during last financial year?"

"2. How many were hung up during the whole of part of the year; and, in the latter cases, for what periods?"

"3. Has it been found necessary during the past three financial years to write

off portion of the cost of bores put down by the Water Supply Department?

"4. If so, in what cases, and what was the amount written off in each case?"

"5. Is it a fact that during last financial year claims were made by employees on the Water Supply Department's boring plants for award rates of wages, and, in consequence, retrospective payments were made?"

"6. If so—(a) how many men were affected; (b) what period did the retrospective payment cover in each case; and (c) what were the amounts of retrospective payments, respectively?"

The TREASURER replied—

"1. Four.

"2. No plants were hung up, but two plants having completed the bores engaged upon were inoperative for periods of six weeks and six and a-half months, respectively, until funds were available for other work.

"3. Owing to a grass fire at the Gerald bore, the sum of £1,049 7s. 6d. was paid to adjoining selectors as compensation for the destruction of fences and grass, and that sum was not charged to the cost of the bore. Also an amount of £234 15s. 10d. being the cost of additional work at Stamfordham, after the bore was handed over to the trust, was not charged to the capital cost.

"4. See answer to No. 3.

"5. The department was paying the award rates which were considered applicable to the duties, and these rates were questioned only when the general secretary of the Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association called at the Treasury in November, 1921, and complained that members of his union were not receiving the correct rates. Inquiries were immediately instituted, and, as the result of a conference, it was decided to pay the increased amounts and make them retrospective.

"6. (a) Seventeen. (b) Various periods between 6th March, 1919, and 30th November, 1921. (c) The total payments amounted to £308 17s. 2d., the individual amounts being as follows:—£2 9s., £17 5s., £6 15s., £12 8s., £12 17s. 6d., £4 11s. 6d., £36 19s. 6d., £37, £32 15s. 6d., £19 12s. 6d., £17 8s. 2d., £12 8s. 2d., £37 9s., £25 12s. 6d., £22 12s. 6d., £3 3s. 8d., £1 9s. 8d."

REPORT OF RANGER CONNOLLY ON NEW SPECIFIC FOR DESTRUCTION OF PRICKLY-PEAR.

Mr. VOWLES asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. Referring to articles appearing in the 'Daily Mail' of 12th April, 1922, 9th May, 1922, and 15th May, 1922, relative to a 'new specific' for the destruction of prickly-pear, has he yet received a final report from Ranger Connolly as to the results of the experiments conducted with this specific? If so, were the results satisfactory, and does he consider the new specific likely to be of practical value?"

"2. Who are the persons interested in this new specific?"

"3. What is the amount of expenditure by the Government in connection with this new specific, and to whom were payments made?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in the absence of the Secretary for Public Lands, replied—

"1. Progress reports only have been received.

"2. As far as the department is aware, the specific is owned by the Noxious Weeds Proprietary, Limited.

"3. As is customary in the case of persons wishing to demonstrate the value of a prickly-pear poison, an officer was deputed to watch the demonstrations on behalf of the department. This officer's expenses were negligible, as he was able to attend the demonstrations while in the localities on other work. In addition, railway passes to the different localities were issued to the demonstrators, as is done in all similar cases."

NUMBER OF ASSISTED IMMIGRANTS SINCE 30TH JUNE, 1907.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*) asked the Premier—

"How many assisted immigrants arrived in Queensland during each of the financial years since 30th June, 1907?"

The PREMIER replied—

"The figures will be obtained and tabled."

REPORT ON UNEMPLOYED MEMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN FEDERATED UNION OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEMEN.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) asked the Secretary for Railway—

"Has he seen the statement, as appears in the 'Queensland Industrial Gazette' of July, 1922, page 518, under the heading of 'Reports from Union Secretaries,' of which the following is an extract:—

District.	Union.	Conditions.	Prospects.	Number Unemployed.	Cause of Unemployment.	General Remarks.
Brisbane ..	Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemn	Fair ..	Good ..	..	..	Drivers and firemen throughout the State are making nearly full time, but cleaners continue on short time, as a result of which engines are in a very dirty condition. There is ample work for cleaners being employed on full time, but economy is being effected by allowing dirty engines to be in service.

"Is such statement correct?"



The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Kippel*) replied—  
“No.”

#### ACCUSATION OF BRIBERY.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I give notice that to-morrow I will ask the Attorney-General—

“1. What amount was collected in premiums by the State Insurance Department in the Mount Morgan district during the financial period 1918 to 1922 for industrial diseases purposes?”

“2. What amount has been disbursed by the State Insurance Department during the above period to—

(a) Sufferers from miners' phthisis or other industrial diseases.

(b) Dependents of the above?”

Mr. FORDE: That won't save you.

Mr. PETERSON: It will not save the hon. member at the Federal election, either.

Mr. FORDE: I did not take a bribe, at any rate.

Mr. PETERSON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Rockhampton distinctly inferred that I had taken a bribe. (Government dissent.)

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: He did.

Mr. PETERSON: I ask that the hon. member be made to withdraw. (Disorder.) I ask him to say it outside. (Renewed disorder.)

The SPEAKER: Order! Did the hon. member for Rockhampton infer that the hon. member for Normanby had taken a bribe?

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*): I said that I would not take a bribe. (Disorder.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The hon. member did not say that.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! Does the hon. member for Rockhampton infer that the hon. member for Normanby has taken a bribe? If he does, he is quite out of order, and must withdraw.

Mr. FORDE: I said that I would not take a bribe.

Mr. FRY: The hon. member always equivocates.

Mr. FORDE: I did not make any inference; the hon. member for Normanby might have taken that inference from what I said.

The SPEAKER: Order! Did the hon. member for Rockhampton infer that the hon. member for Normanby had taken a bribe?

Mr. FRY: Be honest about it! Be a man for once!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FORDE: I made no inference; he might take one if it fits him.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw the statement if he did infer that the hon. member for Normanby had accepted a bribe.

Mr. FORDE: I did not. Mr. Speaker; he drew that inference himself, no doubt.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

#### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Chief Inspector of Machinery and Scaffolding for the year ended 30th June, 1922.

Report of the Marine Department for the year 1921-1922.

Report upon the Government Central Sugar Mills.

#### SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—NINTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

#### HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

##### STATE CHILDREN.

Question stated—“That £196,915 be granted for ‘State Children’”—

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*): After listening to the remarks of the hon. member for Albert, I sincerely trust the Minister will reply to his accusation that, when a widow with only one child seeks relief, no matter what her circumstances may be, invariably relief is refused. I take it the hon. member for Albert gleaned that information from a paragraph in the report of the Director. That statement might be construed to mean what the hon. gentleman takes it to mean, but it has a totally different meaning for a broad-minded and unbiased reader. My experience in dealing with applications to the State Children Department has always been that each case is dealt with on its individual merits. I have had many opportunities of knowing the work done by this department. Any hon. member representing a large industrial centre must sooner or later have cases brought under his notice which require the attention of this department. The Director and his assistant, Mr. Clarke, have always been most sympathetic in dealing with applications that have come from my electorate. They are bound entirely by the Act. There are certain provisions dealing with widows and orphans which I believe it is the duty of the Government to have amended. Under the Act, unless a widow can state that she is absolutely destitute, she cannot obtain sustenance. I think that the Labour Government, who proclaim to the world the benefits of their legislation and administration for the “bottom dog,” cannot hope to live and sustain their position if they are going to continue along the lines contained within the four corners of the Act. I quite realise that where some hardship might result because of certain provisions in the Act the Home Secretary will deal with the matters sympathetically; but I believe that the Government should place the matter absolutely beyond the discretionary powers even of the member of this party who for the time being may hold the position of Home Secretary. The Act should be amended to provide the exact amount that a widow is to have for each member of the family. The Act should provide that she may have a reserve fund and still draw the sustenance provided under the Act. Many women are unfitted, through lack of experience and because they are unfitted temperamentally, to embark upon a certain business. They face the world after the breadwinner has gone. They have a certain amount of money in the bank, and, according to the Act they cannot hope to obtain sustenance until they have depleted that amount of money, which I look upon as a proper reserve fund to meet circumstances that might arise at any time. Take the case of a woman with £150 in the bank and having four or five children dependent upon her. According to the Act, unless she is reduced to the level of a destitute person, she cannot hope for any relief. One of the greatest assets to the State is a healthy,

*Mr. Stopford.]*

educated, rising generation. The Act practically says that she has to exhaust what probably has taken her and her husband years to accumulate.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: And probably what has been collected for her by some charitable institution.

At 4.45 p.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. STOPFORD: That is so. She cannot hope to take advantage of that fund, and she is therefore in no better position than a person who has made no provision at all. That is economically unsound, and, from a humanitarian point of view and from the point of view of the development of the State, it is also unsound. According to the Act, the department is only permitted to level down and cannot level up. Take another case of an unfortunate woman with £150 in the bank with four children. She might have her own home. The State Children Department might advance to her somewhere in the vicinity of £1 10s. to £1 15s. per week to maintain herself and four children. She has to paint that home at stated intervals, pay rates and insurance, and make provision for the children if they should be seized with sudden illness. I am assuming that the children are protected by some lodge benefit which enables them to obtain free medical attention. When a child becomes suddenly ill, the lodge doctor may not be available, and she may have to call in another doctor to attend to the child, and have to pay a guinea or whatever the fee may be; but, if she has no reserve fund, probably the doctor will not come if he knows that he is not going to receive his fee. That may seem a harsh statement, but it has been my experience of some members of the medical profession, although I have no desire to level such a charge against the whole of the members of the profession. We have to-day a Home Secretary who is sympathetically disposed towards these people, because I have known him adjudicate favourably in certain cases; but in other cases I have known him to adjudicate in a very unfavourable manner, and I do not think, as a Labour Government, that we should face the people with the knowledge that it rests on the decision of one member of our party as to whether relief shall be given in circumstances such as that. I sincerely trust that the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimates will endeavour to bring this matter before the Cabinet. Even if it were to cost another £50,000 a year, there are enough wealthy people from whom we should demand a certain amount of the wealth that we, as a class, produce for them to help those of our class who have fallen by the way.

There is another aspect of this department that calls for attention. There are many widows in this State to-day who lost their husbands at the war, and they are in receipt of military pensions. I have in my mind a case in my electorate where a widow is struggling to maintain eight children, and she gets something like 4s. a week from the military authorities to maintain those children. When I approached the Director he stated that it is the duty of the military authorities to see that those children are properly cared for. If the Federal Government or the military authorities refuse to recognise their responsibilities in cases of this

[*Mr. Stopford.*]

description, then the State Department should rise superior to any technicality and extend either permanent or temporary assistance. We should go further than that, and the Government, as a Government, should make representations to the Federal Government drawing attention to such cases, and then, when publicity is given to the matter, if the Federal Government or the military authorities, or whoever is responsible for the small pension paid to-day in such cases as I have described, refuse to give further assistance, the State should rise to the occasion and make the pension up to what we consider is a fair amount.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): So that there may be no misunderstanding of the statement made by the hon. member for Albert, I propose to read a short paragraph on page 8 of the Director's report—

"As a rule, assistance is not granted to one child unless the mother is an invalid and unable to earn the average wage for a woman."

That is very definite. That is one matter that the Minister might give consideration to. It assumes, first of all, that if the widow is an invalid and unable to earn the average wage, then the assistance will be given. When we consider that the average wage of a woman would not be more than £2 5s. per week and she would have to be working all the time to earn that, and the average child living under these conditions would be three or four years of age, it is hardly fair that that rule should apply, and I think there is some justification for the statement of the hon. member for Albert. Early in this session I asked for some information in connection with the State Children Department. We have several times taken exception to Ministers sidestepping questions, and the Minister practically sidestepped my question on that occasion. Whether he was advised by the officer in charge of the department or whether it was off his own bat I do not know, but I do not propose to allow it to pass without showing the position.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am responsible for all questions answered by me.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: On 12th July I asked this question—

"1. What number of children (a) under ten years of age, (b) over ten and under fourteen, have been discharged as State children during the half-year ended 31st December, 1921, and the half-year ended 30th June, 1922?"

"2. What was the saving to the department?"

This was the answer—

"1. Children under fourteen years are not discharged except in cases where it is found that they are not entitled to State aid.

"2. There is no saving to the department, as the vote is for children who are entitled to State aid."

That is no answer to my question. It was not a question with me as to whether they were entitled to be discharged or not. I asked the question because a number of persons have come to me with lists from the department showing that their children had been discharged during those periods, and I am entitled to know what number of children has been discharged during the year.

I assume there was a reason for the children being discharged, but I wanted to know the number, and that was the answer I got. I was not going to be satisfied with that answer, and on the 1st September I asked this question—

“What is the total number of children discharged from State control during period 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922—(a) Having reached age of fourteen years; (b) at request of parent or guardian; (c) on recommendation of Controller of State children for, in his opinion, being adequately maintained?”

The answer I got shows this remarkable position: that out of 1,458 children who were discharged under all circumstances, 913 were discharged on the recommendation of the Director of State Children, because, I assume, in his opinion, they were adequately maintained. The number for the different districts were: Southern district, 660; Central district, 106; Northern district, 147.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is that the question you complain of as not being answered?

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: No; I am complaining about the first question asked in July, which the Home Secretary would not answer. He sidestepped it.

The hon. member for Mount Morgan pointed out instances where the mothers of children are suffering owing to various decisions of the Director of State Children, supported ultimately by the Home Secretary. He has told us of mothers who have a certain amount of money. I have in my mind two mothers at Toowoomba, whose children have recently been discharged from State control. In one case a certain sum of money was raised for this woman by men in the West, who recognised that she had lost her breadwinner and had been thrown on the world to do the best possible for her children. She came to Toowoomba and got some assistance; under what cir-

[5 p.m.] cumstances I cannot say. Later on, after reviewing the circumstances, they decided to take the children out, and were told that this money which was subscribed by well-intentioned persons must be used for the maintenance of the children. The woman came to me about it, and I asked her what she was going to do. The words of the hon. member for Mount Morgan this afternoon come into my mind. She said, “I would like to go into business, but I have only just come into the city and do not know the place, and I might lose my money if I started too quickly.” She said she did not want to lose the money, because in that case she would have to go back for State assistance.

I have a case in my mind where some money came to a widow from insurance, and her father was in a position to give her shelter. The State allowance has been stopped lately, and she has been told that she must utilise the insurance money. She has already paid a large portion of it for medical attendance for her late husband. She is only getting a cover over her head through the kindness of her father, who is a working man in the city. Under these conditions I am not going to say that the department is administered humanely. It is certainly not administered as you would expect it to be by a Labour Government.

These are very serious charges against the department in connection with people who happen to have a few pounds. The reason why I have referred to this matter more fully than I should otherwise have done is because these Estimates are in charge of the Secretary for Mines. I remember the hon. gentleman making a speech here in 1907—it was on another matter altogether—in which he did not subscribe to this policy of making the people suffer through the money which other members of the family might have. When the Kidston Government introduced the Old Age Pensions Bill in 1907, it contained a clause which provided that the pension would be paid, but that the Government had the right to call on the sons and daughters of the old-age pensioner to contribute about 2s. per week.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe that there should be no qualifications.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The Minister's memory is something like my own, and he is anticipating what I have to read. The Minister is reported, vide “Hansard” 1907, page 1517, to have said—

“Another objectionable clause is clause 20, which compels the relatives to contribute towards the keep of their parents. In my opinion, that is discouragement to thrift.

“Mr. Jenkinson: Do you object to it?

“Mr. JONES: Yes, I do. I think that every person should get the pension as a right. It does not matter whether their children are in a position to keep them or not.

“Mr. Jenkinson: You believe that everybody should have a pension.

“Mr. JONES: Certainly. Everybody who reaches a certain age should have a pension. Clause 20 will be a discouragement to those who are thrifty, and the parents who have good and dutiful children will be penalised because the pension will only be paid to the parents of children who are doing nothing to maintain them. There might be other parents who are just as deserving of a pension and who have good and dutiful children, but because they have good children they do not reap the benefit of this pension.”

I am quoting that, because in the absence of the Home Secretary I want the Secretary for Mines to deal with the particular cases mentioned by the hon. member for Rockhampton, the hon. member for Mount Morgan, and myself. I think that the methods of the department in dealing with these cases are not humane. Where money has been subscribed by the public to assist a widow and her children it should be looked upon as a gift to them. The State should not benefit because some kind-hearted people have rendered the widow assistance.

I regret that we find ourselves discussing the Estimates without having the reports of all the departments before us. In this case we have the report, and one item is in connection with the Westbrook Reformatory. It will be remembered that on a previous occasion some references were made to the changes which took place at Westbrook under the regime of the then Home Secretary, the present Secretary for Public Instruction. I said then that I would be one of the first to congratulate the superintendent on making good at Westbrook. I have done that on

*Mr. T. R. Roberts.]*

previous occasions, and I want to do it again to-day. The report shows that the State should have the utmost confidence in the superintendent. No one can read the report without being fully satisfied of the whole-heartedness of the superintendent and his wife in connection with the State children there.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is that in your electorate?

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: It is in my electorate now. I assume from the interjection of the Minister that the Government intend to take up the position that we have no right to discuss State institutions which are in our electorates.

Mr. GLEDSON: You are assuming wrongly.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I saw the prompting, and the hon. member who prompted.

Mr. FORDE: The leader of the Opposition the other night said that I had no right to discuss the Westwood Sanatorium.

Mr. VOWLES: You are a "sticky beak."

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Under the redistribution scheme, the Westwood Reformatory comes into the East Toowoomba electorate.

Mr. GLEDSON: We want to know whether you are fishing for votes or not.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We know that he is.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: This institution is now in the East Toowoomba electorate, and I am proud to have an institution which is managed under these conditions in my electorate. In these days we are out to do something for the man on the land, and we are looking for people who are able to instruct those who are engaged in the agricultural industry. Here is a man who is worth a great deal to the department in that respect. The Director, in referring to the work at Westbrook, says—

"The older boys are taught farming, dairying, fruitgrowing, gardening, clearing land, fencing, cooking, and a general repairing of farm implements. During the year they add some useful training in building, for they built a 100-ton hayshed, an eleven-stalled stable, and an implement shed. The boys take a very keen interest in any constructive work. They were at their best at harvesting and threshing time."

This is the part of the report which I consider of most importance, more particularly to those engaged in the agricultural industry, because we know that this will be for the benefit of these boys—

"We have had another successful year in the farm—no serious pests to contend with. Our sheds and silo are full of grain and fodder, and we have a lot of hay and straw in stacks. An additional thirty-five acres were cleared and fenced, and now there is a good crop growing on it. The wheat was successful, and passed through the Wheat Board and sold as seed wheat."

I think that those paragraphs are worth giving publicity to. This gentleman is not handling the best of material, but he is going to send that material out into the State of Queensland and the Commonwealth much better than it was before it came into his hands. I pay him that compliment this afternoon.

[Mr. T. R. Roberts.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): There are one or two remarks which have been made by hon. members opposite that require some reply, especially those in reference to the giving of assistance. The last hon. member who spoke said that assistance was not given to a widow with one child.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He is quite incorrect.

Mr. COLLINS: He is incorrect to some extent. The hon. member for Mount Morgan made reference to it, too. The practice is set out quite plainly in the report. This is what it says—

"As a general rule, assistance is not granted for one child unless the mother is an invalid and unable to earn the average wage for a woman."

It is no use beating about the bush. It is put there plainly. What do the words "general rule" mean?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He does not say that a woman with one child does not get assistance.

Mr. COLLINS: I want our friends on the other side to be quite consistent in this matter. They are complaining from time to time about the amount of money which the Government are spending.

Mr. MORGAN: You never heard any complaint from this side about the expenditure on this vote.

Mr. COLLINS: If there are not sufficient funds to provide the extra money for a widow with one child, then the Government should not hesitate to put an extra tax on all incomes over £1,500 a year. I want hon. members opposite to be consistent, especially the hon. member for East Toowoomba, because I intend to keep him right up to the mark. If he believes that there should be no refusal by the Government when a woman with one child is an applicant and the breadwinner is taken away, then we should not hesitate to put a tax on the shoulders of those best able to bear it, and see that the child gets a fair deal.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: No one will ever object to paying a tax for that purpose.

Mr. COLLINS: If the Government were to introduce a proposal to put a tax on all incomes over £1,500 a year for the purpose of providing this money, then we should be bitterly opposed by hon. members opposite. There is something here in the Director's report, under the heading "Hired Out," that I would like to read. It says—

"Boys and girls are sent out to service when they reach the age of fourteen years and are certified as medically fit for service. There is still a great demand for them, and a very long waiting list of approved applications. The hirer must provide clothes, accommodation, and medical attention, in addition to paying the following wages:—

From 14 to 15 years, at the rate of—  
Boys, 4s. per week; girls, 2s. per week.

From 15 to 16 years, at the rate of—  
Boys, 6s. per week; girls, 3s. 6d. per week.

From 16 to 17 years, at the rate of—  
Boys, 8s. per week; girls, 5s. per week.

From 17 to 18 years, at the rate of—  
Boys, 10s. per week; girls, 6s. 6d. per week.

“ On 31st December, 1921, there were 556 State children in hired service, as compared with 492 in 1920.”

It does not follow that, because I am sitting behind the Labour Government, I must not call attention to anything wrong if I see it. It is my duty in this Chamber, as a representative of the masses of the people, to declare what I consider to be right. There is one part of that paragraph that I want particularly to draw the attention of hon. members of the Opposition to. That is where it says—

“ There is still a great demand for them, and a very long waiting list of approved applicants.”

Mr. MORGAN: They are all your friends who hire them out.

Mr. COLLINS: The Opposition are always telling us that they believe in the law of supply and demand. We find that the demand in this particular case is greater than the supply. According to the argument of hon. members opposite, when the demand is greater than the supply, wages go up. It is our duty as a Government to protect these unfortunate children. I am not in favour of anyone having children sent to them and calling upon them to pay the small wages mentioned in that list I just read out.

Mr. MORGAN: They get their board, too.

Mr. COLLINS: Hon. members opposite belong to the wealthy class.

Mr. MORGAN: The wealthy class do not get these children. It is Labour supporters who get these children.

Mr. COLLINS: If our supporters or our opponents get these children at the wage mentioned, then the system is entirely wrong. I do not care whether they are our supporters or your supporters, the whole thing is wrong. I do not think that the wages are adequate. I would like to know from hon. members opposite if they think that the wages are adequate. I was thunderstruck when I read that paragraph in the report, especially when I came to the part which said that the demand was greater than the supply. I think the Minister should take particular notice of that. After all, we have a duty to perform as a Labour Government, and that is to look after those who are unable to look after themselves. I differ with some of my colleagues when I say that we can get greater revenue in Queensland than we are getting at the present time. There are avenues of taxation practically untouched, and I think that we should touch those sources of taxation in order to do justice to these unfortunate children who have not got anyone to care for them. Then there is a paragraph lower down in the report which reads—

“ The practice is to consider the earning ability of the mother and the elder members of the family, and, if the total sum coming into the house is of such an amount that additional assistance by the State is not considered necessary, the application is not approved; or, should a widow's financial circumstances materially improve, some or all of the children for whom assistance was being paid are liable to be discharged, and the assistance discontinued wholly or in part. It often transpires that several children are

earning, including two or three sons, who are in receipt of the full basic wage, and they only pay their mother 15s. or 20s. per week board—”

If that is the case, they ought to be ashamed of themselves, I am quite willing to admit that. The Director continues—

“ whereas in their district such could not be obtained for less than 25s. or 30s. per week, with washing extra. In those cases we consider the sons should do more to help their mother to rear the younger members of the family; and that they are morally bound to, and should take joy in doing so, and should be pleased that they are able to do so.”

A lot of discretion needs to be exercised in dealing with this matter. Every young man who is living with his mother ought to pay 25s. or 30s. a week for his board. I have no time for the young man who only pays 15s. a week for his board. We want to realise that these young men want to start courting and take unto themselves a wife. If they are not looking forward to that, there is certainly something wrong with them.

Mr. MORGAN: What do you suggest?

Mr. COLLINS: A young man may be saving up to get married, but, if he has to contribute to the support of his younger sisters and brothers, he may have to remain a bachelor all his life. There is a time when the fire burns very strongly in all young men and young women, especially between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, and sometimes a little later, and when the fire is burning, that is the time that we should help them to get married. If they have to contribute to the support of the family, they will not be able to save anything. It is not our duty to do anything to stop young men and young women from getting married. I think the native-born are the best asset that we can have in the country. If we want to have an increase in our population, we must give every encouragement to our young men and young women to enable them to get married.

At any rate, I know of cases which have been brought under my notice in which I considered there was hardship. It is quite true that there was a number of children in the house, and collectively they may have been earning more than I was. Those young men were paying the current rates for board, and some of the older ones were looking forward to getting married, but they had to keep their younger brothers and sisters. I do not know that they are morally bound to do so. They had no say in bringing them into the world, and, while I believe that it is the duty of the father and the mother to look after the children—especially the father because he is the author of their being—I am not too sure that a brother is morally bound to look after his brothers and sisters, except, perhaps, purely from a humanitarian standpoint, just as I am morally bound to assist my weaker brethren, as we are doing in this vote.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I was very pleased to hear the speech delivered by the hon. member for Bowen about boys who are boarded out or employed by people who desire their services; but I have something to say, because many applications which

*Mr. Morgan.]*

come from the bush for boys or girls are turned down. The policy of the department is not to allow these children to go into the country. They have to remain within a certain distance of the city, and the whole trouble is that they are being used and employed by friends of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat.

Mr. FOLLY: That is not correct.

Mr. MORGAN: It is correct. The point I want to make is that the important consideration is not altogether the wages paid to them, but the homes that the children have. If one of them happened to be my relative, I would far sooner know that he was in a good home and getting proper care and attention than that he was receiving an extra 4s. or 5s. or 10s. a week. It is not a matter of who is prepared to pay the highest wage. It should be a matter for inquiry as to the nature of the home and the lives of the people who take the children. The other argument has no force in it whatever, and the hon. member is looking at the question in a very narrow, parochial way. For instance, a child might get into a home where it would be sent to a technical college during certain periods, and have the opportunity of getting a good education. More than the regulation quantity of clothes might be provided—and we know all these things are laid down by regulation. The child might be regarded as an adopted child, have meals at the same table as the family, and in every way be treated as the other children in the house. On the other hand, none of these things might be done. Some persons might treat the child just as an employee. The hon. member must admit that in the former case the child would be much more fortunate than in the latter case, where the child merely worked day and night and got a few shillings more a week.

I do not say the Director is not impartial, but it seems to me that there are cases in which people in my district have been singled out for particular treatment. I know cases where farmers on small selections have died and left their widows with large families and farms mortgaged up to the hilt. In such a case the unfortunate widow, not being able to carry on and not getting sufficient revenue from the farm to keep the children, has been turned down by the department owing to the fact that the widow had that farm, although it was mortgaged up to the hilt. I have had children in Brisbane pointed out to me as those of parents who were getting State aid, and who were dressed better than any of my children, and better dressed than the children of most people—they were not moderately, but extravagantly dressed.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They were pulling your leg.

Mr. MORGAN: They were not. I know what I am talking about. Other cases have come under my notice where I think the department has not treated the parents in a proper manner and given them the assistance I think they ought to have.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Members have investigated these cases and invariably find that the Director is quite correct.

Mr. MORGAN: I admit that in one or two cases I have gone to the Director himself, and he showed me that he was perfectly justified; but there have been cases where I

[Mr. Morgan.

thought he was just a little bit hard, although, if he had given assistance, there might have been thousands of similar cases in which it would be demanded. It is very hard for the Director to draw the line, but it has to be drawn somewhere, and somebody has to suffer. The Director must act on the reports he gets from the police in the locality concerned. One policeman may be very sympathetic and make a very good report. Another policeman may be looking at the matter purely from a duty point of view, and may make what he considers a fair and honest report, which may be against the granting of assistance, so that a great deal depends on the policeman who makes the inquiries. The Minister will admit that that is possible and probable. Personally, I have no general cause for complaint. I think the Government, like all other Governments, recognise their duty to assist the child and give it the necessities of life during the growing stage, so that it will eventually become a strong man or woman. We know that even in the case of animals, if they have suffered in their growing years, they are not likely to be as fit and healthy as if they had had proper food and attention, and the same thing applies to children.

All I hope is that people in the bush will be dealt with just the same as people in the city, and that they will be dealt with just as sympathetically, although they live 300 miles from Brisbane, as if they were under the personal eye of the Director. I think it will be admitted that such cases are not plentiful in the country, but it will be admitted that there are times unfortunately when assistance is needed, and I hope the Director will recognise that such cases are just as deserving of consideration as those in the city.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I think that the department should be congratulated upon having placed in the hands of hon. members the report which we have before us. I regret that we have not other departmental reports. I imagine it is the lot of every hon. member to carry complaints to the department from time to time. As a rule, the greatest attention is given to any complaint that is made. I admit that, however strongly impressed a member may be in carrying such complaints, almost invariably it is found that the Director has acted wisely and well. I suppose no

[5.30 p.m.] department bestows on its work more intimate attention than does this department. Unfortunately there are times when advantage is taken of the department; and there are other times when the department, seemingly, has not acted rightly and fairly. On such occasions my experience of the department has been that the officers have willingly put right any wrong that might have been done. It is a growing department, and we are sorry that it needs this amount of expenditure. The sympathy of every Government naturally is extended towards child life and its proper training. It is stated in the report that the expenditure for the year was £197,607 3s. 8d.—which indicates that the needs of the people in this direction are having attention. An interesting portion of the report is the following:—

“A small proportion of the child's wages is paid to him as pocket money, and the balance placed to the credit of the child's trust account in the Savings Bank. On the 31st December,

1921, the total sum held in trust for State children was £28,808 4s. 11d. as compared with £28,271 2s. 5d. in 1920, an increase of £537 2s. 8d. The total number of Savings Banks accounts in operation on 31st December, 1921, was 1,060; being 684 in the Southern district; 220 in the Central district; and 156 in the Northern district. The wages collected during the year was £6,617 10s. 7d. as compared with £5,982 3s. 9d. during 1920, an increase of £635 6s. 10d."

The table which follows shows what was received. In the earlier part of the report there is a paragraph which I think should be emphasised. In it the director states—

"It is an honour to be a State child, for as such the treatment, education, clothing, general supervision, and upbringing is in all cases equal to that bestowed upon the average child by its parents, and in many cases far superior. Again, from a financial point of view, the State child always has the advantage over a non-State child, when the age of eighteen years is reached. The child at home with his parents has worked since leaving school and regularly handed all his wages to his parents, as a dutiful son should, but a State child's wages are collected for him and held in trust, so that at the age of eighteen years he generally has £60 or £70 to his credit."

Mr. MORGAN: Very good.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It is very good. Unfortunately, that is not followed out generally by parents in their dealings with their children. A boy or girl of the age of eighteen years who has £60 or £70 and has been trained to save will have added to that amount very considerably by the time the age of twenty-one is reached. The wisdom of the department is significantly shown in its dealings with the earnings of the children. Some exceedingly pleasant and desirable children are hired out, and I think the department is to be complimented upon its wise administration.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): The hon. member for Murilla referred to friends of this party employing State children. I do not know whether he has any authority for making a statement of that kind. He might look round his own party and see whether it does not apply to them.

Mr. MORGAN: There is no disgrace in employing a State child.

Mr. RIORDAN: None whatever; but the hon. member tried to infer that the Labour party were exploiting this department. I do not think that anybody can infer that the man in charge of this department has not done his duty in connection with the letting out of the children under his charge, or in the giving of State aid. I have found the department very sympathetic; the closest investigation has been made in all cases brought under its notice by me. I have always found that the officers were willing to lend a helping hand. I think there should not be a hard and fast rule in regard to a widow with one child. My experience goes to show that there is not. I know of some cases of widows in poor health receiving assistance. There was a case in my own electorate. I found in one town a woman with one child who was in very poor health and was doing

a little sewing from which she was earning 10s. or 15s. a week. Acting on the report of a policeman that she was in work, the department had her taken off the list. I pointed out to the department the circumstances of the case and that the woman was in poor health, and she was again placed on the list. We must speak of the department as we find it, and I find that investigations are made into these matters on every occasion. I think consideration should be given to the wages paid to these children, and an increase made. The money should not be paid to them as increased pocket money, but should be placed to their credit in the Savings Bank, so that, when they reach the age of eighteen years, instead of having £60 or £70, the amount will be doubled. Some hon. members have said that that is a very handy sum, and that very few children outside get that opportunity. There are many boys outside who get that opportunity by obtaining employment, and, if they are thrifty, they are able to put a few shillings away. We must realise that these children are suffering from the loss of their parents, which is a great loss to them. The annual report of the director states—

"One clergyman in this State has recently been publishing the fact that the State does everything for its children except to care for their souls. I do not agree with him, for I contend that the department in general, and the Director as legal guardian, do everything possible to care for the souls of the State children. No child comes into our care without enquiries being made as to his religion. He is then placed out with a foster-mother, but before she is allowed to have that child a clergyman has to certify that he will exercise pastoral supervision over any children sent to her, and that she is, in his opinion, a fit and proper person to have control of children. It is the woman's duty to send the children to church or Sunday school once every Sunday. If the clergyman exercises that supervision, I fail to see what more the State could do for the souls of the children. Thanks are due to God for the many saintly foster-mothers who have for years mothered many children for the department and have exercised great care for their souls."

I think it a shame that people should try and discredit the department or the children who are unfortunate enough to have to come under the control of the State. There is no crime in being a State child. When the children lose their parents, they are given the next best thing. I think the State is looking after those children better than any charitable institution outside could look after them, and I hope that the Government will continue in the way they have been doing. I feel sure that the department will deal with all cases from a humanitarian standpoint.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Quenton*): I think it will be agreed that children placed in the care of the State Children Department are deserving of the very best treatment which can be given them. They are handicapped in most cases by having lost one parent and in some cases by having lost both. It is the right thing for the State as well as for the department to take an interest in the children. I read a paragraph

*Mr. Winstanley.]*

from an old country paper, making a comparison between the treatment meted out by the States to children in Australia and by the Poor Law Guardians to children in the old country, and I found that the child life in Australia was taken at a greater value than in the older country. There can be no question about the fact that as time goes by the Government more and more recognise their responsibility in connection with these children. At one time when children were left orphans the only place they could be sent to was an orphanage. There was a sort of barrack system where they were all treated together with practically no home influence or home control. It was because of that experience that the department thought it would be infinitely better, when children lost their natural mother, to place them under a foster-mother rather than have them in orphanages or such institutions. If we make a comparison with the treatment meted out eight or nine years ago, we find that the treatment to-day is far superior. Eight or nine years ago the maximum amount paid to a woman with five or six children was 18s. per week. Anybody who has had anything to do with the rearing of a family knows that that was not sufficient even with the low price of things existing at that time. It was said at the time that the mother should do something to assist; but what could a woman with five or six children do to supplement her income? The natural mothers and foster-mothers are in a much better position to-day. It has been found that the children are well worth looking after, not only in the interests of the children themselves, but from the point of view that they are the future citizens of the State. The children are now able to continue their education and win scholarships and take their places in the public service and other avenues like other children. They are getting much more care and attention now than they received in days gone by. At one time they were discharged from the department on attaining the age of twelve years, and they then had to go out and do the best they could as hired servants. Now they can remain at school until they are fourteen years old, and, if they show any ability, further consideration is given to them. All this shows that the children are being much better looked after than they were in times gone by. There is a feeling in the minds of some people outside that State children are being exploited when hired out. Some people have written to me saying that they were not being looked after as they should be. The ideas in the minds of some of these people were that the children were not being paid an adequate wage for the work they did; but it will be admitted that the wage is not the only consideration. If a boy gets into a home where a good example is set him, and where he is made one of the family and has privileges and opportunities extended to him, the monetary consideration is not the only one. There is an idea in the minds of some of the people that a boy is made use of for two or three years, and that when he reaches an age when he is entitled to better payment for his work he is turned adrift. I made inquiries at the department, and I ascertained that every care is taken to see that the State children are not exploited.

If they are employed when they are young, when they reach an age when they can work, then they should be paid a reasonable wage.

[*Mr. Winstanley.*]

If anybody keeps these boys for two or three years, then it is only reasonable, when they give satisfaction—as most of them do—that they should keep them on when they have to pay them. I am quite satisfied that, so far as it is possible, the inspectors in connection with the department look after the boys and see that they get fair treatment. I know some people think the inspectors look after the boys too much; but the interests of the boys, and of the girls, too, are the very first consideration of the department; and, therefore, the Director is justified in seeing that the children are both well-fed and well-clothed, and that they get all the things to which they are entitled.

From my own personal knowledge and observations, I say that the compliment paid in the report to the foster-mothers is not too great, and that some of the foster-mothers set an example that might well be followed, even by some natural mothers. Some of them have had children for four or five years, and although the children have gone away to employment in various parts of the State, they keep up a regular correspondence, and regard the foster-home as their home, and whenever they come back they do not fail to visit their foster-mother. That is one of the very finest compliments that could be paid to the foster-mothers, some of whom take on the care of the children simply from the mother instinct. I know of one or two who have never had families of their own, yet they have brought up family after family—four or five children at a time—for the State. Year after year they have done this simply because they like to help the children along, and children are exceptionally fortunate when they get in a foster-home of that kind. Although there may be some instances, as pointed out, where the department appears to be a bit harsh, as a whole it gives every consideration to the boys and girls, and, although comparisons may be odious, I have no hesitation in saying that the interests of the boys and girls are better looked after than they were at any previous time in the history of the State.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): From my experience of cases that I have had anything to do with, I can only say that the State is fortunate in having a department similar to this which has been instituted for some time to look after the interests of the little ones who most need it. I am not going to drag into a question of so much moment to the "kiddies" the slur that was practically cast by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat that some little kudos may be claimed from the fact that the children are being looked after to-day by a department which was established many years ago under another Administration. The present Government have fulfilled their part in looking after the children, but I want also to point out that the vote is greater now than under the last Government because the cost of living is greater; and, what is more, privation is greater under this Government. I have not raised this point to try and make capital against the Government. I believe they are doing their duty.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did the Federal Government increase the old-age pensions?

Mr. CORSER: They did. The statement was made yesterday that the State children are not available in country districts; but from my experience, in cases where it is really warranted, and where it is to the



advantage of the children, the department is making them available to country districts. As I have previously stated, the State can compliment itself on the administration of the department.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): When speaking this afternoon, I omitted one matter of importance to persons interested in this department. I do not propose to mention the name, but the Minister will know the case to which I refer. In 1920 I brought up a case where a certain person was indebted to the department. I was able to get consideration given to this case, and later on the amount was reduced. I pointed out, when speaking in 1920, that the debt was £40. I addressed a letter to the Minister a few days ago; I do not know just what has happened, as I have heard nothing, but what astonished me was that the wife of this person came to me with a bundle of receipts, and said, "I would be glad if you would reckon these up, as I would like to know what I now owe to the department." The receipts had evidently been collected over a considerable period, as some of them were very dirty, and I said, "It will take me some time. You had better come down at the end of the week, and I will do it in my spare time." I went through the receipts and found that, roughly, she had paid £37. Then I went along to the department, and said, "By the way, how much is owing by this person?" The official said, "He paid 15s. the other day." I said, "He must have nearly paid it off." The official replied, "Oh, no; they owe nearly £70." I ask the Minister to give some further consideration to this case, as it is a most serious matter to the man and his wife. As I pointed out at the time, the department took this child away for her own protection. She was causing a good deal of trouble and anxiety, and the father of the child thought the best thing to do was to hand her over to the State. The child is nearly eighteen years old now, and is earning her own livelihood. Still, there is this debt against the father, although he has paid £37 odd. It is not fair that the department should hold this debt against the man. I ask the Minister to look into the matter, and see if he cannot give some relief.

There is another matter that is causing a large number of people in the State some concern. On page 10 of the report it is stated—

"The attention of the public has been drawn to the employment of children by entertainers, more particularly on the stage. Provision is made in the State Children Acts, 1911 to 1917, section 67, as follows:—

Some attention needs to be paid to the employment of children by theatrical companies."

I have no objection to ordinary school entertainments, but I object to the children being engaged in our theatres, night after night, when they probably do not leave the theatre until after 11 o'clock, some of

[7 p.m.] them actually falling asleep, and some provision should be made to prevent that. I understand that the department do control them as far as sending them to school is concerned, but that is not sufficient. If the children have to go to school in the day, and then to take part in theatrical performances at night, it is a hardship to them. I would support the

Government in any restriction they make in connection with this matter.

I again urge the Minister to consider the case of the person I have mentioned in connection with the State children's allowance. The man concerned has paid £37 odd, and I think that the case might be reasonably considered.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): There are cases of hardship, as the hon. member for East Toowoomba points out, of arrears in payment which have mounted up so that it has become almost impossible for the person who is liable to pay what is due. I think the Director is a sympathetic administrator, and that all the members of the staff of the department extend sympathy to those with whom they come in contact. It is one of the departments where anyone unknown can walk in and get civility. Where heads in some departments are concerned, people have to go with a certain amount of caution, as, if they are not careful, they will get their head snapped off at the start. I think the State Children Department is one of the finest departments in the State. It is very interesting to read the report of 1914-15. I find, on referring to that report, that the institutions controlled by the State then were—

1. Diamantina Receiving Depot, Woolloowin.
2. Infants' Home, Woolloowin.
3. Reformatory for Boys, Westbrook.
4. Receiving Depot, Rockhampton.
5. Townsville Orphanage.

The licensed institutions were—

- A.—Controlled by the Salvation Army—
  1. Industrial School for Girls, Yeronga.
  2. Industrial School for Boys, River-view.
- B.—Controlled by the Anglican Sisters—
  1. Industrial School for Girls, Clayfield.
  2. Home of the Good Shepherd, Nundah.
- C.—Controlled by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy—
  1. St. Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee.
  2. Meteor Park Orphanage, Neerkol.
  3. Industrial School for Girls, Nudgee.
  4. Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin.
  5. Magdalen Asylum (Holy Cross Retreat), Woolloowin.

The numbers of children in those public institutions for the year ended 31st December, 1914, were—

Diamantina Receiving Depot	...	12
Infants' Home	...	9
Home of the Good Shepherd, Nundah	...	Nil
St. Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee	...	404
Holy Cross Retreat, Woolloowin	...	28
Industrial School for Girls, Nudgee	...	19
Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin	...	14
Industrial School for Girls, Clayfield	...	34
Industrial School for Girls, Yeronga	...	20
Industrial School for Boys, River-view	...	6
Reformatory for Boys, Westbrook	...	73
Rockhampton Receiving Depot	...	19
Meteor Park Orphanage, Neerkol	...	223
Townsville Orphanage	...	132
Total	...	993

Mr. Brennan.]

Altogether there were 5,066 children under State control in 1914. I will read the figures in the different institutions as contained in the report of the Director for the year 1921. They are as follows:—

Diamantina Receiving Depot ...	37
Infants' Home ...	41
Farm Home for Boys, Westbrook	58
Rockhampton Receiving Depot ...	13
Townsville Orphanage ...	101
Industrial School for Girls, Yeronga ...	27
Industrial School for Girls, Toowoong ...	12
Industrial School for Girls, Rockhampton ...	1
Industrial School for Boys, River-view ...	34
St. George's Orphanage, Rockhampton ...	17
St. Vincent's Orphanage, Nudgee	470
Meteor Park Orphanage, Neerkol	232
Industrial School for Girls, Nudgee ...	2
Industrial School for Girls, Woolloowin ...	2
Holy Cross Retreat, Woolloowin ...	27
<b>Total ...</b>	<b>1,074</b>

We find from another table in the report that the total number of children under State control on 31st December, 1921, was 7,736. In 1914 the total amount spent for the relief of State children was £65,513. There were 5,066 children under State control in that year, which works out at about £12 19s. per annum per child. Last year the total amount spent for State children was £185,506, and as there were 7,736 children under State control, that works out at £23 15s. per annum per child. Hon. members will see that we nearly doubled the amount provided for State children irrespective of where they were situated, whether in orphanages or under State control or with foster-mothers.

I quite recognise that the hon. member for East Toowoomba does a lot of useful work in Toowoomba in filling in forms for mothers and foster-mothers in regard to obtaining relief for State children. These forms require to be filled in by a person acceptable to the department and who knows the people making the application. Each case is investigated by the police. You can imagine what use it would be for the hon. member for East Toowoomba having to fill in these forms on the previous estimate of £12 19s. per child as against £23 15s. granted by this Government, or an increase of 100 per cent. We can only compare it to the old-age pensions granted by the Federal Government. The Federal Government in office since the war broke out have been opposed to the Labour party. In 1914 the old-age pension was 12s. 6d. per week, and they increased it to 15s. per week, as compared with our increase to State children of 100 per cent. Previously a mother or foster-mother was allowed 5s. for the first child, 4s. for the second, and 3s. for the third, and no matter how many children were in the family the total amount must not exceed 18s. per week. This Government made provision for 10s. for each child, or an average of 9s. 6d. per child under fourteen years of age, no matter how many children in the family. That is the greatest tribute that can be paid to the Labour Government. If the Government did nothing else but increase this amount for unfortunate children after

the breadwinner has been taken away, they deserve the thanks of the community. If for no other reason than that, the mothers and foster-mothers of the State children must thank the Government for what they have done, and not individual members. The members of a party who fill in these forms are doing some sort of clerical work; but the real benefit they receive must be attributed to the humane Government in power, who increased the allowance from £12 19s. per child to £23 15s. 6d. It is all very well to find fault with administration, but would the Opposition dare to take away these allowances?

Mr. CORSER: They instituted them.

Mr. BRENNAN: The Labour Government increased the amount by 100 per cent., whilst in the same time the Federal Government only increased the old-age pensions from 12s. 6d. to 15s. per week. Had the old-age pensions been increased in the same ratio, they would have been raised to £1 5s. That is the only comparison one can make. Had the State aid for children been increased merely in the same proportion as the Federal old-age pensions were increased by the Tory Government in the Federal Parliament, the mothers—some of whom have five or six children—would not be nearly so well off as they are. It is all very well for hon. members to say to their electors, "I got you State aid; I got you the old-age pension." I know hon. members who get hairpins for ladies, but the people ought to ask themselves, "Who gave us the increase? Who gave us the facilities to benefit?" Members of Parliament become strict politicians, and all they are troubling about is holding their seats. They will tell the electors anything at all. I want the electors to understand that no member of Parliament could have got them more than £12 19s. per child had it not been for the Labour Government, who increased the allowance to £23 15s. 6d. Anybody can fill in a form—a justice of the peace is qualified to do that—and the people must not be led astray by politicians who say, "So-and-so did not do this. I did it for you." I want them to understand that not the person who fills in a form but the Government who are pledged to give the best possible benefits to these unfortunate children are responsible for these increases.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I think all hon. members will appreciate the tribute which the hon. member for Toowoomba has just paid to the hon. member for East Toowoomba. We all know that there is no member in this Chamber who pays more attention to the needs of his electors in regard to State aid than the hon. member for East Toowoomba.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You should say "in all cases—deserving and undeserving."

Mr. VOWLES: That is a matter for the department to determine. I think the report is a very good one. Everybody appreciates the good work the department is doing in regard to the children of the State. It is a good thing to see a principle which was established by a previous Government being carried forward, and to find the department keeping abreast of the times. When criticisms and comparisons are made; and we are told what is being given to-day towards the upkeep of State children, there is one question which hon. members opposite always forget to mention. It is a question which they push into

[Mr. Brennan.

the forefront when dealing with other matters, more particularly Arbitration Court awards; that is, the increase in the cost of living since 1914, more particularly during the last few years.

Mr. BRENNAN: Has the increase amounted to more than 100 per cent.?

Mr. VOWLES: In some cases it has. If that point is to be laboured in connection with wages, it is as well for hon. members to be honest and to realise that it is a factor which has to be taken into consideration when dealing with the virtues of the Government in granting so much money for the maintenance of State children last year.

Reference has been made to parents not having kept their promises to the department in connection with the payment for the upkeep of their children. I had a remarkable case recently in Dalby, in which a man was more than £100 in arrears in his payments for the maintenance of a child. I think the department is almost as culpable as he to allow the arrears to run well over three figures. When it gets to that stage it is almost hopeless for a working man to make up the arrears, especially when work is not available to enable him to carry out his obligations. Men are brought before the court, ordered to pay a certain sum on account and to enter into an arrangement in regard to the balance. Those arrangements are speculative, because they are dependent upon the future and the prospects of work being obtained. The man to whom I referred has this year had only one month's work. He has a mother to look after, and has incurred obligations with respect to the building of a house, which he must observe or lose the money he has already paid. He is being harassed by summonses from the State Children Department, and is being asked to enter into some arrangement for payment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is he married?

Mr. VOWLES: He is a single man with a mother in a delicate state of health, and he has no funds other than the wages he can earn. In such cases, when the account has gone back over a period of six years, it would be a good thing and would give a little encouragement to a man if the Minister were to empower the Director to put the thing on a business basis and make some new arrangement. In this case the man got a month's work as a carpenter in the country. He had to leave the work to go into court to answer a charge of neglect to pay the maintenance. His only chance of paying was to carry on the work he was doing. The Minister should try and do something to make the position a little less hard for the person affected.

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*): Having had a good deal to do with these cases, I know that the people in the North are differently situated to those in the South. The head office being in the South, the Minister is easily approached in regard to Southern cases. In the North it is quite different. On very few occasions has the department turned down applications of this kind for relief. In some cases where the department has refused children any further relief, it has, after full investigation, decided to continue such relief. I recollect one hard case where a widow obtained work beyond Cloncurry. Immediately she obtained work no further relief was allowed for the child, but after consultation and communication with

the Home Secretary, I was able to again obtain relief for that child. I would ask the department not to be hasty in discontinuing this relief. I know the hardship that these people have to endure while they are receiving State relief, and I think it is unfair that they should be at any time suddenly deprived of it. The method of obtaining information is through the police, but they may not have full knowledge of the particular case. The police simply go along and ask the mother where she is going to work and what she is going to receive. The Director naturally thinks, acting upon the report, that it is a case where no more aid should be given. I would ask that each case be considered on its merits before relief is discontinued.

At one time some children ran away from the orphanage at Townsville, and the superintendent there was considered by some people to blame for it. The department instituted an inquiry, and it was found that the children did not run away because of any treatment at the orphanage, but because of the treatment that they received from one of the masters in the school they attended. The inquiry had the effect of altering that gentleman's manner in regard to the children. The children receive every care and attention it is possible to give them. They march along to school in the morning and home again at night, and occasionally have a free entertainment at the pictures. Whenever the waterside workers or the Labour committee in Townsville hold any sports or demonstration, they take out all the children from the orphanage and give them a real good day free of cost. The youngsters thoroughly enjoy the outing, and they all go home with some prize, either in cash or in the shape of a little toy. The department also considers boys who are inclined to be smart. I know of an institution where a lad showed a good deal of brilliancy in carpentering, and he was sent to the Technical College, and I understand he is turning out a very smart lad. The inspector at Townsville takes lads into his office and tries to teach them a little bit of office work, and they appreciate that very much. From what I can hear in Townsville, the youngsters are well satisfied with the treatment they are getting. I think it would be advisable if some sort of trade classes, such as carpentering and blacksmithing, or something like that, were established at the orphanage to enable the lads to learn those trades. We know that they are able to learn a little about gardening and a little in connection with farming. That is very useful to the lads, and it keeps them out of mischief. They are able to do a lot of useful work. I am in agreement with the hon. member for Bowen that the wages paid to these children when farmed out to different people are too low. I know that the Arbitration Act does not allow children to come within the scope of the Act, because they are distinctly debarred from coming within the scope of any award.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Under a certain age.

Mr. DASH: I understood that was so while they were in the care of the State. The wages that are paid to these youngsters are not sufficient.

Mr. J. JONES: What are the wages paid?

*Mr. Dash.*)

Mr. DASH: The wages are—

“Between fourteen and fifteen years—boys, 4s. per week; girls, 2s. per week—with food and clothing.

“Between fifteen and sixteen years—boys, 6s. per week; girls, 3s. 6d. per week—with food and clothing.

“Between sixteen and seventeen years—boys, 8s. per week; girls, 5s. per week—with food and clothing.

“Between seventeen and eighteen years—boys, 10s. per week; girls, 6s. 6d. per week—with food and clothing.”

Eight shillings a week is not a sufficient wage for a lad between sixteen and seventeen years of age. Most of these lads work very hard in any occupation they are put to, and the number of applicants received by the department for the lads goes to show that the demand is far in excess of the supply. The people know that this is the cheapest kind of labour they can get, and it is to be hoped the Government will see fit to increase the rates. I have no objection to the department seeing that the wages are banked each week to the credit of the boys and girls. That is the best method we can adopt, because then we know that they are saving a few pounds. These orphans should have every possible facility in connection with education, as they are under a big handicap through not having the care of a parent; and, therefore, they are entitled to the most humane treatment it is possible to give them. We know that some of the lads who are farmed out do not get too good treatment from what we hear, while some of the girls sent out to service get very rough treatment indeed. They have to slave from morning to night doing housework, and it is to be hoped that, when they are farmed-out in this way, the inspectors will now and again call round to see how they are getting on, and not leave it to some person to come along to the department and lodge a complaint.

I wish to thank the officers of the department for their sympathetic treatment of the cases I have brought before their notice, and I hope that they will give every case sympathetic treatment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): I agree with the hon. member for Albert, who prefaced his remarks by saying that this is one of the most important departments controlled by the Home Secretary. The hon. member for East Toowoomba quoted from a speech I delivered in this House some years ago when the Old-age Pensions Bill was introduced, in which I advocated that pensions should be paid as a right, and that persons who were willing to accept the pensions should have one qualification, and one qualification only, and that is age. I thought so in those days, and when I look back to that speech, I find I have nothing to take from it, because I believe they were words of wisdom.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I thought so myself once.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I would like to see, as far as possible, charity eliminated from these institutions—old-age pensions, State Children Department, and similar institutions. I would like to say at the outset that I take the responsibility in connection with some of the cases that have been brought up during this debate, for the reason that, as the Home Secretary had a

lot to do in looking after other branches of his department during the last financial year, I have done certain work in connection with State children, and any decisions that hon. members are not satisfied with are really my decisions.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I ought to have been after you before.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I hope the hon. member will make himself clear on the matter. In the office the Minister has to give personal attention to these matters. My experience of the gentleman who has control of the department is that he has administered his department firmly and also sympathetically, and is quite willing to deal with any deserving case.

The hon. member for East Toowoomba brought up the case of the control of a child the father of which had been ordered to pay 10s. a week. The father was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for failing to comply with the order of the court. The Home Secretary had him released from imprisonment, but decided that he should pay the future maintenance of his own child, which was an uncontrollable child. He was earning £21 a month, and was willing to pay. He has paid £37 odd, and [7.30 p.m.] there is still about £34 to pay.

The hon. member for East Toowoomba has asked us to wipe that amount off. Surely the father of the child has some obligation? He has made no application for exemption from payment.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: He has through me.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: A politician steps into the office, and asks for this in order to make himself popular in his electorate.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: That is not so. Be fair.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is the only conclusion one can come to.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: You know that is not the case at all. You are asking the father to pay another £30.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The father has some obligation.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Be fair, and say what the judgment against him was. The judgment was for £40. He thought that, when he paid that £40, he would have paid all, and you are now asking him for another £30.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He must be in debt.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Yes, but that £30 accrued afterwards.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The child was discharged some time ago, or else the amount would be more than that. If it is a deserving case it will receive the consideration of the Director, and will receive my consideration. I do not agree with the hon. member for Albert or the hon. member for East Toowoomba in their statements that the department has been inhumanly administered. When those hon. members were sitting on this side in past years, the greatest amount they spent on the orphan children in the State was a little over £131,000, and we are providing £196,000 this year.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The numbers have increased since then.

[Mr. Dash.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Surely there is nothing in the charge that the department is being administered unsympathetically.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I said it was inhuman to take the allowance away in connection with this one child.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: My consideration is only going to be given to the child. We take into consideration the benefit of the child. In connection with the cases mentioned by the hon. member for Dalby, we say that the parent has some obligation to keep his own child.

Mr. VOWLES: Why did you let it accumulate, and not take action long ago?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In the case the hon. member mentioned the person agreed to pay the department £10 and 7s. a week. He had £100 in the bank which he withdrew and paid to his brother for something else.

Mr. VOWLES: He did not. The £100 did not belong to him.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No, because he owed it to some other member of his family. We have wiped out hundreds of pounds in cases where there was no hope of getting it. I think hon. members opposite will agree that the father has some obligation in regard to his child, and that is a good principle to lay down. The hon. member for Rockhampton raised the point that the natural mother of the child should have the same concession granted her as the foster-mother. It is well known that the foster-mother has the right to go to a medical officer if the child is sick and have it treated, but the natural mother has not the same right, for the reason that, when the child is an orphan, it becomes really a State child in the true sense of the word, and it is the obligation of the State to provide it with medical treatment when it is sick, but, when it has a mother, that obligation certainly rests on her.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: That has been the policy of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It has been the policy of the department for years, as the hon. member knows.

The question of widows was raised by the hon. member for Albert and also the hon. member for Mount Morgan. There is no definite rule laid down for a widow with one child. There is nothing in the Director's report to say that a widow with one child shall not receive assistance. All cases are considered on their merits, and we take into consideration the ability of the mother to pay when coming to a decision.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: You say that in the report, but we want something else.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It would have to be laid down definitely in the Act as to how the department should act. There is nothing in the Act to say what income a widow shall receive before she is to be deprived of State child allowance. The hon. member for Toowoomba also said that we had sidestepped certain questions when answering them, but there has been no sidestepping so far as the Home Secretary is concerned.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: You did not give full information.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member probably did not direct his questions properly. I have not seen the questions.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Do I understand the Minister to say that he will review the case of any widow with one child which is brought up?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Certainly; we do not know. Each case will be considered entirely on its merits. We regard it as our duty as a Government to do our best for the orphan children of this State. In administering this department we have not taken into consideration some things which our predecessors did, but we recognise every child born in the State as a real asset to the State, and we consider it is our duty to encourage it to live and grow up to become a healthy man or woman, as the case may be. (Hear, hear!) It is our duty as a Government to see that the child is properly clothed and fed and educated, and given a chance in life to become a good man or woman and a good citizen.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Don't you think we did that, too?

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Of course, we did.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not making any charge against our predecessors in office; but I do not think that hon. members opposite should make a charge against me or against the Government and say that we are inhumanly administering the department. The department looks on every Queens land-born child as an asset, and we should see that that child has a chance in life. I appreciate the compliments paid to the department by members on both sides of the House regarding the care of the children and their education. All we consider is the children, and we will continue to give them a chance in life.

Mr. WEIR (*Maryborough*): One issue has been raised in regard to the State children that does not seem to be quite right. I listened to the remarks of members of the Opposition, and they were candid enough to admit that the Government have done the right thing in connection with this department. Those remarks of the Opposition alone were quite sufficient to show that the Government are doing good work, because they single this out as the one department where the Government have done right and which has given good results. I have to compliment the women at the Woolloowin Home for the good work they are doing in connection with the treatment of State children. The efforts of the women and staff generally must be fully appreciated by anyone who knows anything of the good work they are doing. They take charge of unfortunate children who are left on the doorstep overnight, so to speak. They are "kiddies" not wanted by anybody, in some cases "kiddies" whose mothers cannot afford to look after them, and in other cases parentless children. In the first instance the good women at this home receive the children like a little bundle of rags, and then turn them out as happy boys and girls. That is one of the best advertisements that the womenfolk of that institution can get. They have given the whole of their lives to that sort of thing, and the way they look after the children who come under their care is a credit to them.

There was one remark made by the hon. member for Albert with which I do not agree, and I hope the Minister will pay some

Mr. Weir.

attention to my criticism. I refer to his remarks about the woman with one child, and where he referred to the mother's interest in the child. It is the duty of the Government to take the full responsibility for such a child. As soon as the breadwinner is gone, the duty of looking after that child should devolve upon the State. We must not cultivate the spirit that tells us that the mother must assume the responsibility, and I hope that spirit will not be found creeping into this department. I think the department is doing good work, but there is another side of the State children question that we must continue to develop. It has developed a good deal since my time, and we can develop it still further. I remember when I was a lad going to school in Townsville that the State child was not given a chance at all. I know that other hon. members have had the same experience. I used to attend the North Ward School in Townsville and I know some of the State children could have taken scholarships, but they were not given a chance. They had to go to work as soon as they reached the age of fourteen years.

MR. GLEDSON: Thirteen years?

MR. WEIR: Yes, thirteen years it was then. They were not allowed to sit for the scholarship examination for the obvious reason that, if they won a scholarship, they would shut out someone else, there being then no provision for maintaining these children by the State after the then "work" age of thirteen years. I am very glad we have altered that system. I want to see the education of the State children developed further. I would like to see a State child obtain a University degree if he has the intellect to win it. If a State child has an unusual amount of intelligence we should develop that intelligence. If any member comes across a State child of that description, I hope that he will get the ear of the Minister, who will see that that child's education is properly developed. The more protection we can give to the State child the better. If there is sufficient finance, I know that my boy will have a reasonable chance of getting a good education. What he gets because he has parental control the State child should also get. The State child should not be debarred because he has no father. The State child is handicapped enough through having to study under a different set of conditions to that of the boy whose parents are alive. A boy who has a father can get his help in doing his lessons at night, and he can study under conditions much more advantageous to him than are offered to a State child. We know that the atmosphere in a home is much better for a boy with parents, and he can always get a lift over some temporary hurdle. The State child has to study in some cases in a worse atmosphere in a workhouse or orphanage or in a foster-mother's home, and that is not conducive to good study. If a State child shows intelligence enough there is no telling what he may become in the future. I was reared alongside an orphanage at Townsville, and I met State children in the North Ward School there. I know that some of them would have become eminent citizens if they had had a chance. We may produce an Edison or a Dr. McCormick from some of our State children if they are only given a chance. I might mention the case of a State child in Townsville, who is well known to the hon. member for Mundingburra. He grew up under the care of a good old

[Mr. Weir.

Christian Salvationist. I say "good Christian" because he was one of those men who worked from daylight until dark and then started to grind the organ for hours at night. The boy ran away from that man, and the police found him at 5 o'clock in the morning hiding in a concrete trough. The police gave him the option of going to gaol or going back to his employer. The boy said he would sooner go to gaol than go back to that employer. He did not go to gaol however, as another man in Townsville took pity and took charge of him. That is the case where a boy preferred to go to gaol rather than go back to work for that man. I hope that the departmental inspectors will not tolerate any treatment like that, of State children. The boys and girls under State control must be looked after. Nothing like that occurs in my own district, but it is likely to occur in any district. Let us see that our inspectors put a stop to it. Let the inspectors know that they have all the force of the Government behind them when they insist that the State children shall get fair treatment. I congratulate the Minister on the good work he has done. The amount of the Estimate shows the good work that is being done by this department. It means that thousands of lives are being saved to the State, which would otherwise be lost in early childhood. I hope the Minister will take notice of my references to the one child mother and the necessity for developing the intelligence of these boys and girls.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I want it to be distinctly understood that I certainly cast no reflection on the department. After coming in contact with the officers of the department right from the head to the inspectors, I know that they have the interests of the children at heart.

MR. WEIR: I will accept your apology. (Laughter.)

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am not apologising at all. I know that the Director is sympathetic, but the whole policy is regulated by the Minister. I desire to pay this tribute to those officers with whom for so many years I came into contact, and I can only say that, if they are left alone to carry out their duties, they will do so efficiently and for the benefit of the children entrusted to their care.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The hon. member for Maryborough has raised the question of State children's education. I desire to mention that some of them have won scholarships and been educated at high schools and at grammar schools, although none of them has reached the University yet. The policy of the department is to endeavour to encourage them in this direction as far as possible.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Will the hon. gentleman also say that the late K. M. Grant gave the Director these powers when he was Secretary for Public Instruction?

Question put and passed.

STEAMER "OTTER."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): I beg to move—

"That £4,753 be granted for 'Steamer 'Otter.'"

There is a reduction in the vote of £537. That is due to reduced cost of coal, stores, repairs, and overhaul.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I think that this vote deserves a little remark in view of the large number of persons carried by the "Otter," and it is not out of place to express the appreciation of the Committee for the invariable courtesy and care which the captain and crew of the vessel display towards their passengers, so that it has always been a pleasure to travel by her.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

#### MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): I beg to move—

"That £31,450 be granted for 'Miscellaneous Services (Sub-division).'"

Hon. members will observe that there is an increase in this vote of £5,000. We are asking for £5,000 this year for the destruction of prickly-pear instead of £1,000.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Are you satisfied with the work that is being done?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In the destruction of pear generally?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes. I think a good deal more can be done than has been done in the past. The Premier a few nights ago mentioned that it is proposed to assist in the establishment of a board to deal with this pest.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Did you spend the £1,000 last year?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes; I think we spent more than that. The hon. member for Burnett will bear me out that the Rawbelle and Auburn shires have done very good work on the roads under their control. Probably the Government have done more to eradicate prickly-pear than any other Government. I take some little credit in the matter, because the State arsenic mine was established solely to assist in the eradication of prickly-pear. I am sure the hon. member will bear me out that we have done very good work by supplying cheap arsenic.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: This vote is for the purpose of eradicating the pest through the local authorities?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Home Department has been subsidising the local authorities for prickly-pear destruction.

At 7.57 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I would like a little information from the Minister as to the items in this vote. I notice that the amount for the destruction of prickly-pear is to be increased from £1,000 to £5,000. The other night we voted £2,000 for prickly-pear destruction in the Chief Secretary's Estimates.

Mr. CORSER: That is for the Commonwealth Prickly-pear Commission.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member may get to be a Minister with very radical views some day, but at present he is more conservative than his father. (Laughter.) I should like to know where that £5,000 is going to be spent. Then I notice a grant to the Creche and Kindergarten Association of

Queensland of £1,100. Does that association operate outside Brisbane? There is also a vote of £200 to the Alexandra Home at Coorparoo. Is that purely a home for the metropolis also? Then there are other votes for the metropolitan area, and I would like to know what services the institutions concerned perform to the community. There is a vote of £200 to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, Brisbane. Cruelty to what? Cruelty to human beings or to dumb animals? There is also a vote of £50 to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, Townsville. Townsville must be a fairly decent place if they require only £50.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The amount placed on the Estimates last year to provide subsidies to local authorities for prickly-pear destruction was £1,000, and the total amount expended was £1,786 6s. 9d. I think we can justify that expenditure. The principal subsidies were—Fitzroy Shire Council, £290 9s. 5d.; Gayndah Shire Council, £84 7s. 11d.; Rawbelle Shire Council, £832 9s. 11d.; Rosenthal Shire Council, £370 16s. 8d.; Tarampa Shire Council, £208 2s. 11d.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Do you subsidise the councils £1 per £1?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I am very pleased that the Minister has increased this vote. Discussing the Estimates last year I complained that the vote had been reduced to £1,000. Since that time

[8 p.m.] certain action has been taken on behalf of the shires in my electorate. The Rawbelle Shire went so far as to communicate with a number of other shires, with the result that Rawbelle, Gayndah, Degilbo, Tarampa, Bungil, Fitzroy, Livingstone, and Rosenthal councils decided to approach the Home Secretary and request an increase in this vote. Unfortunately, the Home Secretary was so unwell that he asked that the interview be delayed. We are sorry that he is not well enough even now to listen to the appreciation of his action in fulfilling his promise. He intimated that, whilst it was impossible for him to see us, arrangements had been made to meet our desire, and an increased amount would be provided. This vote is a credit to the Home Department, which is the only department in the State that has done anything practical in the direction of saving from the ravages of the pear the lands vested in it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You are wrong there.

Mr. CORSER: I am not going to trespass on my rights by referring to the inaction of the Lands Department. Since 1911-12 the Home Department has provided no less a sum than £33,400. The provision of this money was made possible by the late Home Secretary, the hon. member for Albert, who administered it beneficially. It has been of such great advantage that in the Burnett district up to the present time the local authorities have spent £18,736 in clearing roads and reserves infested with the pear, half of which the ratepayers found. That has been a benefit to travelling stock, and to the struggling individual who has had to live alongside it and observe the conditions of the land laws by keeping his place free from infestation. It is a shame

*Mr. Corser.]*

that Crown lands are not similarly treated. They are seed-beds, and lead to the reinfestation of the holdings of people who are compelled by law to keep their places clean—people who are being drained in body and soul, as well as financially, in an endeavour to keep their places clear of the pest. It is a pleasure to find that £5,000 is being appropriated. The shire of Auburn applied to be brought under the section of the Act that provides for the proclaiming of clearable areas. Certain divisions of that shire are easily clearable. When they made application to the Home Department, the department refused to make the proclamation. Until it is made, they are not entitled to any subsidy. Fortunately, after many representations had been made, the Auburn shire received £300 last year to cover some expenses which had been incurred. I hope that, with the increase in the vote, the Auburn Shire will be included in the clearable area, so that the ratepayers, who are prepared to go on with the good work of clearing the roads, may be enabled to secure a subsidy from the grant.

The hon. member for Bowen referred to the vote of £2,000 which was passed in an earlier Estimate in connection with the clearing of prickly-pear. It must be remembered that that sum is for scientific investigation through the Commonwealth Bureau of Science and Industry. Some years ago, country members—including the then Labour member for Normanby, to-day a reformed and advanced member of the Country party—(laughter)—made representations to the then Premier (Mr. Ryan) to secure that vote of £2,000 to the Bureau of Science and Industry, provided that New South Wales made available £2,000 and the Commonwealth £4,000 a year. That £8,000 has been appropriated from year to year in an endeavour to find, through the Bureau of Science and Industry, some means of coping scientifically with the pear. Until we do it by some cheap means, the greater part of our huge pear-infested territory will remain waste land. I think that the people do not pay sufficient regard to the amount of trouble that will be caused to those who are to come after us. Considering that eight years ago it was claimed that we had 30,000,000 acres under pear, and that the menace was expanding at the rate of 1,000,000 acres every year, we might fairly say that we now have something like 40,000,000 acres of pear-infested country. We would spend a large amount of money to stop an invader from any other country coming along and taking our country—though he might develop it. How much more, then, should we try to prevent this pest rendering our country absolutely worthless? It is a great pity that we cannot remove this question from party politics and settle ourselves to a solution of the problem. We are too fond of shoving it aside. It is sad to go through our beautiful territory and find that reinfestation has rendered the past work of the pioneer worthless. Thousands of acres in every direction are being rendered useless. It is pleasing to note that some action is being taken with regard to the establishment of a board. I hope that the Government will not delay its creation. It has been advocated by us for many years. When established, it should be removed from party politics. The members should have full authority to work in the best interests of the State, and there should be no red-tape in

granting concessions to people who are prepared to clear areas which can be used as buffer areas to prevent the spread of the pest. Assistance should be given to people living round the pear areas, so that they might clear their lands, which then would become buffer areas. Do not deny to scientific investigation the few thousand pounds which are essential to rid the State of the pest.

Mr. BRENNAN: How many stations have already been wiped out by the pear?

Mr. CORSER: Quite a number, and far more settlers. We should appoint a Commission to look thoroughly into the spread of pear and the trouble and hardship that it is causing to struggling people who are trying to fulfil certain conditions. We should give more time in Parliament to considering, from a non-party point of view, what is the best to be done in this direction.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I think the grant of £200 to the Alexandra Home, Coorparoo, is money well spent. That home is doing splendid work for babies and young children. I am pleased that the Government are continuing the grant to the Salvation Army Rescue Home for Discharged Prisoners. I think that that money is also money well spent. No doubt, the work that institution is doing will help Queensland, because it will help to assist those who are down and out, and will enable them to be replaced in society again when otherwise they would probably go to the wall.

I desire particularly to draw attention to the endowment for benevolent societies. I do not think that they are doing the work that they ought to do, or that the money is being used in a way that it should be used. About a fortnight ago I saw a report of the Brisbane Benevolent Society in the paper, which report pointed out that something like £206 was spent in relief and that £101 had been incurred in expenses. I thought there must have been some mistake, and that, instead of £206, it must have been £2,006, and that the expenses were £101. I got a report from the society, and I found that for the year the subscriptions were £161 7s. 1d., and the expenses were £101 13s. 8d., less a refund of £1 1s., leaving £100 12s. 8d. in expenses. The Government subsidy was £109 13s. 6d. I do not think it is a good policy to pay £1 to receive £1 10s. as is being done by this society. Of the money collected to relieve the stress in Brisbane, I find that £300 has been put into war loan bonds, and that interest is being drawn from it. I do not think the Government give subsidies to people to be put into war loan on which to receive interest. I see that the vote is continued again this year. I think some inquiry should be made into the manner in which the money is spent. It should be spent straight out on people in distress. We find that the balance in the bank is £139 16s. 4d., and in the Savings Bank £201, or a total of £340 16s. 4d., yet that society is drawing a subsidy from the Government. We have been told by hon. members opposite that there is a great deal of distress in Brisbane, and if the Government are prepared to grant subsidies for the purposes of relief, why should the societies invest £300 in a war loan and have practically £340 in the bank? The Government should not have to advance money to swell bank balances or war loan investments. That is not the idea at all. The money should be spent on relief and given to the people who need it.

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Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The amount appropriated last year under this vote was £26,450. I would like to know to what items this amount refers. On looking through the records for last year I find that there was no appropriation for the Creche and Kindergarten Association, Queensland, the Institute of Social Service, the Salvation Army Rescue Home, or the Society for Prevention of Cruelty. Either that money was not used or it was not appropriated by Parliament. I cannot find anything last year having any reference to it. I find a lot of discrepancies under other votes, more particularly as to the number on the staff. I have already mentioned this in connection with the vote for the relief of aborigines.

In connection with the vote for destruction of prickly-pear, it would seem to me that where there is sparse pear the local authorities do not seem to be aware of the conditions under the Local Authorities Act, whereby they obtain a subsidy on money which is intended for the eradication of pear in certain areas.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: With regard to the question of the votes this year not being stated under "Miscellaneous Services" in the Estimates last year, I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the items have been rearranged.

Mr. VOWLES: The local authorities do not seem to be aware of the powers existing under the Act.

Mr. BRENNAN: The Rosenthal and Tarampa shires do.

Mr. VOWLES: In Dalby we got rid of all the pear in the municipality. I know the Tarampa Shire Council did a certain amount of work, but I do not know that they have done all the work that should be done. Anyone who travels up and down the railway line will notice pear growing in the vicinity of the park at Ipswich. It is a scandalous thing to have prickly-pear growing almost in the heart of an important city like Ipswich. The matter should be brought before the local authority, so that they will be compelled to get rid of the pear. Once it starts to seed we do not know where it is going to end. Prickly-pear looks very innocent when it is growing, but when the seeding process starts, the trouble begins, and you cannot block it. I am glad that the vote has been increased from £1,000 to £5,000, and I trust that the local authorities will take the advantage afforded to them in that direction.

Reference has been made to the accumulation of funds by benevolent societies. I do not think it is fair to criticise them without knowing the reasons why this is done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The money is voted for relief each year. It is given for the purpose of relieving distress for that particular year.

Mr. VOWLES: If that is so, then the money should be spent, more particularly in very deserving cases.

At 8.21 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. VOWLES: I would like some information with regard to the grant of £200 to the Institute of Social Service. That is one of those peculiar items that we see in the Estimates. We saw recently from the papers where a similar institution in Toowoomba

was receiving benefit from the proceeds of gambling under a permit from the Department of Justice, and the money was used for electioneering purposes.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: That was a different thing altogether. That was educational, not social.

Mr. VOWLES: I am very pleased to hear that. It seems a strange thing to me that £50 should be set down as a grant to the Society for Prevention of Cruelty, Townsville, while humane societies in other important cities do not require to be subsidised. What occasion is there for Townsville receiving £50, and other important towns receive nothing at all? It seems rather a reflection that Brisbane and Townsville are the only two cities in Queensland that require subsidising in order to make the people more humane.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I presume there are no societies in the other cities.

Mr. VOWLES: It seems to me rather remarkable that other important places, such as Toowoomba, Ipswich, and Rockhampton, have no societies for the prevention of cruelty.

Mr. GLEDSON: The Brisbane society works up the line.

Mr. VOWLES: With regard to the grant to the Salvation Army Rescue Home for Discharged Prisoners, I may say, from my experience of the various religious bodies, that there is no body I know of that deserves encouragement more than the Salvation Army does in respect to its prison work. It is the one form of religion that sends its officers to the gaols, and tries to do some good to the people in trouble.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): Regarding the grant to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, I would point out that police officers have power to deal with any persons guilty of cruelty to animals. In Toowoomba there is an honorary society, and all legal work for the society is done without charge. If a conviction is obtained, of course the solicitor gets his fees from the other side. I do not see any necessity for the vote at all, and when people are paid to attend to that duty, the money could be put to a more useful purpose.

Regarding the vote of £5,000 for the destruction of prickly-pear, if the local authorities do avail themselves of the provisions of the Act, the Minister should follow it up and see that they keep down the prickly-pear once it has been destroyed. We know that in the past certain shire councillors have destroyed prickly-pear at a big cost to the ratepayers, and then other councillors have come along and allowed the prickly-pear to grow again. We know that prickly-pear seedlings will come up ten years afterwards, and unless these young plants are kept down it is useless to clear the pear. I hope the Minister will see that the pear is kept down, and that he will have an officer appointed to report every year on the way in which the money has been spent.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I take it that the Auditor-General or some other Government officer scrutinises the accounts of these various societies in order to see that the money is being expended for the purpose for which it was contributed by the Government. I do not think the Government would be lax in that direction. The hon. member for Bowen wanted to know something about these

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votes, and he mentioned the Alexandra Home. I happen to know a little about the Alexandra Home, and it would be a very good plan if members of Parliament followed the advice given by the hon. member for Maryborough and visited some of these institutions, as then they would have first-hand information of what was being done. The hon. member also mentioned the Home at Wooloowin, which I also happen to know something about, as it is in my own electorate. That home is doing excellent work, and is well administered in every possible way; and I can say the same of the Alexandra Home. In the last report I saw that there were somewhere between eighty and a hundred youngsters in the Home. I do not think the hon. member for Ipswich was quite right when he said they took in babies at that home. I think a child must be three or four years of age before they will take it in. At any rate, there are between eighty and a hundred children in the home, which is managed and directed by a committee of ladies, and they do splendid work. The home is beautifully situated; I do not suppose there is a home better situated for the purpose in the whole of the metropolitan area, and the self-denying work carried out by the women who direct the activities of the home is worthy of the highest commendation. I notice that there is a grant of £200 for the home, but from what I know of the work, I should say it takes between £2,000 and £3,000 a year to run the home in the way it is being run at present. That money is raised mostly by voluntary contributions.

Mr. BRENNAN: Do they not get a subsidy of 10s. in the £1?

Mr. TAYLOR: Not that I know of. So far as I know, they only get the £200 grant. There are a number of cots in the home which have been donated by different people, and these people also contribute towards the upkeep of those cots, and the funds of the home are also supplemented by contributions from parents. For instance, a man may lose his wife and be left with three or four young children, and he finds it would probably be better for him to break up his home and put his youngsters into a home such as the Alexandra Home, and he agrees to contribute 15s. or £1 a week, just what he can afford, for the maintenance of his children while they are in the home. That is the way in which the funds of the home are raised, and I would like to go over there one day with the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Bowen is a fairly busy man.

Mr. TAYLOR: We are all busy men. I just give this information to disabuse the hon. member's mind of any doubts he may have with regard to that particular grant.

Mr. COLLINS: I cast no reflection on that home. I only asked for information.

Mr. TAYLOR: I did not say that the hon. member did cast any reflection on the home. I have only given information which I know to be absolutely correct, as I know the whole of the members of the committee running the home.

With regard to the grant to the Institute of Social Service referred to by the leader of the Opposition; that is all right, I take it, as this Institute has been in existence now for more than ten years. It was started by the Reverend Loyal Wirt in a building in the Valley that was previously

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used as a tobacco factory. It is being run by a committee of ladies and gentlemen, and the late hon. member for Merthyr, Mr. McLachlan, is still on the committee, and has been closely associated with the work of the institution ever since it was started. The Institute looks after boys and girls, and is doing a very good [3.30 p.m.] work in that thickly populated part of the metropolis, and is well worthy of the vote set down. I would bear my testimony to the good work the Salvation Army are doing with the grants they are getting. The aim of these various organisations is to make good men and women of those who pass through their homes, and they are deserving of the support of the State. I should like to see the votes increased, but probably it is impossible to do that at the present time.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumbidgee*): There is an item in this vote, of £15,000 for fire brigades. I have no intention of criticising the fire brigades—I have an admiration for the wonderful work they do—but there are places distant from town where there is no fire brigade. Recent fires have brought home the necessity of something being done in those districts. The department should insist on precautions being taken in the construction of buildings in outside places where there is so much danger from fire. Take the fire at Chinchilla. There was £40,000 worth of damage done there, and the district is going to be hit for years to come. It would have been better if past Governments had seen the necessity of compelling people, when they were building these towns, to take precautions against fire. In one case there was a shop built of reinforced concrete.

Mr. BRENNAN: Is that your shop?

Mr. WARREN: Yes, and last time it saved the town from being swept by fire. Although £40,000 damage was done by the fire, only £30 damage was done to that building. I hope that the Home Secretary will go into this matter and see that proper precautions are taken when buildings are being constructed in those places.

I want to join with other hon. members in supporting the grants to the Salvation Army. We think it is a laudable thing to save property from fire, but the Salvation Army are saving human lives, and we can all feel glad that such good work is being done by the Army. My opinion is that one woman rescued by the Salvation Army is worth tens of thousands of pounds to the State. While there is failure on the part of some who are rescued to continue in the right path, splendid work is being done. I would suggest that the great value of this work be recognised by placing a larger amount on the Estimates for the Salvation Army.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I see that the amount put down for the destruction of prickly pear has been increased from £1,000 to £5,000 this year, but that seems to me to be rather a hopeless amount in view of the fact that, while we are clearing, say, £20,000 or £25,000 worth of land from prickly-pear per annum, the pear is doing increasing damage at the rate of £40,000 or £50,000 worth per annum. It seems to me that what is wanted is a definite policy which will enable us to cope with prickly pear. On many areas on the

Downs where there was no prickly pear ten years ago large quantities are to be found to-day, principally on repurchased estates taken over by the Government. A lot of this land was thrown up because men found they could not make a living on it, and it has become a hot-bed for the spread of prickly-pear. The Government have not done anything to cope with the pear which is coming up on that land.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Bring up this matter on the Lands Estimates.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I hope the Chairman is not going to confine us simply to the question of whether it is right to grant £5,000 to shire councils for clearing pear from the roads. The question of dealing with prickly-pear is far too big to confine it to the question of whether the Government are right or wrong in giving £5,000 to clear the prickly-pear on the roads in shire councils. It is time that the people appreciated the fact that prickly-pear has gone beyond simply being dealt with by local authorities in a spasmodic way. It has become a great national question, and one would expect to see a definite policy adopted in regard to the destruction of the prickly-pear.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Premier laid down a scheme.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to restrict the hon. member, but, while I realise the importance of the point he has raised, I would point out that this vote provides only for the destruction of prickly-pear by shire councils.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Have not the shire councils got authority over all the land in their areas? I claim that I am perfectly in order in discussing the question.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out again to the hon. member that this particular vote, which has been increased from £1,000 to £5,000, deals with the pear-clearing to be done by local authorities only.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In clearable areas. This seems to be a ridiculously small amount. It seems to me that, if we spent £50,000 per annum for the next three years, we would get a better result than by spending £150,000 in thirty or forty years. I am not carping at the Government. If the prickly-pear spreads at the rate it is spreading now, we shall very soon have it in Queen street in Brisbane. If this vote of £5,000 was increased to £50,000, we should have some result.

Mr. COLLINS: Then you would get up and criticise our expenditure.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I would point out that £177,000 was spent last year on outdoor relief.

Mr. COLLINS: On human beings.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is not a question of human beings. It is a question of whether we are going to save Queensland for the white people that we have got now. If we do not realise the danger of the prickly-pear menace, the time is not far distant when we shall have two-thirds of the country under pear. If we are only going to allow £5,000 to assist the local authorities to clear pear, then we are not

going to get valuable work done. It is simply a flea-bite. The Government should spend four or five times that amount, and then we would get some good results from it. Hon. members do not realise what the prickly-pear means to Queensland, and to the rising generation.

Mr. COLLINS: There are £10,000 on the Lands Estimates.

The PREMIER: It is a legacy from past Governments.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The late Government left the Government a legacy in the Treasury, and they "blewed" it. If they would "blew" the prickly-pear as easily as they did that money, it would be a good thing for Queensland.

I agree with the hon. member for Murumba that the Salvation Army have done good work for Queensland, so far as their rescue work is concerned; and I am pleased to see the amount on the Estimates to assist the army in its rescue work. I congratulate the Minister and the department for putting these amounts on the Estimates.

I would like the Minister to give us some information about the £2,000 asked for in connection with polls under the Liquor Act. I notice there is an amount of £200 for the Prevention of Cruelty Society in Brisbane, and £50 for the same society in Townsville. I think that is money well spent. Surely there is not a member of this House who is so devoid of humanity as to refuse to give relief to suffering dumb animals.

Mr. BRENNAN: The services should be honorary.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If the hon. gentleman was wearing a boot that was too tight for him and was expected to walk around Brisbane for some hours while wearing that tight boot, he would want some relief. Well, a horse with a sore neck or a sore back suffers the same excruciating pain as the hon. member would if he had a tight boot, but he would not make the same noise about it as the hon. member.

Mr. BRENNAN: You want to pay the man who exposes it.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Yes. We need to have some inspectors to look after these things, and to catch people who work horses suffering from sore backs.

Mr. BRENNAN: The police do it now.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I know that excellent work is done in East Toowoomba, and I am pleased that they have got a member there who appreciates the work done by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The hon. member for Toowoomba evidently does not believe in it, but I would like to see a special grant made for Toowoomba, to prevent cruelty to animals. I hope the Government will see their way to make that grant.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): With reference to the £2,000 asked for in connection with the polls under the Liquor Act, a poll is to take place in May next year. As that is in the present financial year, provision must be made for the taking of the poll. There are three requests in already. The hon. member for Burnett, in speaking of the eradication of prickly-pear, said that the

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Home Department did more than any other department. I do not want to talk about what the Home Department have done in this direction, but we know that the Home Secretary is genuinely sympathetic, and wishes to do something for the eradication of prickly-pear. That fact is emphasised by his placing an increased amount on the Estimates to provide subsidies to shire councils during the current year. The hon. member for Burnett should also be generous enough to mention that the Mines Department have done a good deal in this direction.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Wait till we get to the Mines Estimates.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Home Department granted the Rawbelle Shire a subsidy of £367 last year, and the Mines Department sent up 6 tons of arsenic for the eradication of prickly-pear as well. If the Rawbelle Shire had paid the rate charged in Brisbane for arsenic, which was £72 per ton, they would have had to pay £432 for that arsenic, and railage as well, or about £500 altogether. We delivered the 6 tons of arsenic at the railway station for £60, thus saving the shire in the electorate of the hon. member for Burnett something like £440.

Mr. CORSER: You ought to read all the correspondence about it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member was generous to the Home Department, and he should have extended his generosity to the Lands Department, which subsidised the Mines Department and enabled us to do the good work we did.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I would like to pay a tribute to the Acting Home Secretary for the way he has controlled his Estimates while they have been discussed by the Committee. I expressed my regret at the continued absence of the Home Secretary, and I am sure all hon. members agree with me when I say that we are sorry that he is not here to take charge of his Estimates to-day.

There is a vote of £1,100 for the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland. I would like to see it increased to double that amount, so that an increased amount of work could be done by this institution. We know that children of tender years, who are too young to go to school, and who have mothers who go out to work during the day to earn the money to keep the home together, are taken charge of by this association. From my observations I have come to the conclusion that it is a very charitable institution, and deserving of support. The institution is not revenue-producing, nevertheless the work it does is good work for the State, and we should encourage it to the fullest extent.

Then the vote of £250 as a subsidy to the Salvation Army Rescue Home for Discharged Prisoners in Brisbane is a very small amount. They meet the prisoners as they are discharged, befriend them, and encourage them to start out in life afresh; and if they are successful in even one case, the £250 has been well spent. Who would say that £250 is too much to pay for the reclamation of one prisoner or one person who is down and out? If the Minister could see his way clear, I would like to see that vote increased. There is one other vote I would like to touch upon; that is, the assistance given to the Royal Life Saving Society.

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The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is provided on the Estimates of the Department of Public Instruction.

Mr. FRY: I should like to say that, if the Minister could see his way to give a little more encouragement to their work by increasing the subsidy so as to enable them to get more efficient equipment and organise their clubs, it would be appreciated.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): I agree with what has been said by previous speakers with regard to grants to the Salvation Army to help their work for discharged prisoners, because I think they are worthy of every help we can give them, and they do good in very many ways. I want particularly to refer to the Home for Discharged Prisoners, which was established through the efforts of the late Rev. William Powell, who was chaplain to the gaols at one time and gave a proof of his interest in the prisoners in that way. I think the home has been opened now, largely through the generosity of the late Mr. J. J. Lovekin, who gave some ground equal to about £1,000 in value. I referred to this matter in 1913 and again in 1920, and asked questions of the then Home Secretary, Mr. Huxham, and I thought the Government had been approached for assistance. It is certainly a very deserving institution.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Where is it?

Mr. PETRIE: I think it is on the South Coast line, out Kuraby way. I am not sure of the exact location.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It has not been subsidised.

Mr. PETRIE: These prisoners have been taught trades in St. Helena and other gaols, and if they have some other home to go to, they may become useful citizens. I hope that, if the Government are approached, they will consider the question of assisting this very estimable institution.

I am glad to see that the Government are doing something in the direction of trying to eradicate prickly-pear. I remember prickly-pear when I was quite a boy—which is quite a few years ago—and we used to make excellent jam from the fruit, but I would like to see it eradicated as quickly as possible.

I have not had the opportunity, like the hon. member for Ipswich, of seeing the balance-sheet of the Brisbane Benevolent Society, and I was not aware that they had any money to their credit. I understand they are supposed to spend the money which they receive each year, and I do not think the amount they get from the Government is in any way unreasonable. The people connected with these societies do good work, and whatever Government may be in power should assist all they can in the cause of humanity through the various votes under this heading.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): I would like to say a few words in praise of the Salvation Army for their work amongst discharged prisoners, also to their meeting people from the country and elsewhere, in which they are always very punctual. I would not mind if the vote for the Salvation Army were doubled, because I think they do very good service to people very badly in need of it,

especially in the relief of prisoners; and when an old man comes from the far West or the North, for instance, for medical treatment here, they meet him and look after him until such time as a bed is available in the General Hospital.

During the latter part of last year I travelled through Western Queensland with the hon. member for Balonne, and I think it is very necessary that some steps should be taken to make shire councils keep their roads clear of pear. I have no doubt that the Assistant Under Secretary, who is in charge of this vote and whom I have always found energetic, will keep the councils up to their duty in this respect. Apart from prickly-pear, there are such pests as galvanised burr, Bathurst burr, and Noogoora burr; and if the Noogoora burr were to get into the sheep country, for instance, it would be a greater curse than prickly-pear is at present in Western Queensland. I would not mind if the vote for the destruction of prickly-pear on main roads and reserves of shire councils were doubled, and I think it will be necessary to try to get the pear blocked in buffer areas and make some effort to stop its spread, or in not very many years it will mean the ruination of this State.

The Creche and Kindergarten Association is rendering very valuable service, particularly to women who have to go to work and have in the Creche and Kindergarten places where they can leave their children and feel that they will be well looked after.

It is a very fine institution for [9 p.m.] little children under five years of age. The "kiddies" can be put in there, and that gives a mother the opportunity of doing a little shopping without having to take the whole family with her. It also enables working mothers to be freed from anxiety regarding their children while they are at work. That vote is justified. The hon. member for Kurilpa, and Opposition members generally, are not consistent. They are continually criticising the Government in Market Square, in the Centennial Hall, or in South Brisbane in regard to reckless expenditure; yet, whenever a vote is under discussion here, they say that they would like to see it doubled or trebled.

I would like to know where the Institute of Social Service is and what social service it renders to the community for the £250 voted.

The grant for the Prevention of Cruelty Society in Townsville and Brisbane is money well spent; good service, no doubt, is done by the society. The police also render valuable service in connection with this work.

I think the whole vote can well be justified. Taking the remarks of Opposition members as a guide, I am beginning to think that, instead of being extravagant, this is a very miserly Government. (Laughter.)

Mr. EDWARDS (*Yanango*): It is very pleasant to hear the discussion in regard to prickly-pear proceeding without party feeling. Governments and shire councils every now and again wake up to the fact that the pear is an awful menace; then there is a lull for two or three years before preventive measures are again resorted to. It is necessary to take the matter in hand seriously and see that the pear does not spread any further. When this matter was under discussion last session the Secretary for Public Lands stated

that he would place before the House the results of a survey made to ascertain the extent of the spread of the pear.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the hon. member that that aspect of the question must be discussed under the Lands Department vote. This vote deals exclusively with aid to shire councils in connection with their work.

Mr. EDWARDS: This will be of great assistance to shire councils. Those who know the pear are aware that it does not spread acre by acre, but that in some cases advances take place from 25 to 30 miles in front of the main body of the pear.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not a very quick-spreading plant.

Mr. EDWARDS: If the hon. gentleman had seen some areas years ago and saw them to-day he would know that it does spread quickly. The increase from £1,000 to £5,000 is a very small contribution towards the cost necessary to clear the pear. It is necessary for the Government to meet any expenditure within reason to ensure prevention of the spread of this awful menace.

I want to say a word in praise of the good work which is done by the Salvation Army and other institutions provided for by this vote.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I was somewhat interested in the remarks of the Minister regarding the sum of £2,000 provided for the taking of polls under the Liquor Act. On the previous liquor poll in 1920 £16,500 was spent. I understand that the next poll is to be taken in May, 1923. This sum seems remarkably small for that purpose. Do I understand that the hon. gentleman anticipates that £2,000 will be the only expenditure?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The poll will be taken only in those localities which have made application, and not right throughout the State.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The question has been asked as to what has been done by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty. I have the report of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty, and I think we should have on record what that society is doing. The report states—

"The proposal of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, London, that reciprocal legislation should be introduced in Queensland to facilitate the enforcement of maintenance orders in all parts of His Majesty's dominions had been carried into effect."

Evidently the Bill introduced last session for dealing with this matter was brought in at the suggestion of the society. The report further states—

"During the year proceedings had been instituted in twenty-three cases under the Animals' Protection Act (1921), and one case had been dismissed as no witnesses were available. Three cases were awaiting trial."

That discloses that there were reasons for interference by this society. The report is a rather lengthy one, and it points out that the society have dealt with a number of cases of cruelty to children, and they have also impressed upon the Government the necessity of dealing with children who take

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part in variety entertainments. The hon. member for Ipswich quoted the balance-sheet of the Brisbane Benevolent Society. We should always take into consideration what time of the year certain payments are made, because there is just a possibility that moneys may be paid in at a certain time and the balance-sheet will disclose considerably more money than would otherwise be the case. I have the report of the Ladies' Benevolent Society at Toowoomba. The receipts, including the Government endowment, amounted to £407 2s. 10d., and during the year the society paid £84 14s. 9d. for groceries; £57 8s. 9d. for meat; £49 8s. 1d. for bread; £23 0s. 9d. for wood; £11 9s. 6d. for drapery; £1 13s. 3d. for boots and shoes; 17s. for stationery, stamps, and printing; £5 3s. 6d. for cabs, cartage, and rail fares; 7s. 6d. for banking charges; 10s. for insurance; and 2s. for sundries. The cost of supervision and work of the society was only £51 6s. We have to admit that there are other generous distributions in Toowoomba apart from that society. The police issue relief in certain cases, and the society has to be certain that it is not double-banking that relief. The lady in charge of that society visits the homes of the applicants and assures herself and the committee that the people are deserving of assistance. If the funds of the society can be administered under those conditions, I think it is very cheaply carried out.

Mr. WEIR: Does the hon. member think that it is well done at 3s. 4d. in the £1?

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: Yes. Inquiries have to be made in every case; relief cannot be given to everyone who makes application. Even the Government have to make inquiries before they hand out relief. Many questions are asked, and then the Government send an officer to verify the statements made. I do not think the Government can distribute relief at a cost of 3s. 4d. in the £1. This society is doing a great deal of valuable work.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

##### CHIEF OFFICE.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I beg to move—

"That £22,718 be granted for 'Head Office,' Department of Public Works." There is a decrease of £9,237. The expenditure last year was £27,839. The reduction this year is due to a very large extent to reorganisation in the department.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Minister has given an explanation as to why a reduction appears in this vote. We find that the positions of engineer for bridges, three quantity surveyors, and seven inspectors of works have been abolished. The Minister failed to state that a new department had been created.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I said that there had been reorganisation.

Mr. KERR: I think the Minister, when moving such an important vote as this, should have told us that a new department had been created in the Works Department employing a staff of eighteen public servants. I know that I will not be permitted to deal with the expenditure of loan money on this vote, but I intend to make a comparison between the results achieved by the Department of Public Works under its present policy and under the policy that previously

was followed out, and in so doing I will have to touch upon the question of loan expenditure. I want to show that one of the reasons why no return is being obtained by the expenditure of loan money is because of the policy now being carried out by the Department of Public Works. In 1914-1915 the amount of this vote was £25,000, and for 1922-1923 it is about £3,000 less, notwithstanding the fact that the revenue has increased during that time by £3,000,000, and the population has also increased considerably, thus causing the department to build more in order to meet the requirements of the increased population. If hon. members will refer to the policy of the previous Administration, they will find that a larger number of employees was required, because under the policy then adopted we paid more out of revenue to meet our ordinary commitments than we pay to-day. The policy of the department to-day is to construct unproductive works out of loan money, whereas previous Governments constructed such works out of revenue, which did not add to the interest charge against the State and increase our public debt. The reason why the reorganisation has been necessary is because of the altered policy of the department, and, in my opinion, a wrong policy has been adopted, as I contend that revenue should be utilised for the construction of unproductive works. Of course, if it is necessary to construct a building for an institution such as the State Insurance Office, which can afford to pay rent, then it can be constructed out of loan, because we get rent from the building, which will pay the interest charge.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you think that school buildings should be built out of revenue?

Mr. KERR: Before the present Government came into power school buildings, to a large extent, were built out of revenue. All wooden buildings were built out of revenue.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You should have got more authentic information before bringing this matter up.

Mr. KERR: I am not going to bring up an argument unless I can support it by facts and figures. In 1914 the amount paid out of revenue for buildings, etc., was £190,000, while to-day revenue is only drawn upon for that purpose to the extent of £79,000—a difference of £110,000 less from revenue in the twelve months. Seeing that the revenue has been relieved of that expenditure on buildings, the Government should show a large surplus; but, as a matter of fact, we have an anticipated deficit of £576,840. Let us go a little further in regard to the policy of the Works Department. For the three years prior to the present Government taking office, the amount spent from revenue for schools and public buildings was £526,000, while during the last three years this Government have only spent half that amount from revenue on buildings. I am not going to say that the same amount of money has not been spent by the Government as was spent previously, because that would not be correct. If you add the loan expenditure and the expenditure from revenue together, you will find that in the last three years the present Government spent within £100,000 of the amount spent during the last three years of the past Administration. My argument is that, while previously revenue was being utilised for this purpose, to-day loan money is being utilised, and we are adding to our

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public debt. If the present policy of expending loan money on all sorts of things is continued, we shall have an everlasting burden, and will be continually increasing our debt. During the last three years of the previous Administration the amount spent on buildings from loan money was £193,870, while during the last three years of the present Administration they have spent from loan money, on buildings, £560,638, or nearly three times the amount of loan money spent in the last three years of the previous Administration. If you look at the amount expended from revenue during the last three years of the previous Administration and the last three years of the present Administration, you will find the position is exactly the opposite—that is, instead of three times the amount of expenditure from loan money, it was three times the amount of expenditure from revenue. What has brought about this change of policy? I want to emphasise my argument by quoting what the Federal Treasurer has to say on this question.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Who told you this tale you are giving the Committee now?

MR. KERR: The Treasurer's financial tables. I defy the Minister to say that my figures are not correct.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: I am not saying that you are twisting them round, but I say that you have been given wrong information.

MR. KERR: There is only one conclusion to draw from the figures. The Treasurer's financial tables give us these figures, and we need look for no further reason as to why our loan moneys are not producing sufficient to pay interest, and why in 1914 our loan moneys did produce sufficient to pay interest. The reason is that loan moneys now are being invested in unproductive works, whereas previously it was not so, and revenue was utilised for such works. If we continue this policy, we may as well say that we will pay salaries out of loan moneys, and so add to our public debt. In time to come our whole revenue of £12,000,000 a year will be required to pay interest on our public debt. The principle is a pernicious one, and hon. members will acknowledge that the policy adopted by the Works Department is a wrong policy. Turning to the Federal Treasurer's Budget, we find in regard to the Postmaster-General's Department that £2,500,000 have been appropriated by Parliament from loan account for works that are reproductive. A new policy has been propounded by the Postmaster-General in connection with postal works, and in regard to every penny invested there is a provision for interest and redemption and a Sinking Fund. A post office is a reproductive work, because it brings in revenue to the State; and, therefore, it is right that loan money should be expended for that purpose. Let us see what the Federal Treasurer has to say in regard to the correct principles of finance, and his advice is worth having. The recent Budget introduced by the Federal Treasurer is one of the finest Budgets ever produced, and some of his advice is worth following. On the question of utilising loan money for the construction of public works, Mr. Bruce has this to say—

“Loans should not be raised for

current ordinary expenditure, and the Government's proposals provide for all current expenditure to be paid out of revenue.”

I would have liked to go further into the question of loan money than I have done, but that would not be permissible. I am quite sure that if another Government [9.30 p.m.] ment came into power, loan money would not be expended as it is being spent at the present time. I do not say that all these works are being paid for out of loan. The figures for 1914 show that for similar purposes we spent out of revenue £190,000 in that year, while to-day, for similar purposes, although our revenue has increased by £3,000,000, we are spending £110,000 less from revenue. That £110,000 is coming from loan money. The same thing has happened every year since this Government came into power. It is one way of trying to balance accounts by not letting revenue meet the ordinary committals. If we had to take the £110,000 out of revenue, as we did in 1914, the deficit of the Government would reach enormous figures. This is a bad practice for any Government to adopt.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I would point out that the statements made by the hon. member for Enoggera are not based on facts. The hon. member sought to lead the Committee and the people outside to believe that the Government are carrying out certain works out of Loan Funds that ordinarily should be paid for out of revenue. He backed up his statement by making a quotation from Mr. Bruce, the Federal Treasurer, with which I agree. The practice laid down by Mr. Bruce is followed in this department. New works are built out of Loan Funds, and repairs and general maintenance are paid for out of revenue. That has always been the practice. The practice of charging certain works to loan and other works to revenue has never been changed. Take, for example, the case of wooden buildings. Wooden buildings properly constructed have a life of at least twenty-five years if effectively maintained, and it is proper that expenditure of that character should be charged to Loan Funds, but it would be wrong to charge general maintenance and repairs, such as painting, and so on, to loan. Last year the expenditure from revenue was £196,442 for repairs and current expenditure, but new buildings were properly charged to the Loan Fund.

At 9.33 p.m.,

MR. POLLOCK (*Gregory*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

MR. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): The Minister has quite evaded the contention raised by the hon. member for Enoggera.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: He definitely stated that we were doing certain work out of Loan Fund which should be properly charged to revenue, and he is wrong in making that statement.

MR. G. P. BARNES: He said a great deal more than that. He pointed out that prior to this Government coming into power wooden buildings of a less permanent character were generally charged to revenue.

MR. WINSTANLEY: They were not.

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Hon. J. G. APPEL: I say that that is correct.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. member for Enoggera proved his statement. He showed that in 1914—and you will find the same thing in previous years—the sum expended in connection with buildings and charged to revenue was altogether in excess of what it is to-day. The hon. member showed that in that year the previous Administration expended out of revenue on buildings £190,438, while this Government last year only expended on buildings £79,991. The total expenditure for 1914-15 was £263,791, as against £241,111 last year. If the Government had acted as their predecessors did, their balance-sheet would have shown them up to still greater disadvantage. Instead of the anticipated deficit for the coming year of £576,840, if the Government go on as they have been doing in the past and charge to loan account expenditure on buildings which should be charged to revenue, they will be another £100,000 to the bad during the coming year. We say that is not sound business. Compared with the administration of their predecessors, the Government are altogether at a disadvantage.

Mr. BRENNAN: You sold Crown lands and put the money into revenue, and we have not.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That is true; but it is not the point I am dealing with. We on this side think it is bad business to charge to revenue wooden buildings that are not of a permanent nature, and which deteriorate if they do not receive proper attention.

Mr. WEIR: What difference does it make?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You are putting a charge on posterity which should be defrayed out of current expenditure.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I just wish to reply to the Minister. During the period of three years prior to 1915, the then Government provided out of revenue £526,000, while in three years this Government have only provided out of revenue half that amount. Out of loan money, in the three years prior to 1915, the then Government only spent £193,000, whereas this Government in the last three years have spent three times that amount from loan, showing that this Government have used loan money in a way which the previous Government did not. I am not saying that repairs and things like that are being wrongly charged to loan account. I say that certain works to-day are being paid for by loan money which under the previous Administration were paid for out of revenue. It is a fact that we are receiving £110,000 out of loan money for this purpose which was previously charged to revenue. The Government have been hard pushed in regard to unproductive work to make ends meet, and, instead of calling on the revenue, they have called on the loan money to do it. Only the deficits and surpluses are seen by the people. They do not see that these works are being carried out by loan money, and that it will mean an increased burden in the future. The revenue should pay its fair share of these works and let us show so much deficit to the country. It is not fair to charge it to loan money at all. The Minister is only charging the increased interest to posterity. Revenue should be used to pay for these things from year to year, instead of adding

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it to the public debt. I have not invented my figures, because I have taken them from the Treasurer's financial tables.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): I am pleased that the Minister has already referred to the reorganisation of this department, but I regret that the Committee did not have the report of the Works Department before discussing this vote. I know that one report was laid on the table this afternoon.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The general report was tabled last week.

Mr. PETRIE: I congratulate the Under Secretary, Mr. Quinn, on his appointment. He was in the department for some time prior to his appointment as Under Secretary, and I think he is a very worthy officer. The Works Department is a spending department, and I think the hon. member for Enoggera is quite right in drawing attention to the fact that certain work is done out of loan money now which was previously done out of revenue. I see that no provision is made for the quantity surveyors. I would like to know if the Chief Architect and Assistant Architect are to do that work in future? Have they to take out quantities and prepare estimates of the various public works?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will find them under the heading of the "Loan Fund."

Question put and passed.

#### SERVICES—PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH. I beg to move—

"That £33,250 be granted for 'Services, Public Buildings.'"

The expenditure on this vote last year was £32,215. The amount asked for this year is a decrease of £3,130 as compared with the amount appropriated last year. That is due largely to the fact that many of the rents that were formerly paid are no longer necessary. Many of the public departments are now housed in the Government Insurance Building.

Question put and passed.

#### BUILDINGS.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I beg to move—

"That £95,000 be granted for 'Buildings.'"

The expenditure on this vote last year was £79,991. The amount asked for this year is an increase of £11,000 over the appropriation last year. There is a good deal of repair work which the Government hope to overtake this year. Owing to the curtailment of expenditure last year, this work could not be undertaken, but we hope to do it this year.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I am glad to hear that the department intends to carry on repair work to a greater extent than last year. A lot of painting and repairs is required.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Denham Government left a very big legacy of repairs, amounting to £150,000.



Mr. G. P. BARNES: I wish to refer to the wooden structure in the town of Warwick called the old Technical College. The Government have been in office seven years, and the building has never been touched since they came into power.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: And how long before that?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Not long before that. The hon. gentleman is a practical man, and he must know that that building has not received any paint for seven years, and it must be in a bad way. Dry rot is setting in and it is falling into decay, and it is a disgrace to the department. I hope some attention will be given to the renovation of that building, otherwise graver loss will take place. I see there is a vote of £4,000 for Technical College and High School buildings. That is an increase of £1,000 over last year. Last year I made reference to the necessity for additions to the High School and Technical College at Warwick, but funds did not permit of the carrying out of the necessary additions then. Might I ask the Minister to give his early attention to this matter, because it is a very worthy and fine institution. I suppose that right through the land there is no technical college and high school which ranks higher or is doing better service for the community than the Warwick institutions. The Secretary for Public Instruction promised to give some attention to the matter, and I hope that the department will see that the work is carried out.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): A great deal of our complaint is that there has been no change in the policy of the department. We hold that, in the interests of the State, we should spend our money to the best advantage, and we think that can best be done if we provide for a test between contract and day labour. There are capable men in the department, and, if the Government are game to pit their day-labour system against the contract system, they should let those officers make their own estimates and allow people outside to tender, and, if the tenders from outside are below the estimate, the contractors should complete the work. The men are protected by the awards, and are just as prepared to work under contract as under the day-labour system. The same thing could be done in our railway construction work.

Mr. W. COOPER: It cannot.

Mr. CORSER: It cannot, perhaps, because hon. members opposite are not allowed to do it. It will be news to you, Mr. Pollock, but it is a fact, that their policy is laid down by somebody outside here.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You are talking about the Trades Hall, but the Union Bank Chambers decide your policy.

Mr. CORSER: They do not.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: They have a good say in it.

Mr. CORSER: Nor have they a good say in it. The primary producers of Queensland decide our policy.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: A lot more than you have a say in your policy.

Mr. CORSER: Sometimes hon. members opposite have a say, and they define it not quite in accordance with the truth.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What about that money from the South?

Mr. CORSER: What money from the South? It is the first I have heard of it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORSER: You do quite right to call the hon. member to order. (Laughter.) Whenever there is an election looming he talks about money from the South.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman ought to keep his mind on the expenditure in his department, and he would then very soon devise a means of expending our money in the best interests of the country, and we would not have to go through our country districts and cities, particularly the country districts, and find school buildings wanting paint, even though we spent large sums of money on them, and our railway and other Government buildings deteriorating for want of renovation and attention. When the next Government come into power as soon as the elections are over, the amount of money that will have to be spent to bring our public buildings into a fair condition will reach a sum larger than I would care to mention.

The amount of money to be expended from loan funds for buildings and repairs is tremendous. This year we are spending from revenue about one-half the amount we have spent from that source in the past. We had less than £7,000,000 of revenue in 1915, and we have £12,000,000 to-day; yet we find that the expenditure on these works is to be a charge on loan funds to a greater extent than ever. A large proportion of the upkeep of our public buildings is to be a charge on Loan Funds.

Mr. DASH: It is not.

Mr. CORSER: It is; and, if the hon. member consults the Minister, he will find that my statement is correct—that is, if the Minister knows anything about it. (Laughter.)

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What fund would your party have without the squatters?

Mr. CORSER: I would like to know what fund the hon. member's party have from which to pay the squatters in the Upper Burnett whom they are evicting.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORSER: I beg your pardon. I thought you were calling the hon. member to order. I would like to refer to the fact that buildings such as hospitals are, in Brisbane, a charge entirely on the State. When the country people build a hospital they want the money to go as far as possible. Plans and specifications were drawn up for a hospital at Gayndah, but we were not allowed to proceed because they were drawn up by private persons, and it was proposed to do the work by private enterprise, so no subsidy would have been granted for such a work. The Government drew up plans themselves, and said that that hospital and nurses' quarters were going to cost an estimated amount. The money was appropriated, and

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the one-third which was required from the hospital committee was placed at the disposal of the department before the work was started.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you know how much the work cost finally?

Mr. CORSER: We have not had the exact figures. I asked some questions to-day with a view to securing the information.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You are only about £2,000 out.

Mr. CORSER: And the work is not yet completed, there being no operating ward. After the hospital committee had subscribed the money demanded, the Government built the hospital and [10 p.m.] nurses' quarters. They now send to the hospital committee for one-third of a further amount of £1,250. The committee have to live within their means. They are not like the Government; they cannot go to "Yankeeland," borrow a lot of money, and leave posterity to pay for it. In Brisbane the whole amount was found by the State. Is it fair for the Government to ask a country hospital committee to find money to make good the expenditure over the estimate agreed upon? We do not know what the total cost will be. The Corser Bridge at Mundubbera was estimated to cost £5,200 by day labour. I asked many questions regarding the final cost, and the last information I got was that it was costing £7,400. I have received no information since. I give that as an illustration of how the expenditure under the day-labour system exceeds the estimate. The officers of the Works Department are sufficiently competent to draw up specifications for any work. Let those be submitted to private tender, and, if lower, let the private tenderer proceed with the work, to be passed by the department after completion. - The Works Department are not responsible for the present position; the Government are responsible for it, and they do not care how they spend their money.

Mr. COLLINS: Read what ex-Minister for Railways Paget said.

Mr. CORSER: Mr. Paget was about ten years in this House. He made one statement which suited hon. members opposite, and that is the only one they remember, although it disagreed with his sentiments and his policy. That does not prove that day labour is the better system.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It might have disagreed with your sentiments, but it did not disagree with the evidence.

Mr. CORSER: It disagreed with the evidence before Mr. Paget. Sometimes we see hon. members opposite saying, from kerosene tins in the Domain, that their estimates have not been exceeded. If that is the only argument they can use in favour of day labour, they ought to pack their "bundle" and get out of office. Let them put on trial a system that is fair, and judge by results.

Hon. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): The item I am particularly concerned about is in connection with "State School Buildings, Additions, Improvements, Furniture, Repairs, and Painting." I fear that the appropriation of £40,000 is insufficient to carry out

necessary new buildings and make additions to buildings already in existence. I am quite satisfied that to erect the necessary new school buildings and make the additions to the buildings already in existence in my electorate will certainly exceed an expenditure of at least £10,000, and I do not think I am beyond the limit. We all know that there is a large number of schools which are insanitary and offer inadequate accommodation, and that new schools to replace them in some instances were approved of five years ago. On every occasion that an appropriation is made, the school committees approach the member for their district to bring the matter before the department, and they have been told on all occasions that funds were not available for carrying out the work. I view this matter with a considerable amount of alarm. Hon. members on both sides have urged that the care of the young is one of the most essential duties of the State; and, when we have a large number of school buildings which have to accommodate a large number of children, and not only are buildings insanitary but the lighting is absolutely prejudicial to the eyesight of the children, then it becomes a matter of moment, and it should be discussed irrespective of whether hon. members are on the Opposition side or on the Government side. If the work which has already been approved is carried out, the amount voted is absolutely insufficient, and a number of necessary buildings will have to be delayed.

Mr. HARTLEY: Move an increase in the vote.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member should know that is not permissible under the Standing Orders.

Mr. HARTLEY: Suggest a penny in the £1 land tax.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I am not dealing with this matter as a joke.

Mr. COLLINS: A penny in the £1 land tax would not be a joke; it would be a very serious matter. (Laughter.)

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Within the vicinity of Brisbane, where the people have railway facilities, and where we have some of the most fertile land in the State, settlement is now taking place at a very rapid rate, and school accommodation is absolutely necessary and essential. I know that quite a number of new schools has been approved and applications are coming in for the erection of others. These schools are in newly settled areas distant three or four miles from schools already erected. That distance of three or four miles represents a greater distance than if it was in a district where the roads are good and there is bridge accommodation to enable the children to cover that distance on all occasions. But in mountainous country such as we have, where the creeks rise very rapidly and where there is a large rainfall, it is practically impossible for the children to have the benefit of instruction unless accommodation for that purpose is provided in their midst. We are anxious to settle people on the country lands of the State, and I think we are all agreed that the children of those persons who are prepared to settle on the country lands should receive that education which is accorded in a very much higher degree in the centres of population. That at least is the duty of the State. But

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the Minister will admit that he will not be able to construct all the school buildings which have already been approved if the appropriation only amounts to £40,000. There is one school in particular—that at Canungra—which has been condemned for years.

Mr. HARTLEY: " 'Billy' Hughes's white elephant."

HON. J. G. APPEL: I do not know anything about "Billy" Hughes, but I know the hon. member at one time was a very great admirer of his, and there is a wonderful likeness between the two. (Laughter.) That school has been condemned as insanitary, and owing to the want of proper ventilation and lighting it is destructive to the eyesight of the children, and a new building should have been provided there some five years ago, yet every year replies are received that funds are not available for the purpose. So it goes on. My concern is to see that those children receive an education, and that without physical danger, and I believe I have the sympathy of a majority of the members sitting on the Government benches. I hope so, and my sole object in rising was to point out that the sum on the Estimates is insufficient, and that, if the necessary accommodation is to be provided, a larger amount is necessary. I would like to ask the Minister in what order the buildings will be constructed.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: In the order of their urgency. Some works are more urgent than others.

HON. J. G. APPEL: If the Minister will lay it down that where there is no school accommodation the erection of a school in that locality is a work of urgency, then I am with him.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Where there is no school at all, then it is a work of urgency, provided there is a sufficient number of children in the district.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am very glad to have that information from the Minister. In some instances there is no school at all. When you go round with a distinguished visitor and inspect these schools, you do not like to admit that additions which are urgent and have been approved are being delayed because funds are not available for the purpose. I do not desire to take up the attitude of a carping critic. My sole object is to see that accommodation is given to the children. It is the children of parents who have gone out into the country away from the conveniences of city life who should receive preference in education, without which they will not be able to compete in after life with others.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): The hon. member for Albert has complained about schools which have been approved not being erected; but, if the Government were in a position to commence the erection of new schools and repairs to existing buildings at the end of the current year, even if the hon. member did not do it, his friends would complain about the huge expenditure of the Government, without making any mention of the fact that a large portion of the money was spent on new school buildings. There is a big vote of about £1,250,000 for the Education Department, but no mention is

made of that when the expenditure of the Government is being criticised. I hope that the Government will not depart from their policy of day labour in connection with the erection of buildings.

Mr. MOORE: I hope they will. It is the most scandalous waste of money which has ever taken place in Queensland.

Mr. FERRICKS: There is no comparison between the two systems, not only in regard to cost, but in the durability and completeness of the work. When Mr. Paget was Secretary for Railways, he put into "Hansard" a comparison of the cost of the day-labour and contract systems, which stands good to-day. We had a shocking example only a few weeks ago, when tenders were called for some sewerage work. The Board engineer's estimate for the work was £31,000 less than the contract price, with the result that an alteration has been forced upon those who opposed the day-labour system as against the contract system. I am also pleased to observe that a sum of £5,000 is allocated in the Estimates on account of the commencement of the erection of a high school at South Brisbane. That work is not embodied in this Estimate, but it appears in the Loan Estimates. I hope that the Government will not depart from the policy of day labour in that regard. I should like to see the erection of that building commenced this year, so that the school children resident on the south side of the river from Victoria Bridge as far as Beenleigh will be catered for in that connection. The Government can be given credit for their endeavour to place educational facilities at the convenience of the children in the country. I heard the hon. member for Albert complain about the need for ventilation and light in the schools, but the modern style of school now being erected supplies that want. The schools erected within recent years give sufficient ventilation and light.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I was referring to the old buildings.

Mr. FERRICKS: The schools now being erected are of modern design and well equipped, and they give sufficient ventilation and light. It is only within the last five or six years that this type of building has been constructed by the Government. Proper light and ventilation are important factors, and the officials are also giving some study to the sight of the children when constructing new buildings. We cannot over-estimate the value of that. The experts of the department generally do not lose sight of the necessity for these things. I see that the sum of £5,000 is put on the Loan Estimates for the new high school at South Brisbane, and I hope the Minister will see that a start is made with that building this year.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I have no wish to deprive South Brisbane of its high school; but schools have been closed up in my electorate owing to the fact that there are only eight or ten pupils there, and I think the wants of those children, so far as primary education is concerned, should be attended to before we spend money on a new high school in South Brisbane. If there is any money for a high school in South Brisbane after attending to the primary education of the children in the country, then I have no objection to that school

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being gone on with; but by all means let us see that the children in the country get facilities for primary education first. I know the policy of the Government in connection with repairs, but it is a mistake to carry out repairs to schools under the present system, as it is costing 200 per cent. or 300 per cent. more than would be the case if a little common sense were exercised by the Government officials connected with the department. I do not blame the officials, as I know it is a matter of Government policy. I could give numerous illustrations, but I will just cite the case of the school at Taroom. The nearest railway is 40 miles away; yet, if repairs are required to the school building, the department sends an inspector from Toowoomba or Dalby. His travelling expenses have to be paid for two days to Taroom and two days back again. The whole job will not cost more than £10, yet the Government spend that amount in the travelling expenses of the inspector before the job is started. The local school committee could get the job done by a handy man locally much cheaper than it costs the department to send up an inspector to report on the proposed work.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is done.

Mr. MORGAN: The practice must be of very recent origin, because I can give illustrations of cases where I know men have been sent to such jobs. I know of cases where men have taken two days to get to a job which has only taken one day to do, yet we wonder why work is costing more than it did in the time of the Liberal Government. I say that local men are entitled to the work. Why should the Government have men in the large centres doing local men out of work?

Mr. DASH: When has this happened?

Mr. MORGAN: Has it not happened in the hon. member's electorate? It has been happening ever since the Labour Government came into power. It is a silly and expensive system, and there is nothing to be gained by it. Our buildings in country districts to-day are in a more dilapidated condition than I have ever known them to be. In the important town of Goondiwindi the school and teacher's residence are in a disgraceful condition. I can produce three or four letters stating that the work has been referred to the Department of Public Instruction, and that it will be done when money is available.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The work is to be done.

Mr. MORGAN: I have got that answer for the last three years. I go continually to the Works Department, and each time I get a letter from the department stating that the work will be done when money is available.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Minister in charge of the department is now telling you that the work has been approved and will be done.

Mr. MORGAN: Will it be done within the next five years?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: It will be done this year.

Mr. MORGAN: I am very pleased to know that. That is something definite. I

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shall immediately write to the school committee and tell them that it will be done this year. I feel quite sure that, notwithstanding the fact that the Government have been spending a great deal more money than any other Government before, the money they have spent has not had the same result as one-half of that amount spent by previous Governments, owing to the wasteful and extravagant policy pursued by the Department of Public Works. It may be good policy to build a high school in South Brisbane by day labour and it may save money, but I am quite sure that in the country a school committee could get a job done for one-third of the amount it would cost the department.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How could it be done?

Mr. MORGAN: You could empower the school committee to spend so much money, say, £20, and you would get good value for the money. I feel sure you would get much better value than you do at present.

At 10.30 p.m.,

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN said: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, I shall now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 10.31 p.m.