

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 31 AUGUST 1923

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The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 7 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

AMERICAN LOANS—INTEREST AND SINKING FUND ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*), in the absence of Mr. Elphinstone (*Oxley*), asked the Treasurer—

“In connection with the first and second American loans, respectively—

“1. What was the amount in dollars of each half-yearly payment of interest, the rate of exchange in each case at date of payment, and the total amount in pounds sterling of each such payment, including loss on exchange? Also, the amount of the outstanding principal (dollars) on which each payment of interest was made?

“2. What amounts have been retained in America, from time to time, to meet possible repurchases of bonds, which the Government is liable to be called upon to make under the Sinking Fund arrangements, and what rate of interest (if any) has been allowed on such amounts? Also, what amounts have been remitted to America for such purpose, and at what loss on exchange in each case?

“3. Have any of the bonds of the first loan been offered to the Government by the bondholders; and, if so, at what price?

“4. Why is the money credited to the Sinking Fund of the first loan invested at fixed deposit with the Commonwealth Bank when the Government is paying over 5 per cent. for loan money at the present time?”

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

“1. See the statement which I now lay on the table. I would point out that, as money had been transferred at a profit from the State to London to meet interest payments, the rate of exchange between London and New York, as shown in the statement, does not represent the cost to the State of paying the interest.

“2. (a) One hundred thousand dollars were retained in New York to meet Sinking Fund payments on the first loan, and this amount is earning interest at the rate of 2½ per cent. per annum. (b) The equivalent of 68,000 dollars has been remitted to New York for Sinking Fund requirements of the second loan, as follows:—August, 1922, 50,000 dollars; February, 1923, 15,000 dollars; August, 1923, 3,000 dollars. The remarks in reply to question 1 in respect to the cost of transfer of funds applies also to these transactions

“3. No portion of the first loan has been available to the Government at or below par, which is the price fixed by the agreement for purchases from the Sinking Fund.

“4. Upon representations of the late Governor of the Commonwealth Bank, it

was considered desirable to invest the Sinking Fund with that bank, a condition of the investment being that the money was available at any time for purchase of the relative bonds. Upon his further advice, it was decided to invest the amount at the credit of the Sinking Fund in the Commonwealth Government 5 per cent. loan now being offered."

AMERICAN LOANS.		Exchange Rate
INTEREST	Nominal in £ Sterling.	
Amount on which Interest paid in America.	Due Date.	(Amount retained in New York)
\$12,000,000	1st April, 1922	4-41½
	1st Oct., 1922	
	1st April, 1923	
\$10,000,000	15th Aug., 1922	4-44½
	15th Feb., 1923	
	15th Aug., 1923	

MINISTERIAL TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*) asked the Premier—

"1. Has the return, which was promised last session, showing the amount paid to various Ministers for expenses connected with their office, been prepared?

"2. If not, when will the promise made last session be honoured, and when may the return be expected?"

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

"1. Information was furnished by individual Ministers while the Estimates of their respective departments were under consideration.

"2. See answer to No. 1."

Mr. CORSER: You are shirking it.

SUGGESTED INQUIRY INTO CONDITIONS IN IPSWICH RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"In the face of the statements made by Mr. Frank Cooper, M.L.A. for Bremer, when speaking upon the Financial Statement on Wednesday, 29th instant, will he cause an inquiry to be held to investigate and report upon the conditions as stated by the member for Bremer to exist in the Ipswich workshops?"

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

"Inquiries are being made."

PAYMENT TO NEWSPAPERS FOR SPECIAL ARTICLES.

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

"In reference to the articles which were recently published in the 'Standard,' 'Worker,' and the 'Alert' (Maryborough), relating to successful settlers in the Burnett and other districts—

1. Was the information obtained by a Government employee?
2. Was it supplied by the Government to the papers mentioned?
3. What other papers have been offered the same matter for publication?
4. What was the full amount paid by the Government to each of the above papers (and others, if any) for such publication?
5. In connection with the free distribution of the 'Worker' containing these articles throughout the Burnett electorate during last election campaign, what extra remuneration (if any) was paid by the Government?"

The PREMIER replied—

- "1. Yes.
- "2. Yes.
- "3. None.
- "4. The 'Daily Standard,' £37 10s.; the 'Worker,' £51 3s.; the 'Alert,' £40 6s.
- "5. None."

EXPENDITURE ON GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING.

Mr. CORSER asked the Premier—

"1. What was the total expenditure of his department last financial year for advertising?

"2. To whom were payments made under this heading; and what was the amount paid to each?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 and 2. This information will be given when the Estimates are under consideration."

ROAD FROM ROMA STREET TO NEW RAILWAY GOODS SHED.

Mr. KIELSO (*Nundah*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is it a fact that the road which has recently been constructed from Roma street to the new Railway Goods Shed was originally laid with tarred metal, and that it has been dug up and relaid with concrete?"

"2. If so, what was the cost of the tarred metal road and the cost of the concrete road?"

"3. What action does he propose to take in future to prevent such a waste of public money?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. Yes; after twelve months' use.

"2. Tarred road £928, less £500 value of tarred metal used elsewhere. Concrete road £3,550, including cost of removing tarred metal.

"3. Departmental officers state that the difficulty could not be foreseen, and was attributable to excessive loads, but I am prosecuting further inquiry."

BOARD FOR REVALUATION OF SOLDIER SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"In connection with the Revaluation Board, and particularly soldier settlements—

"1. Will he increase the functions of the Board to include the valuation of all blocks on such settlements, based on a commercial foundation—that is, after improvements are written down to present-day cost, permit the Board to value as a commercial proposition?"

"2. If a farm on a group settlement is abandoned by a soldier settler and is subsequently reallocated to any person, is the revaluation made on a basis less the capitalised interest of a previous occupier?"

"3. If so, will he empower the Board to make a similar decision in this connection to present holders?"

"4. If not, will he take suitable separate action to give effect to suggestions contained in Questions 1 and 3?"

"5. Having already agreed to grant a further loan, equal to the amount of the reduction by valuation, provided the case warrants it, is he aware that the capitalised interest may be in the vicinity of the amount by which valuation is reduced? In such cases, will he apply his decision irrespective of any such capitalised interest?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"1. No.

"2. Yes.

"3. No.

"4. No.

"5. Not if it brings his indebtedness over the £625 quota."

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Sugar Experiment Stations Act of 1900 in certain particulars."

The object of this Bill is to provide means

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for the systematic destruction of insect, animal, or bird pests which injure sugar-cane. The origin of the Bill was a request made by the Mackay sugar-growers, who passed a resolution which was forwarded to the Council of Agriculture. The Council of Agriculture has approved of the scheme contained in the Bill, and they approve of the passing of the measure. The scheme of the Bill is to cope with the pests by means of a compulsory levy not exceeding 3d. per ton on all sugar-cane delivered at any mills within a proclaimed area. This levy will be borne equally by the canegrowers and the mills, and all the money raised in each year will be spent directly by the local board for the suppression and destruction of cane pests. The board to be appointed in each area will consist of five members, three to be elected by the canegrowers and two by the mill-owners.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE presented the Bill, and moved—

"That the Bill be now read a first time."

Question put and passed.

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

STALLIONS REGISTRATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I might briefly outline the history of attempts which have been made from time to time to deal by legislation with the improvement of the breed of horses in this State. In 1903 the late Hon. J. T. Bell secured the appointment of a Select Committee to report on the steps which should be taken to improve the horse stock of Queensland, and the primary recommendation of the committee was in the direction of imposing an annual tax of between £2 and £10 upon all stallions over twenty months old, the proceeds of which tax were to be expended in the payment of premiums for approved stallions.

This matter has been discussed in Parliament from time to time, but nothing was done until Mr. Lennon became Secretary for Agriculture. He had a Bill drafted which also provided for a system of taxation, but it was not proceeded with. I personally was opposed to it on the ground that it provided for a heavy tax on stallions. The Bill now submitted is not intended to provide a tax. The only payment that will be made by horseowners will be a small registration fee to pay the expenses of the Board which is to be created. The principle of this Bill is entirely different from that contained in any other Bill or in any other scheme suggested. The principle of this Bill is the improvement of the breed of horses in Queensland by granting certificates to horses after examination by a board. Queensland is the largest breeder of horses in the Commonwealth. The total number of

horses in the State is about 750,000, with about 6,400 stallions. A voluntary system has been established for some time under which certificates are granted by veterinary surgeons. I think about 1,500 certificates have been granted.

Mr. CORSER: Only for show purposes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. The Council of Agriculture took an interest in this matter last year and they have approved of this scheme. Acts dealing with the matter have been passed in other places. An Act was passed in New Zealand in 1914, in Tasmania in 1917, and in Victoria in 1919. There are many Acts in America, particularly in Kansas, Indiana, Utah, and Colorado. Many other countries also have legislation dealing with the improvement of the breed of horses. It is not intended that the Bill shall apply to the whole State at once. The Council of Agriculture will make recommendations what districts shall be proclaimed, and those districts will come under the operations of the Act. In districts proclaimed a board will be constituted, the members of which will be recommended by the Council of Agriculture, and the chairman, who will be a veterinary surgeon, will be appointed by the Minister. This Board will have power to give notice every year that it intends to examine horses at specified places, and the horses complying with the conditions will have a certificate issued to them as provided in the schedule to the Bill. Once a certificate is given to a horse over a certain age it will hold good for all time, but the Minister can ask that that horse be further examined if it is thought necessary. The registration fee, which will be fixed by regulation, will only be sufficient to pay the expenses of the Board. The members of the Board will be paid fees for every sitting, and those fees will be fixed by regulation. To show the sincerity of the Government and their desire to improve the breed of horses in this State, I might mention the recent action taken by the Government to secure draught stallions in the South. The Council of Agriculture have interested themselves in this matter. Mr. E. Baynes has been particularly helpful, and has been persistently urging the Government to do something to improve the breed of stallions. Here, again, we have evidence of private enterprise having failed to do the right thing and the people asking for State socialism. (Opposition laughter.) The breed of horses, as is well known to everyone, has been deteriorating year after year in Queensland. That may apply to the other States as well.

That deterioration has been so obvious to Mr. Baynes—he evidently recognised that private enterprise is not prepared to do what is necessary—that he called on the Premier and myself, with the result that the matter was fully considered. The Government then decided to spend some money in buying pedigree horses in the South. The services of Mr. Tait, a well-known judge of draught horses, were secured on the recommendation of Mr. Baynes and approved of by the department, and he was sent South to buy some horses. In accordance with a promise I made to members of the Opposition, I want to give some particulars of those horses and the prices and the total cost of those horses to the State. I may mention, before doing so, that a committee has been appointed to control those horses. This committee con-

sists of Mr. Baynes, Mr. Tait, Mr. Scriven, Mr. Quodling, and Mr. Cory. This committee will control the horses and lay down conditions as to their services. The fees have been fixed by the Government at £2 2s. When I inform the House that some of these horses have been standing the season in the South at fees of six and seven guineas, they will realise that the Government have made a considerable concession in order to encourage the improvement in the breed of horses. In doing that it is necessary to ensure that the very best mares are mated with these horses, and to do that they have inserted advertisements in the districts in which they think the best mares will be found. On certain days they will examine the mares and select fifty of the best, in order to get the best results from the expenditure of the Government. The horses which have been bought by Mr. Tait have all got certificates from Victorian State veterinary officers in the South, and I believe they are very good horses. They certainly cost a lot of money.

Mr. CORSER: How much did they cost?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will give that information now. The horses Mr. Tait secured were—

“Premier Again”—a five-year-old, 16 hands 2½ inches in height, bred in New Zealand, where he had a highly creditable show record; cost £336.

Mr. VOWLES: Is that the landed or cost price?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The cost price.

“Glenalla”—a four-year-old, 16 hands 3 inches high, bred in New Zealand, where he also was a prize winner, and “Bold Wyllie,” another New Zealand bred horse and a show-ring winner, cost together £735.

“General Wallace,” a bright bay of 17 hands, bred in New Zealand, perhaps the pick of the lot; cost £420.

“Fabric’s Heir” who has had a distinguished show career in New Zealand, New South Wales, and Victoria; cost £420.

“Baron Again” is a Victorian bred horse, who won the first prize in the three-year-old class in Melbourne, and was first for the £100 Government Shield, and won the first prize and championship both at Werribee and Kyneton; cost £420.

All these horses are in their prime, and, needless to say, all possess Government certificates of soundness. An extra horse was obtained from the Agricultural College in an endeavour to meet the claims put forward by the various districts.

This horse, “Prospector,” which will make a total of seven altogether, is a dark brown horse by Prospero, and won the three-year-old class last year at the National Show. Both father and son are registered.

That, briefly, is the history of the horses purchased, and I believe myself that the transaction, which involved a considerable sum of money, will have good results. We have to remember, too, that the cost of feeding those horses, the grooms, and all arrangements for the season will fall on the Government. The investment will, in my opinion, be a good investment for the State. If it

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turns out to be so, after the next season the Government may be induced to buy further horses in the South.

Mr. VOWLES: What did it cost to bring those horses here?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have not got the full particulars of cost up to date.

Mr. CORSER: You have had time to get them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I can furnish the information if hon. members wish it.

Mr. CORSER: Yes, I wish it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Very well, you will get it. Having given that information, I do not think I need say anything more.

Mr. VOWLES: Tell us something about the districts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have already said that the Government have appointed a committee to decide where these horses shall go.

Mr. VOWLES: Have they not decided yet?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, they have decided. The names may be somewhat misleading, as I have not the map here showing the boundaries of the districts, but the districts selected are—Rosewood, Clifton, Oakey, Kingaroy, Wallumbilla, Gympie, and Wowan. It will be seen that Central and Northern Queensland have not been fortunate enough to get any of these horses. Consequently the North may have some room for complaint. However, the committee have laid it down that these horses should, for the time being, go to the places where the best mares are to be found. So far as I know, the judgment of the committee should be sound, as they have no axe to grind; they are not concerned about whether the decision pleases members of Parliament or not, but are only concerned about doing the right thing for the improvement of horses in Queensland.

Mr. VOWLES: Did they inquire about the number of mares?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: At present they are advertising—

Mr. VOWLES: They do not know what they are doing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Probably the hon. member for Dalby will be able to tell them what they should do. The committee are advertising at present, and, if the advertisement does not bring forward fifty first-class mares, they will be quite justified in changing the districts.

Mr. VOWLES: If the advertisement brings forth 150 mares, will you supply a horse? Of course, you will not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member for Dalby knows so little about this matter that he should keep quiet. With that explanation as to the necessity of the Bill I think I need say no more. I think the Bill is an important step in the right direction, and one that, in my opinion, is very much overdue in Queensland. I have pleasure in moving—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. VOWLES: You said you would give us all information on the second reading.

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Mr. MORGAN (*Marilla*): Why I, of all members of the Opposition, should be selected to champion the rights and privileges of stallions I do not know. (Laughter.) I have taken a very keen interest in horsebreeding, and I own several stallions and know a little about the industry of horsebreeding. I have listened very attentively to the Secretary for Agriculture, and I am sorry that he has not gone more fully into this matter. He has not given the information we expected with respect to the purchase of the stallions that have come to Queensland to improve the breeding of our horses, and I am afraid that members of the House have received very little information. We are told that in New Zealand, Tasmania, and Victoria similar Acts are in operation. I contend that those Acts operate in quite a different direction to what the Minister intends this Bill shall operate. I understand that this Bill only deals with stallions to be offered for service for a monetary fee. We know that in Queensland at least 80 per cent. of our stallions are bred by their owners, who do not offer them at all at a monetary fee. Therefore this Bill is only going to apply to 20 per cent. of the horses in Queensland. In Victoria the Act applies to horses used by people for their own purposes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where the Act is not put into operation.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not put into operation because there is a special provision made for thoroughbred horses. With the exception of thoroughbreds used for breeding there is a special principle that does not apply. I intend to deal with that phase later on. How the Minister can claim that this Bill is going to do any great amount of good when it only applies to 20 per cent. of the horses in this State I am at a loss to understand. The hon. gentleman truly said that the breed of horses in Queensland has deteriorated. Why have our horses deteriorated? Not owing to the fact that private enterprise has failed, as the hon. gentleman stated, but owing to the fact that the breeding of horses has not been a remunerative enterprise. There has been no money in the breeding of horses during the last five or six years, with the result that people have gone out of the industry and have used their land for other purposes. It is the same as in connection with any other business. The very moment an enterprise fails to be remunerative the people go out of that enterprise and look for something more profitable. So the horsebreeders of Queensland have looked for something more profitable than horsebreeding. There is no doubt that some years ago the Maryvale stud, run by the late Mr. Weinholt, was one of the finest studs that existed in Australia for the breeding of draught horses. Horses from that stud were known, not only throughout Queensland, but also throughout New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. You can meet men to-day in those States who will tell you that the class of horse bred at the Maryvale stud, known as the “A.W. 1” horse, is not procurable in the whole of Australia to-day. That stud was built up by private enterprise, but unfortunately the stud broke up, and since then horses have declined in value, with the result that to-day horsebreeding is not a payable proposition. Probably we have to blame the advent of motor lorries to some

extent for the decline in horse values. In the city of Brisbane or wherever you go you find motor lorries being used where previously draught horses were used. Take the Main Roads Board. They use a number of motor lorries. They have a certain number of draught horses, too, but they find it is more economical to use motor lorries, and the result is there is not the demand for horses that there was previously.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't you admit that good draught horses always bring a fair price?

Mr. MORGAN: They have not always brought a fair price. A certain class of draught horse to-day is bringing a fair price.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Good draught horses.

Mr. MORGAN: Ten or twelve months ago in the Toowoomba yards you could buy splendid draught horses for £7, £8, and £10 a head, and the Minister will admit that those are not good prices.

Mr. RORDAN: Where can you get a good draught horse for £7 or £8?

Mr. MORGAN: I sold a mob in Toowoomba twelve months ago, and they did not average £10 a head. That was owing to the fact that there was no demand for them at that time. To-day good draught horses will fetch as much as from £20 to £25. That is the horse known as the single dray horse. But the average farm horse is not bringing those prices. They may be bringing those prices in the sugar districts of Queensland, but I can tell the Minister that even to-day, if he goes to the monthly sales in Toowoomba, he can buy a good class of farm horse for less than £12.

Mr. HYNES: You are sore because the selectors are going to get the services of good horses for a small fee.

Mr. MORGAN: I am not dealing with the Bill so far as that matter is concerned; I will deal with that question later. I notice, first of all, that it is the intention to make the Bill applicable to the breeding of thoroughbred horses, but the Bill goes on to say that, if a stallion does not pass the test owing to the fact that it has some hereditary blemish, it cannot be registered. It has been proved in New Zealand, Tasmania, and Victoria that it is absolutely impossible to apply a measure of this sort to thoroughbred stallions owing to the fact that those horses may be used [7.30 p.m.] for racing purposes, and, owing to the stringent training they have to undergo, they may develop ringbone, spavin, thoroughpin, or roaring. Owing to the fact that a horse is being trained he may develop any of those diseases. The best thoroughbred sire in Victoria—the horse which is giving the best results as far as racing is concerned—is a horse which would not be registered in Queensland under this Bill.

Mr. KIRWAN: Why?

Mr. MORGAN: Owing to the effect of the training he had to undergo in his racing career, he is a roarer—not like the hon. member for Brisbane. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: That is a most unkind remark.

Mr. MORGAN: He has become the victim of wind, but that is brought about, not from hereditary causes, but by the severe preparation the horse has had to undergo. The Minister will know, as one who has taken part in many games in his younger days, that a man may be thoroughly sound and fit, but, owing to the fact that he overdoes his training, he may develop consumption, and we know what that means. It is just the same with the horse. If a veterinary surgeon saw a draught horse with ringbone he would condemn it immediately, because he would say it was hereditary and might be transmitted to its stock.

Mr. BULCOCK: Why do all schedules debar ringbone and spavin from certificates of soundness? The army schedule also debars these defects.

Mr. MORGAN: It is no use the hon. member getting at me on that point. I admit that, if a draught stallion has ringbone, spavin, curby hock, or calf knee, he should be debarred from getting registration; but those things would not be brought about through overwork or training. Take a horse which is racing, and which becomes eventually a sire. He may develop some of those things if he receives a knock. As an illustration I might refer to the horse Radium, which is one of the greatest jumpers we have in Australia. That horse, owing to the fact that he is engaged in jumping, is unsound from the knee downwards, and you would refuse him a certificate in Queensland owing to the fact that he has developed blemishes, although those blemishes have not been transmitted to him by his sire. The same thing applies in the Southern States to stallions engaged in steeplechasing and racing. They jump fences, and naturally develop ringbone and other diseases, which veterinary surgeons say are hereditary and may be transmitted to the stock of those particular sires. Therefore, I hope and trust that the Minister will accept an amendment when the Bill is in Committee that thoroughbred horses which are used for the services of thoroughbred mares shall not come under the provisions of the Bill. The Victorian Act, for instance, is far more drastic than this Bill. The definition of "thoroughbred mare" and "thoroughbred stallion" in that Act reads—

" 'Thoroughbred mare' and 'thoroughbred stallion' mean respectively a mare or a stallion entered in any prescribed studbook or in the register kept by the association known as the Victorian Trotting and Racing Association "

It goes on to say—

" Notwithstanding anything in this Act it shall not be necessary for the owner of any thoroughbred stallion to apply for registration of such stallion under this Act: Provided that any such stallion shall not be used for stud purposes except in regard to thoroughbred mares."

That means that the thoroughbred horse may be used for the purpose of serving thoroughbred mares for racing purposes; but, if he is used for the purpose of getting hacks or remounts, he must come under this Bill. I say that a similar provision to that should be included in this Bill. It would be ridiculous for the Minister to insist on the Bill as it is at present; in fact, some of our best mares in Queensland to-day would not be

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registered owing to the fact that in their racing days they developed some of the blemishes I have mentioned, and consequently would not be passed by the Board appointed under the Bill.

I also wish to mention one or two other points. First of all, this Bill is only going to apply to districts recommended by the Council of Agriculture. If this is a good Bill, why should it not apply all over Queensland? If it is to apply in one district, why should it not apply in others? I have heard some men outside suggest—I do not know whether what they say is true or not—that, owing to the fact that the Government have brought certain horses into districts where those horses are going to stand, they are going to make the Bill apply there to enable them to compete more favourably with the horses in that particular locality.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no truth in that.

Mr. MORGAN: I would ask the Minister why the Bill should only apply to certain districts recommended by the Council of Agriculture and not throughout Queensland. If it is going to do good in one part of Queensland, it should do good in all parts of the State. There is no district where horsebreeding is carried on to a greater extent in Queensland than my district.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It might be too great an expense to appoint a Board in some districts.

Mr. MORGAN: If it is right to conduct the examinations in one section of Queensland, it is right to have them throughout the State. I want to know why a veterinary surgeon should be the chairman of the board. Is he likely to be able to conduct the business of the board better than anyone else? There are four laymen, and they may know more about horses, generally speaking, than a veterinary surgeon. I know that the Minister, when he selected a man to go to the Southern States to select horses, did not select one of his own veterinary surgeons. He went to a layman, recognising that that layman perhaps knew more about horses than his own official.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There will be four laymen on this board.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes; but why should a veterinary surgeon be the chairman? The board should appoint their own chairman—the man they consider most capable of conducting the meetings—because the chairman has to conduct the meetings. The veterinary surgeon may be a good man with regard to the examination of a horse, but he may be a total failure in regard to conducting meetings which may have to decide very momentous questions.

Then again I notice that the Bill does not apply to all stallions. For instance, I breed more horses than all the people round about me put together. I do not offer my stallions for services. If any of my neighbours want to bring their mares to my place, I allow them to do so for nothing. The result of my offering to do that without any charge is that my neighbours say, "You do not take payment," and then they do not send their mares along. What applies to my case applies to other cases right throughout the State. Why should I not be compelled to

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keep good stallions, just as people in Victoria are required to do who only use them for their own purposes? This Bill fails owing to the fact that the Minister has not shown strength in drafting it. He is tinkering with a most important subject; he has not displayed the strength one would expect him to show, because he evidently does not want to offend anybody.

Another fault in the Bill is that it does not specify what the registration fee is to be. Whatever the fee is to be, it should be stated in the Act, as is done in the Victorian Act—whether it be £2 or £5, or some other figure. We have no right to pass the Bill unless we state definitely what the registration is going to cost, so that people will know beforehand. That is done in other States, and it should be done here.

But I repeat that the principal weakness of the Bill is that 80 per cent of our horses are bred from stallions whose services are not offered by the owners to the public, and the measure does not propose to touch those stallions at all. The result will be that the Bill will not have the desired effect, or the effect which the Minister expects.

Another weakness—and, in my opinion, a very considerable weakness—is that, in the event of an appeal against a decision of the board appointed for a district, the Minister is the person who will decide it. Why should the Minister have that responsibility thrust upon him? In Victoria and other States they have an appeal board.

Mr. HYNES: Can you not stop quoting Victoria?

Mr. MORGAN: The reason why I am quoting Victoria is that I want to quote a place where they have decent, sensible legislation. If the Government would adopt Victoria's example in many matters, they would make Queensland as good as Victoria some day. I quote Victoria, Tasmania, and New Zealand because they have Stallion Registration Acts in force, and it is only right and proper to refer to what is done there. Is it right, when an appeal is lodged against a decision of a district board, that the decision should lie with the Minister, who is a partisan? Such a provision is unheard of. It is ridiculous to think that an appeal of that kind should be included in a Bill of this description. We should have an appeal board consisting of independent men who have nothing whatever to do with Parliament. The Minister emphasised the fact that the men who would be appointed to a district board would be free from political influence, and would not care whether the owners of the stallions were members of Parliament or anybody else—they would do as they thought right and proper. I agree with the Minister that they should be free from political influence, but I say that an appeal board should be constituted instead of allowing the Minister to be wholly and solely responsible. I feel sure that the Minister does not want that responsibility. In any case, is he sufficiently a judge in these matters? He may be a very capable man—no doubt he is in many respects—but consider the responsibility which would be placed upon him of deciding whether a district board had given a right or a wrong decision.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: To whom do you think the appeal should be made?

Mr. MORGAN: It should be to an appeal board constituted for that purpose, just as a district board is constituted for the other purpose. It might consist of one man or more, but there should be an appeal board free from political influence in any shape or form, just as in the case of the district board the Minister said no consideration should be paid to members of Parliament or parties.

The Minister should decide what the registration fee is going to be. In Victoria it is £1 or £1 1s. If the Minister does not think that is sufficient, let him fix some higher fee—£2 or £5, or whatever he likes—and put it in the Bill. I am not here to suggest any sum or make any recommendation. It is the Minister's Bill, and he should accept the responsibility for matters like that.

There is another important point I would like to draw attention to. If a stallion is refused registration and an appeal is lodged with the Minister, the Bill says that the animal shall not be used by the owner for his own purposes while the appeal is pending. Yet, if the appeal is dismissed, he can use the stallion for his own purposes without any trouble. That just shows how loosely the Bill has been drafted.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am afraid that you do not understand the Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: I do understand the Bill, but I am afraid that the Minister shows by his interjection that he does not understand it. Clause 8 provides—

“An appeal shall lie to the Minister from any decision of the board: Provided that during the period for which the decision is postponed, the owner shall not use or permit the stallion to be used for stud purposes.”

The Minister cannot accuse me of not having read the Bill—surely to anyone who understands English that is plain enough. During the pendency of the appeal the owner may not use the stallion for his own purposes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is obvious that he cannot use it if his appeal is dismissed.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not. A man can use a stallion for his own purposes without coming up for registration at all, because the Bill requires only those stallions which are offered for the use of the public for monetary consideration to be registered.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What is the appeal for? There would be no necessity to appeal if he could use it for his own purposes.

Mr. MORGAN: An appeal might be made because he wanted to use it for both purposes. During the pendency of the appeal he cannot use it for his own purposes; but, if the appeal is dismissed, he can turn round and do so, and the Government cannot prevent it. Clause 9 provides—

“After this Act has been in operation for two years no person shall offer for stud purposes any stallion without holding a subsisting certificate of registration for the same, and for any contravention of this provision he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds; but the offer for stud purposes of a stallion in respect of which an application has been duly made and has not been rejected by the board, shall not be deemed a contravention of this provision.”

That goes to show that, so long as the owner is using the horse for his own purposes, he need not apply for registration at all. The Bill provides that he must register under the Bill only if he offers the services of a stallion to the public for a monetary consideration. That is an anomaly so far as the principle of the Bill is concerned.

I want to deal with matters pertaining to the purchase of draught stallions by the Government. The Government are doing something which will assist the breeding of draught horses in Queensland, but I think they might have done it in a better manner. I do not approve of the system or the policy which has been adopted. I recognise that the bringing of these six good horses—they are good horses; there might be one that I am a little doubtful about, but, generally speaking, five of them are good horses—into this State is going to be of benefit in the direction of breeding horses. I contend that with the expenditure of the same amount of money the Government could have obtained twenty-five stallions from all parts of Australia and New Zealand.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member can make reference to the State stallions, but he must realise that there is nothing in the Bill dealing with them.

Mr. VOWLES: I think there is.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member may make a reference to them.

Mr. MORGAN: The Bill provides that certain districts can be proclaimed, and those State stallions may be in those districts.

The SPEAKER: The State stallions have nothing to do with this Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: I claim, Sir, that you allowed the Minister a good deal of latitude, and I crave some indulgence in connection with this matter. Perhaps according to strict parliamentary procedure I am not in order in referring to this matter; but the Minister, in reply to a question the other day, said that he would give all the information on the second reading of the Bill, and, naturally, we came to the conclusion that you would allow us a certain amount of latitude in this debate. I am not going to attack the Government in any carping spirit. I recognise that the purchase of these horses is going to do some good; but I am of the opinion that a system of subsidising private persons who are prepared to buy stallions would have been a much better scheme. I consider that the board should have been appointed, and they should have visited the Southern States to see the different grades of horses at the Melbourne and Sydney shows, and they could have selected fifteen or twenty stallions that they thought would have been beneficial to Queensland, and they then could have offered a subsidy of £200 to any person who purchased any of those stallions to bring them to Queensland, with the result that Queensland would have had twenty-five stallions instead of six stallions for the expenditure of £5,100. From the Minister's figures, I gather that that figure represents the expenditure. We do not know what it cost to bring those horses here.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will give you that.

Mr. MORGAN: According to the Minister's figures, those horses are going to cost

at least £5,100, plus the expense of bringing them to this State. It will cost another £300 per annum for the upkeep of those horses, as it will not be possible to feed each horse under a cost of £1 10s. per week. During three months of the year there will be the cost of an attendant for each of those horses. It would be necessary to have those men take the horses round the districts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What are you trying to prove?

Mr. MORGAN: I am trying to prove that the Government would have done better had they paid the £5,100 by way of subsidy to horseowners to encourage them to bring horses from other parts of Australia rather than for the Government to bring the horses themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: As a matter of fact, the Government should have consulted you?

Mr. MORGAN: No. I hope the Minister will accept my suggestion in the spirit in which I intend it. I have already said that I quite agree with the object of the Government in bringing the horses here. I am not out to blackguard the Minister. Speaking as an experienced horsebreeder and one who has the interests of Queensland at heart, I think the Minister should accept my suggestion in the spirit in which I make it. The Government would have obtained twenty-five horses under the system of subsidy.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have no desire to prevent the hon. member from discussing this matter, but he must see that he is not in order in proceeding on his present lines. The Bill deals with the registration of horses. If the hon. member desires, he may make a passing reference to the purchase of these stallions. If he desires to criticise or speak at length on the purchase, he can do so on another occasion, but he is not in order in proceeding as he is now doing.

Mr. MORGAN: I agree to a certain extent with your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but I would point out that the object of the Bill is "to improve the breed of horses, and for other incidental purposes." I am endeavouring to show where the Bill is defective, and that there should be some further provisions in the Bill to improve the breed of horses.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will be in order in doing that.

Mr. MORGAN: I am endeavouring to show that, if the Government had offered a subsidy to persons who were prepared to purchase stallions for this State, they would have been doing something more beneficial, and they would have carried out more effectively the intention of the Bill. The board should have been appointed to select those stallions in the first place. I do not disagree with the personnel of the board. Two of the men on the board I recognise as first-class men. The improvement of the breed of horses is a most laudable object for any Government to have in view, and I hope that in future more money will be spent in this direction; but I hope that the money will be expended in such a manner that full value will be obtained for it. In carrying out this scheme we want to get the most we can for our money. I know that Mr. Baynes and Mr. Tait have taken a very keen interest in this matter, and I feel sure that they will agree that it would have been far better if the Government had adopted a subsidy

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scheme such as I have suggested instead of purchasing the stallions themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Baynes recommended the purchase of these stallions.

Mr. MORGAN: He may have done so. He has been a very effective worker in this matter. In Victoria, in the Wimmera district, they have the finest breed of draught horses; I believe that one of the State stallions came from that district. The breed of horses there was improved under the subsidy scheme. Once a year the agricultural societies send a board, consisting of three gentlemen, down to Melbourne, where the horses from all parts of Australia and New Zealand are congregated. These three competent men pick out perhaps six stallions, and a subsidy is offered to any person who is prepared to buy any of those stallions and bring them to a certain district, and the Board also guarantees the purchasers of those horses fifty mares at £5 5s. each every year for a period of three years. Those conditions were an inducement to men to go down and purchase stallions for their districts. They were sure that the horses would be a payable proposition under that scheme, and the result has been that now they have the best class of horses in any part of Australia at the present time. New Zealand is perhaps the only place that can excel Victoria in that direction.

I hope that the Minister will take into consideration my remarks if, on a future occasion, the Government propose to spend

[8 p.m.] more money in connection with the encouragement of the breed of horses. I have indicated that

I intend to move certain amendments when the Bill reaches the committee stage to make it a better Bill than it is at the present time, and, when those amendments are moved, I feel sure that the Minister will give the consideration to them that he should, and, if he thinks it advisable, embody them in the Bill.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I am sorry that the Bill we are considering is not one which aims at the improvement of all sires. The Bill limits our operations to some extent, and the principle it seeks to attain could easily have been extended to operate in very many classes to the betterment of the State. I am sorry that the Minister, in introducing the measure, said that it was essential on account of the failure of private enterprise. He added political significance to the Bill, which should have appealed to him as being right above the spirit in which it was introduced. It seems impossible for him to deal with any matter without introducing the political aspect.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Does your party stand for private enterprise?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman, even by his interjection, is trying to assume that the Bill is necessary through the failure of private enterprise.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then, how do you account for it?

Mr. CORSER: I account for it as a personal experience. As a breeder of horses myself—and draught horses, too—I find that the greatest trouble, particularly in draught-horse breeding, is the price you get for what you breed. Some years ago, draught mares brought a considerable price. A person trying to improve the class of draught horse

would pay a good price for his mares, and, after getting the first result, he would find that, instead of the price paid for the mares being £20 or £25 apiece, he was only offered £4 or £5. The drop in the price of the horse is responsible for the neglect in the breeding of horses to-day. No encouragement has been given by the Government or agricultural societies to tide the draught-horse breeders over the trouble they have experienced. Draught-horse breeders have been amongst the greatest losers for a number of years, and the scarcity of draught sires throughout Queensland is due to the very poor market price that has obtained for many years in this State for good draught horses. That is the reason for the lack of attention given to improving the breed, and not the non-success of private enterprise as the Minister would like to make out.

The Minister has pointed out that the Bill is the outcome of the deliberations of the Council of Agriculture. He added that they have deliberated on this question, and that they have taken an interest in it, as they have done in all other questions pertaining to agriculture.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hear, hear!

MR. CORSER: The Minister says "Hear, hear!" Why does he not take the same notice in regard to their interest in and deliberations on the industrial side of agriculture? He gave them no say whatever in that regard. They were not asked if or how industrial awards should apply to agriculture, although, in my opinion, they should function in all these matters. This Bill and the outcome of this Bill is due solely to the advice and recommendation of Mr. Baynes, of the National Agricultural Association. That gentleman is responsible, and not the Council of Agriculture, for the purchase of the stallions, which has evidently brought in its path the initiation of this Bill. It may be news to the Minister, and possibly to some hon. members of this House, that this is not an old matter. The Minister has referred to the action of the late Hon. J. T. Bell in 1903, when he helped to bring in a Stallion Bill for the registration of all stallions in the country; but the outcome of this Bill is, no doubt, centred in the conference that was called by the Commonwealth Government on 3rd November, 1916, in Melbourne of the various horse-breeding societies and agricultural societies of Australia to discuss what should be done to bring about an improvement in the breed of horses. At that conference the greatest consideration was not only given to the stallion, but also to the mare. If we are going to raise the standard of our draught stock in Queensland, we must also give consideration to the raising of the standard of our Australian mares. Some consideration ought to have been given in this Bill to the standard of our mares further than the rigid inspection that is proposed. Another feature of the conference was that suitable stallions in suitable districts were considered. We may lay down a particular rule or law, or specify a particular type of stallion, and stamp it as the class of horse we desire to see in each district, but we must remember that different districts establish types of their own. We have an illustration of this in the conference advocating the Percheron horse throughout the greater number of districts of Australia. The Bill does not provide in any way to

assist in the direction of the importation of the Percheron horse, or the encouragement of different types of draught horses. It deals with sires, and does not differentiate or encourage for the various districts a specific breed of horse which should predominate in that district, and which really is the best kind of horse featured in the district. There is no provision for the type of mares in the various districts, or for the breeding of the type of horse found throughout the British Isles. We should also classify our mares to suit this type, and provide, where possible, for the establishment of those types in districts suitable for those mares and stallions. There is no provision to broaden our outlook in that regard. What seems to be neglected more than anything else, and what is more essential and more recognised in other countries, is the desire for education in these matters. There is no provision in the Bill for that education, or for any instruction among our Australian breeders or those who hope to be breeders, as to the best type, the way to breed, and the way to fix the type so as to make that particular type predominant. We must start off in our horse-breeding as we did in connection with our agricultural system by educating breeders to the necessity for having good stuff by breeding the horse best suited to various conditions. Education should be the first feature of this Bill—not only an education from a practical point of view, but from a veterinary point of view. This Bill might easily have provided for a continuance or extension of our veterinary science conditions as found in Queensland to-day. Unfortunately, there is no provision for an extension of our veterinary science or for veterinary education in our agricultural colleges to enable our young men and horse-breeders to qualify in veterinary science. Such an education would enable them to decide, from an Australian point of view, upon the horse best suited for local conditions. If this Bill fails at all, it is due to the fact that there is no provision for this education and scientific attention to veterinary science.

There was a suggestion in 1916 that we might now well consider, not only in regard to draught horses, but also in regard to blood horses—that 2½ per cent. of all the moneys passing over the totalisator should go towards the encouragement of the breeding of better horses. That provision is not embodied in this Bill. If that money was devoted to propagating the breeding of better horses in Queensland, it would mean that a fund, coming from nobody specifically, would be available for the improvement of our horses, which would create an interest not now existent.

I ask if it is not possible to utilise mares considered unserviceable from a draught point of view to mate for the production of mules?

MR. COSTELLO: Hear, hear!

MR. CORSER: This is an enterprise that has been very successfully taken up in the United States. A mule from an ordinary mare possesses the maximum amount of value for farm operations and for general purposes. I suggest that mares rejected as first-class, either in the blood or the heavy class, might be excellent for producing mules, and that every encouragement should be given to this scheme. We have only touched the question lightly, but it has been tried at Buaraba and other stations with very

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successful and encouraging results. It is a pity that it has not been further extended.

The attention that has been given to horsebreeding in the past by agricultural associations has reaped a reward. Some years ago, if you came to the Exhibition grounds, you would find scores of good stallions there. One of the great features of the show was the Thursday's sale of young stallions. During the last couple of years there has been almost a total absence of young stallions—the classes were conspicuous by their absence. This is due to the small price—not altogether to the failure of private enterprise. We find that not only has the private individual refused to breed a horse that is unprofitable, but Government institutions also have not been successful in the breeding of draught horses during the last few years. We hope that this Bill will encourage the breeding of good horses in a way that has not been achieved by Government institutions previously. I hope that this venture will enable us to produce local horses as good as those produced in New Zealand, and probably as good as those produced in Victoria to-day.

I think provision should be made in the Bill to subsidise small owners to enable them to secure good stallions. We would then have an opportunity of breeding good foals for the coming years that does not exist to-day. Let us take time by the forelock. The Minister has an excellent opportunity. Some years ago Queensland was overrun with unprofitable stallions, but to-day, owing to the small price of horses, we are not pestered with a large number of inferior animals. The Minister has an open field—practically a clean page to operate on. Instead of allowing people to have poor horses, we should subsidise them with the object of encouraging the breeding of better horses, thus filling our vacant spaces with good horses that could be registered and controlled. Agricultural societies may be encouraged by increasing the subsidy that they now receive from the Government. We know that in the past few years these subsidies have been reduced considerably, and only a small amount is now given by the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are cut out altogether in New South Wales.

Mr. CORSER: We must remember that we are not quite so developed as is New South Wales, and we have not encouraged the breeding of good animals as successfully as they have on the State farms in New South Wales. We might easily give more encouragement to our agricultural societies by adding to the subsidies and by prizes for class horses. This should also be done in the cattle section. This would not only encourage people to go in for better animals, but would encourage them to show their stock. I advocate definitely the improvement of mares as well as of horses. We should be just as anxious to encourage the breeding of good mares as of good horses, and, if we do that, we are going to make possible the breeding of good stallions in Queensland at a very much lower cost than the Government had to pay for the stallions recently purchased, which cost up to £400 a piece.

During the war the horse played a very great part, and the British Government spent many millions of money on horseflesh. If

we had up to that time given some attention to horsebreeding, we might have secured a greater amount of the money that was available. During the first twenty-one months of the war Great Britain purchased no less than 600,000 horses and 170,000 mules, at a cost of £32,000,000. They secured from us too many of our best mares, so that it is essential that we should now give some encouragement to the breeding of good horses and see that the inferior mare is not bred from so far as horses are concerned, but give some attention to the breeding of mules from those mares.

The Bill does not make any provision for the putting aside of inferior horses. If we want to have good horses in the State, we have not only to look after and guard those from which we can build up a better horse, but we should also make some provision for the putting aside of horses that are unprofitable. At the conference called by the Federal Government consideration was given to the question of exporting inferior horses to the other side; but just as that scheme was about to come into operation the price of stock fell and horseflesh exportation was not encouraged. It might be a good thing to make provision in this Bill to get rid of some of our unprofitable horses which might perpetuate the inferior class of horse that is to be met with in some districts to-day.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you suggest boiling them down?

Mr. CORSER: The conference did not suggest any provision for boiling them down. If the hon. member will look up the records of the conference held in Melbourne in 1916, he will find a very useful and businesslike solution of the question of disposing of inferior horseflesh.

Mr. KIRWAN: A company in Townsville started to export them.

Mr. CORSER: Just as the company started to export, the price of stock fell, and it would not pay to export beef, much less horseflesh.

I notice that provision is made in the Bill to refuse the registration of horses suffering from certain diseases. It would be far better if the Bill itself mentioned the specific diseases for which registration could be refused. We as a Parliament, with the experience of veterinary science in the State, should be able to decide as to what is a hereditary disease and what is not. We are asked to pass a Bill which provides for the disqualification of horses suffering from certain diseases, which will be fixed by regulation. We do not know what is to be laid down in those regulations—that is the unfortunate part of it. The Minister will agree that that is an anomaly. We are asked to give the Minister power to disqualify all horses, because we are going to give him power to draw up regulations which will provide that any specific trouble or defect is a hereditary disease which will disqualify the horse.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How long would you put them out for?

Mr. CORSER: You would put them out for life?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would you like me to withdraw the Bill?

Mr. CORSER: Whenever the hon. gentleman introduces a Bill and one tries to assist him he comes out with that same gramophone

record. I am sure he is not going to withdraw the Bill.

Mr. COLLINS: I notice that nearly all the stallions are in Tory electorates.

Mr. CORSER: I thank the hon. member for not calling me a Tory. There is one district that a stallion should have been sent to in the interests of the State, and that is the Burnett. It was arranged for one to go to the Burnett, but something happened and it was withdrawn.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You certainly canvassed very hard to get one sent there.

Mr. CORSER: I certainly canvassed for one and secured the promise of one, but some strings were pulled and he was "pulled" out. He ran wide of the track to the Burnett—he ran into the bush and did not take the straight road.

Mr. HYNES: Perhaps members of the United party "pulled" him.

Mr. CORSER: Somebody on the other side "pulled" him. Getting back to my point, these regulations trouble me somewhat, because "roaring" is supposed by some veterinary surgeons to be a hereditary disease, and I understand that it will be considered a hereditary disease and a horse suffering from that disease will be disqualified. One of the finest sires in Great Britain—"Bend Or"—was a "roarer," and, if that horse had been disqualified as a "roarer," we would never have had Syce or some other good horses which have proved themselves to be something out of the common. "Roaring" is considered by a number of veterinary surgeons to be caused merely by a local paralysis.

Mr. HYNES: You are a political "roarer." (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member is a "bull roarer," and generally a "bull." (Renewed laughter.)

Mr. HYNES: I don't make as many "bulls" as you do.

Mr. CORSER: No, you do not; you misfire too often. (Laughter.) One of the finest horses produced in the Empire was bred from a sire who was a "roarer," and, if we disqualify a horse for that complaint, we shall lose many good horses. I ask the Minister to use some little discretion, and to give the House an opportunity of learning just what diseases are to be considered hereditary diseases, and not allow the whole bill to be carried into effect through regulations which are unknown to members of the Opposition.

*Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): I think that we might approach the discussion of this measure without any party feeling. The debate, so far as it has gone, has been all in the direction of the necessity of building up a better type of horse than we are producing in Queensland to-day. I think that even the

most casual observer walking [8.30 p.m.] through any of our Brisbane streets must admit that the type of horse seen there is very unsatisfactory, both as regards conformation and freedom from disease. I do not care when you walk down the street, you can see poor, unfortunate horses limping along on three legs with one leg pointed out, simply because they are suffering from some hereditary disease. Hon. members opposite, in their contention that blemishes of a certain nature should not prevent a horse from gaining a

certificate of soundness, should not overlook the fact that in determining what is a hereditary disease in a horse, the greatest veterinarians of the world have given to the question a great deal of thought, and there is a considerable consensus of opinion amongst those experts as to what constitutes a disease which will preclude a horse from serving at the stud. I take it that, when the Minister and his department are framing regulations which will debar horses suffering from certain diseases from serving at the stud, the consensus of opinion amongst experts will be taken into consideration; and, if that is done, very safe lines may be laid down in regard to what constitutes and what does not constitute soundness. I think that the hon. member for Murilla, while to a great extent on very sound grounds and principles with regard to the majority of statements he has made, overlooked the fact that it is not essentially the jumper or the racer, but it is the utility horse—the horse that is going to give us those services that we require in the State—that we have to look to for the replenishment of our impoverished stock. The hon. member for Burnett instanced the fact that during the war there was a great call for serviceable types of sound mares, and they were withdrawn from our State to a great extent. That is so, and we have therefore a greater handicap to-day than we had prior to the war and a greater necessity for utilising our opportunities at the present time to do something to build up the breed of stock. It is obvious that even the judges in many instances are not competent to perform the work which they are performing. Not so very long ago, at a certain show, I saw a grade horse given first prize as a purebred Shire. You see many of these things, and you see unsound features that may not in themselves be hereditary, such as sidebone, ringbone, bog spavin and blood spavin, but the tendency in the main is that they are hereditary. That is instanced if you walk up Queen street any day and see the number of poor, unfortunate horses that are suffering from these blemishes because they are the progeny of poacher horses which have not been licensed. They are suffering from the fact that they have been sired by horses which have faithfully reproduced offspring of the same type as themselves, just as like always produces like. The hon. member for Murilla and the hon. member for Burnett may be correct when they say that "roaring" is not a definite hereditary disease, but it is certainly a definite hereditary tendency, just as tuberculosis is. You would not breed stock suffering from tuberculosis—you would be very unwise if you did—because you would have the tendency developed in the offspring sooner or later, and so you would have some manifestation of disease if you allowed horses which are unsound to serve at the stud. The hon. member for Murilla mentioned sires like "Radium," one of the greatest jumpers Australia has produced. There is no doubt that the progeny of horses like that might be an acquisition to the State.

Mr. MORGAN: He is blemished from the knee downwards.

Mr. BULCOCK: That may be so; but we have to realise that it is not the jumper that we want. I know that the Bill might possibly have a harsh bearing on a case of that nature; but, after all, that is only one case, and you are protecting the other ninety-nine cases. What we are after is the sound

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utility horse—the horse capable of performing a maximum day's work. The hon. member for Murilla instanced certain draught horses as the farm type—an unfortunate term that has grown up in connection with horse-breeding. The term indicates nothing except that you cannot ride or drive them. If you cannot ride or drive a horse, you call him a farm type. You put him into the saleyard—a knock-kneed horse of no particular value—and sell it for £10. That is the type we are rapidly producing, and to which we are approximating in the State to-day. The hon. member for Murilla suggests that this Bill is inferior in many directions to the Victorian Act, which provides for the sub-division of stallions. I am prepared to admit that in the Campaspie, Mallee, and Wimmera districts in Victoria there are some very fine types of Clydesdale horses. That is possibly why the Secretary for Agriculture deputed Mr. Tait to go to Victoria to purchase Clydesdale stallions. There is better stock in Victoria than in any other part of Australia to-day, but that is due to the forethought and activity of earlier men who imported the sires of the horses which are down there.

Mr. COSTELLO: Private enterprise.

Mr. BULCOCK: It was a profitable private enterprise, as instanced by the prices we paid for the stallions which we purchased in Victoria. Private enterprise had the opportunity of doing the same thing in Queensland, but did not avail itself of the opportunity, nor did private enterprise do anything to build up the horses that private enterprise developed. We might well ask ourselves in this connection why our overseas market has disappeared. We can answer the question in a very few words. Our overseas market has disappeared because we are not producing the type of horse we produced in the early days or the type which is desirable overseas, and consequently buyers are operating in other countries.

Mr. MORGAN: We never did ship heavy draught horses oversea at any time.

Mr. BULCOCK: But we ship light horses, and we are not shipping light horses now to any extent. The hon. member says we never shipped heavy horses, but I know that two years ago a consignment of heavy horses was sent from Queensland to India. With regard to the operations of the Victorian Act, I would like to quote from a letter which Mr. Tait, who purchased the stud stallions, sent to the Secretary for Agriculture—

“During the time I was in Victoria selecting the horses, one opinion was generally expressed, and that was, if the scheme was properly worked, it was sure to be a success. In many cases, farmers mentioned that they wished the Victorian Government would do similarly for them. In many instances your Government was warmly congratulated for their undertaking.”

Mr. COSTELLO: Those are the people they bought the stallions from.

Mr. MORGAN: The men who have their mares served by these stallions will also agree with it, because they are getting free services.

Mr. BULCOCK: That may be so. With members of the Opposition I agree that the question of “poaching” stallions has not been sufficiently dealt with in this Bill. If we had excluded the owner of a stallion from

using that stallion for poaching purposes without fee or reward, hon. members opposite would probably have said, “The man who owns that stallion reared it to maturity at some considerable expense and inconvenience to himself, and, having done that, without giving him any warning whatever you propose to reduce the efficiency of his stud by eliminating the services of that particular stallion from the stud.” They would say in that particular connection—“Repudiation!” This is what I think would be done. I realise that it may be a hardship to include some stallions which are not competent to take certificates of soundness, but it is only a matter of time when those stallions will have passed from the period of maximum service and become unprofitable to their owners. This Bill will be in the nature of a warning to men who have stallions which are not sound, and the stud master will be guided in the future and see that his stallions are sound so that they will bring the absolute maximum of profit.

Some other aspects of this Bill may be worthy of some comment. First, as to the constitution of the district boards. Personally, I am not very much concerned whether a veterinary surgeon is chairman, but I think the hon. member for Burnett was getting on to rather good ground in discussing veterinary education. He deplored the fact that there exists no facility for imparting even the most rudimentary training in veterinary science. Hon. members may say that Gatton College provides it. In the past Gatton provided only the services of a visiting veterinarian for one lecture a week, and, as the course extends for only three years, not much knowledge could be obtained in the time. I might suggest that in the remodelling of the college the services of a veterinary surgeon be attached to it or to that district. I think the result would more than justify the expenditure which would be involved.

Mr. CORSER: Give a veterinary diploma.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am quite with the hon. member there. You need not establish a chair of veterinary science at the university, but let us give ordinary instruction—instruction which will enable a man to recognise ringbone, sidebone, or spavin. Under the Bill a board is to consist of a veterinary surgeon and certain other gentlemen appointed by the Minister. I think we may clearly define their activities on the board—there is a clear line of demarcation between those of the veterinary surgeon and the other members. The former is capable of dealing with the pathological side of the business, not only of recognising diseases the existence of which would preclude a horse from going to the stud, but also of imparting that knowledge to others. That is a valuable adjunct to the work of the boards. I know of my own experience that not many people outside, even including horse masters, can tell whether a horse's legs are sound or not. It is unfortunate, but the position has been brought about by our system of education, which has not provided any distinct means of training farmers and farmers' sons to recognise ordinary defects. I trust that this will happen when the boards are functioning in the way they should function: The veterinary surgeon will examine a horse and give it a spin and say, “That horse, unfortunately, has sidebone.” The members of the

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board will say, "Justify your statement." It will then be incumbent on the veterinarian to explain what is wrong with that horse. That will be a valuable means of imparting knowledge to men who, by reason of the mere fact they are serving on the board, evidently have a good practical knowledge of horse work and are keen upon doing something for the horse-breeding industry in this State. Then, on the other hand, I know veterinarians who are capable of recognising pathological conditions, but know nothing about type and conformation; other hon. members may have had the same experience. In those cases you will have the knowledge of the practical men, with their schedules from the stud books, who will be able to say that this horse adheres to the standard or that horse wanders away from the true type and is of no use as a thoroughbred. That information will have a value, insofar as the heredity of the horse will be recognised. By bringing those two arms of the service together—the practical man with the knowledge I have described and the veterinarian with his cold application of scientific pathological knowledge—you will so work in the matter of the breeding of horses that in a few generations we shall have accomplished something worth accomplishing.

Other hon. members have suggested that there should be a system of approval of mares. I know, too, that there should be, but we must not lose sight of the fact that we have not got the right type of mare, and that it is not possible to import it on account of the price. We have therefore to go in for a gradual evening-up process by the use of good blood sires. In the course of time we shall bring the quality of the mare up to "fifty-fifty," and, with the continued successive use of good sires, will continue the gradual tendency to improve. There will be "throwbacks," but the general tendency will be one of improvement. Even if mares of good quality are not available, the Minister is to be commended for bringing these excellent Clydesdale stallions to Queensland. Unfortunately—with other hon. members—I feel disposed to limit the number to five. One horse does not appeal to me at all as a satisfactory sire; but he is young, and, whilst we may condemn him now, he may become as satisfactory as the best of the horses there as the years go on.

Hon. members have been discussing the question of the utilisation of poaching stallions without fee or reward. I trust that the Minister will limit the use of stallions to the purposes of the man who owns them—that is, amongst his own stock. If we must allow them to exist, let us confine their activities to the smallest possible circle. It is obvious that there is a loophole, if a neighbour has a mare and can easily get the services of such a stallion, that a foal may be bred by an uncertificated poacher, and we may end up just where we were before we passed the Act. But if the owner of that horse is prevented from utilising it outside his own stock, the evil will be minimised to some considerable extent.

I do not believe in the principle enunciated by the hon. member for Murilla of subsidisation, nor do I believe in a stallion tax. I believe that State control, with a view to the extension of the principle we are enunciating in this Bill, is the most satisfactory means of improving the breed of horses. I

think, also, that the registration fee should not be made burdensome, and I hope that it will be the same throughout the State, because it is obvious that, if we are going to have a stallion board in the north of the State—I understand that a veterinary surgeon is now established at Ingham or somewhere in the North—and the chairman of that board is to travel half across the State to examine horses, the expense will be considerably higher than in the southern part of Queensland. I hope there will be a process of evening-up, and that the cost of registration will be the same throughout the State, so that the fee in the most densely populated districts, from an equine point of view, will be the same as where the horses are not so numerous or so much used.

The question of breeding mules was raised by the hon. member for Burnett. He used almost the same argument as I intend to use. I have no prejudice, one way or the other, with regard to mules. It was hinted by the hon. member that in the cotton country of America the mule is most exclusively employed because he is a cheaper beast of burden to keep than a horse and does just as much work—

Mr. CORSER: And will live longer.

Mr. BULCOCK: And is not subject to the same diseases as a horse. There is an old saying that you never see a dead donkey or a dead mule. I believe there is something in that. There is just another question, and that is the economic side from the point of view of the farmer. I am more interested in the Bill from the point of view of the farmer because, after all, with the limitation of the activities of the horse in other directions, it is obvious that our efforts must be directed towards improving the type of horse that the farmer wants. I think that is the backbone of the Bill, because the horse is the backbone of the farmer. I hope that those horses that we see in the Toowoomba saleyards for auction are not sent there by the hon. member for Murilla. I think he did hint that he sent some there.

Mr. MORGAN: I have always obtained good prices for the horses that I have sent there. I have topped the market.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am glad that the hon. gentleman has done something to improve the breed of horses in this State. These horses require just as much to feed them as good horses, but they do not do as much work. The relative cost is high and the muscular power is less than the muscular power of the horses which we should provide for the farmers, and which the Government are endeavouring to do. From the viewpoint of economy, if the farmer is only going to yoke up three horses where he previously had yoked up four or five, it is obvious that a very considerable saving is going to ensue. We have confined this question so far to Clydesdales. I do not know whether they are going to give the most satisfactory service in all districts in Queensland. I am inclined to think that in certain districts the Clydesdales will not be the most efficient or give the most satisfactory service. The Bill says that approved mares shall be used. I hope that does not mean that exclusively approved Clydesdale mares shall be used. The Clydesdale-Suffolk Punch cross gives excellent results. The Bill gives power for

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the making of regulations setting out that approved mares shall be used.

Mr. MORGAN: That is only for State stallions.

Mr. BULCOCK: It has a bearing on the improvement of the stock in the State. I hope that wisdom will prevail, and that a satisfactory trial will be given for determining the utility or otherwise of various crosses. I know, in the wheat belt of Riverina, the Clydesdale-Suffolk Punch cross has proved eminently satisfactory as a farm horse. He will pull the binder or the plough; pull the wheat into market; or, if the worst comes to the worst, he can be driven in a buggy. He is a good type of all-round horse, and such as we can evolve in Queensland with little difficulty. This question must be faced sooner or later, and I am pleased that the Minister has introduced the Bill, which will assist in doing something to improve the type of horse that we have here. There has been even within my knowledge in Queensland a steady decline in the quality of the horses that we have. They have practically declined in any district that you like to go to. There are some public-spirited men in Queensland who have tried to keep up the type. I do not know what would have happened if those men had not, on different occasions, brought new blood to Queensland in an endeavour to perpetuate a better type than was surrounding them. Personally, I think the Bill will bring about a lot of good. I know that, being a Bill opening up new ground in a new direction, there is a natural fear in the minds of some of us that those things that we feel should happen will not happen. As this is a first step, I believe that in the course of a few years it will be necessary to introduce an amending Bill to prevent the poacher altogether, and allow foals to be got by certificated stallions, who will be sound in accordance with the advice of the best veterinarians that we have—men of the standard of Mr. McFadden and Professor Stockton—and free from what, according to their observations, constitute hereditary unsoundness.

*Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I understood the Minister to say that private enterprise had failed in connection with this matter. If the hon. member will look up the "Queensland Stud Book," he will find that I have as many draught horses on that book as any other owner. I have had a long experience with a small stud. I am not claiming to have had a very large experience. Purebred horses will not pay to breed. As a business it would break anybody. It is a sport and a fancy.

Mr. COLLINS: Clydesdales?

Mr. DEACON: I have bred purebred horses for the market, but my experience has been that it is no use trying to breed them as a business. No one in Queensland has ever made that business a success for long. There has never been a draught stud that has been kept going as a financial success for any length of time in Queensland, owing to the fluctuation of prices.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I know of a man doing very well to-day breeding horses.

Mr. DEACON: In the early eighties you could sell draught horses in Queensland at something like £35 to £40 each, and towards the other end of the eighties the price was

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about £5. No man could keep in the horse-breeding business when horses were that price. They cost more than that to breed. From 1890 right up to 1897 first-class draught horses could be bought for anything from £3 to £5 each. About 1897 purebred Clydesdales were bought on Maryvale station for £12 12s. a head. In 1908 the Government of the day bought fifteen fillies from the Maryvale stud, and they gave an average of fifty-five guineas each for them. These fillies were two or three years old. Mares that were sold at 155 guineas were sold in the Warwick saleyards three years later at an average of forty guineas each. That is a tremendous fluctuation in price.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They would not be worth as much when they were three years old.

Mr. DEACON: Horses are too easy to produce in Queensland. You can breed draught horses so easily and in such numbers that there is not the market here for them, and there never has been an export market for them. In the early part of 1920 I saw draught geldings and fillies two and three year old bought in Toowoomba for pig feed. In 1913 I saw draught geldings rising three-year old sold in pens of three and four in the Warwick saleyards at an

[9 p.m.] average price of thirty-five to thirty-seven guineas, while in 1919 I bought animals just as good at 15s. and £1 per head. No man could continue breeding as a regular business with such fluctuations of the horse market. In 1855, twenty years before the "Clydesdale Stud Book" commenced, the Maryvale people kept a studbook and bred pure stock, buying the best that they could obtain, yet, after going on for fifty-five years they gave up. The Minister stated that private enterprise has failed. It has failed because the business does not pay; yet, in the face of that experience he is attempting, on behalf of the Government, to improve the breed of horses. I wish him luck. Certainly he has plenty of money behind him with which to purchase stock.

Mr. COSTELLO: Other people's money.

Mr. DEACON: He ought to be able to get the best judges possible to buy for him. It does not matter if the results of his experiment are good—the financial results are beyond his control, and they may not be any better than they have been for the owners in the past. Some of the horses purchased cost something like 420 guineas. Last year stud horses as good as the horses purchased were selling at from thirty to thirty-five guineas.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where?

Mr. DEACON: In Queensland.

Mr. COSTELLO: That is a serious accusation.

Mr. DEACON: They were pure-bred Clydesdale stallions. I have only mentioned that to show the tremendous fluctuation there is in the market price. If the horses bought by the Government were traced back to the very day they left the breeder, the prices at which they were originally sold would be surprising. It does not make any difference to the quality of the horse to-day because the market price has fluctuated. The Bill is one that is not going to do much good or much harm. In fact, in a year or two we shall have forgotten that the Bill is on the statute-book. It may perhaps have the good effect of having a register kept of the sound draught stallions.

but, so far as our blood stock is concerned, it will not affect them. Breeders of blood stock will only take notice of the standard they require themselves and the horse they wish to raise. It is impossible under this Bill to prohibit the use of a horse if he has not a certificate. The Stallion Board is not going around the country to see whether an owner is going to use a horse for himself, and the Government cannot prohibit a person using a horse for himself. That is absolutely impossible.

Mr. COSTELLO: You can make him register, though.

Mr. DEACON: The Government, by putting stallions on the market just as good as those privately owned but at a lower fee, are not going to encourage an all-round improvement in the breed of horses. No private person will go to the trouble of purchasing a well-bred stallion when he knows that he will be undercut on the market by the Government. The chances of success or failure with the Government are the same as they are with the private breeder. I fail to see how any good is going to come by this measure, but I am not going to condemn it altogether, as it is not worth the time. It is not to be expected that any hon. member on the Government side will take any notice of men on this side of the House with practical experience. I agree with the hon. member for Murilla that the soundest policy for the Government to pursue is to assist the owner of a good horse by the payment of a subsidy. It does not pay now to keep a good stallion for the public service. It is impossible for the Government to take the place entirely of the private individual. I hope that, when the Bill reaches the Committee stage, the Minister will listen to suggestions for the improvement of the Bill. The Government may not be in a position to provide financial help at the present time, but, if we can get a clause inserted to that effect, it will eventually improve the breed of horses more than the present proposal. I hope the Government will consider the advice of practical men, who offer suggestions based on practical experience.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): Like the hon. member for Cunningham, I wish to congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture upon introducing a Bill to improve the breed of horses, although I do not think there will be much improvement within the next five years. I am one of those who regret that the old measure to improve the breed of our stallions was unsuccessful—it was merely a stallion tax. The present Bill may, to some extent, enable us to improve and protect our standard, but it is not the better class of person to-day—the man who goes in for stud breeding—who has a deteriorating class of horse. It is the small man who keeps a horse and works it with his team, uses it for his own purposes, and lends it to his neighbours. That horse is bred on any lines; he may be from a good mare or possibly may be from a good stallion. That kind of horse is depreciating the standard of our Queensland horses to-day. It has been said that within the last twelve months horses could be purchased in the Toowoomba saleyards for 30s. a head. If anybody has followed our Queensland horse sales for the last five years, he will know that, if you sit on the saleyard rail for a day and see about 250 horses pass through the yard, there

will not be more than fifty serviceable for any other than saddle work. Seventy-five per cent. are unsuitable and are only grass-eaters.

We find from the statistics of the last ten years that the number of horses has not increased. In 1912 we had 9,322 stallions and 665,251 horses, making a total of 674,573 horses in the State. The highest number of horses in the State during the last ten years occurred in the year 1917, when we had 752,062 horses. The 1921 returns show that we had only 6,164 stallions and 741,379 other horses, making a total of 747,543. The reason that the number has decreased is that horsebreeding, as the hon. member for Cunningham has said, has not been profitable. The Secretary for Public Lands stated that he knew of people who had made fortunes from horsebreeding. Some may have been fortunate enough to have had good class Clydesdales and to have made a good profit. It takes a lot of feed and expense to produce a horse to the age of four years, and, when he is then taken to the market, conditions may not be favourable and you hold him for a further period. This entails a big risk, as you might strike a dry time—as they have in South-West Queensland. The horse depreciates and falls away, and in another twelve months he is five or six years of age, and you have lost on the animal. The hon. member for Barcoo stated that he remembered consignments of Clydesdales going overseas. Very few Clydesdales have gone overseas except for war services. In 1921 we exported to Dutch New Guinea thirteen horses, valued at £130; to India, 1,646 horses, valued at £27,909; to Java, 229, valued at £3,480; to the South Sea Islands, 8, valued at £106; and to the Straits Settlements, one horse valued at £1,000. This makes a total of 1,897 horses worth £32,625 for one year. Those figures prove that there is not much in the business of exporting horses to other countries. Prior to the war India was the main purchaser of our horses, buying gunners and remounts. The position is different to-day, and India is not going to provide an outlet for many of our gunners and remounts in future. The Indian Government can now supply their own horses, and, of course, their army is not the size it was prior to the war.

To improve the breed of horses it is necessary to have some legislation. Going through the Brisbane Exhibition you will find that the most noticeable feature of the stock lines is the poor quality of the Clydesdales. I can remember seeing at our country shows better exhibits of these horses than was to be seen at the last National Exhibition. I met a Victorian at our recent show who asked where our Clydesdales and other heavy horses were. He thought that Queensland was famous for breeding good horses. We had good results during the war, and he had seen good results in Sydney and Melbourne in lorry work. He was disappointed to see the inferior class at our show, and he was quite right. The horses seen at our last National Show were good specimens of our present Queensland Clydesdales. We have deteriorated considerably, and it is hoped we shall find something in this Bill to improve our Clydesdales. However, I fear there is nothing in it that will improve our standards. Until we find some way of preventing the individual having a sire of his own we are going to have a very inferior class of horse.

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This brings me to a very important question—the breeding of the famous Arab. We all agree that the Arab is a wonderful horse, most perfect, noble, and wonderfully enduring.

Mr. CORSER: Hear, hear!

Mr. COSTELLO: I have been closely associated with the Arab horse for some years, and am sorry to say that I was more disappointed than anybody could possibly have expected when I saw what an inferior animal he is in his own country. No doubt there were some very fine sires and some very fine animals, but the breeding had been neglected, the same as the breeding of horses in this country has been neglected. Every man was a breeder, and the result, when we came into contact with the Turkish army, who were mounted on Arab horses, was that they were not able to stand up against us. The breed had run out, and they were miserable, little animals; but, no doubt, they were wonderful for their size. The beautiful Arab horse is a thing of the past. The same thing will happen in Queensland. Our Clydesdales are running out. They are worse to-day than they were fifteen or twenty years ago. The Arab horses used by the Turkish army were not to be compared with the Australian horses we were mounted on, and the Turkish army, with their lances and swords, were not able to stand up to our people with the bayonet and rifle mounted on the Australian horse.

That brings me to the question of the breeding of mules. I am very anxious for the Government to give a little more attention to the breeding of mules in Queensland, as the climate here is adapted to the breeding of mules, and there is a lot of work in Queensland at which mules could be employed. As the hon. member for Barcoo said, the mule does not suffer from any disease, and he stands up to his work a good deal better than the thoroughbred horse. I can assure hon. members that the mule is a marvellous animal for work. On the Palestine front at one period we had 95,000 horses and mules, and, out of the 95,000, 50,000 were mules. Mules were employed for every purpose but remounts. They would cart your machine guns, pull your wagons and transports; they would carry your army, and they would live on half the feed a horse would live on. The mule would be a good animal for our new settlers. In the Burnett district the mule would be a great asset to the settlers, as they would be cheap to maintain and do not contract any disease. If they were kept in continuous work, they would become quite docile and suitable for farm work. The South American mule used in Palestine was bred on the lines we could breed them on here, and they could do good work in the cotton and wheat fields. They may not be suitable for ploughing on the heavy black soils, but in the Burnett and on the south-western lands the mule would be a marvellous animal for farm work, and I hope the Government will agree to put an amendment in the Bill to encourage the breeding of mules.

I do not wish to delay the House any longer, but we will have a good deal more to say at the Committee stage. I fear there is very little prospect under this Bill of improving the breed of horses. It is like the Dairy Bill which has been promised so long—the object is good, but no Government is game to introduce it and carry it out. Although

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the Government have introduced this Bill to improve the breed of horses it is not very far-reaching, and I am afraid it is not going to do very much in the near future.

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

The consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

MAIN ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): In moving the second reading of this Bill I shall be as brief as possible, because I have already outlined the main provisions of the Bill at the introductory stage. The Bill is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the proposal to include developmental roads under our Main Roads Act. The second part takes power to deal with people who shift survey pegs, and also give the board the right of entry on private property for survey purposes and also for the removal of material for road construction. The third part has to do with stealing the use of a motor-car—an offence under the Main Roads Act.

Mr. MORGAN: Why introduce that into this Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will tell you later on. The first part of the Bill is a departure from the present policy. A description of a developmental road is included in the Bill, and it really means that in future the Main Roads Board will be able to declare certain roads “developmental” roads and build these roads under certain conditions in conjunction with local authorities—roads which to-day could not be classed, or probably ever be classed, as main roads. The work will not be of such a permanent nature as main roads, and the idea behind the innovation is to help settlers who are some distance from a railway. The scheme is not original. It is in operation in Victoria, where it is working satisfactorily. In declaring a road a “developmental” road, the proposal is to take into consideration the location of that road. The idea is to connect settlements with railway centres so that the people living in the settlement will have the advantage of a road to carry their produce to the railway. Under the Main Roads Act to-day, as hon. members know, a main road must be a road running through and serving two or more districts, and that provision could not readily be applied to a developmental road. The chairman of the Main

Roads Board has informed me [9.30 p.m.] that the system has worked very satisfactorily in Victoria. The board found that their functions could be widened for the benefit of the people engaged in primary production, and I took the opportunity of placing a sum of £40,000 on the Estimates this year to be used for developmental roads. The board will build the road in conjunction with the local authorities practically under the same system as is adopted to-day. The local authority may do the work; the board may do it, or it may be done by contract. The financial aspect of the question is an important one, and provision is made that the Main Roads Board shall find the whole of the money for this work from the developmental roads fund. The

local authority is only to be charged interest on half the amount, which is different from the position under the Main Roads Act at present. Under the Main Roads Act the local authority has to pay interest and redemption on half the cost of the road. On this class of road the local authority will only have to pay interest on half the cost of the road, the board finding the balance of the money and half the interest. The local authority will have to keep the road in repair after it is constructed. Under the Main Roads Act it is provided that a sinking fund shall be established, and that fund is made up to-day by the contribution from the State as a whole of 2 per cent., and the balance from the income of the board and from the rates of the local authorities. The capital cost of the road will be wiped out in a given number of years. Under this proposal, the wiping out of the capital cost will come wholly on the Main Roads Board and the State. The other proportion has not been decided upon, but it will perhaps be 2 per cent. or 3 per cent. I may explain that the Main Roads Board revenue is expanding. The only source of revenue to-day is the parliamentary appropriation and a tax on motor vehicles. The tax on motor vehicles is now up to £73,000 a year, and at the rate of increase which is taking place in motor vehicles in Queensland that income will be a rising factor during the coming years, and will expand to perhaps double what it is now in two or three years' time. Hon. members can work out for themselves the amount of loan money that £100,000 per year will pay interest and redemption on. Most of the construction of roads in America to-day is carried out on that principle. The enormous revenue from the taxation of motor-cars in the United States of America provides hundreds of millions of dollars for road construction. The idea, of course, is to develop along those lines. We could never build new roads from revenue only; but the annual revenue that we shall get from motor vehicles will pay interest and redemption on a very large sum of loan money, and give to the people who use the roads something for the money they are giving in the form of taxation on their cars.

The second part of the Bill deals with the power to allow the Main Roads Board to enter private property and take material for road building. Provision is made for compensation to the owner of the property for any material removed. That clause has nothing to do with a developmental road.

Mr. CORSER: The compensation can only be equal to the value of the land. The damage might be far greater.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not think so. The Public Works Lands Resumption Act can be used, and the Land Court can be appealed to if there is any dispute. It is a necessary provision, because, where quarries are absolutely necessary, we resume the land at its value, but where we are only taking material for the construction of roads we do not need to resume land from the person who holds it, and the amount of material taken for road construction does no damage to the carrying capacity of the land.

Mr. MORGAN: Will that apply to timber, if necessary?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will not apply to timber. I would like to state that I do not allow one branch of

my department to exploit another branch of it. I have irrigation, road construction, land settlement, and forestry under my control. The interests of these several branches are not identical. I find that in some cases, in my desire to get land for settlement, I may encroach upon my forestry policy; and it requires a good deal of tact and discretion to deal with these things in order to maintain the balance which is necessary in the public interests.

There is nothing of a repudiatory nature in the proposal regarding the taking of material. Hon. members know that, as a rule, what constitutes good road material is of very little use for agricultural or grazing purposes, consequently there is no hardship in the proposal. It is really only a tightening up of the policy embodied in the Act.

The third part of the Bill deals with the making of the illegal use of a motor-car an offence under the Main Roads Act. The hon. member for Murilla asked why such a provision should be included in a Bill of this nature. There are reasons for it. The hon. member will remember that a special Bill was introduced dealing with stock. The old English common law has never made the stealing of the use of a thing a criminal offence. The distinction between stealing an article and stealing the use of an article may be a nice one, but I think the House will agree that there is quite a difference in the intention. If a person takes a thing with the intention of stealing it and is caught in possession of it, he is prosecuted under the Criminal Code, whether the article be a motor-car or any other chattel. We do not intend to deal with offences like that, because, if the offender has an intention of keeping the car, he comes within section 445 of the Code. But, if he takes a thing and returns it without any injury at all, other than the injury involved of necessity in its use—a small amount of wear and tear—or if he leaves it somewhere unattended and is not caught in possession of it, he is only guilty of stealing the use of it, and I cannot find that in any part of the British Dominion the stealing of the use of a thing is made a criminal offence.

Mr. MORGAN: You can illegally use a horse.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes. In countries like Australia, where horses were easily taken and the owner has not such a good chance of defending his property as in older countries, it was found necessary to depart from the established custom and make provision for illegally using—really the stealing of the use of the animal. I can find no law which makes stealing the use of a chattel a criminal offence, and none of the other States of Australia has seen fit to include stealing the use of motor-cars in its criminal laws. We do not want to manufacture criminals. However we may disagree with the actions of young fellows who take motor-cars as a sky-lark or to have a "joy ride" and return them with no damage other than that which necessarily arises from the temporary use of them, we do not want to make them criminals. We do not want to prosecute them under the Code, but we do want to prevent the taking of motor-cars in that way, because, after all, it is an offence. It is at the least an inconvenience to the owner. In one instance a doctor had his

car taken whilst he was attending a patient. Certainly it was returned without any damage, but with less petrol than it had had in it; but there is always a danger that the people who take such cars may have an accident.

Mr. MORGAN: I know of cases where they have taken even Ministers' cars. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member would not suggest that the gentlemen who thought of doing that should be prosecuted under the Criminal Code? But it would be quite in order to prosecute them under the Main Roads Act as we propose to amend it. The Attorney-General had the matter in hand, and, after discussion with me, we decided that we had better follow the course which I am pursuing and include a provision in the Main Roads Act, so that we could have at our disposal a means of punishment—a deterrent—for the stealing of the use of a motor-car for a "joy ride," and thus accomplish our object without making criminals of people who had no criminal intent. I think we are all agreed that for an act to be a crime there must be some criminal intent behind it. Such an intention must exist before anybody would indict the offender and send him to gaol under the Code.

We are also making provision in the Bill for the holding of inquiries into accidents resulting in injury to persons, caused or alleged to have been caused by motor vehicles. It must be conceded that a reckless driver has no intention of running over a person. When a death occurs through misadventure in motor-driving it is generally due to an accident.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not purely an accident when the driver is drunk.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. gentleman must recognise that in the case of a drunken driver there is a difference between manslaughter and murder, and a difference between accident and guilty intent. There is no intention on the part of the driver to injure anybody. If there was that intent, then it would be a case of murder. If any person wilfully ran down another in the street by driving a motor-car over him, that would be wilful murder; but no jury would believe, and no jury has ever believed, that a man who did that had any criminal intent.

Mr. MORGAN: The public should be protected from a lot of the "motor hogs."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They should; but there are methods of dealing with "motor hogs." The police control the traffic, and, goodness knows, the restrictions in regard to speed are tight enough. The law provides definite restrictions in different areas. The rate of speed is made so low that a prosecution is almost certain to succeed in every case. I suppose that every motor-driver in Brisbane exceeds the speed laid down under the regulations. That speed is not fixed because it is considered to be a safe speed, but for the purpose of allowing a prosecution to succeed whenever it is found necessary to take action against any person who is known as a reckless driver.

Mr. KING: A very slow speed may be a very dangerous speed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That may be so. In some of the cities in

America a trial is being made to see if high speed traffic regulations are not an improvement on low-speed traffic regulations. Provision is made in the Bill for holding inquiries into deaths. I think that will have a salutary effect upon reckless drivers. There is nothing contentious in the Bill. The portion of it that deals with the establishment of developmental roads will surely have the support of all hon. members. It will mean the opening up of new territory, or even existing territory, which will be of considerable help to the shires. That, I think, is a good idea. I want to point out to hon. members that there is no extra tax put upon shires under this proposal. This is really a concession, because almost every road to be included under the definition of "developmental roads" has now to be laid down by the shire and kept by the shire. This proposal is really a protection for the shire, as against the State as a whole. The State is taking a little more of the obligations in connection with the establishment of developmental roads. In some places it would be a misnomer to call some roads main roads when they extend from a good agricultural settlement into a rail centre. That is a developmental road, and not a main road.

Mr. COSTELLO: Who is to decide?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It would come back to the Minister finally. In the first place there would be a consultation between the shire and the Main Roads Board, and, if an agreement is reached, the Main Roads Board will represent the case to the Minister and he will approve, so far as the money at his disposal will allow. That is, briefly, an outline of the Bill. I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): We are certainly very pleased at the introduction of this amending Bill; but I do not think that anyone can honestly say that the provisions of the Bill were fully set out by the Minister. The Minister said no additional burden was placed on the local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I did not say that. Have you got wax in your ears?

Mr. KERR: No; but I know exactly what the Minister said. The Minister said that the Bill imposed no additional taxation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I explained the financial provisions of the Bill.

Mr. KERR: I listened to it carefully, and I hope the Minister will be good enough to listen to what I have to say in the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I don't want you to misrepresent me.

Mr. KERR: I have no desire to misrepresent the Minister, but I understood him to say that the Bill imposed no additional taxation.

Mr. KING: I understood so, too.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I said that the local authorities concerned will pay half the interest on the cost of the road and the whole of the cost of upkeep. I also said that to-day they have to pay the whole of the construction of the road and the whole of the cost of its subsequent upkeep.

Mr. KERR: Another assertion of the Minister was that it was extending the powers

[*Hon. W. McCormack.*]

of the board. It is extending the powers of the board in one way; yet, if you read the Act closely, you will find that the board eventually is losing part of its powers. According to my reading of the Main Roads Board Act, the board is appointed to make over main roads and construct new ones. Under this amending Bill the board has power to declare a developmental road. That means that once a road is declared a developmental road it no longer is a charge on the Main Roads Board. It does not go further and say that, on the declaration of a developmental road, the board will still pay its 50 per cent. cost of the maintenance. After a road is declared a developmental road the cost of its maintenance and upkeep is to be borne entirely by the local authority. That is one of the most important features of this Bill, and the Minister omitted to tell the House of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you know why?

Mr. KERR: No, and the Minister can tell the House in his own time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You do not have to hear.

Mr. KERR: The hon. gentleman has had his "go," and I am going to have mine. It is my duty to bring those points before the House and obtain information. The wording of the Victorian Act in some instances is exactly the same as this Bill, but the Minister has failed to follow the Victorian Act in its entirety. There are some principles in the Victorian Act which could well have been included in this Bill. One of the principles in that Act is that, where a developmental road is beneficial to a district and obviates the necessity of constructing a railway, the Railway Department contributes its quota of the cost of maintenance. Subsequently, I think, that cost was made a charge on the consolidated revenue. In Queensland half the cost of construction has been borne by the ratepayer, which is not the case in Victoria. Another point which was made by the leader of the Country party in his speech on the Financial Statement is that it is possible to build roads in the country which will be a burden on the primary producer. The Victorian Act makes provision for such cases and provides that, if the maximum rate struck by the local authority is 1s. 6d. in the £1, it is not possible to get a developmental road under certain conditions. The clause dealing with developmental roads gives to the Government power to declare any part of a main road a developmental road. If the Secretary for Public Lands reads the Victorian Act, he will find that such a road cannot be declared a developmental road, more especially if certain improvements have been placed on the road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I think I can give you a good reason for that.

Mr. KERR: The Minister may give a reason. It is all very well to give a version to the House, and, when the Opposition see the point, to squeal about it, and that is what the Secretary for Public Lands has been doing to-night. I agree that developmental roads would be a fine policy for Queensland if the community were able to bear the cost of them. In Ontario, Upper Canada, the percentage of people using motor-cars is—farmers 37 per cent. and business firms only 2.2 per cent. With such a comparison develop-

mental roads are a substantial benefit to the community.

The Secretary for Public Lands does not lay down where a main road may be gazetted or declared a developmental road. The Bill should give the starting and terminating points.

Regarding the punishment provided for the illegal use of motor-cars, I think that some action could very well be taken in this connection. I understand that a recommendation was made by the Automobile Club of Queensland to have the matter dealt with. I think that a fine of £20 is insufficient. It is quite possible—and it has been done—to take a car and run down to New South Wales, taking three or four people. They save their train fares, and a £20 fine is a small sum in comparison. This is not merely meant to deal with three or four boys who want to have a "joy ride" or to toot the horn—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The case you mention can be dealt with under the Code.

Mr. KERR: I do not know whether it can be. A person can take a car and leave it at a certain spot after using it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You can have them up for stealing the petrol.

Mr. KERR: I accept the explanation, but I still think that we should increase the fine to £50, as £20 is too small.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I thank the Secretary for Public Lands for the explanation he has given of the Bill and for having gone so thoroughly into the details. I may say that I think that the Bill is, in the main, introduced to make possible the opening of roads in the more distant portions of the Upper Burnett in the 3,000,000 acres which have been acquired by the Crown—land that is 30 miles from a railway.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am going to do that under the Public Estates Improvement Department. They would be developmental roads.

Mr. CORSER: That was the point I wished to have cleared. I think it is the function of the Public Estate Improvement branch, but I think it would be better to surcharge the land before it is selected, and not after.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will be done under the Burnett land scheme by the department. It will be loaded on to the lands.

Mr. CORSER: The work may be done by the settlers who are there?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will be done by the prospective settlers.

Mr. CORSER: The developmental roads will make possible the operations of the Main Roads Board in areas where main roads cannot be dealt with to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is why we are taking the power to which the hon. member for Enoggera objected. Where there is really a main road and not a developmental road we can take it and make something of it.

Mr. CORSER: Where it has been gazetted you will be able to treat that now as a developmental road and make something of it?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes; that is the very thing the hon. member for Enoggera complained of.

Mr. Corser.]

Mr. CORSER: I hold that in the interests of development and in the interests of all our main roads the Bill should contain a clause providing that the State shall build all main roads at the cost of the State, the same as a railway. Particularly is that necessary in regard to developmental roads.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That would mean an alteration of the policy.

Mr. CORSER: It is an alteration that the Minister will admit is not altogether unreasonable. The Minister must agree that these highways take the place of railways and cost as much as railways did in 1910, and they really become national highways, and an amendment in that direction would have been of great benefit to the settlers, particularly in new areas.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It would mean the destruction of the local authorities.

Mr. CORSER: No; because they are main roads. In these new areas the settlers have to develop their land, and, if they have also to develop their roads, it looks a little bit one-sided, considering that the whole State benefits by these roads.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Don't you see the difference between a road and a railway? You pay fares and freights on a railway, but not on a road.

Mr. CORSER: I agree that the local authority should contribute half the maintenance cost, and that would be a subsidy as against the fares on a railway; but the cost of construction of all main roads should be a charge on the State, and the local residents in those areas should be charged half the cost of maintenance. The full cost of these developmental roads is to be paid by the local authorities, while only half the cost of main roads is to be paid by them. I understand that, if a portion of a main road is proclaimed a "developmental" road and operated on as a "developmental" road, when the Main Roads Board proceeds to open that portion as a main road, only half the cost will be charged to the local authority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is exactly what we will do. Any permanent work will be charged "fifty-fifty."

Mr. CORSER: I notice that the local authorities "shall" take over and maintain developmental roads. I would like the Minister to give the local authorities some jurisdiction as to the taking over of

[10 p.m.] these roads. We know that thousands of pounds have been spent from the Public Estate Improvement Fund in the past in certain districts, and the local authorities have refused to take over the roads. Up to the present there has been no power given to the Government to compel the local authorities to take over those roads. To get over that trouble, the Minister has wiped away any possible objection by the local authority, which will be compelled to take over the road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You may be sure that we will not force roads on to any local authority.

Mr. CORSER: When this Bill goes through, if a local authority objects to taking over a road, it may be compelled to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We will not declare it a road unless we get an agreement with them.

[Mr. Corser.

Mr. CORSER: Subclause (1) of clause 3 provides—

"The local authority in whose area any developmental road is situated shall at its own expense maintain such road and all works thereon; and the board shall, except as next hereinafter provided, have no duty, obligation, liability, or responsibility in respect of such maintenance."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: But the road will not be built unless the local authorities are consulted.

Mr. CORSER: The local authority need not be consulted.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No.

Mr. CORSER: The Secretary for Agriculture does not know what he is talking about on this matter. He should study his Bill. When the road is built, under the Bill they "shall" take it over and provide the cost of maintenance. There is no limit in the Bill to the number of miles of road that may be constructed—and constructed probably for the development of Crown lands.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No, they will not be loaded with Crown lands liabilities.

Mr. CORSER: The local authority will have no say as to whether the road shall be constructed, but the Bill says that it "shall" be compelled to take it over.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are raising an "Aunt Sally."

Mr. CORSER: I have no desire to raise an "Aunt Sally."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will give you an undertaking that while I am in the department no road will be forced upon a local authority.

Mr. CORSER: That is to say, we must try never to defeat the hon. gentleman as Minister, having got that assurance.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CORSER: In the Binjour, Eidsvold, Mundubbera, and Mundowran areas the Public Estate Improvement Fund has operated in the same way that it is proposed this Bill shall operate—the Bill will take the place of that fund—and the shire councils have refused to take delivery of the roads until certain alterations have been made. When this Bill is passed the roads are going to be constructed under a different system, and the local authority will be compelled to take them over. That is what I object to. We are forcing the measure upon the local authorities, who are supposed to have some rights. We are going to compel them to shoulder certain expenditure which they have not had a say in, and to which there is no limit. We are passing this unsound proposal without considering the local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you know that some main roads already constructed are costing the shires in interest and redemption less than the old roads—heaps of stones—cost them?

Mr. CORSER: I shall not contradict the hon. gentleman, but it is not in my electorate, or in any other electorate that I have seen.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; in the electorate of the hon. member for Murrumba.

Mr. CORSER: I have not seen it in any electorate.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Your electorate is not the whole of the State.

Mr. CORSER: To me it ranks second to none, and I think the fact that over £2,500,000 is being spent on railways in it shows that it is one of the most important in the State. Another provision in the Bill is that the Main Roads Board may enter and take gravel and other material from private property, but that compensation shall be paid. I have no bone to pick with that, but there should be some means of deciding upon fair compensation. The Bill says that it shall not exceed the value of the land affected.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is that not what compensation means?

Mr. CORSER: No; there is such a thing as damage. If you lose your hand, a certain damage is done to your prospects in life, for which you are compensated. I know instances where the board have gone into valuable freehold properties and carted away 1,500 or 2,000 yards of gravel by five or six different routes. They may go through the homestead, perhaps, and chopping up the place generally. So soon as rain comes all those channels leading to the road outside will probably be watercourses and washaways. They are dust heaps to-day—clouds of dust following eight and ten drayloads of solid metal being carted through the freehold in one direction or another from a small property of a few hundred acres.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You ought to fine the cows for walking over it.

Mr. CORSER: I am sorry that the Minister calls main roads workers cows. (Laughter.) Those channels could ruin a certain amount of cultivation in the future, and I say that compensation should be paid. I am here to represent the interests of the man who has taken up land like that. If it is fair for the Government to have this metal—and nothing can be said against that—we should give protection to the man who has taken up land and improved it, made a home for himself, and got together a good little farm.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Would you put in a good road?

Mr. CORSER: How can you put good roads into private homesteads from which they take 2,000 yards of gravel.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What would you do?

Mr. CORSER: I would give reasonable compensation to see that the place was left in the same condition as it was before. It comes to this—that in making a 20-chain main road you are to be permitted to destroy 2 miles of a man's property. (Government dissent.) I know where gravel is being carted nearly 2 miles through an individual's property. They are carting gravel a distance through my own property. I have drays going through my own freehold to-day chopping it up in every direction in carting the gravel to the roads. They are carting it a greater distance through my property than the actual length of the road that they are constructing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I shall stop them making main roads in your electorate.

Mr. CORSER: I challenge the Minister to try. He has not the power. I shall stand by the rights of owners. The man on the road should be paid his wages, and the injured property owner should have his compensation. He also has to help to pay for the road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The road is sufficient compensation.

Mr. CORSER: The Minister said that there was no desire to make criminals of motor-car drivers who caused accidents.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Can the hon. gentleman prove that considerable damage is being done to the property by a dray going over it? If he can, he can get compensation. No one in the world would believe that a dray or any drays going across property would destroy that property.

Mr. CORSER: If 1,700 yards of gravel have to be carted from a certain place, that does not say that one dray is going over the property. The drays have to go 1,700 times one way and 1,700 times the opposite way. That is not one dray going over it. In these dry times how long can the drays keep on one track? They go along one, and cut it up, and then they go to another, and then another, and cut the man's property up. As this work is being carried out for a public purpose, there should be some protection given to private property. I am not putting in a plea for compensation for my own land. The settler should know where he stands. The man who took up land years ago should have some protection. The man who works on the road is paid for his work, and the man who owns the property should be protected, more especially when the property is being damaged in an effort to do something for the benefit of everybody.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Damages can be assessed by a proper tribunal.

Mr. CORSER: Only to the value of the land affected. I notice that there is a provision according to which, if an Opposition member of Parliament is passed out of this House at 2 o'clock in the morning, it will cost him £50 if he goes home in a Government car. (Laughter.)

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I desire to comment on this Bill, which I think contains many very good points. The Secretary for Public Lands to-night indicated that he would give a certain undertaking, but I think it would be far better that those undertakings should not come from an individual Minister and that, if any protection is required, it should be contained in the Bill. I feel perfectly certain that the Minister would honour any undertaking that he gave. The Minister must remember that he may not be in his present position to-morrow. There is no security of tenure in that respect. Any undertaking offered by the Minister should be contained in the Bill. I believe there should be a certain amount of elasticity in every Act of Parliament and discretionary powers given to the Minister, but here the case is somewhat different. Every one will admit that the Main Roads Board has done very good work—(hear, hear!)—and the people of Queensland are to be congratulated on having Mr. Kemp and those who are associated with him on the board. They know their work and are doing it well.

Mr. King.]

The principle of main roads is also a good principle. This Bill, though, provides for certain things which rather exceed the functions of the Main Roads Board. I am not referring to developmental roads so called, but I mean developmental roads in the true sense of the term—roads that are opening up new country for settlement. Under this Bill any road can be a developmental road and a main road, and any main road can be converted into a developmental road, and any developmental road can cease to be such and become an ordinary road and be a charge on the local authority concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Don't you think that is necessary, so that people may get help from the Main Roads Board?

Mr. KING: This is a possibility under this Bill, and it is my duty to point it out. I am not doing it out of any desire to indulge in captious criticism. I am pointing out that any main road can cease to be a main road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Surely, you will concede that there is some equity in the matter?

Mr. KING: When equity is superseded by statutory enactment you must follow the Act.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is a matter that has to be done by administrative act. Many roads are declared main roads in order to give some help to the districts in which those roads are. We want to knock them out as main roads and declare them developmental roads to get some money spent on them. When the district is properly settled they will again be placed under the Main Roads Board.

Mr. KING: There is no provision for that in the Bill—that is my trouble. If we could have these things set out in the Bill, I would not have a word of complaint. The Bill should set out what are the powers of the Main Roads Board, and the powers, liabilities, or obligations of the local authority. The liability of the local authority may be very great. Under the Main Roads Act as it now exists the local authority accepts certain liabilities, but a main road can cease to be a main road under this Bill and become a developmental road, thereby putting the whole expense of maintenance on the local authority, and after a time it may even cease to be a developmental road and become an ordinary road and a charge on the local authority. I know the local authority receives some benefit in the first cost of construction, but they get that in any case. But the liability is on the local authority, which has for all time to maintain and keep that road.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; the local authority gets a quid pro quo in both cases. If it is taken away as a developmental road, the Main Roads Board has to find half the cost of upkeep. If it is allowed to remain a developmental road, the shire council has to pay the cost of upkeep and the Main Roads Board has to bear the whole cost of construction.

Mr. KING: I can see nothing in the Bill that says it will become a main road.

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

Consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

[*Mr. King.*]