

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 1924

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER, 1924.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 10 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

REFRIGERATING PLANT, BRISBANE SICK CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL—TENDERERS AND COST OF INSTALLATION.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. What was the cost of installing the refrigerating plant in the Brisbane Sick Children's Hospital?”

“2. What firm or firms received the order to do the work?”

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*), for the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*), replied—

“1. £1,196 9s. 9d.

“2. Messrs. Wildridge and Sinclair, Limited. If the hon. member desires, he may peruse the papers.

Mr. MAXWELL: Thank you.

NUMBER OF MARES IN FOAL TO STATE STALLIONS.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

“1. Has the department made any inquiries as to the number of mares in foal to each State stallion?”

“2. If not, will he give consideration to the matter?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) replied—

“1 and 2. The hon. member should know that it is too early to have the complete figures, but they will be obtained in due course.”

AGENTS APPOINTED BY WHEAT BOARD TO CANVASS WHEATGROWERS.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

“1. How many agents have been appointed by the Wheat Board to canvass the wheat-growers for the purpose of securing an affirmative vote for continuance of the Wheat Pool?”

“2. What salary are they receiving?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Bacham*) replied—

“1 and 2. As these questions relate to administration, and, like other questions of this nature, suggest that kind of Government interference so much objected to by the hon. member's party, I think inquiry should be made of the chairman of the Wheat Board.”

PAPER.

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

Report upon the Government central sugar mills.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—THIRTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. Pollock, Gregory, in the chair.*)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Question stated—

“That £47,300 be granted for ‘Secondary Education.’”

* *Mr. WEIR (Maryborough)*: In continuing the remarks which I was making at the closing period yesterday, I want to follow the lines of the argument of the hon. member for Rockhampton on the question of limiting, if not abolishing altogether, the assistance which the Government are giving to secondary schools which are harbouring primary school students. It cannot be gainsaid that the policy is wrong, when we see the urgent requirements for primary education in the country districts. There is no justification for keeping on a Government subsidy for this sub-department to cover work which could very well be covered by primary schools. We know from experience what is happening. I know from experience, as a trustee of the Maryborough Grammar School, what is happening with us, and I have followed this question for a number of years in Maryborough endeavouring in the best way I can to get the trustees there to view the matter seriously. Up to now we have been fortunate in this respect, that orders have been issued that no child should be taken into the school until it has passed the scholarship examination. We do not deviate from that, except in special circumstances. I can quite conceive—and so, no doubt, can anyone else—of exceptional circumstances. Take a case in point—a widow who is cook at a hotel and who has one child. Anyone can see that it would be a most difficult thing for that woman, situated as she is, to send her little child six or seven years of age to a primary school a long distance away. We have in one case of that kind granted a concession, and allowed a child to attend the Girls' Grammar School as a boarder only, on the understanding that she must get her primary education in the Central State School. That brings me to the question of hostels for country children attending schools in the cities, with which I shall deal later on. In other cases, we find that people in the bush whose circumstances will not permit them to provide a secondary education for their children are, nevertheless, anxious to give it to them, and in those instances we have strained a point

[*Mr. Weir.*

and have taken one or two. But we discourage the attempt by wealthy people in our district to foist on secondary schools children who should go to primary schools, and we know that city people, as well as country people, do the same thing. We have known cases—we have cases now, but they are the last of their kind—in which people will not sanction their children going to primary schools because the dignity of the family demands something better. I was in the presence of one good gentleman not long ago who told the head mistress of the Girls' Grammar School that he did not care what sort of education his girl got, so long as they made her a lady. That is the sort of stuff they are pushing on to us. We get these children, and some of them are not mentally suitable for assimilating a secondary education. Some of them are not fitted for competition with the ordinary common garden variety of boy and girl of the working classes at the primary schools, and they make a horrible mess of things. They are unloaded on to the grammar schools, and there they are on our hands. They are really sent to the grammar schools so that they may be able to wear a band on their hats, and that the girls especially may display themselves on speech day as products of the grammar schools. I remember distinctly in the old days when there were only twenty-nine scholarships for the whole State, boys of that kind drew the colour line on us who had won scholarships: they would not meet with us, or have anything to do with us. Yet we know that the men and women of the best intelligence in this State have been turned out from amongst the State scholarship boys and girls. These people know that when their children get into competition in the schools with the working-class boy and girl, the working-class boy and girl are the ones who, by and large, make good.

Some reference has been made to the Maryborough Grammar School, and I think I can safely say that we have an up-to-date, efficient school. I do not say that merely because I am associated with it, but because we have got good results; and when we have got good results we ought to say so, and encourage people to send their children there. From the last report to hand, I find that the Maryborough Girls' Grammar School secured five passes out of seven girls who were sent up for the last senior University examination, and of the three boys who were sent up, two got through. I think that is more than Rockhampton has got through in the past two years. Our results have been phenomenally good, and particularly on the girls' side. The girls' school has been a tribute to the district. It is a very well-organised school, with a well-trained staff, and generally we have everything of the highest order. It is true there have been complaints at the boys' school at different times, and we always inquired into them and attempted to remedy them. I repeat that it is a pity that we should allow the schools to be crowded with primary subjects which can just as easily be taught in the State schools. On the whole, that is a bad policy. It simply means that we are paying teachers £350 a year to teach primary subjects which could quite as well be taught by pupil-teachers in the State schools.

I am one of those who believe, as the hon. member for Kelvin Grove said, that intelligence is not the only thing that is required

to make a good teacher. It does not follow that because a boy is a good student he will of necessity be a good teacher. I believe that a student should go through a course of training, the same as anybody else who desires to enter a calling. The grammar schools are not yet nationalised, but I hope they soon will be. The trustees of the grammar schools have to take what they can get in the way of teachers. I say definitely that the best teachers in the State are in the Department of Public Instruction, and they are the best teachers because of the training they get in that department. I am not reflecting on the teachers connected with secondary education, except to say that they would be better teachers if they had had the chance of going through some training. They do their best, still, they could do better with a chance of training. These people come along, and immediately we get them we are forced to pay them a higher standard of salary in accordance with the award on account of the fact that they are the holders of degrees; yet they are not one bit better, and in many cases not as good in their first, second, and third year as a pupil-teacher in a school during his first, second, and third year. On the one hand we have the pupil-teacher receiving £100 per annum, and on the other a teacher receiving £300 per annum doing exactly the same work and getting no better results. That is the sort of thing that should not be tolerated, and I hope the Minister will take more than passing notice of what I say. Unless all the trustees do their work as we are trying to do ours, the department should refuse to subsidise secondary schools for teaching primary subjects. It means a considerable amount of overlapping, and in that sense we have kindergartens on both sides, and for that reason it should not be tolerated. We teach commercial subjects at the grammar school, and commercial subjects are taught at the technical college, and so it goes on see-sawing all the time. We are wasting money in teaching primary subjects, and this money could very well be spent in another direction. Some people say "Spend it in the country." Spend it somewhere where it is absolutely necessary—I do not care where—so long as you do not waste it.

The hon. member for Maranoa has raised the question of hostels. In connection with secondary schools the one question that confronts us is the question of accommodation for country children. In many cases, unless there are hostels, there is not the remotest chance of getting country children to come to the schools in the city. In the Maryborough Grammar Schools we have been forced to open our doors and allow some of them in. It is absolutely imperative that those who come to the city for education should have somewhere to go. It is not fair to compel country children to come from the country and put up at an ordinary boarding-house. When these children leave home to go to school there should be some responsibility on the Government to accommodate them and see that they are well looked after while they are away from home. The people entrusted with the work of educating the children of the State are entrusted with the charge of their morals, as well as the education and development of the intelligence of the children. If we do not do something in this respect, we are going to lay ourselves open to competition—

as is the case to-day—with the denominational schools. Take Warwick as an example. You cannot walk round that town without stumbling over some denominational educational establishment. There is one at almost every corner; and, unless the State wakes up to its responsibilities in connection with boys and girls who are forced to leave home to attend school, we shall be subject to unfair competition with these people. The secondary schools have not yet been nationalised, but I hope that will be accomplished before long. It seems to me that, when a correspondence system is properly developed, there will be little occasion for country children to go away from home. I can quite see—and I have it on good authority—that the standard of education received through the correspondence system has now reached the standard required for scholarship examinations. If that is so—and I believe it is right—and you can prepare scholars for the scholarship by that method, then there should be no excuse for youngsters having to leave home at all. I hope that that method will to some extent minimise the inconvenience that country children are subjected to to-day. I would urge that the educational facilities offered by such a method should be extended in the very near future. I now come to the next step, and that is, "What is the State going to do about the nationalisation of these institutions?" We do the best we can with the grammar schools, but they are always asking for more money. At the Maryborough Grammar School we had to build a dormitory which cost, roughly, £1,000, and we had to go to the Government for that money. These things should be seriously considered. I know it is always a question of finance, but there does not seem to be any necessity for the discrimination between high schools and grammar schools that is shown to-day. Take a district such as ours. A boy or girl who passes the high school examination in our district has to go to Childers to attend a high school, but a boy or girl who passes the examination entitling them to enter a grammar school goes to the Maryborough Grammar School. There is something wrong with the system when, just because there is a slight discrimination between the two standards of examination, one child in Maryborough has to go to Childers while another can stay at home and be educated at the grammar school. I do not know how it works out in the country, as I have not studied that phase of the question, but in the city there should be no discrimination in the examinations—they should be identical. If the grammar schools are not open to all children who reach a certain educational standard, then we should make provision to give that opportunity to those children, but, if on the other hand, the grammar schools are placed on a proper footing, there should be no difference between the entrance examination for a grammar school or a high school. What is the difference? It is possible for a child to graduate to the University from either school. I say it is possible, because it is possible for a child in the high school to pass the junior university examination if he studies hard enough, and it is equally possible for a child to pass the same examination from a grammar school. Why, then, should there be this difference in the cities? Both should lead along the high road, and the examinations should be uniform so that all boys and

Mr. Weir.]

girls can, if they wish, go to grammar schools, and those institutions should not be reserved for the children of privileged people.

Mr. LLOYD (*Kelvin Grove*): The Secretary for Public Instruction, judging from his remarks yesterday, is looking for something to do. He will find plenty of work to keep him busy in the matter of the secondary schools. It would be repetition for me to go over the ground which has been so ably covered by the hon. member for Maryborough.

There is obviously need for co-ordination in the different activities that are being carried on by the State or assisted by the State in the way of secondary education. First of all, there is the question of the training of teachers for secondary work. Up to the present the training of the teacher for secondary school work seems to be a thing unheard of. I am a Government representative on the Board of Trustees of the Brisbane Grammar Schools, and, when I raised the question as to what training a candidate for appointment had, it was treated as something quite unusual and quite unexpected. The idea is that a degree gained at a university is a sufficient guarantee for fitness in the work of teaching. It is essential, first of all, that the teacher should know his subject. (Hear, hear!) It is quite impossible for a teacher to teach anything he does not know, but it is also recognised that there are some people who have the power of concentration on one subject developed to such an extraordinary extent that the very concentration which makes that person a very successful student makes him an unsuccessful teacher. From my knowledge of teachers—and I lived and worked among teachers for fifteen years—I have come to the conclusion, on the whole, that the man with the best brains is the best teacher, and allowing for certain striking exceptions, the man who is successful in getting through his examinations, as a rule, is better than the man who has been unsuccessful; but there are so many exceptions that we cannot make a hard-and-fast rule on the point. Anyone who has had anything to do with the practice of teaching knows that there are some—perhaps a small number, but a number sufficiently large to be mischievous—who are excellent students but are unsuccessful teachers, and always will be unsuccessful teachers.

Mr. WEIR: We have the same in all callings.

Mr. LLOYD: Some means of training a secondary teacher before he gains a permanent footing in the profession of teaching is a very necessary step indeed.

Another thing is the recording of the work of secondary teachers. At the present time, on the Board of Trustees of the Brisbane Grammar Schools we have the very important duty to perform of selecting a new head mistress, and we have to go by ordinary recommendations. Apart from the people that we know personally we have no reliable data—I do not wish to be harsh—to go on. Hon. members know what recommendations are when they come from members of Parliament. They know what happens when a man comes along and wants a job in a Government office. You have never seen the man before, but you write him a recommendation and you suggest that, if the department you send him to can find a job

for that man, the department will be very fortunate in getting his services. (Laughter.) The desire to help our fellow man is a very desirable quality in human nature, and our university professors and all these other people are just as good natured as we are, and perhaps a little more so.

I place very little reliance on the testimonials of people from other States. I think myself that, if a friend of mine came along and asked me to write a reference for him, I would feel as a friend that it was my duty to make out a case for him and that it was the duty of somebody else to pull that case to pieces. In that sense I look on most of these testimonials that people bring along as unreliable, without suggesting any conscious misrepresentation on the part of those who write the recommendations. The consequence is that most of us—I speak for myself, at any rate—when we have to deal with a case of that kind, confine ourselves to the people we know. We may be doing an injustice to other people—we probably are—but our knowledge of the person is the only thing we have to go on. Most people think the same way, consequently the selection is very much narrowed.

We should have somebody recording the work of secondary teachers right through. If a school master in the elementary schools applies for a position, say, in a secondary school, it is possible to get that man's complete record. I do not know whether the Department of Public Instruction would give us that record, but it is there if it would. There is a record in the department, and on the whole a reliable record if it extends over a number of years. Of course the teacher may have had his troubles with cranky inspectors and fussy inspectors—inspectors who, outside the range of their own little sphere, are ignorant. He may have met a few such inspectors, but on the whole most of the inspectors are fair, and, if we take one thing with another, we can get a true record of a man whose practical work in teaching has been reported on by, say, seven or eight inspectors. From that record we can gather a very fair idea of what his work is like. At any rate, we have something infinitely more reliable than a bundle of papers brought along by applicants for positions in secondary schools.

I will now go on to a very sordid aspect of education—that is, the question of the value we are getting for the money we are spending on education. Education has many definitions which do not differ in any essential, but which differ, perhaps, according to the viewpoint of the person discussing education at the time. It is generally agreed that education is a function of the State, in so far as it is the preparation of individuals for the exercise of citizen rights. I propose to review secondary education from the point of view of that definition. The Government, I claim, are justified [10.30 a.m.] in spending public money on education only in so far as the results of that expenditure contribute towards that end. The fact that the great mass of citizens never attend secondary schools is so obvious that it is unnecessary to stress the fact that the benefit gained by the great mass of citizens from secondary schools is negligible—that is, that the direct benefits from its culture are negligible—but in order to give secondary education every

[*Mr. Weir.*]

possible chance—to give ourselves as the people who are spending public money on it every possible chance—we have to take into account certain indirect considerations. There are three, or perhaps four, indirect benefits which a system of education can confer that may justify the expenditure of public money. First of all, the money may be spent in preparing future citizens for the exercise of special functions—I refer now to the training of professional men, where it is highly important that the public should know they are dealing with professional men who have certain qualifications. Secondly, we are justified in expending public money in providing equal opportunities to all citizens to enter callings which confer special advantages on the people who enter them; and, as a consequence of that, we may consider the further benefit of giving the community a wider range in the selection of individuals for callings which require special qualifications. That is to say, if by an educational system we can make it possible to every brainy boy to become a doctor if he is fitted for it—if we extend the range of choice to every smart boy in the community—we are much more likely to get good doctors than if the choice is restricted to a few people, as under present conditions.

Then, again, it is claimed that secondary education may provide a sort of second-hand general culture for the community generally—that is, if it is granted that people who have not had the advantage of this higher education gain something by contact and intercourse with those who have. I am afraid that even on these rather strained and rather sophistical considerations, the community has really very little to show for its money. Except in the case of students who intend to become teachers afterwards, there is very little done by secondary schools in the way of really specialised preparation. The secondary schools are mainly kept hard at work removing arbitrary and artificial barriers which must be overcome before a student can even begin the specialised study necessary for a profession. To take again the case of a doctor: The specialised training of a doctor is done at the university; but, before the young man can go to a university, he must spend about four and a-half years at a secondary school preparing for matriculation, and during that time it is possible for him to be hard at work, and learn nothing whatever that is going to do him any good as a doctor. There is an idea that it is necessary to learn Latin in order to be a doctor. The only use of Latin is for making prescriptions, and all that is required in that direction could be learned by any brainy individual in a few months. On the other hand, there are many good Latin scholars who could not read a doctor's prescription even assuming that the prescription was typed. (Laughter.)

Some people have claimed that scholars do not appear to retain what they have acquired at the grammar schools, and that the grammar schools have nothing to show for the expenditure of public money on secondary education. I think we should be doing more in the direction of giving equal opportunities if we removed these artificial barriers. During the last few years I am sorry to say that this Government seems to have had its leg pulled, and we have allowed certain monopoly professions to put artificial barriers in the way of entry into these professions.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Opticians and dentists.

Mr. LLOYD: There are old dentists here whose literary education is so small that it would not be nice to discuss it. There are one or two who are highly intelligent men, and excellent men in the practice of their profession and in the theory and science which is necessary for their work, but they certainly could not at any period of their lives have passed the present matriculation examination. We should keep things separate. If we are going to give culture, that is one matter; if we are going to give opportunities, that is another matter. The way to give opportunities is by the more direct method of removing unnecessary barriers which are put there to delay the youth in beginning the studies necessary for the particular profession that he wants to follow.

With regard to equal opportunities to citizens at large, it is a fact which has been stressed by other speakers—and particularly by the last speaker—that even with all the extensions of scholarship and bursary benefits which have been given by this Government, and to some extent by previous Governments, it is impossible for the man on the basic wage, unless he is particularly fortunate and has a particularly healthy family, to send his children to a secondary school.

With regard to the benefit that the community may derive from diffused study, as it were—that is, the benefit that those of us who have not been to secondary schools may derive by contact and intercourse with those who have—I am afraid that is negligible, because nearly all people who go to secondary schools go there for the sake of getting through some barrier. The idea of the boy who goes there with a view to becoming a dentist or a doctor is to remove an artificial obstacle. He takes very little interest in his studies. He memorises what is put before him in the way of foreign languages. He would memorise a railway time table just the same if by doing so he would be able to get at what he has in view. Consequently—I am not in any way reflecting on the handling of these subjects by the teachers—I am not talking about that at all—the students pursue their studies in such a perfunctory way that the results of them are quite obliterated when they come later on to practise the professions they have chosen. They regard them as studies which are merely necessary as a preliminary to the studies proper to those professions. I read a rather boyish article on educational matters last year. I could not follow the writer throughout—he seemed to be a perturbed young man who had spilt the dictionary over himself—and I could not discover his conclusions except that educationally everything was wrong—everything in the heavens above and on the earth beneath and in the waters under the earth. I noticed, however, one phrase, in which he referred to the ideal of education for its own sake as a “fatuous bourgeois ideal,” which, being translated into English, seems to mean, “a silly middle-class ideal.” Nothing could be more absurd than that. The conventional middle-class ideal seems to be that of education as a means of maintaining social distinctions and as a means of depriving the great mass of people of the opportunity of getting into favoured callings. We shall

Mr. Lloyd.]

never get anything out of education until we find ourselves following the ideal that education is valuable for its own sake—education that will make a better citizen of a man or that will make a better specialist of the person who gets the special training. There is too much of the idea nowadays of getting secondary education as a means to a billet. I often hear people prating against the school where so and so has been educated. They complain of having been misled, that they understood that when the boy or girl was finished there was some nice billet waiting for him or her, and such people talk about the sacrifices they have made. They recognise no obligation on the part of the child to the State or educational system—they seem to believe that in some way or other the State is under an obligation to them for having allowed their children to go to the school and get a secondary education. Certainly, if we want to get people for State positions requiring the qualifications gained at these schools we should give preference to students of our own training. Nevertheless, they must not run away with the idea that by accepting the advantages of this system of education, which costs the community so much and is only meant for people who are anxious to get it and cannot get it otherwise, they are conferring a benefit on the community. They must clearly understand that they are taking the benefits of the system and unless they are prepared to take this higher education for its own sake, they should leave it alone.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I would just like to say a few words on the vexed question of subsidy by the Government to grammar schools. It seems to me that the time is past when the subsidised grammar school was a useful factor in the advancement of education in this State. I think that in the progress of our State system of education the time has arrived when the Government must seriously consider the extension of secondary education to embrace the whole educational system of the State.

If people want private schools with particular advantages because of their prejudice in certain directions as to those attending certain schools, then let them pay for it, but do not compel the State to adopt practically the position of the "wood and water jocky" in the educational system, and compel it to support and carry on those schools, so that they can extend a preferential system of education to the children of wealthy parents. That is really the position to-day. The report of the department makes some reference to the Rockhampton Boys' Grammar School and Rockhampton Girls' Grammar School. When speaking on "Chief Office" vote I pointed out that the Government had refused to allow students for the senior examination to be trained at the high school or the technical college at Rockhampton, although those schools possess the necessary staff, who are well qualified to teach those subjects. That action was taken because it was estimated that the cost would be about £280 or £300 per pupil. The pupils who desired to take that course were compelled to attend either denominational schools or the Rockhampton Grammar School. I contend that, if the money that is being advanced to the grammar schools and technical colleges in scholarship fees and in other directions was all used under a State system of education and all

the schools were under the complete control of the Department of Public Instruction, the money advanced by way of subsidy would be almost sufficient—so far as Rockhampton is concerned—to educate the children of the workers to the standard necessary to pass the senior university examination. I am unable to obtain the number of pupils at the Boys' Grammar School who passed the State scholarship examination, but the total fees amount to £1,416, and the Government endowment alone is £1,508. I know that the scholarship pupils attending at that school would not be more than about 50 per cent. or 60 per cent. of the total attendance, so it immediately becomes apparent that we are paying more by way of subsidy and State scholarship fees than the whole revenue produced by the paying pupils who attend that school. The boarding fees amount to £1,543, so that practically what is happening is this—that with the boarding fees and subsidy from the Government the Rockhampton Grammar School is able on that account to reduce the fees of the school to a lower level than would otherwise be the case if the parents of those children had to pay a reasonable charge. The report on the Rockhampton Girls' Grammar School puts the position very much plainer. These figures show the attendance of State scholarship pupils during 1923:—

1st Quarter	...	...	15
2nd Quarter	...	...	15
3rd Quarter	...	...	26
Last Quarter	...	...	26

The number of paying pupils during the first quarter was 112, and the number during the last quarter was 124, or in other words, the paying pupils outnumbered the State scholarship pupils by about five to one. The point I want to make is this—that all the Government are getting in return for the endowment of £1,500 and scholarship fees which are included in the amount of £3,315 19s. 2d. received for school fees and boarding fees, is the education of twenty-six scholarship pupils. The Government, in my opinion, is paying 60 per cent. of the cost of educating the other 124 girls from the other parts of Queensland. That is a position that should not be allowed to continue. I am obliged to the hon. member for Rockhampton for reminding me that for the cost of that subsidy, or half of it, the fifteen State scholarship holders who were educated at the school in the first quarter and the twenty-six who attended in the last quarter, together with the other pupils attending the Boys' Grammar School, could have been educated at the high school in Rockhampton, which is conducted at the technical college. The staff and facilities are there. The time has either come when the Government must merge the grammar schools into the State system, or they must take their scholars and educate them with the money they are now spending at the grammar schools and allow the grammar schools to conduct their own business. If there are people in the State who desire to have a sort of private high school or some sort of advanced school, they should pay for it; but I do not see that the Government are justified in any longer continuing the subsidy to the grammar schools. It must be one thing or the other. We must either say that we can take our children from the A B C right through to the arts and manufactures in the technical college, and from

[*Mr. Lloyd.*]

there to the higher branches in the university, or admit that for some reason or another we cannot get above the high school standard. It is to the advantage of the children of the workers that the Government should control the whole course of education. I am sure that, if the money now spent in subsidies to grammar schools and in fees to denominational schools was reserved for the extension of our high school standard so as to enable the State to take our children right from the primary school to the university, we would have a much better and sounder educational system than the one which is at present in existence.

Question put and passed.

STATE SCHOOLS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. T. Brennan, *Toowoomba*): I beg to move—

“That £1,130,418 be granted for ‘State Schools.’”

The amount asked for in the appropriation last year was £1,079,893, so that the increase in the amount asked for this year is £50,525.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I would like to get some information from the Minister regarding the item “Agricultural Education, Rural and Vocational Schools,” which I mentioned before. The vote last year was £11,000, but this year it is reduced to £6,500. I would like to know whether this branch of the department is to be curtailed, or what is going to happen. These classes have been very successful, and have been supported most enthusiastically in the country centres. Their success and support warrants not only a continuation but an extension of the system. If it is going to be curtailed, it will be a great pity. I would like some information from the Minister in that regard.

I wish to reply to some remarks made yesterday by the hon. member for Rockhampton, in which the hon. member said that the Teachers’ Union did not object to school exhibits in agricultural shows.

Mr. FARRELL: Just stick to the remarks I did make.

Mr. MOORE: I am.

Mr. FARRELL: I did not say that at all. I referred to the results of vocational classes in rural schools.

Mr. MOORE: I wish to refer to several quotations from the “Queensland Teachers’ Journal.” There are various things which are considered unprofessional, and they deal thus with scholarship examinations and reports on teachers—

“IT IS CONSIDERED UNPROFESSIONAL:

“3. To make an adverse oral report concerning any teacher without at the same time disclosing the terms of the same report to the teacher affected.

“4. To increase systematically the school period for the purpose of giving extra tuition to scholars with a view to securing passes in public examinations, and to hold special classes in which the whole of the curriculum is not attempted for the purpose of passing the scholarship examination.”

I have no objection to those systems at all. It is only common honesty when making a report about a teacher that the teacher should be given the text of that report. There is nothing to object to or criticise very much there. The next quotation is—

“IT IS CONSIDERED UNPROFESSIONAL:

“6. To participate in prize-giving for ordinary school work.

“7. To use political or other extraneous influence to obtain advancement, or interfere with transfers arranged by the department.”

These people are most frightfully careful about this question of prize-giving, but in five cases out of ten, when a transfer is made and does not suit the person concerned, that teacher goes to the member for the district and asks him to go to the department and see whether it cannot be altered. They are frightfully careful about prize-giving but when it comes to this matter of political influence to obtain or prevent transfers, the law is entirely a dead letter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and we cannot change it.

Mr. MOORE: That is just the system I object to. If the question has anything at all to do with the children and the school master or mistress is alleged to break the rules of unprofessional conduct, they render themselves liable to be put out of the union, and, as has been submitted to me on one occasion, practically to victimisation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: A just man falls seven times a day.

OPPOSITION interjections.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MOORE: They are very keen about matters affecting the children, such as prize-giving or school exhibits at shows; but, when it comes to a question of the rule which is broken every day in the year—that of using outside and political influence to obtain or stop transfers, or to obtain advancement—the regulation is entirely a dead letter. There is no question of victimisation when a teacher breaks that regulation. Regarding the question of exhibits at shows, I shall quote from page 6 of the “Queensland Teachers’ Journal” of 21st March, 1923—

“2. From a Darling Downs teacher requesting a statement of the union’s attitude with regard to school exhibits at shows. It was decided to forward to him the resolution passed at a former executive meeting disapproving of the practice, and to request the subcommittee dealing with the matter of unprofessional conduct to make a recommendation dealing with this topic.”

[11 a.m.]

On page 2 of the issue of 19th August, 1923, there appears a report of an executive meeting of 4th August, the fourteenth paragraph of which reads—

“From two teachers, inquiring would the executive regard certain actions as constituting unprofessional conduct.

“The first referred to the exhibition of fancy work for a local show. The teacher explained that he had no hand in the matter at all, and that the sewing mistress was giving the necessary instruction on Saturday afternoons. It was

Mr. Moore.]

decided to inform him that the executive would regard the entry of this as a school exhibit as constituting unprofessional conduct."

Then in the issue of 17th October there is a letter by Mr. Charles Irvine, who says—

"These two school activities, recently placed on the Index Expurgandorum, stand together because the principles in both are the same. They have been discredited because—

1. They waste school time; and
2. They disorganise school routine."

Then he goes on with his ideas as to the absurdity of this regulation which was promulgated by the Teachers' Union. In the discussion in the union it was pointed out that the teachers were being asked to serve two masters. That is the position I take up. The opponents of the rule argued that the department should be the authority to give instructions to the teachers as to what should be allowed and what should not—if they thought that in the interests of the children prize-giving was detrimental, then it should be the duty of the department to issue those instructions.

Mr. HARTLEY: They give prizes in the Rockhampton Grammar School.

Mr. MOORE: They give prizes in any amount of places. The late Home Secretary distributed prizes in connection with a school in my own district. He evidently had no objection to it. If the department has an objection to the giving of prizes, then the department should give the instructions to the teachers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You have heard the experts speak on it.

Mr. MOORE: If the department objects to school work being exhibited at shows, let the department take the responsibility. What I object to is the Teachers' Union taking the responsibility of saying to a teacher that if he disobeys the regulation promulgated by the Teachers' Union he will stand a chance of losing his job or of having a reduction of salary. It is the duty of the Teachers' Union to protect their members and to get the best possible conditions for them; but it is not the duty of the union to say what shall be done in the matter of children's exhibits at shows or as to whether prizes shall be given or not. At the present time the union is interfering in a matter in which they have no right to interfere, and the department has every right to stand up against it. If the department is going to carry on the educational system of this State in the way that it should be carried on, then it should issue all instructions to the teachers. I strongly object to teachers being given instructions by outside bodies—instructions, apparently, with which the department does not agree, and on which it has given no ruling although the department has been asked to give a decision. I have looked through a good many numbers of the journals published by the Teachers' Union, and I have been unable to find where the department has given a reply either one way or the other, or has taken a stand one way or the other. My contention is that the departmental officials, having come to the conclusion that it is detrimental to the children to have prizes given or to allow them to exhibit at shows, it is for the

department to give the instructions, and not an outside body. I have continually visited different shows where school children were actually exhibiting school work of all sorts.

Mr. FARRELL: Exercise books?

Mr. MOORE: Yes, and why should they not? The exhibits I refer to in particular were the vocational class exhibits, and I make the statement definitely that the teachers at the two schools I have mentioned—and others, too—have clearly understood that they laid themselves open to expulsion from the union if they disobeyed the rule. I have looked through the regulations and I have looked through the discussions that took place, and I fail to see that any exception was made in regard to vocational classes. Perhaps an exception has been made, but these teachers were not informed of it. We have the Government granting subsidies for agricultural shows and for exhibitions all over the State, and in many of the schedules to these shows there are classes for various sorts of school work. The Government apparently do not object to these exhibits, otherwise they would object to their inclusion in the schedule when granting the subsidy. In spite of that, we have an outside body coming along and saying that, if a teacher allows the school work to be exhibited, he will render himself liable to expulsion from the union, which means either a reduction in salary or expulsion from the service. The whole position is wrong, and it is up to the department to take a firm stand on this matter and issue instructions to the teachers themselves, and not allow an outside organisation to dictate to the teachers as to what method shall be followed regarding these two very debatable questions of giving prizes in State schools and of exhibiting at shows.

Mr. GILDAY (*Ithaca*): The leader of the Opposition has drawn attention to the instructions issued by the Teachers' Union that prize-giving in State schools is to be abolished. I happen to represent a very large school, and for many years past it has been the practice for the committee of that school to collect each year a certain amount of money for the purpose of providing prizes for the children. I think that is a very good thing, because, when my own children were attending school, their mother could not possibly get them to stay away for half a day owing to the fact that they did not want to lose the chance of winning a prize for the best attendance. In many ways it is a good thing to give prizes. Up to £30 is collected every year which goes in the purchase of prizes which are distributed amongst the children. I do not think it is any concern of anybody except of the people who contribute the money for the purchase of those prizes. I hope the question will be reviewed, and that the present practice will be continued, and that every child who desires to compete for a prize shall be given an opportunity of gaining a prize. I really think it is best for the children themselves.

There is another matter that I would like to bring under the notice of the Minister and of this Committee—that is the system of carrying out necessary work after the Department of Public Instruction has recommended that work to be done. In my own district two minor matters have been under

[Mr. Moore.

consideration for a considerable time, and I know for a fact that the Department of Public Instruction has recommended that the work be done by the Department of Public Works, but up to the present time nothing has been done. Something should be done to give the Department of Public Instruction more power to deal with the requirements of the various districts in the matter of schools instead of leaving it in the hands of the Department of Public Works.

I notice there is an increase in the number of teachers in the department, and anybody who has had the opportunity of travelling over Queensland as I have had during the last few years must recognise that more teachers are necessary. I notice there is a decrease in the number of itinerant teachers. That may be due to the fact that in many of the districts where itinerant teachers worked in the past there may be now a sufficient population to warrant a permanent teacher.

Mr MORGAN: The correspondence classes have had a good deal to do with the reduction.

Mr. GILDAY: That may be. That is the only conclusion I could come to. There is no doubt that, taking everything into consideration, both the past Minister and the present Minister have done everything possible for the welfare of the children of Queensland and also for the welfare of the teachers, and I hope that policy will be continued. I hope the Minister will give the request of the school committee with regard to the work to which I have referred serious consideration, and that the necessary improvements will be carried out as quickly as possible.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I should be glad to learn from the Minister whether the department approves of the action which has been taken in regard to what practically amounts to the abolition of the giving of prizes and medals as a reward for merit on the part of the scholars.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is a debatable point.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I want to put this phase of the matter before the Committee: When I was a State school boy the awarding of prizes and medals—although there were not a great many given at that time—was undoubtedly a great incentive to us all to do the best we could to profit from the instruction of our teachers and gain the maximum benefit from the education which the State gives. I speak on this matter as an old State school scholar. Before I became the member for the district which I represent I was in the habit of giving medals to certain schools and when I became the member for the district I enlarged the scope of my action in that respect, and offered, as no scholarship had then been won, to give a gold medal to the boy or girl winning such a scholarship.

Mr. WRIGHT: Vote catching.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member must not judge me by himself. I simply acted as an old State school boy. I can quite understand the interjection coming from the hon. member.

Mr. WRIGHT: Why?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Because you know nothing about the earlier conditions in Queensland.

Mr. WRIGHT: I have just as much idea as you have.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am simply recounting my experience as an old State school boy. I offered a gold medal to the boy or girl who could win a scholarship.

Mr. WRIGHT: And it incidentally got you votes.

HON. J. G. APPEL: You would not get them, at any rate.

Mr. COLLINS: You have got the money behind you.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I have not got the money behind me. It is the hon. member for Bowen who is becoming a considerable capitalist.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! (and laughter).

Mr. COLLINS: I have not got a diamond ring on my finger yet.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You have the money at your back, though.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am sorry the hon. member has still got that covetous and envious feeling concerning my personal possessions. (Laughter.) I can assure the hon. member that I do not covet anything he has.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to deal with the vote.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I was drawn off the track. The result of my action was to cause such emulation that I had to give five gold medals, as five scholarships were won. The first winner was a lad, who has told me that his inducement was the offer of that gold medal. Having won the scholarship, he was imbued with a desire to do the best he could according to his ability. He went to the grammar school, and eventually won a Rhodes scholarship, and he is one of the most prominent of the Rhodes scholars to-day. He has assured me that the offer of that gold medal was the first incentive, and that it laid the foundation of his education and the success which he has obtained since.

Mr. HARTLEY: What happened to the other four who won scholarships?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Of course, some of them have not done as well as others, but they have all done fairly well. I only received a letter yesterday from a young fellow, who reminded me that many years ago he had won one of my medals, but that, unfortunately, although he had acquired mechanical skill—he is an engine-driver—owing to present-day financial conditions he is not able to obtain permanent employment. I recollect this young fellow, because, as a rule, I am asked to present the medals at the different schools where they are awarded. The paradox of the whole thing is that some of the teachers are permitting medals and prizes to be awarded while others refuse to do so. In country districts the parents, naturally, are dissatisfied when the children are not permitted to receive prizes in one school while they are given in another school, and parents themselves have told me that unquestionably, owing to the fact that no prizes are awarded, there has been a falling off in the industry of the children. I have no hesitation in saying that these prizes are an incentive to the children to do the best they can.

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: has caused a very great amount of discontent amongst the parents and also amongst the children.

Examinations are held to allot the position of the students in their classes when the inspector goes round.

HON. J. G. APPEL: We know that from time immemorial it has been recognised that "to him who merits it the palm shall be given." Has not that always been an incentive in the department? If the department does not approve of the giving of prizes, why are scholarships and bursaries offered? Does the department want to put the scholars all on the same level? Are not those whom nature has endowed with a greater amount of brain power, and who have the industry to make use of it, to receive a reward? Do we propose to abolish all incentive to those who desire to do the best they can? Referring again to my school days, I unhesitatingly say that, although I did not gain many prizes, it was not because I did not try. There is a possibility that, if there had not been any prizes given, I would not have tried as hard as I did. Many of my school-mates became brilliant scholars owing to that incentive, and acquired high positions in the community. As I have pointed out on many occasions, it was not a case of the prize winners coming from wealthier members of the community. As a rule the majority of prize winners are amongst those who are not so well situated financially. If we take the whole history of education in Queensland we shall invariably find that all those who have been most prominent as prize winners have not come from the ranks of those who are well off, but, as a rule, from those who are not so well situated financially. Why should we do anything which would cause any alteration? We all know that the aim and object of our whole educational system is to equip each child in the community with an education which will enable that child, however humble his parentage may be, to attain to the highest positions which the State has to offer, if he or she has the ability and ambition. To my mind that is more or less the whole aim and object of our educational system—to give to every member of the community that equipment by means of which, if he has the industry and the ambition, he may rise to the highest position in the land—as indeed in many instances has been the case. One of my school mates, the late Hon. T. J. BYRNES, is a case in point. What did education do for him? Look at what a prize winner he was, and consider what education did for him. He was the son of parents in a comparatively humble position who had no financial means to enable him to attain to the position of distinction which he afterwards reached; but owing to the fact that prizes and rewards were given—which acted as an incentive—he was able to attain by the acquirement of education practically the highest position which any member of our community can reach. If it is the policy of the department to endorse the action of certain teachers—because it is not the action of all teachers, but only of a section amongst them—and say that prizes shall not be given, it will lead to considerable dissatisfaction and discouragement. I know of one instance—I refer to the State school at Southport—where for very many years the committee have made a supreme effort on breaking-up day and at the distribution of prizes to give the children something in the nature of a reunion as a reward for their industry. I can assure hon. members that the decision of certain of the teachers in this direction will cause and

[Hon. J. G. Appel.

Mr. COLLINS: Did they give each child a prize?

HON. J. G. APPEL: No. The same old story of the tall poppies! Level them all down! One would think that the hon. member for Bowen, above all others, would do all that he could by his influence and voice to assist all those who desired to take advantage of a system encouraged by prizes. What is the inducement of the worker to give of his best but the wage which he receives? So it is with our school children—the prize is their incentive. Why discontinue the practice? If you knocked off the reward of the worker for his work, would he do anything? Of course not, and properly so. It is the same thing with our children. I know that just as I felt on this matter so my fellow natives of today feel. We looked forward to prize-giving day, and after it had come and gone we looked forward to the next. So do they. It was our incentive, but now we are told by the hon. member for Bowen that there should be no distinction—that all children should be treated alike. He says to the children, "Whether you want it or not, you shall get no prize and no reward for your industry."

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I do not subscribe to that feeling. I think a reward should come to those who strive to gain it and who deserve it. They are the ones who should receive reward. So it is throughout life. I speak as an Australian native with a knowledge of my fellow Australians.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is only an accident.

HON. J. G. APPEL: It is a very considerable accident that the hon. member is sitting in this House.

Mr. COLLINS: Do not insult the electors of Bulimba.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Apparently from what the electors of Bulimba are doing now they regret their choice already.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am very sorry to have been led astray. (Laughter.) I am like the Hon. the Assistant Home Secretary—I am old enough to know better. But I am not going to permit any slur to be cast on my native land of Australia and of Queensland by a person who has come here within the last few years. I am not saying that the hon. member is not the best immigrant that ever came here.

Mr. WRIGHT: You are an absolute mongrel.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member for Bulimba to withdraw that expression.

Mr. WRIGHT: I withdraw the expression.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member for Albert will address himself to the vote.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I rise to a point of order. Seeing that the hon. member for Bulimba has withdrawn the remark that he made in reference to the hon. member for Albert, might I ask that the hon. member for Albert be asked to withdraw his remark reflecting upon an hon. member who has been duly elected under the constitution of this State. (Opposition laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN (addressing Hon. J. G. Appel): Did the hon. member make any reflection upon the hon. member for Bulimba?

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I did not.

Mr COLLINS: The hon. member for Albert reflected upon the hon. member for Bulimba as regards the country of his birth, and also as a member of this House.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Don't be silly.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I did not make any reflection upon the hon. member.

The CHAIRMAN: I can assure the hon. member for Bowen that I heard no such reflection upon the hon. member for Bulimba by the hon. member for Albert. If I had, I would have asked him to withdraw.

HON. J. G. APPEL: If the hon. member for Bowen thinks that I made any personal reflection on the hon. member for Bulimba, I unreservedly withdraw it, because I have no personal feeling against any hon. member. On the contrary, I have the best of feeling and goodwill towards my colleagues.

I hope that we shall have some definite policy in connection with the giving of prizes and rewards for the industry and intelligence which the school children display. They are incentives to them to do their best, and to strive for those positions which, to my mind, it should be the ambition of every Australian to attain to—that is, to strive for all that is highest and noblest in this southland. I once more would impress upon the Minister the fact that the practice of giving prizes has unquestionably been an incentive to children in the past. I am giving my own idea as an old State school boy and an Australian.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You are talking as one of the brilliant intellects.

HON. J. G. APPEL: No. I leave that to the other side. I never professed to have a brilliant intellect, but I claim to have useful brains which have stood me in very good stead. It is the useful brains in our school children that, as a rule, lead others to come forward and seek to attain the positions that I, as a fellow native, desire to see them attain as a further reward.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I listened very carefully to the remarks made yesterday by the hon. member for Cook in reference to what has been achieved by the system of correspondence classes. The hon. member, as a representative of [11.30 a.m.] such an extensive electorate, is in a position to judge as to the benefits of that scheme. The hon. member for Cook, the hon. member for Barcoo, and the hon. member for Murilla, representing extensive and more or less isolated areas, have all spoken in complimentary terms of this new system, which indicates that it must be proving a success. The hon. member for Murilla inadvertently, but none the less surely conveyed a false impression to hon. members regarding the abolition of itinerant teachers by this system of tuition by correspondence. The hon. member left that impression upon me, and that being so, I inquired of the Assistant Home Secretary, the Hon. M. J. Kirwan, if the Government had abolished the system of itinerant teachers. If that impression was left on me it is quite possible that country people reading "Hansard" may also be of that opinion. I have

followed the institution of this system with some attention during the past couple of years. Quite accidentally I came in contact with the initiation of the scheme, and learned what was intended or hoped to be achieved by its operations. I happened to be in the Department of Public Instruction a couple of years ago on some other business, and in speaking to the present Under Secretary, who was then, I think, Acting Chief Inspector, he told me that he had initiated this system. I, for one, did not share his optimism. I realised the scope there was, but I did not think that such beneficial results could be achieved as I have since ascertained have been achieved. Mr. McKenna told me that the idea of this scheme of tuition by correspondence was not to supplant the itinerant teacher, but to reach the boys and girls—the ones, twos, and threes—living in districts so far away that they were inaccessible by these travelling teachers, and even in some districts where the appointment of an itinerant teacher would not be warranted by virtue of the fact that they were close to large centres of population, yet far removed from State or provisional schools. The report by the Under Secretary points out that, when this system was started only a couple of years ago, the enrolment was twenty-nine, and that to-day the enrolment is 1,900, which goes to show that the scope is there, and that the system is proving very beneficial. Itinerant teachers could not be appointed, say, in districts between here and Gympie—I am not speaking of the area directly along the railway route, but the area within a given distance from the railway—yet it is possible to conclude that there are boys and girls within that area who are not being reached by the advantages of tuition provided by State and provisional schools. This correspondence system reaches them, and it also reaches the boys and girls on the islands off the coast, where the establishment of even a provisional school would not be warranted, and great and good work is being done. From time to time I have taken the opportunity, when in the department, of having a look at some of the work that is performed by these boys and girls. The work is most striking in its simplicity, and is very interesting. The courses are sent to the children weekly, and they do not receive education four times a year, as is sometimes the case when depending on itinerant teachers. The courses are sent out weekly: they are completed and returned to the department, and if they are not returned, then a communication is sent to the parent asking the reason why. The hon. member for Murilla quite correctly said that many parents had not the time or perhaps the qualifications, through no fault of their own, to impart the necessary instruction to their boys and girls in the bush. It has appeared to me for the past twelve months or so, in viewing the work that goes out to these boys and girls and in seeing the progress that has been made and is being made by them, an opportunity is offered to parents who were shorn of the opportunities of obtaining the benefits of education in their own youth. There is an opportunity for the older members of the family and even the parents themselves when the children become advanced in those lessons that are sent out weekly. There is great scope for the advancement of those who the hon. member for Murilla quite frankly stated were deficient in that respect. It appears to me that in

Mr. Ferricks.]

the great spaces of this State the system has not only come to stay, but is going to do even greater good work than it has done in the past. I just rose for the purpose of making it quite clear that the system does not aim at supplanting the system of teaching by itinerant teachers, but is rather intended to supplement that very worthy method of instruction.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I would like a little information from the Minister in connection with the item, "Gratuities and Retiring Allowances." Last year the sum of £1,000 was provided, and this year £2,000 is asked for. I suppose that is by way of compensation for the teachers who will be retired at the age of sixty-five years. Is any of this money to be paid in lieu of the benefits that those teachers would have obtained by contributing towards a pension scheme on the understanding that their services would be retained until they were seventy years of age? Have the Government reconsidered the question of doing anything for those unfortunate teachers who will be retired at the age of sixty-five years and who have been contributing to the superannuation scheme on the understanding that they would participate in the benefits of such a scheme on reaching the age of seventy years? The sum of £2,000 does not appear a very large amount to compensate teachers who may be retired. It seems to me that once again a protest should be raised against the retirement of those teachers who have been led to pay very high premiums—at great sacrifice to themselves—to the superannuation scheme on the understanding that they would not be compelled to resign their positions and fall back on the benefits of that scheme until they had reached the age of seventy years. We find that the policy of the department at the present time is that these teachers shall be retired at the age of sixty-five years, and those teachers are not going to get the benefit of that pension scheme. I have heard it said that the probability is they will receive back the amount they have contributed to the scheme. That certainly is a very poor recompense to these men who at a late period of life denied themselves so that they might be able to pay very heavy premiums in order that at the age of seventy years they should receive the full benefit of the scheme. If they were led to believe that they were going to get the full benefit of the scheme at seventy years of age, it is quite fair to say that was practically an admission on the part of the Government that, if they were capable, their services would be retained until they reached the age of seventy years. I would like the Minister to state whether this matter has been considered by the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is under consideration at the present time.

Mr. KELSO: Might I ask the Minister again if this vote "Gratuities and Retiring Allowances of £2,000" has anything to do with that matter?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No, it is only an estimate for that purpose.

Mr. KELSO: This £2,000, then, is for quite a different purpose, and is for contingencies that might arise?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes, it is totally different.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): The hon. member for Albert in addressing himself to this

{Mr. Ferricks.

vote had a good deal to say in regard to prizes and the distribution of prizes in various parts of the State. I take it that the ideal State and school would be where there were no rewards and no punishments. Possibly we may evolve to that stage some day. In the meantime, the question of prizes and the distribution of prizes might be considered with a view to their total abolition throughout the State. It is quite obvious that those districts where prizes are given at the present time are doing no more for the scholastic attainments of the children than those districts where prizes are not distributed. We all know that the prize and reward is for brilliance and not for industry. A child who does not get a prize may be the most disappointed child in the whole school, and the moral effect of that disappointment is more evident and keen than the gratification of the child who gets the prize. There is the adverse effect to be considered as well as the effect on the successful child, who may gain a prize for brilliance and not for application.

I want to say a word or two about the system of itinerant teaching. The number of itinerant teachers has been reduced from fifteen last year to twelve this year. The total cost of maintaining an itinerant teacher during the present year worked out at about £670. Taking the salaries of the twelve teachers at £5,055 and the equipment, travelling expenses, allowances, etc., at £5,000. Five of these twelve itinerant teachers are supplied with motor-cars, while seven travel by other means. It is obvious that it is not economical to allow a teacher who costs the State £670 per annum to travel the country by slow methods. It is a very wasteful process to allow one of these teachers to travel about with a buckboard and a couple of horses when he is costing the State all this money. Other Government officers occupying positions in the West, whose remuneration is very much less than that of the itinerant teachers, are provided with cars. Take out workers' accommodation and machinery inspectors. These men receive from £260 to £340 per annum, and are provided with motor-cars because it is recognised it would be absurd to expect the best possible results from them if they could not get about quickly.

Mr. KELSO: Do they go everywhere by car?

Mr. BULCOCK: They go practically everywhere by car. A Ford motor car can be taken wherever a buggy can go, and wherever there is a beaten track leading to where a child is the teacher goes. We send by car our union organisers to various camps of men, and surely there should be no difficulty in sending these teachers there also. Many of the tracks along which the itinerant teacher travels are roads which are well maintained by the local authorities and station people. There is no difficulty in that respect. The time has arrived when we should give consideration to the question of providing proper facilities to itinerant teachers. We have reduced their number, and we should therefore expedite the travelling rate of those who remain. If we have only twelve itinerant teachers this year against fifteen last year, they ought to be made to travel faster than the fifteen travelled. The Minister has stated that the reduction in number is due to the fact that a correspondence system of tuition has been introduced.

I have an open mind on this correspondence system. I feel that some investigation ought to be made to determine whether the system is giving the results that the officers of the department would lead us to believe are being obtained. Unfortunately in the West a big proportion of the parents are incapable of supervising the studies of their children. We realise, therefore, that the correspondence system calls for a system of superintendence by the parents, and many parents have protested to me about what they term an unjustifiable intrusion on their time. That question must be considered. It would be reasonable to detail one of the inspectors—and there seems to be a huge staff of inspectors employed in the department—to visit the families which are taking advantage of the correspondence system and see whether the results are really being obtained from it that the department would lead us to believe is the case. There is another fact to be considered. We have a number of itinerant teachers on the outposts of civilisation. They should be provided with travelling facilities which would allow them to be more comfortable. I remember last year striking one of these teachers in my electorate. His conveyance was stuck in the black soil, and he could not move backwards or forwards. We should not ask our itinerant teachers to endure those hardships if we can prevent them. I believe that a motor car in the majority of cases would enable these teachers to overcome such hardships. All the itinerant teachers who travel by buggy have a boy employed. That means that the teacher has to sit down while the boy is getting the horse and buggy ready, and during all that time opportunities for the education of a child are being lost. If the maximum amount of benefit accruing to the child under the present system is to be achieved, the Minister must give consideration to the question of providing motor cars for the itinerant teachers. The Minister has data to go upon in the fact that three years ago his predecessor provided a motor car for an itinerant teacher who was travelling partly in the electorate of the hon. member for Leichhardt and partly in my electorate, and the results have justified the action that was taken on that occasion.

We might investigate the whole question and see whether the system of itinerant teaching or the system of teaching by correspondence is giving the best results. The department can make exhaustive inquiries and adopt the best system. Personally I do not know whether the best results are being obtained from the correspondence system in those cases where the parents cannot supervise the work of the children.

There is another fact I wish to touch upon. We have often heard complaints about superior educational facilities provided for children in the cities and towns. We say that the children in the cities and towns get the best educational facilities under the best possible conditions. That is true. I believe that the Minister has done everything in his power to meet our requirements so far as the Western representatives are concerned, and has made Western schools better than they were in the past. I have no particular grouse in that connection, but I want to put in a plea on behalf of the children who are at present under the itinerant teachers. In the towns the ordinary dental inspector comes along and inspects the teeth of the children in the schools under his control. Ordinarily

those children would have access to a dentist and could have their teeth inspected when they wished. Those children in the bush, who are not reached by the dentist, require this dental assistance. I ask the Minister could he not detail a dental inspector to make a trip with one of the itinerant teachers, inspect the teeth of the children in the area and determine whether it would pay to put on an itinerant dentist to attend to the teeth of the children in the West.

Having exhausted that phase, I desire to deal with a department which appears to be a sub-department within a department—the teaching of agriculture in State schools. That instruction appears to be uncontrolled at present, and I suggest that it could be better controlled by the Department of Agriculture. If hon. members will turn to the report of the Secretary for Public Instruction for the year 1923 and peruse the report of Mr. Stubbin, the teacher of agriculture in State schools, I am sure they will agree that that gentleman is called upon to undertake more work than any individual should be asked to undertake under any circumstances. As there is only one instructor of agriculture in our schools, I presume that that gentleman probably devises his own curriculum, and is no doubt doing the best he can from his own point of view. Undoubtedly he is undertaking too much work—work that should certainly not come within the scope of one individual. We have here a serious case of overlapping. Mr. Stubbin points out that amongst other activities he visited schools and pupils' homes and formulated "Home Project" clubs (pig, calf, fruit, flower, and vegetables, etc.); visited homes of members of clubs to inspect and value their work in connection with the projects; organised and conducted a milk and cream-testing class for teachers at Pittsworth; assisted ten other teachers to qualify themselves for the teaching of milk and cream testing; addressed meetings of parents at various schools in connection with the formation of home projects clubs, and so on. I do not think it is the function of one individual to perform such multitudinous duties. He is provided primarily for the instruction of the children, not for the purpose of instructing dairymen. We have competent inspectors in the Department of Agriculture who are quite capable of instructing the farmers. I take it that it is the duty of this Instructor of Agriculture in State schools to instruct the children and not the parents.

In addition to that, Mr. Stubbin acts in the capacity of judge at various shows, prepares for publication a bulletin upon pig-raising—and on this point I might say the Department of Agriculture employ a pig expert. They have a man with very high qualifications, who is undoubtedly capable of expressing opinions so far as the pig-raising industry of the State is concerned; yet here we find this teacher of agriculture in State schools expected to write a bulletin on pig-raising. I think we should either get Mr. Sheldon to take over the complete matter of pig-raising, or tell Mr. Stubbin to write on pig-raising and take up Mr. Sheldon's duties and tell the farmers and their children what they ought to do in this matter.

In addition to that, this gentleman has official correspondence to attend to and also some literary work—I take it the publication of a monthly article in "The Education

Office Gazette." Mr. Stubbin formulates some rather peculiar propositions in his report. For instance, here is one which would be rather interesting if tested to its fullest degree. He says that the Minister should make some research to compare a cow's work and see how she would respond under kindly methods and under rough treatment. Who is to administer the rough treatment, and who is to define what is kindly treatment and what is rough treatment? Words like that only serve to obscure the issue and make the whole thing ridiculous. We should determine in what way Mr. Stubbin's abilities may best be utilised. We should cut out this judging at shows, writing pamphlets on pig-raising, and giving instruction to farmers and dairymen in milk and cream testing. Those activities should be restricted, and the milk and cream testing should be confined to school children.

Undoubtedly there is a good deal of work outside these suggestions that could be undertaken, particularly in the direction of experimental garden plots in our schools. More valuable work could be done there than in many other directions. We already have experimental plots under the direction of our Department of Agriculture, which assist us to determine which is the best seed to use, how it may best be acclimatised, whether methods of culture at present in use are suitable, and so forth and so on. School children provide much labour that could be utilised admirably in that direction. Let me cite a case in point. Two or three years ago we started experimental cotton plots at the Jericho State School to determine whether cotton could be acclimatised and grown upon the desert country. We found that not only could cotton be grown, but the standard of the staple was quite equal to that grown in more favoured districts.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Did you use water?

Mr. BULCOCK: Yes. The point I want to make is the value of the school garden experimental plot. It has no commercial value except in very isolated circumstances and instances. Personally I do not believe the school garden should have a commercial value, because better work in that direction can be done by commercial enterprise. If the Minister instructed Mr. Stubbin to go more into the subject of experimental plots, the adaptation of crops to districts, the use of fertilisers, and that sort of thing, more valuable work would be done than is now being done by one gentleman who, I will admit, is perhaps an expert and who is enthusiastic, but who is attempting to do the work that could not be performed satisfactorily by half a dozen officers all trained in agricultural pursuits. I suggest that the Secretary for Public Instruction ask the Department of Agriculture to draw up a curriculum providing for a fair amount of work to be performed by Mr. Stubbin, and that Mr. Stubbin be asked to confine himself to the branches of his work that do not clash with the work of the instructors in the Department of Agriculture and Stock. If that were done and experimental work was carried out in the way of school garden plots, better results would accrue, the school children would have more enthusiasm, and it would provide some stimulus and enthusiasm for the teacher. He should have a well-defined curriculum for the guidance of the children, and not the parents, in our agricultural community.

[Mr. Bulcock.

Mr. WRIGHT (*Bulimba*): Generally speaking, there seems to be very little dissatisfaction regarding the way in which the State schools in Queensland are managed. I am speaking from my own experience in connection with my electorate. I have quite a number of large schools, and so far as the standard of teaching is concerned there is no dissatisfaction. There is the desire on the part of the public for further accommodation, but I think that is a pretty general desire in the metropolitan area.

I desire to voice my appreciation of the work that is being done in connection with the education of the retarded and defective children. During the last year the department established classes in certain of the metropolitan schools, and those classes have been very successful in educating our unfortunate children along the pre-c.r.b.d lines. I think the teachers who have been allocated to this particularly trying task are to be complimented on the success they have achieved.

[12 noon]

I would like to make a suggestion to the department in connection with the supplying of school materials such as the books that are required for the different classes. At the present time it is necessary for the teacher to tell the scholars that certain books are required, and the parents have to go along to the warehouses or retail shops and purchase them. I would like to see the department supply these books free, but, if that cannot be done, the next best thing is for the State Stores Board to purchase wholesale all the books that are required and then sell them to the parents at the cost price. If that were done, it would mean a considerable saving to the parents. I hope the Minister and the department will take a note of the suggestion and see whether it is not possible to carry out that policy.

I want also to bring under the notice of the department a particular matter in connection with the cleaning of slates. One of my electors has patented what he terms a "dry slate cleaner." It is a small square pad which effectively cleans the slate without any moisture. Hon. members will readily understand what a very desirable method that is if the cleaning can be done successfully. I am quite sure that this patent will be successful, and it will do away with a lot of the "spitting" and with the necessity of the kiddies having to carry a rusty tin containing a wet cloth. I understand this method has been approved of by the Queensland Teachers' Union. The teachers can see the value of it, and some of the departmental officers have also approved of it. The department should seriously consider the advisableness of purchasing the necessary number of these patent cleaners to supply the whole of the State schools in Queensland. There is no doubt it is a good idea, and, if adopted, it would save the parents of the children a good deal in the way of clothing, because, if the wet rag is not handy, well, the elbow is just as good. I hope the Minister and the department will note that suggestion also.

I want also to ask the consideration of the department to the question of providing further school accommodation in my electorate. As pointed out by the hon. member for Ithaca, the question of providing school accommodation is controlled by two depart-

ments, and I agree with the hon. member that something should be done to bring about a better system. The Department of Public Instruction should carry its own responsibility. I do not mean to say that there should be a gang of workers attached to the department, but the department should be empowered to spend the money required, leaving the actual work of construction to be carried out by the Department of Public Works. There is a strong desire for the purchase of a school site at Morningside. That district has been fortunate enough to secure a tramway extension, and within a very short space of time hundreds of children will be residing in the district for whom it will be necessary to provide school accommodation. The only schools at present in the district are at Norman Park, Bulimba, and Cannon Hill. Certainly, they are not a very great distance from each other, but it seems to me that it would be a false move on the part of the department to enlarge any of these schools to provide for the large number of children who will reside in the very centre of that area. A site at present is available and, if it is missed, I cannot see how the department can hope to get any other suitable site at some later date when it will be absolutely essential to provide school accommodation there. There is also a demand for a school at Murarrie. At present the Murarrie children travel by train to Cannon Hill or Hemmant. There is a compact settlement near the meatworks containing sixty or seventy children at the present time. The district is also being rapidly settled, and it is deserving of consideration. I hope the Minister and officers of the department will give serious consideration to that matter too.

At 12.6 p.m.,

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

Mr. WRIGHT: I do not wish to enter into a personal controversy with any hon. member in this Chamber, but the hon. member for Albert this morning made some remarks which may be taken to refer to myself, and I would like to ask the hon. member whether, when he presents his prizes to the successful scholars in the schools in his electorate, he asks them to give him the pedigree of their ancestors on somewhat similar lines to what the hon. member gave to this House in connection with his own ancestors.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I am pretty sure that you have none.

Mr. WRIGHT: I must have had some otherwise I would not be here. I am just as proud of my ancestors as the hon. member for Albert is of his. In 1914 the hon. member deemed it necessary to describe his ancestors, but it is alleged at the present time that he disowns his ancestors and claims now that he is the only member of German descent who was able to hold his seat in Parliament during the late war and since the war.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be in order in saying that the hon. member for Albert disowns his ancestors.

Mr. WRIGHT: I said it was alleged.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: I am proud of my ancestors, and I have never denied any of them.

Mr. WRIGHT: "Hansard" shows that the hon. member was so anxious about his ancestors that he took the trouble in 1914 to get into "Hansard" who those ancestors were, and he even went back to the time of the Huguenots. I want to know does the hon. member ask the children, before presenting them with the prizes, to give him the pedigree of their ancestors? The bigger the hon. member gets round the stomach the more warped his mind becomes.

OPPOSITION MEMBER: That is dirty.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: It shows the type of the individual.

Mr. WRIGHT: The hon. member referred to my electorate and to my standing. I want to say to the hon. member that I am proud of the land of my birth, and I am proud of my doings in Queensland. The hon. member has always argued that he would like to see immigrants coming here. I am proud of having been an immigrant, and I am proud of being able to stand up here and say so. The hon. member would like to see coming to Queensland the class of immigrant who is prepared to work for low wages and "scab" when "scabbing" is required.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): The hon. member for South Brisbane appeared to be under the impression that I had stated that the system of tuition by correspondence was going to supplant the system of education by itinerant teachers. I did not wish to give that impression, and in looking over my speech in the discussion on the vote for the "Chief Office" I do not think such an impression could be given. I stated—

"In my electorate some of the children are being taught under that system, and in some cases the parents are dissatisfied and would prefer to have an itinerant teacher visiting them."

We have the correspondence class system in operation in the Murilla electorate. Some parents have told me they would prefer to be visited by the itinerant school teacher in preference to the correspondence classes, while others have stated that they prefer the correspondence classes to the itinerant teaching. I wish that to be made plain. I recognise that good work is being done under both systems in localities where children are unable to attend schools. It may not be possible for itinerant teachers to visit every family in an electorate such as mine, but if an itinerant teacher could pay a visit even two or three times a year to the homes of the children who are receiving instruction through the correspondence classes, he could perhaps instruct some of the parents so as to enable them to help their children. Some parents prefer the itinerant teacher because he can visit them and spend an hour or two in giving them personal instruction. Instruction by letter is not as good as personal instruction. The parents would thus be assisted in carrying out the education of their children. I would like the two systems of education to be worked in conjunction with each other as far as possible. I would emphasise the claims for consideration of the children who happen to be a long way from school. Where a man does not receive an income of £208 a year he should be allowed £30 extra to enable him to send his children away from home. I do not think £30 a year is quite enough, but it would be a great help to people in this position. The same thing should apply to families living a long dis-

Mr. Morgan.]

tance from schools. If the Government are able to render assistance to the extent of £30, £40, or £50 a year in the way I have indicated, similar assistance could be given to these people. They could then either employ a governess to instruct the children, or else, if the mother is capable of imparting instruction personally, she could employ some help in the home so as to give her time to instruct the children. While mothers may be capable, unfortunately the amount of household work they have to do prevents them from personally instructing the children. These people are a big asset to the State, and they should be encouraged to rear their children in the country districts. I think the children in the country districts are entitled to all the facilities we can give them.

Mr. FARRELL (*Rockhampton*): I wish to mention two or three subjects in speaking on this vote. The first is the continued attack by the leader of the Opposition on the policy of the Teachers' Union in prohibiting prize-giving in schools, the second the matter of district exhibits, and the third the matter of school libraries.

Mr. MOORE: I did not deal with school libraries.

Mr. FARRELL: The hon. member may not have dealt with them, but I propose to do so. Let me repeat again that the decision of the teachers to do away with prize-giving in schools was a decision not of the executive of the union, but of the teachers from all parts of Queensland gathered together in conference. All phases of the question were placed before the conference, and on each occasion the vote in favour of the abolition of prizes in State schools was practically a unanimous decision.

Mr. MOORE: Why don't you get the Minister to endorse it?

Mr. FARRELL: Who is in a better position than the teachers themselves to say whether prize-giving in the schools is a good or bad thing? I have had personal experience of teaching in schools where prizes have been given, and later when prizes have been abolished, so that I can speak with some degree of authority on the effect of prize-giving in schools. The system of granting prizes to children in the schools for merit, or supposed merit, is altogether wrong in principle. I have found from experience that the prize winner in the school—the boy who can win the prize without any trouble at all—turns out to be the worst citizen in future life in the majority of cases.

Mr. KELSO: That is not correct.

Mr. FARRELL: Will the hon. member allow me to make my speech?

Mr. KELSO: You are not old enough.

Mr. FARRELL: I hope to God that I shall never reach that stage when I have to come to the same conclusions as the hon. member. The boy or girl—particularly the boy—who becomes the best citizen in after life is the boy who has plodded along in his school career.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN and other Opposition members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FARRELL: Thank you for protecting me, Mr. Gledson. The hon. member has not had much experience in these matters, and

[*Mr. Morgan.*

apparently does not wish to hear the views of anyone who has had experience.

Mr. MOORE: I do not object at all.

Mr. FARRELL: The boy who afterwards becomes the best citizen and reaches the highest place in public and commercial life in the community is not the boy who is brilliant at school and gains prizes without any effort at all. It is the boy who plods through his school course with concentration and application, and very often without winning a prize, who has a good career. In my own experience the prize winner has not been the boy who has worked hardest at school. Every school has its system of marks, under which at the end of every month or quarter the positions which the pupils have relatively gained are denoted by the positions they occupy in their classes. There is not one teacher who will disagree with me when I say that, taking a twelve months' course, after the first six months have gone, there is rarely a change in position in the class for the remainder of the year. One or two boys may change their positions, but the relative positions of the boys remain the same. It does not matter how many prizes you give, or how many different subjects you give prizes for, the teacher could write down immediately that the boy who was sitting in the back seat of his class would win all the prizes without any effort at all. The giving of prizes not only has a bad influence on the child, but also has a tendency to prevent the teacher from playing the game. As the hon. member for Barcoo pointed out, the disappointment on the face of the youngster who has striven hardest during the year and has made certain advancement in his class, when he sees the boy in the back seat getting the prizes, is sufficient to induce the teacher to admit straight away that the system is wrong.

Mr. KELSO interjected.

Mr. FARRELL: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. KELSO: I have given prizes myself, and I know.

Mr. FARRELL: That is the extent of the hon. member's intelligence—if you give a shilling to the Salvation Army, you know all about the Salvation Army's work. The hon. member does not know anything of what he is talking about, and he had better listen to others.

Mr. KELSO again interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is entitled to speak without interruption. I do not object to an hon. member interjecting if the interjection is likely to be useful, but continual interjections are not in order, and I ask the hon. member for Nundah to cease making them.

Mr. FARRELL: I was saying that the disappointment of that child is quite sufficient for the teacher to determine to do away with prizes altogether. The value of the prizes themselves is not an incentive to the boys sitting in the back seat who win the prizes to work hard.

Let me deal with the question a little further from the teacher's point of view. I quote the experience of my brother, who is at present the head master of one of the largest schools in the State. He was at one time teaching at the Rockhampton Central Boys' School, and there was a prize-giving day. Prior to the day the teachers of the

various classes were informed of the subjects for which the prizes were to be allotted, and the teacher of each class was asked to conduct examinations to see which boys should win them. I may say that the chairman of the committee of the school was at this time one of the leading doctors in Rockhampton, and on the list of donations to provide prizes was a donation by that doctor of ten guineas. My brother submitted the names of the prize winners to the head master. He looked through the list. There were the names of the boys who won the prizes for mathematics, history, geography, good attendance, and so on. The head master said to my brother, "I do not see the name of the son of the doctor, who is in your class. I do not see that he has won a prize, Mr. Farrell." My brother replied, "No; he is the worst boy I have in my class." "But, Mr. Farrell," said the head master, "Doctor so-and-so gave ten guineas to the subscription list to provide prizes." My brother replied, "Well, the position is absolutely as I have told you, and if prizes are to be given, those are the winners, and the doctor's son is one of the worst boys in my class." On prize-giving day my brother was surprised to find that a special prize had been given by the head master to the doctor's son, and it was given for general proficiency. The biggest fool that he had in his class received a prize for general proficiency, awarded by the head master!

Mr. MOORE: Every child gets that now.

Mr. FARRELL: There is an instance of how the system will, consciously or unconsciously, affect the teacher himself—where a head master, who was not inclined to hurt the feelings of his doctor friend, had to give a special prize for "general proficiency." That is the case from the teacher's point of view.

Mr. MOORE: That is only one case.

Mr. FARRELL: If it happens in only one case, it is sufficient justification for doing away with the system.

Mr. MOORE: According to your argument, if one member of Parliament is a fool, you ought not to have a Parliament at all.

Mr. FARRELL: The system is altogether wrong, and the fact that the teachers themselves—who know what they are talking about and have had actual experience—have come to the decision that prize-giving is wrong and does not bring about the results claimed for it by hon. members opposite is sufficient to justify the Minister.

Mr. MOORE: I claim that the Minister should be the man to do it—not the Teachers' Union.

Mr. FARRELL: I know the hon. member has been up against unions all his life, whether the Teachers' Union or any other union.

Mr. MOORE: The teachers are not unanimous.

Mr. FARRELL: The teachers are absolutely unanimous. The hon. member said the other day that they were "squibs."

Mr. MOORE: I said the Teachers' Union squibbed when it came to the point.

Mr. FARRELL: The secretary of the union will hear it this time.

Now I shall quote the case of two schools in Rockhampton in support of my argument—one school where prizes had not been given

for seven or eight years, and another school where prizes were given right up to the time when the Teachers' Union prevented it. The results at the first school—the Boys' Central School—show that it is one of the best schools in Queensland. The departmental reports go to prove that, and the scholarship results achieved by it in 1925 were the best of any school in Queensland. It is a school where prizes have not been given for ten years. Then take the other school, not half a mile away, where prize-giving was in vogue, and where the attendance is double that at the Boys' Central School. The results are exactly the opposite. The inspector's reports are unsatisfactory; the scholarship results are unsatisfactory; the general control of the school has been unsatisfactory. That is an absolute fact—the school where no prizes were given is the school which any of the officials will tell you is one of the model schools in the State. So the fact that you give prizes to children at the end of the year is not an incentive to them.

The leader of the Opposition still sticks to his statement that the Teachers' Union prevents teachers of vocational classes and rural schools from displaying exhibits at country shows. That is absolutely wrong. The union does not interfere at all, because the teachers recognise that the results of the teachers' work are shown by an exhibit by the vocational classes and rural schools. The results of the domestic science, woodworking, carpentering, saddlery, and other classes are shown.

Mr. MOORE: What about needle-work?

Mr. FARRELL: If needle-work is taught in domestic science classes in vocational schools, the Teachers' Union does not object to exhibits of such things, because they are a reflex of the work that is being done in the school.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Provided that they shall not be competitive.

Mr. FARRELL: Of course, they shall not be competitive. It is to exhibits by the ordinary primary schools that the Teachers' Union objects, and for this reason: Can any hon. member tell me that an exercise book, a copy book, or a map drawn by a youngster, or a garment made by a youngster shows the result of the teacher's work in the twelve months? Anybody who suggests such a thing does not know the very rudiments of education, or one of the first duties of a teacher in a primary school. I think the question is best treated by a quotation from the report of Mr. Inspector Mutch.

[12.30 p.m.]

The report says—

"The man in the street still thinks that the great use of a school education is to teach the pupil *things*, whereas the chief work of a teacher is to mould, check, and redirect the pupil's impulses, feelings, and tendencies, so as to bring him into adjustment with his ever-widening environment—physical, social, and cultural."

You are going to display it by placing a map of Russia, or an exercise book, or a copy book, alongside the fat pig or the pumpkin in the show! The teachers have objected to anybody coming along and judging the work of their school from a copy book, exercise book, or a map. Here again I have had experience of what has taken

Mr. Farrell.]

place in these classes. I have been in schools and taught in schools where copy books and exercise books are prepared for the show, and for seven or eight weeks before the show takes place the best writer in the class is put in a little desk by himself, and does nothing for that period except write up exercise books and copy books. In a lot of cases—this was stated in public at the Teachers' Conference—the copy books are written up by teachers themselves. It is to protect that teacher from himself that the Teachers' Union has issued the order that there shall be no more exhibits of school work at the various shows.

Mr. KELSO: The union runs the department.

Mr. FARRELL: The union does not run the department. At the head of the department to-day are two gentlemen who up to the time of their appointment were members of the Queensland Teachers' Union. The chief inspector was president of the Queensland Teachers' Union, and is recognised as one of the ablest authorities we have on education.

Mr. KELSO: That is so.

Mr. FARRELL: It was during the time that he was president of the union that this order came into force—prohibiting school exhibits at the various shows. What is the good of blaming the Teachers' Union? The members of the Opposition adopt the same attitude towards the Teachers' Union as they do to all other unions, and they are the same gentlemen who absolutely refused to allow the teachers to form a union. It was this Government who gave the teachers the right to form an industrial union, and the right to go to the Arbitration Court to obtain decent conditions. The crowd sitting in Opposition are the crowd who sweated the teachers by paying classified teachers £2 per week, and now they are complaining about the Teachers' Union because the union, through its executive and through its officers, is going to do something for the education of the kiddies of Queensland, and is going to turn out real citizens, and not a lot of exercise books and copy books to be placed alongside fat pigs at the country shows. I am very pleased that the union has issued this order against the display of school exhibits from primary schools at the various shows, for the reason that it does not represent the work that the teacher is doing in the school.

Mr. KELSO: Did the hon. gentleman say "order"?

Mr. FARRELL: Of course I said "order."

Mr. KELSO: I thought the hon. gentleman said it was done by the Chief Inspector?

Mr. FARRELL: It is no use trying to explain anything to anyone who has not sufficient brains to understand what I am talking about. The Queensland Teachers' Union took up the attitude that the teachers should turn out from the school boys and girls who could think for themselves and not be mere machines. Some of the teachers recognise that their chief duty is to form the character of the children, and not to turn out crammed machines to take their places in after life. Some of them recognise that their chief duty is not to display copy books at shows, but to give such grounding in mental training, in cultural training, and physical training, and particularly in so developing the æsthetic taste that, when

he leaves school, he will be fitted to take his place as a useful citizen of the State. That is the work of the teacher. The work of the teacher is not the showing of copy books at different shows or in being placed in the humiliating position of having to provide a special prize for general proficiency for the doctor's son.

Mr. KELSO: The doctor's son seems to have got on your brain.

Mr. FARRELL: The hon. gentleman has never displayed sufficient brains for anything to get on them.

I would like to say something in connection with school libraries. There has been a reduction in the vote by nearly £185. I hope that there will be more co-ordination between the various schools of arts in Queensland and the different schools, so that there may be an interchange of reading matter between the school libraries and the juvenile libraries in the schools of arts. Nothing tends to broaden a child's mind, and nothing tends more to cultural development than reading, and there should be more co-ordination between the juvenile libraries in the schools of arts and the libraries in the schools so that the children would have a larger number of books to choose from.

Mr. KELSO: They might read something about war there.

Mr. FARRELL: That is just about the height of the intelligence of the hon. gentleman. For the sake of the kiddies of Queensland, it is a good job that the hon. member will never be in a position to contaminate their minds about war.

Mr. KELSO: The hon. gentleman should be the last to talk about contamination.

Mr. FARRELL: You get up in your place and say anything about me. Go on! Say it either in here or outside! I would like it better outside. We do not want contamination by people of the type of the hon. member. I would not say contamination by members of the Opposition because I know it is not general amongst all members of the Opposition. Some of them are very decent fellows. The advantages of school libraries to children cannot be over-estimated, and I hope the Minister will give some consideration to the enlarging of the school libraries or to making conditions easier whereby the children can obtain greater advantage through the school libraries.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): The hon. member for Nundah has revived the question of the obligation of the State under the Public Service Superannuation Act. Unfortunately we find ourselves after years of consideration just exactly where we were when the question was raised in this Chamber years ago. We were told then that the matter was under consideration. The Government are too slow by far in giving consideration to some questions. The obligation of the State in this particular direction has been clearly set out, and indeed, if it were less clearly set out, the obligation of the State would be none the less. In looking up "Hansard" in connection with the matter, I find that Mr. Macartney, when speaking in 1912 on the introduction of the Public Service Superannuation Act which he had in charge, said—

"A special right is conceded to those of forty years of age and upwards. Upon paying a lesser contribution, they can pay

[*Mr. Farrell.*]

as for retirement at the age of seventy years. It may be stated that all contributors otherwise are made to contribute in respect of retirement at the age of sixty-five years, and the contributions cease when the contributor arrives at that age. In the case of those officers to whom I have just referred, of forty and upwards, they can, if they so elect, contribute to four units of insurance and annuity payable at seventy years of age, in which case they pay a lesser sum."

At 12.39 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The question was again referred to by myself in the year 1921, as will be seen from "Hansard," page 1574. This matter was brought up by me at the instance of public servants. The regret in my mind is that the matter is still under consideration whereas it should have been decided once and for all. The notice that was issued at the particular time is specially clear. It reads—

"CLASS C AND D.

"MALES 40 AND OVER.

"If you contribute under tables B, D, F, or H, you will acquire the right to remain in the service until the age of seventy, and your contributions will continue until that age, when your rights to incapacity allowance, if you have contributed for that benefit, will cease, and your annuity will commence, and if you have contributed for assurance, the sum assured will be payable at death, or you may, on retirement, exchange for an additional annuity according to its value.

"Dated, Public Service Superannuation Board Office, Brisbane, December, 1912.

"(Signed) ROBERT RENDLE,
"Manager.

"Public Service Superannuation Board Office."

It would appear that the department were, to a certain extent, in ignorance of the existence of the contract, because the Attorney-General at that time stated at page 1575—

"In view of the opinions expressed by hon. gentlemen on the question, he would examine the circular and go into the matter. He had never seen or heard of the circular previously, but he now would go into the matter and see what was behind it. He wanted to do justice to everybody.

"Mr. G. P. BARNES (Warwick): He thought the statement of the Minister was satisfactory. They understood that the Government were in ignorance of the matter.

"The Attorney-General: I am not saying that at all. I say I have not seen or heard of the circular.

"Mr. G. P. BARNES: If the Committee were given to understand that fair play was to be afforded to these men, the matter could reasonably be dropped. No one should be victimised."

It is clearly set out there that the State is under an obligation to do its duty by those men with whom it entered into a contract. Hon. members on this side stand for honouring all contracts that may have been made.

Mr. MAXWELL: Hear, hear!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: We call upon the Government to give consideration to this matter. They have been considering and sleeping over the matter, and the time has now arrived when a decision should be arrived at and made known.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Who passed that legislation?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It was passed in 1912 by Mr. Macartney. If the Minister will look up "Hansard" for 1921, at page 1580, he will see all about it.

A good deal has been said about prize-giving. I for one, at any rate, have thought so much in connection with that matter that I have given an annuity valued at ten guineas a year for prizes at the Warwick High School for all time. That shows that I have a little faith in the value of prize-giving. It certainly might not have the same significance in connection with the primary schools, but in all the schools which I have attended—even the Warwick High School, where prizes are distributed each year—prize-giving is a distinct pleasure to the recipients, but, when one sees the clapping of hands and the joy of those who have failed, he begins to realise that those who have failed to receive prizes rejoice in seeing the success of their fellows.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That may appear on the surface, but cheers are not always indicative of what is really felt.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: There was nothing superficial in the cheers. I believe that they exhibited the finest evidence of pleasure that could be imagined. Everywhere when the hero is successful, whether in sport or otherwise, that feeling is manifested. Last Saturday sports were held in connection with all the schools of Warwick, and no one would say that the pleasure manifested in the success of the heroes of the day was anything but sincere.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you think that physical effort is of any value in the child's education?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: We all appreciate the value of all effort in life.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: How are you going to value physical effort?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Whilst there may be a great deal in what is put forward by hon. members on the other side, I am quite sure that a distinct pleasure results from prize-giving in many directions. On the other hand, I agree with the hon. member for Rockhampton in this sense, that boys and girls who are successful in life are those who stick at it all the time. A bright girl or boy may eventually go down, but the plodder will come through in life. I remember reading some years ago, a statement made by a leading American to the effect that he had watched the careers of thousands of men from boyhood up, and those who finally succeeded in reaching the top in life were those who possessed the gift of "sticking at it." Some people who rely on their ability do nothing. A child was being asked a question in my presence about preparation for an examination, and he said, "I have only got to read that over and that will be all right." He was sure of the result once he read it over. But that is no justification for a wholesale condemnation of the giving of prizes. The gladness of

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

both parents and children gives me so much pleasure in connection with the distribution of prizes that no order should go out from the department prohibiting them in our schools.

Unfortunately, every year one has to listen to remarks as to the failure of the Department of Public Instruction in the matter of providing teachers' residences. The department has failed to meet the needs of my district in this matter. For years the people of Maryvale and Mount Gordon have asked for such provision, and only last week I received information from Mount Gordon as to the claims of the district for the erection of a teacher's residence. As has been pointed out, the Department of Public Instruction should control to the fullest extent the erection of buildings. Instead of that it is a matter largely controlled by the Department of Public Works, and that department may or may not be in sympathy with the object. Reference to a second department provides an easy means of excuse for the building not being gone on with. I press the rights of the Mount Gordon and Maryvale people for the erection of teachers' residences in those districts.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): In reply to the hon. member for Rockhampton, let me say that I did not go into the ethics of whether it was a good thing or a bad thing to give prizes in schools. I said that it should be the Department of Public Instruction that gives orders and not the Teachers' Union. Certainly, many arguments could be advanced for and against prize-giving.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Prizes are given in some schools now.

Mr. MOORE: Yes; but the teacher runs a risk of being kicked out of the union or of getting a reduction in his salary.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No.

Mr. MOORE: I am not stating something that I know nothing about. I received a letter from a teacher saying that he ran the risk of expulsion from the union, which meant being kicked out of his job or having his salary reduced, if he persisted in prize-giving. But that is not the question. The question is who is to exercise control? I consider the argument of the hon. member for Rockhampton against the showing of school work is not worth a snap of the fingers. He stated that a teacher was dishonest enough to write an exercise for a child and exhibit that exercise as the child's work. That argument is not worthy of consideration. If a teacher was so dishonest as to do that, he should not be retained in the service.

Mr. FARRELL: I said that the fact was admitted at the Teachers' Conference.

Mr. MOORE: A teacher like that has no right to be in the department. To say that a teacher would be prepared to stoop to deceit and put in an exercise written by himself, pretending that it was a child's work, is not an argument against the showing of pupils' work.

Mr. FARRELL: The restriction will have the effect of protecting teachers against themselves.

Mr. MOORE: The argument merely proves that that teacher has no right to be retained in the service. It is not an argu-

ment against prize-giving or against show exhibits.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Who gives the prizes?

Mr. MOORE: What for?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The prizes you are referring to

Mr. MOORE: The parents, as a rule.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes—not the department. It is outside the jurisdiction of the department.

Mr. MOORE: Outside the jurisdiction of the department! Is it outside the jurisdiction of the department to say how the various activities of the schools shall be conducted? Instead of that, we find those activities being dictated by an outside authority. The fact is that the department are not game to take a stand one way or the other, and they allow an outside body to dictate their policy. In many instances teachers have their own opinions on the subject, and they consider what is best for the various schools. In some cases they consider prize-giving an advantage. If the department say that it is against regulations to give prizes, the teachers are perfectly justified in obeying that regulation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you suggest that regulations should be brought in to abolish prize-giving?

Mr. MOORE: No. I object to an outside body giving instructions on a question like this. If a teacher carries out what he considers best for the children and distributes prizes, he is likely to lose some salary or to be kicked out of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you believe in preference to unionists?

Mr. MOORE: I am not going to allow the hon. gentleman to draw a red herring across the trail and say whether I am this or whether I am that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you want me to smash the Teachers' Union?

Mr. MOORE: What nonsense the Minister is talking! I do not care twopenny whether the Teachers' Union is smashed that way or not. That union is there for a particular purpose—to protect the interests of the teachers in definite directions—to see as far as possible that they are efficient and that they receive proper conditions. They are not there to dictate the policy of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: What have they to do with prizes?

Mr. MOORE: I take it that the department has jurisdiction over its teachers. If it considers the showing at exhibitions is beneficial, and that it is likely to encourage children and give them an incentive to work, it is for the department to say that that principle shall be laid down—not for an outside body to say what shall or shall not be allowed. The reasons given by the hon. member for Rockhampton are beneath notice, although I believe some very good reasons were given both for and against these subjects in conference.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If the department already gives prizes in the form of scholarships, why do you want more?

Mr. MOORE: If the Minister is going to sit supinely by and allow teachers to dictate

{*Mr. G. P. Barnes.*}

as to how the department shall conduct its work, it is not my picnic, it is the hon. gentleman's. I still have the liberty of protesting against such a procedure. The hon. member for Rockhampton seems to think I was afraid to express my opinion because of the Teachers' Union, or possibly because some member of that union was in the Chamber and might object to my utterances.

Mr. FARRELL: I said nothing like that.

Mr. MOORE: I put forward a particular case and object to the department being controlled by any outside body. I am perfectly open about my attitude. I asked why no exhibit was forthcoming from the vocational classes at Crow's Nest. Some two years ago those exhibits were made, and they did a lot of good and had considerable educational value. When I asked why there was no exhibit this year, I was told that the Teachers' Union objected. Since I brought the matter up in this Chamber, the hon. member for Rockhampton has got up and said that the teachers do not object to that class of exhibit, but to another class of work being shown. I made my statements perfectly openly. I can see no difference between showing work taught in school by a needle-work mistress and that taught in a domestic science car for vocational purposes. The hon. member for Rockhampton said the teachers would allow the one but not the other to be shown. It is a question for the Department of Public Instruction to say whether teachers are to be allowed to submit exhibits in shows, and as to whether prizes shall be given. That is not a question for an outside body. It is not a question of ethics as to whether the system is good or bad. It is a question of whether the Department of Public Instruction shall rule or whether it will allow some outside body to give orders. That is the stand I take. I have not the slightest objection to the Teachers' Union keeping within its own sphere of action. The department should control its own affairs.

Mr. FARRELL: Do you not think the union should control its teachers?

Mr. MOORE: The union has no right to dictate the policy of the department. If the Minister thinks it advisable to give prizes or to exhibit at shows, that policy should be carried out, and the teachers have no right to threaten the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is outside the jurisdiction of the department. They are not our shows, and they are not our prizes.
[2 p.m.]

Mr. MOORE: The department recognises the principle of preference to unionists, and if a man is expelled from the union, he will suffer a reduction in salary. I object strongly to the Teachers' Union dictating as to what shall be done, and I think it is time that the department had full control over the work of the department. Mr. Inspector Mutch, in his report, says—

"The teachers are as a body loyal to the department, and interested in their work; they perform their duties as a rule with a satisfactory degree of efficiency. But, as in other departments of the service, only the superior manifest marked diligence and merit; the majority are content to complete the ordinary rounds of duty, but do not exert themselves to extend their knowledge, either of the subjects taught or of professional prin-

ciples and practice. The superior teacher keeps his mind alert and flexible, and is always ready to cope with changing circumstances."

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

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): In my opinion this vote in connection with the Department of Public Instruction is the most important vote of all, as it deals with primary instruction, which is the foundation of [2 p.m.] society. I have listened very attentively to the debate that has taken place to-day, and I must admit that to some extent it has been instructive, not only to members of this Committee but also to the people outside.

I am in somewhat of a puzzle about this question of giving prizes to the children. I know that up in my own electorate at a place named after myself, Collinsville, which is on the Bowen coalfield, they took a very broad view in connection with the distribution of prizes, and I think the system followed there could well be followed throughout this State. The school committee at Collinsville saw that every child in the school got a prize. That appears to me to be the right thing to do. It is all very well to say that this child is a smart child, or that some other child is a dull child. What we want to get down to is that a lot depends on the environment of the child after it leaves school. In many cases the home surroundings are very poor, and in other cases the home surroundings are very good. The environment of the child has a great effect on the child's education. In my travels to and fro in this great Commonwealth I have met men who have studied at different universities in Great Britain and in the Commonwealth, and I would class some of those whom I have met as the biggest nincompoops I have ever met in my life. That is not a reflection on the universities. The point I want to make is that it does not follow that the children who obtain the first prizes in our schools are going to be the great men or great women of the future. I am reminded of a saying of Mr. Gladstone, that, if all the men who had graduated from Oxford and Cambridge with "B.A." and "M.A." at the end of their names had been clever men, England would have been filled with clever men long ago; but we know that they were not all clever men.

Anything that will make the lot of the teachers in the country better in regard to school residences should be done. I repeat what I said during last session, that, if the people want their children to be educated in the manner in which they should be educated, they will have to pay for it. In my opinion, there is not sufficient money on the Estimates to deal adequately with schools or school residences. In my own electorate I have a great deal of trouble to get the Department of Public Instruction, and also the Department of Public Works, to think big enough. That is what is wrong with them—they never think big enough. In regard to the school at Collinsville, I told the Secretary for Public Instruction at the time the first school was asked for that the place was going to grow. First of all, we erected a tent school, and later on we shifted an old school from Rochford. I said before it was removed that it would

Mr. Collins.]

be found to be too small, and we had to put additions to it later on. I suppose the paint was hardly dry before it required further additions. The department cannot think big enough, especially in a growing electorate such as I represent. I want the department to take a larger outlook than they have done in the past. The department ought to realise that growing agricultural centres are going to be there for all time. They are not like mineral fields, which disappear from time to time. I hope that my remarks will receive attention. I remember on one occasion, when my attention was drawn by the late Secretary for Public Instruction, the Hon. J. Huxham, to regulation so and so, that I wrote him a letter back and said, "I hope that your regulations are not unalterable like the laws of the Medes and Persians." We have to recognise that country districts are growing districts, and everything should be done to give the children education. The children in the country are on a different footing altogether to the children in the cities. I am a believer in the highest education which it is possible for a man or woman to get. I have always said that a man could have all the culture of the centuries, and yet swing a pick and use a shovel. When I walk along George street and see all the children coming from the technical college at the rear of this building, I ask myself whether they are receiving the right kind of education. If it is an education to enable them to escape from toil or useful work, it is the wrong kind of education. My opinion is that we are getting too many men and womenfolk who want easy work and seek to escape the hard work of the world which must be done.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will have an opportunity of dealing with the subject of technical education on another vote.

Mr. COLLINS: I wandered a little bit. I was trying to make the point that we have not got technical colleges and schools in the part of the country which I represent. We have a technical college in Bowen, it is true, but there are people in my electorate who are a hundred miles from the head centre and who cannot take advantage of this higher system of education.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: I want to see the best trained teachers sent into the country districts to impart education to the children who live there. I hope that not only the Department of Public Instruction, but also the Department of Public Works, will see, when we get a school approved, that the building of the school takes place quickly, and that we shall not have to wait for weeks and weeks before anything is done. I remember that on one occasion I had a pile of correspondence about six inches high, all dealing with one school, and I got tired of writing first to the Department of Public Instruction and then to the Department of Public Works to find out when it was going to be built.

I want to draw the attention of the officers of the department to another important matter. When a teacher resigns, especially a woman teacher—and in the North they very often resign because they get married there—there should be no delay in the appoint-

ment of a successor. Sometimes—I know it may not be the fault of the department—I have received a letter to the effect that a certain teacher has resigned and that "Miss So-and-so" has been appointed, and then perhaps in a week or ten days I get another letter telling me that the appointment has been cancelled and some other teacher is being sent. I do not know whether hon. members on the other side use political influence to prevent these ladies from being taken away from their electorates—(laughter)—but, at any rate, what I say is quite true. I do not think there should be any delay between the resignation of one teacher and the appointment of another. I want the children to be taught.

It is quite true that I have a rural school in my electorate—that at Home Hill—and I notice one sentence in the report in reference to it. I suppose the gentleman who wrote this report had the tired feeling. He says—

"At Home Hill the club work was directed to home flower and vegetable gardens, and special attention was given to experimental agriculture, beekeeping, and milk testing."

One sentence in a report in connection with the rural school in my electorate, which gives very little information at all! I want another rural school in my electorate, that is to say, at Proserpine, which is a growing district. I know the Minister is giving the matter favourable consideration, but I want to see it established. Of course I shall be told, just as others have been told when they make application in January for new schools or additions to schools, that the request will be considered when funds are available. I am one of those who believe that, if we prate about our educational system as being this, that, or the other thing, if sufficient money is not available under existing conditions, then the money ought to be found—(Hear, hear!)—and we ought to be able to devise some means by which it will be found, because a nation will be known not by the few scholars it turns out from a university—they are all very well in their way—but by the culture of the common people—the great mass of the people, who I hope will in the future live in the country, just as they have had to live in the country in the past. I hope they will not all drift to the cities. As in the country in many cases the children have to ride three and four miles to school, I hope the best teachers will be provided. If there are any unclassified teachers, as they are called, by all means keep them in Brisbane and see that they get properly classified. Here they have the advantages of training schools and colleges—but at any rate give us in the country districts the best teachers there are.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): The hon. member for Nundah raised a question in connection with the treatment meted out to teachers who had reached the age limit. I want to quote from "Hansard" of 1921, page 1575, to show that the Attorney-General, discussing a question raised by the hon. member for Windsor, then leader of the Opposition, said—

"In view of the opinions expressed by hon. gentlemen on the question, he would examine the circular and go into the matter. He had never seen or heard of the circular previously, but he would

[*Mr. Collins.*

now go into the matter and see what was behind it. He wanted to do justice to everybody."

It is now 1924, and I have not heard of one instance where justice has been meted out. Certain teachers came into this scheme under certain conditions that were laid down. I have here a document from Mr. Rendle, the manager of the Public Service Superannuation Fund. In this document certain questions are asked, and certain answers are given. The first question is—

"What benefits can I obtain, and what shall I have to pay for them?"

The answer is a table, and I would ask permission to have it inserted in "Hansard."

The CHAIRMAN: I am very sorry indeed that I am forced to apply this limitation to a member of the Opposition. I hope that my action will not be misunderstood, and that it will not be considered that I am acting in a partial manner. I have considered the question, and have come to the conclusion that the insertion of tables in "Hansard" that are not read to the Chamber is very much out of order. In that way an hon. member can get material into "Hansard" that he otherwise could not get in during the ordinary time allotted by the Standing Orders. That enables an hon. member to obtain an unfair advantage over other hon. members, and I hope that in the future hon. members will not ask to be granted that privilege. I ask the hon. member for Toowong not to press his request. He has the right to read the table.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not intend to read the table, as it will take a considerable time and I would not then have time to say what I desire on this vote; still, I realise the importance of it. I appreciate the manner in which you, Mr. Pollock, have explained the position to me, but at the same time I regret that I am the unfortunate individual who has been sacrificed. Let me continue the questions and answers. The next questions and answers are—

"Question—What is the difference between the two sets of tables? If you contribute under tables A, C, E, or G, your contributions will cease, and you will retire on the annuity at age sixty-five; you will then cease to have any right to any incapacity allowance you may have contributed for, but the sum you may have assured for will be payable at death, or you may then exchange the assurance for an additional annuity according to its value.

"Answer—If you contribute under tables B, D, F, or H, you will acquire a right to remain in the service until age seventy. . . ."

That is the point I want to emphasise.

" . . . and your contributions will continue until that age, when your rights to incapacity allowance, if you have contributed for that benefit, will cease, and your annuity will commence; and if you have contributed for assurance, the sum assured for will be payable at death, and you may on retirement exchange it for an additional annuity according to its value.

"Question—If I die or resign before reaching the annuity age, do I lose all I have paid in on that account?"

"Answer—No! All your payments on account of annuity (see tables G and H) will be refunded, but without interest.

"Question—Can I contribute for more than one unit of benefit?"

"Answer—Yes! You can contribute for either one, one and a-half, two, two and a-half, three, three and a-half, or four times the amounts of assurance or annuity, and for either one, one and a-half, or two units of incapacity allowance."

I want to point out the injustice that has been done to a section of teachers who embraced the scheme under certain conditions. I would like to know from the Secretary for Public Instruction if the Attorney-General has made the necessary inquiries that he promised in 1921. The Attorney-General said that he had no desire to do anyone an injustice, and to be quite fair to that hon. gentleman, I do not think he had any desire to do any injustice; nevertheless, nothing has been done to remove the injustice up to the present time. It is bad enough for a man to be practically told when he has attained the age of sixty years that he must get out and die, as he is no longer of any use on the surface of this earth, but the position is worse when a person has subscribed to a certain scheme under certain conditions. For the teachers to be treated in the way they have been treated is repudiation in its worst form.

We have had a discussion in connection with the giving of prizes in State schools. I want to be perfectly fair about this question, and to give credit to those who have worked in the service and who are viewing the question from that viewpoint; but I also want the hon. member for Rockhampton to also give hon. members on this side of the Chamber the same privileges as he claims himself.

Mr. FARRELL: I have never suggested anything else.

Mr. MAXWELL: Only in so far as the hon. member for Nundah is concerned.

Mr. FARRELL: He became nasty and he got it back.

Mr. MAXWELL: I understand that the hon. member for Nundah had a brilliant record at the Brisbane Grammar School, and thoroughly understands what he is talking about.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Very seldom.

Mr. MAXWELL: He is not exactly a Master of Arts, but I am sure the hon. gentleman would not suggest that the man who achieved educational success and became a Master of Arts, a Bachelor of Arts, or an LL.D. was a person who did not know what he was talking about. All honour to those men who have devoted a great amount of time to study and have achieved such distinction. I find on page 27 of the report of the Secretary for Public Instruction the following paragraph dealing with changes in the administrative and the inspectorial staff:—

"The special work of inspecting grammar schools and State secondary (high) schools was deputed to—"

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I have already allowed hon. members a very wide latitude on the main vote, and I hope that

Mr. Maxwell.]

the hon. member, like other hon. members, will in his remarks adhere closely to this vote.

Mr. MAXWELL: I intend to do that. Encouragement should be given to the men teaching in the State schools who, through their ability and hard work, have attained such high degrees as B.A. and M.A., by translating them, as opportunity offers, to the highest spheres of activity in the service. No one would object to that.

In connection with the question of prize-giving, for a number of years I was associated with a State school as secretary, treasurer, and a member of the school committee. I now look back with a great amount of pleasure on the years of work which I put in with a very dear old friend who has "gone west," and was laid to rest this morning. I refer to the late Major Denis Tracey Lyons. I had the pleasure of being associated with the late Major Lyons at Clayfield. My association with the committee of that school and with that good man taught me a great deal. Among other things it taught me to appreciate the troubles teachers have with their teaching. At the same time I fail to see any harm in the school committees encouraging the scholars by offering prizes. If we analyse any sphere of activity to-day, there are always opportunities and prizes at the end of it all. Take the department itself. Let us take those men who by perseverance, industry, and ability have attained the highest rank that it is possible to attain in the department. The blue ribbons of the department are the prizes.

Mr. FARRELL: That is not a prize.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is a prize that the hon. member would like to have, and I admire him in being ambitious enough to try and secure it. I congratulate any man in the department who can do that. Those are some of the prizes that the officers of the department get for industry.

Mr. FARRELL: That is the sort of prize we want the kiddies to get.

Mr. MAXWELL: It has been stated that we should not give prizes to the children. We must remember that the brain of the child is not as receptive as that of a grown-up, and it is only right to give the child encouragement and so assist to advance him a few steps further.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: If you had ever taught a class of adults or children, you would not say that.

Mr. MAXWELL: I would not like to teach a class of people like the hon. gentleman.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Take a class of your own side, and try to teach them.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is very difficult for a teacher to impress the mind of the child, and there are times when prizes are offered to the children for doing certain things and to encourage them in doing them. If a school committee or those associated with a school consider that it is desirable in the best interests of the children to give prizes, I fail to see why the Teachers' Union should step in and say that it is wrong. It might be wise for the Teachers' Union to recommend the matter for consideration by the department, which is, I take it, one of its functions, but no union has a right to dictate to a department and say that it shall do certain things. I understand from the speech of the hon. member for Rockhampton that

[Mr. Maxwell.

the Teachers' Union said that certain things had to be done. Then we have the information conveyed to us by the leader of the Opposition, who was most emphatic in his statements, notwithstanding the remarks of the Secretary for Public Instruction and the hon. member for Rockhampton.

The hon. member for Rockhampton mentioned something in connection with the conduct of a school teacher and condemned the whole system of school exhibits because that teacher wrote out a copy book and exhibited it as the work of a student. I am quite with the leader of the Opposition. That was disclosed at a conference of school teachers, but, irrespective of where it was disclosed, it was wrong for a teacher to do such a thing. Personally, I have a higher opinion of the teachers of Queensland than to think that many would do such things as that. Again, the hon. member for Rockhampton condemns prize-giving because a doctor's child got a general proficiency prize under certain circumstances. I think that was a contemptible thing. At the same time it is unfair to condemn the system because of one bad illustration. The hon. member for Rockhampton is entitled to his opinions, and I respect his views; at the same time I ask him to wait a little longer until he moves about a little more in new spheres of life, and until he begins to rub shoulders with people in other spheres of life—

Mr. FARRELL: I would not learn much from the hon. member.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. member will then find that his views will change considerably. It is only necessary for me to remind the hon. member that certain views have been expressed by various people on different occasions, and on other occasions they have been changed. Even in politics it is said that if a man does not change his mind he has no mind to change. I think it a pity that the hon. member for Rockhampton should form his opinions on just two illustrations. That is inadvisable, and will recoil upon himself. The hon. member should not condemn a system which has been very beneficial to our children for many years, merely because of these two cases.

Mr. FARRELL: My opinions are the result of fourteen years' actual experience.

Mr. MAXWELL: There are others who have had a lifetime of experience and who certainly do not agree with the hon. member. At the same time the hon. member is entitled to hold his opinion; but when the hon. member moves about a little more and gets a few more years of wisdom upon him he may alter his opinion.

[2.30 p.m.]

There is a matter which I desire to bring under the notice of the Minister. It was brought to my mind by the speech of the hon. member for Barcoo dealing with experimental plots. If encouragement were given to the scholars of the various schools for beautification of the school grounds and buildings somewhat on similar lines to what has been done by the Commissioner for Railways at railway stations, it would inculcate a spirit of healthy rivalry amongst the children that would be very beneficial, as it would lead to the beautification not only of the school grounds, but also to the beautification of their own homes. I have a recollection that some years ago the Department of Agriculture—I discussed this matter with the

Secretary for Agriculture, who very kindly promised to go into it—set aside certain plots in our Botanic gardens for the school children in the metropolitan area. I do not wish to be parochial and say that this should apply only to the metropolitan area. It should apply to all parts of the State where there are public gardens. I think it was during the time Sir Alfred Cowley was Secretary for Public Lands and Agriculture that these plots were set apart for the children, and good work was done in that connection. I throw out the hint to the Minister, and hope that some good will result from it.

Mr. FARRELL: Do you suggest that the children should be given prizes for looking after these plots?

Mr. MAXWELL: I suggest that certain plots should be allocated to the children and prizes be given at the end of the term. I have seen feelings of disappointment on the part of some children, and I can quite understand the point raised by the hon. member. But even in our businesses we meet with disappointments. In business it is not all prizes. There are blanks, just the same as there are prizes. I have an illustration running through my mind of where a little child was bent on getting a certain prize and was disappointed. If there is one thing more than another that breaks our hearts, it is to see a disappointed child. At the same time it is necessary that encouragement be given to the children to enable them to obtain something. It is not that the prize is worth anything; it is the honour of having won it.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: What about a scholarship?

Mr. MAXWELL: That is a prize.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is the Government's prize.

Mr. MAXWELL: I remember competing in the first spelling bee that was held in Brisbane. I was only a kiddy at the time, and I do not know whether it was my good luck or what it was, but I won that spelling bee. The prize was an atlas that cost 9d. I valued that atlas very much because it was something that I had won.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: How did you win it?

Mr. MAXWELL: I won it as I always win things—honourably and fairly.

Mr. WEIR: Like you won the war?

Mr. MAXWELL: No, I left that to the hon. member. I would like to ask the hon. member for Rockhampton—I believe he is a sport—if in his football days he was not desirous of winning a trophy or winning a position in his team to represent his State?

Mr. FARRELL: There is no analogy there at all.

Mr. MAXWELL: There is an analogy, because in the field of sport and in the business field you still go on improving. I can quite understand the attitude taken up by hon. members opposite against the spirit of competition. The hon. member does not mind prizes being given for sport, but he considers that it is a wrong thing for prizes to be given to the children in our schools, although the parents of the children are quite prepared to pay for them.

In my electorate we have got some wonderfully good school committees and works committees, and the parents take a very great amount of interest in their children and work very hard for the advancement of the schools. I would ask the Minister if he will take a drive out with me some day to some of the schools there, and see the opportunities which are given in those State schools to encourage the children to cultivate garden plots. I refer to the Taringa and Toowong schools particularly, where the grounds are worse than a road.

Mr. FARRELL: Ascot is a fine school in that regard.

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes. When you get the parents interested in prize-giving you are creating a big interest in the schools. The parents have done some wonderfully good work for the schools I have been associated with, and they are doing it to-day. One teacher with whom I discussed the question of prize-giving said, "We are going to have a sports meeting for the children, and prizes will be given." I fail to see the difference between giving prizes to children for running, skipping, and jumping hurdles, and the giving of prizes for mental qualifications. I can quite understand what the hon. member for Rockhampton, who has had experience, says in connection with some children who pass examinations not fulfilling expectations in after life. While we have seen some instances of that kind, such cases certainly do not predominate. It is wrong to disappoint a child by abolishing straight-away the system of prize-giving which we have carried out for a number of years. By helping the children in every way we can to take more interest in their lessons, we are helping to make them good citizens of the State.

Mr. LLOYD (*Kelvin Grove*): It has been repeated so often in this Chamber that it has become almost a platitude that the Queensland education system is second to none. I do not dispute it, but I sometimes wonder what data those who say that have for making such a sweeping statement. I take an interest in education as a citizen quite apart from the professional interest of a teacher, and I have the good fortune to be associated with other people who do, but I have never known anyone who has sufficient knowledge of educational systems throughout the world to make such a statement with absolute certainty. At the same time, I believe that our education system is so good that we have no need to be ashamed of it, but its efficiency is due very largely to causes which may not always operate. In the early days we gained something from having a highly centralised system. I am not a great believer in over-centralisation, but there is no doubt that where centralised management receives plenty of attention from the public, it is the best kind of management. Then, again, in days gone by, there were very few openings for brainy young people in Queensland. Most of these people were recruited into the teaching profession from the upper classes in the State schools, and consequently we get from those who are trained under the pupil-teacher system a very high standard of efficiency.

Then, again, we were prevented from doing very much in the way of university education, and attention was focussed on

Mr. Lloyd.]

elementary education. I am not quite sure that we are not slipping a little in our present system—or, rather, that we have not slipped already. During the time the present Government have been in power we have added a great many responsibilities to those previously resting on the elector, and if we are to prepare the citizens of the future for those added responsibilities, we shall have to try to do something towards that end in the elementary schools. I do not propose that we should thrust on to young people something which is only suitable for adults. I do not propose—in fact, I should strongly oppose—the introduction into our schools of anything in the way of political or economic dogma, but I think we should teach the pupils enough of what is going on in the outside world to prepare them for the problems they will have to solve when they grow up—that they should be taught at every stage that each citizen has an equal responsibility with all other citizens for the welfare of the community. I am afraid that the tendency at the present time is to inculcate an easy optimism. Children are imbued with the idea that they belong to a great Empire and a great Commonwealth, and that these institutions will keep on going all right because, it is claimed, they have so far gone all right. For one thing, I think we should enlighten our pupils a little as to the great paradox of modern civilisation—the unemployed question. We should point out to the child that at present all over the world large numbers of persons are willing to work but cannot get work, and that the reason for it appears to be that for four years the world's property was being destroyed at an unprecedented rate.

Mr. MORGAN: Was there not unemployment before the war?

Mr. LLOYD: That is an anomaly that we are unable to explain, and I think we should put it before the rising generation, and let them have an opportunity of thinking it out as they grow up. We should tell them of the problems which modern civilisation has to solve, without attempting to prejudice the child one way or the other in the direction of a solution.

Then I think we should go in for the teaching of a different history in elementary schools. Complaint has been made here that Australian history is not taught. That is not right. Australian history—such as it is—has been taught to my personal knowledge for the last thirty-five years, and as a rule it is the only history a child remembers; but, unfortunately, there is not enough Australian history, and there will not be enough for many centuries to come to make it valuable in the sense of a science of development. Neither is it right that we should cramp the child by keeping him to the history of the British Empire alone or of the British Islands alone. We need to give him the outlines of world history. We need to cut out a great deal of unimportant detail, and put in its place something of the important general aspects of human development.

Then, again, considering that so much depends on science, I think we ought to give the child in the elementary school an introduction to the facts of science.

That teaching should be on a formulated and uniform plan. I am aware that most teaching of science as science is an expensive matter, and we may not be able to afford

[*Mr. Lloyd.*]

it; but there are plenty of little books giving an outline of the main facts of science which are perfectly interesting to children, and which are more interesting than a good deal of reading matter that is put before them at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the hon. gentleman that I allowed a wide discussion of that matter on the vote for the "Chief Office." I ask hon. members not to cover the ground again on another vote.

Mr. LLOYD: Mr. Pollock, I ask you to take into consideration the fact that on that previous vote I kept entirely to the question of the Minister's administration and did not touch on this matter. I am now speaking entirely on the question of elementary education. The sixth class has almost, if not entirely, vanished. That is a great fault. In days gone by, at least half of the children who went through school went to the sixth class, and, if they did not get any formal secondary education, they got close to it. I trust that something will be done to restore the sixth class, especially in view of the fact that very few children ever receive secondary education, and unless we can give education much more liberal treatment than we do at the present time, they will not be able to get it. On the question of school libraries, I would suggest that small collections of books be furnished to every school sufficient to give some meaning to the extracts from the standard authors included in the reading books. At the present time we get selected passages and clippings from Dickens and other standard authors, which do not convey very much to the child unless the context is there, and I think that the complete works from which these extracts are taken should be accessible to all the children.

The question of correspondence schools has been discussed. That system will play a very useful part, but too much cannot be expected from it. It is quite possible for the children of two separate families living, say, on a lighthouse, to benefit to a different degree from such a system. If the parents in one case have some education themselves, then correspondence tuition will do a great deal of good; but, if the other parents have not that education or interest in their children, the correspondence system of tuition for young children who are unable to read properly can be of no value whatever. The only remedy for children in isolated places is one which is not likely to be popular, but it is the only practical one, and that is something in the way of establishing boarding schools so that children in outside places can come in for a few years and get a really sound education. After the foundation is laid, a good deal can be done in the way of correspondence tuition.

The question of school committees has cropped up. I hope that school committees will continue to exist. As a teacher, I found them very helpful, and as a member of Parliament, I find them very helpful. Their greatest merit is that they enable the people to take more interest in school matters than they otherwise would, although, unfortunately, the interest is not what it might be.

The question of prize-giving has been so much discussed that I do not propose to go further into that. I would remind those hon. members who have taken exception to

the attitude of the Teachers' Union that it is a matter on which the department has never stepped in and never adjudicated on. In such a case a professional union has a perfect right to legislate for itself in these matters. I am not sure that the Teachers' Union want to fall foul of the wishes of parents, and I suggest to those hon. members who are so keenly interested in this question that they, through the School Committees' Association, get into touch with the Teachers' Union and talk it out with them.

Mr. MAXWELL: Why not talk it over with the department?

Mr. LLOYD: I am not suggesting the department, because the action has been taken by the Teachers' Union.

Mr. MAXWELL: Is it not a matter for the department?

Mr. LLOYD: I have no means of knowing what the attitude of the Teachers' Union would be, but unless they have changed very much in late years, they are likely to be a reasonable body of men. They would either come to some understanding with the school committees, or they would be able to convince them that prize-giving is not in the best interests of the education of our boys and girls.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): The vote this year has been increased. I am not surprised at that fact, because many hon. members have from time to time called on the department and made certain demands which were necessary for many parts of Queensland which are being settled at the present time. Hon. members hope that from time to time as they present their cases to the department they will receive the consideration they deserve.

A great deal has been said about prize-giving. I have been asked on many occasions to attend schools in my electorate and distribute the prizes, but I have noticed recently that the distribution of prizes has been abolished because they are called gifts. In the country schools, most of the children used to get prizes, but now they get gifts. In my opinion, the best prize a child can receive is to take every advantage of the educational facilities while they are at school. There is not the slightest doubt that, if facilities are given in the country for the education of the children, it would be the best prize they could receive, and the one which they will be able to carry right through life which would be of benefit to them.

Mr. FARRELL: Hear, hear!

Mr. CLAYTON: I dealt with the delay that takes place in the erection of schools when the vote for the "Chief Office" was under discussion, but I am in perfect accord with the remarks in that respect of the hon. member for Bowen. That hon. member said he had a heap of correspondence about six inches high dealing with the application for one school. My correspondence has not reached that height in respect of any particular school, although it has reached about half way. I trust that, after approval has been given by the department for the establishment of a new school, the Department of Public Works will expedite its erection.

The vote for agricultural education is a very important one to country districts. I would like to see every encouragement given to teachers to take advantage of classes of

instruction in cream and milk testing, or any other such classes which would be of benefit to the children in the country. The teachers in the country should take advantage of the technical colleges to study those questions, so as to be able to impart that knowledge to the children. I was present at the Raby school, in the Bauple district, the other day, where the teacher has a certificate for cream and milk testing. He has a class in that subject, and the children take great interest in it, and he is doing an enormous amount of good by imparting his knowledge to the children. It is education of that nature that the parents in the country districts desire their children to have.

The Instructor of Agriculture is doing a great deal of good, and so are many of the teachers and school committees in different parts of Queensland. I can refer to a school in my electorate—the Goomeri School—where the committee and teacher have been instrumental in getting together a sum of no less than £400 with which to beautify their grounds. They have also gone in for a small patch of cultivation, and they grow fruit trees, vegetables, etc. They have erected a windmill and have a perfect water supply. They also have a small patch of cotton. The children take a very keen interest in the work. We should congratulate that committee on the keen interest they are taking in the welfare of the school children.

Some time ago we applied to have a rural school established in that centre. Murgon happened to be more successful, as the department looked upon Murgon as being more central for the establishment of such a school. I would like to see the Secretary for Public Instruction carry out the promise that the ex-Minister, Mr. Huxham, gave me—that he would allow teachers to be sent from the rural school in Murgon to Goomeri. Those teachers could go down to Goomeri and instruct the children and hold classes such as are held where the rural school is established.

Again, a rural school is to be established at Imbil, in the electorate of the hon. member for Cooroora. We are waiting for the Department of Public Works to construct the school so that classes may be held underneath the building. I hope the Secretary for Public Instruction will see that no unnecessary delay occurs with this work, so that these classes may be started almost immediately. I also ask that the Minister will do whatever is possible and will use his influence with the Railway Department so that a direct train service is put on the Mary Valley line to enable the children to go to the school in the morning and return to their homes in the evening. I have been on the job for some time, in conjunction with the influential people of Imbil, and the matter is now before the Commissioner for Railways, who promises that it will receive consideration, and I trust the Department of Public Instruction will assist me in that direction.

I consider that school committees are essential. I know that, when I happen to go to a place where a school is needed, the matter is first brought up by a school committee, and after some months we generally get something done in connection with the establishment of that school. The school committees assist very materially, especially in the country. I do not think I have had a school granted in my electorate where the school committee have not undertaken to clear the land, provide stumps, and also do

Mr. Clayton.]

the fencing if the department supplies wire. They not only assist very materially to make the vote go as far as possible, but after the school is erected they look after the affairs of that school, and on many occasions are of great assistance to the teacher.

Mr. SIZER (*Sandgate*): While on the matter of school committees I ask the new Secretary for Public Instruction if he will reconsider the position—rather an absurd one—which was taken by the ex-Minister, Mr. Huxham, when he refused to gazette the Sandgate school committee. The reason was because there was a bit of a clash between the Minister and the chairman of the committee. A bit of a duel occurred, and the Minister refused to gazette the committee. I hope the present Minister will reconsider the matter, and have the committee gazetted. They are a good body of men, and have done good work for the school. I do not think it will be to the detriment of the department if they are gazetted, though it will be quite the contrary if the hon. gentleman gazettes the committee that was elected by the parents of school children on that occasion. It was merely through a brush with the chairman that the ex-Minister refused to gazette the committee.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They refused to act.

[3 p.m.]

Mr. SIZER: No. They were supposed to have offended the Minister in some way or other.

Mr. FARRELL: There was no "supposed" about it; they did offend him.

Mr. SIZER: That is a matter of opinion. I say they did not. I ask the Minister now if he will go into that matter and re-gazette the committee, which will be in the best interests of that big school.

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*): I notice from the Estimates that the vote for "Agricultural Education, Rural and Vocational Schools" has been reduced by £4,500. I am rather surprised to see that economy is being effected in this direction, because, on turning up the report of the department, I notice this—

"During 1923 there were in operation rural schools at Nambour, Boonah, Marburg, Gracemere, and Home Hill, and preliminary arrangements have been made for opening, during 1924, additional rural schools at Gordonvale, Muigon, Clifton, and Gayndah. The success of these schools has been so marked and the character of the work so highly appreciated by parents and pupils that numerous applications have been received from other agricultural districts for the establishment of similar schools."

The rural schools are doing very excellent work in the country districts of Queensland, and I would like to see that system of education extended, because it has the effect of increasing and maintaining the interest of country boys and girls in the occupations in which their parents are engaged. At the present time the tendency is for the bright scholars in the country districts to gravitate to the cities, where they think they will be more highly paid for their services, and where they will have more congenial occupations. The rural schools are doing a very great service. As the report says, there are five now in operation, four more projected, and applications for rural schools from many

other districts. I would like to suggest to the Minister that he appoint a director to be placed in charge of these rural schools. In the district of Boonah we have a very excellent rural school, which is doing splendid work in that district. In other districts where they have been started, the teachers who have been appointed to these schools are not quite sure as to the direction the education should take or what lines it should follow, and it is high time that the department considered the appointment of a director to take charge of rural schools alone. Such a man, if appointed, would be of great assistance to the department in the running of these schools, and he would be of great assistance to the people in the country districts.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): One cannot help but be struck by the fact that the Government have made a special effort to extend education to the country districts of Queensland, but, as the hon. member for Bowen pointed out, their efforts in many cases have been too late for the settlers. What I mean is that very often educational facilities are not provided for the settlers quickly enough to induce the settlers to remain in the district. I hope the new Minister will take this matter up very seriously, because it is a serious question. If the settlers in a district have been agitating for a school for some length of time and then find that all sorts of difficulties are put in the way—first in the matter of obtaining a school, and then in obtaining a teacher or the transfer of another teacher if one teacher resigns—they immediately come to the conclusion that it is necessary to get their children into another centre where they will have an opportunity of obtaining a better education. By doing that we are creating a position which tends not only to restrict the facilities which are necessary in the way of education for the children, but also to put the school into such a position—and that has happened in my own district—that there is not a sufficient attendance to keep the school open. It is very often the fault of the Department of Public Instruction, and more particularly the Department of Public Works, in not coming to the rescue quickly and seeing that the necessary accommodation is given to these particular schools.

I want to say a few words in connection with rural education in country districts. I am rather surprised to find that this vote has been cut down. Strange to say, when we had the Agricultural Estimates before us we found that the amount was cut down. We now find that the vote for "Agricultural Education, Rural and Vocational Schools" is cut down from £11,000 to £6,500.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That was only an estimate. It was not all spent.

Mr. EDWARDS: If it was not spent, it should have been spent. There is any amount of room for expansion in country districts. In my district we have been agitating for a rural school for a long time, but the matter has been continually hung up, although it has been determined where the school shall be built. If the money is available, the department are not doing their duty to the country districts in not building these rural schools quickly. It has been pointed out over and over again that we must apply scientific training in connection with agriculture and train the children on those lines in

[Mr. Clayton.]

order to give them the best education possible in agriculture. We must see that their minds are developed along scientific lines, so that better conditions can be brought about in country districts.

There is also the matter of the building of teachers' residences. I may be asking rather a big thing when I ask the Minister to build teachers' residences in country districts, but, if it is right to build residences for teachers in large centres of population, it is also right to build them in the country. In connection with old settled districts which have every possibility of expansion and are not likely to go back, and there is a good case put up by the people in those districts, the department should make every effort to give the married teachers there the same facilities as are given to teachers in the cities and large towns. The country people require, and are entitled to, just as good teachers as the people in the cities. It is not right to ask a teacher to go out to a country district if he cannot get a suitable residence. I know teachers in country districts who have to ride many miles to school every morning. I would ask the Minister to give this matter every consideration. There is a school at Wheatlands in my district, with an attendance of seventy children, where they have been asking for a teacher's residence for many years, but have not got any further in regard to the matter.

There is another matter which, in my opinion, deserves very careful consideration from the department. I refer to the class of teacher sent out into the country districts. We know that in many districts teachers have to work under very difficult circumstances. In many instances in the early stages the people have not the accommodation to give the teacher which is due to him, but many teachers who are sent out into the country have had no country experience whatever. There is no doubt that this raises a very difficult question, but it is a matter which the department should take up with a view to doing all they possibly can in supplying the right class of teacher in out-back places.

In conclusion, I want to say that I hope the Minister will give some attention to the matter of seeing that schools are built in country districts wherever there is sufficient settlement to justify them. As I have pointed out, the danger of leaving the question is that the population will only remain in the country if there are educational facilities. Otherwise, if the people are interested in their children, they will move away, and therefore the lack of school facilities not only does a district a great deal of harm but also creates what every hon. member in this Chamber is trying to avoid, that is, a drift of the people of the country into the large centres and towns. It is only by giving facilities for education and in other ways that the people in the country will be induced to stay there and educate their children there.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. T. Brennan, *Toowoomba*): This vote has led to a good deal of discussion. It shows a considerable increase this year. As hon. members are aware, our population is increasing, and the Estimates therefore have been framed more liberally this year than last year. It is also known to hon. members that loan money is difficult to obtain, consequently we cannot

do all that we would like in the building of schools. Personally, I believe that £1,000,000 should be raised to put all our schools on a proper footing. That amount could well be spent by the Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Instruction in putting them in a condition satisfactory to all concerned. I believe it would well repay us.

There has been a good deal of comment upon the reduction of the item for "Agricultural Education, Rural and Vocational Schools" from £11,000 to £6,500. That is explained by the fact that this is a comparatively new vote. Last year we spent £2,099 on rural schools, the reason being that, although a number of schools are established, the extension of the system entails a good deal of investigation and work. We have to select the localities, erect the schools, and make other arrangements, and this year we expect to spend £6,500. That will be a considerable increase this year. The hon. member for Aubigny directed attention to several matters in regard to rural education, and mentioned such centres as Pittsworth, Kingsthorpe, and Laidley, and said that more attention seemed to be given to the city than to the country. The Secretary for Public Works recently pointed out that last year in Brisbane we spent £9,033 on State schools, whereas £105,784 was spent in the country. Three new schools were erected in the metropolitan area last year as compared with twenty-five in the country, so that hon. members will see that the country is not being neglected.

Mr. MORGAN: That includes the South Brisbane High School.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Those were the amounts spent last year on new State schools. Reference has been made by the hon. member for Logan to the number of teachers leaving the department. Very few female teachers in the country leave the department to seek new positions. The only occasion on which they resign is to get married. They are quite satisfied with the service. So many matters have been raised on this question that I have not been able to deal with them all, but I will answer them all if the questions are asked later on.

The question of competition for school prizes has been dealt with very effectively by the hon. member for Rockhampton, who is an experienced school teacher. He entered public life some eighteen months ago, and he has given a fair exposition of his idea of prizes. The State—not the Labour party—gives certain prizes in the form of scholarships and bursaries to students enabling them to get free education. These are the prizes offered by the Government, and if the school committees wish to spend 10s. here and give an atlas there, that is a matter for those committees. The department should not be called upon to interfere in those matters; that is outside of the department. The Teachers' Union says that that is a matter outside of the department, and that the only duty of their members is to see that the children are so educated as to pass the examinations and obtain the State prizes. That is the teachers' duty. Anything that the Teachers' Union decides outside of the department is a matter for the union, but any matter affecting the policy of the department will be administered by the department.

Hon. F. T. Brennan.]

ment. The department is not concerned with something that happens outside of school hours.

The same remark applies with regard to exhibition at shows. Personally, I would not allow any school teacher to exhibit school exercises in districts where three, four, and five schools compete, because, as the hon. member for Rockhampton pointed out, in some cases the school exercises are written by the parents of the children or their elder brothers, and that is unfair and would create dissatisfaction and anger, besides jealousies between teachers and adjoining schools.

Mr. MORGAN: You cannot prevent the individual children from competing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No. The technical branch of the department had one of the finest exhibits at the last Brisbane show. That work was shown to indicate what we were doing, but not to compete with any other department.

Mr. FARRELL: That was a true reflex of what was being done, but an exercise book is not a true reflex of what is done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member for Aubigny pointed out that at a certain district show there were no exhibits from a rural school. If the department decides to place an exhibit in a show, it is as a reflex of what is being done. Since I came into the department about eighty photographs have been taken in connection with technical education, such as wool-classing, etc., and I expect to exhibit them in a week or so. They will be sent to the country as a reflex of the work done by the technical colleges. That is some thing that we consider should be exhibited. It is no use saying that the Teachers' Union is dictating to the department, because the department would not be worthy of the name if the union was allowed to do that. The union has a perfect right, as a body, to say the teachers shall not do anything outside their contract of teaching in carrying out their duties. It might be asked why the union exists. We give preference to unionists, and the union should have a say in the work of its members outside the authority of the department.

If there are any other matters that I have not dealt with, I shall be only too pleased to reply to any questions that may be asked at a later stage. I have a complete answer to all the matters that have been raised.

Question put and passed.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. T. Brennan, *Toowoomba*): I beg to move—

“That £75,662 be granted for ‘Technical Education.’”

This amount shows an increase of £3,817 over the appropriation granted last year. The increase is due to increases in connection with the Central Technical College and country technical colleges.

Mr. MORGAN (*Marilla*): There is one little matter I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister, and I have been asked to do so by those who wish to take advantage of the teaching of the subject. There is a desire on the part of some to learn motor mechanical work. At the pre-

sent moment it is possible to receive instructions at the college in connection with motor-cars.

Mr. GLEDSON: Not in motor mechanical work, but in motor operating.

Mr. MORGAN: Is it possible to get instruction in the driving of motor-cars?

Mr. GLEDSON: A class can be formed at any college in any subject if the inducement is offering.

Mr. MORGAN: No training is given at the technical colleges in the subject I desire. The horse is gradually going out of use, and people are using motor-cars not on account of any pleasure they derive from them but because they are an absolute necessity. Instruction cannot be obtained on how to drive a motor-car at the Central Technical College, and instruction should also be given on what to do with a motor-car up to a certain standard should anything go wrong. All that is required is to give the instruction in this direction that any ordinary motor-car driver possesses. I believe that all the opportunities exist for such a class at the Central Technical College, and it is possible that some of the Government cars could be made available for the class.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If you get ten students, the college is prepared to start a class and provide a teacher.

Mr. MORGAN: I am told that the boys do not get an opportunity of learning how to drive a car.

Mr. GLEDSON: They get an opportunity of learning the whole operation of a car.

Mr. MORGAN: This is a matter that is well worth taking up. Many boys from the country, when holidaying in Brisbane, would be prepared to spend a portion of their time at the college in learning to drive and control motor-cars. I know that it is a matter that takes a great deal of time, and it is therefore necessary that the opportunities for instruction should be available. If the Minister consulted with the heads of the Central Technical College, I am sure they would be only too pleased to introduce some class of this sort.

I had the opportunity on several occasions of going over the Central Technical College, and I must congratulate those connected with it on the very good work that is being accomplished there. I am only sorry that the children in the country have not the opportunity of attending such an institution, and securing the facilities of which the sons and daughters of the wage-earners of the cities and towns are the only ones who can avail themselves. I do not begrudge that for one moment, as I think they are entitled to it. I believe the college is doing splendid work. The staff and all concerned are doing their level best, and the institution is a credit to the State and to the Department of Public Instruction.

I hope the Minister will put my suggestion before the proper authorities with a view to getting something done.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): I wish to pay my little tribute to the work that is being done by this branch of the Department of Public Instruction. I realise that they are doing a valuable service so far as the education of the children of the State is concerned. I believe they could still further

[Hon. F. T. Brennan.]

extend their activities and do something still better than they are now doing. If one reviews what is being done so far as our western centres are concerned, one finds there is a domestic science car, which fills a very necessary part in the lives of the young women and girls of the back country. Then we have the manual training college, which is ineffective in a way, although I do not say that it should be done away with, but the perpetual making of soap boxes and so forth does not lead very far.

It is obvious that one of the great problems confronting us is the drift from the bush to the towns. If we analyse it, we find that the lack of facilities offered in the western areas has a good deal to do with this. Parents leave the West because they cannot find proper facilities for the training of their children there.

Wool is the most valuable asset that we have in Queensland. In the western areas we are producing a type of wool second to none in the world. That is proved conclusively by the buyers from all parts of the world who purchase our output. Although we are prepared to establish schools for the training of our young folk in manual science, tinsmithing, carpentry, and so forth, we ignore training in wool. It might be argued that the boys could go to the Central Technical College and get their training. I cannot follow the force of that argument for two reasons. First and foremost, the wool curriculum of the Central Technical College is definitely overloaded. There is more bluff and bull-doing about wool-classing than there is about any other profession. It is not very difficult to learn wool-classing if teachers teach the proper thing and do not put the students through a lot of academical trivialities that do not matter one way or the other. Consequently, the wool activities here are somewhat restricted and do not reach the boys they should. I advocate the establishment of a wool-classing school in some western town. I have no jealousies. The question might be decided in two ways.

1. We could establish a rural school where boys might be taught wool-classing.

2. We could give the instruction through itinerant teachers.

Personally, I think that better results would be obtained by the employment of itinerant wool-classing teachers who would visit western schools and teach the boys something about wool.

It has been very truly argued that the small selector never manages to top the wool market either in Brisbane or elsewhere. We know that the big wool men bring expert wool-classers from the Southern States to go through their flocks and class the clip. Consequently, the wool is put up in a more efficient manner because of the system of incessant culling that goes on. The small selector is unable to do that, and has frequently to rely on his more or less imperfect knowledge of the wool industry and wool market to bring his flocks to the highest degree of productivity. Naturally he is not successful. It is obvious, therefore, if we take into consideration that the time is not far distant in the sum total of things when most of the big holdings will be cut up into small holdings, that we should ensure that the men going on to those holdings should have some knowledge of wool and what should be done to secure the best results. We have made no effort to train

our young men in the west in the woolen industry. What else is there that we can offer? We cannot offer mechanical aims, we cannot offer training in the trades which pertain to the city. We desire that these people should remain in the bush to populate the bush, and do something really valuable so far as the State is concerned. Surely it is the duty of the State, recognising the necessity of keeping the rising generation in the bush, to provide some facilities that will enable them to remain there and earn a more or less adequate livelihood.

[3.30 p.m.]

There are many appointments for which boys who had had some training in wool would be readily accepted, and they would not drift into the nomadic occupations they are drifting into to-day. It may be argued that the outlay will be too great. It may be argued that only a few boys would take any interest in a wool-classing scheme such as I have outlined; but if only half a dozen boys each year took an interest in the scheme and learned all that was possible within the narrow range provided, something valuable would be achieved, and a very desirable object would be served. It may be argued that we cannot do this because we would not have the boys at our disposal for a sufficiently long period. That is wrong. We do not desire to teach these boys anything about the grading of cross-bred wools. We do not want to start with thirty-two counts and work up to the high-grade counts. In a scheme of this nature we would content ourselves with teaching the classing of the types of wool that are produced in the central-west and the north-west, or wherever a local scheme was put into operation. That is all we would have to teach. We would teach the pupils the classing of wools between sixty's and seventy's, including sixty-four-seventy's. That is not a very wide range. That range may be mastered by any intelligent boy in a short space of time. It would not be difficult to obtain an itinerant teacher who would go from school to school conducting classes at definite periods under definite conditions and teach the boys something about wool, and invite those beyond the school age to come along and learn something about wool, too. That would be far more valuable than teaching the boys how to make soap-boxes, as has been done in our schools for the last ten years, week in week out, and year in year out. In addition to these considerations, vital as they are, there is still another question in relation to this that we have to discuss—that is, the great improvement in the wool industry. As I said before, the selectors' clips are usually inferior to the squatters' clips. If we train the boys, who will ultimately become selectors, then their flocks will be equal to the flocks of the more prosperous and more progressive squatters in the sheep-producing areas of our State. I hope the Minister will be prepared to give this matter some consideration, because I think it is a vital question, and advantage could be taken of the experience of the Department of Public Instruction in New South Wales, where a scheme of this nature has been established and has been successful, and where there are many wool classers who are prepared to impart a knowledge as to the classing of wool. The opposition does not come from the wool classers themselves. The opposition comes from those who desire to make this wool classing a close corporation,

Mr. Bulcock. }

and would exclude everybody but those who have had the highest possible training—a training they cannot possibly put into effect when they go into the wool areas of the West.

Mr. HANSON (*Buranda*): I notice in the report of the Superintendent of Technical Instruction that he makes some reference to the training of apprentices, and I want to discuss this vote in so far as it relates to the training of these boys. I would like, in the first place, to congratulate the officers of the Central Technical College on the way in which they have assisted the various Apprenticeship Committees at all times in the drawing up of syllabuses and in all matters appertaining to the training of apprentices in the Technical College. As one who has been connected with the apprenticeship scheme since its inception, and as one who has been closely associated with the officers of the Central Technical College, I say I do not think that their services have been sufficiently appreciated. They have been ready to place their services at the disposal of these committees at any time of the day, and I might also say, at any time of the night. Right from the Superintendent down to the trade teachers their services have at all times been at the disposal of these various committees. The training of apprentices in the metropolitan area is on a very sound footing. The apprenticeship scheme has been in operation sufficiently long to permit of the various committees becoming thoroughly established, and to have their syllabuses properly framed and put into operation. There are some trades, I admit, in which the Apprenticeship Committee have not yet established classes.

What I want to speak of at this juncture is the matter of the extension of technical training to the various country towns. During recent months the apprenticeship system has been extended to towns outside the metropolitan area. On the South-Western and North Coast railways, and right up North the apprenticeship system has been extended to a large number of places. Unfortunately, in many of these places the technical colleges are not in the developed state which they have reached in the bigger centres, and a good many of the trades which have been brought under the scheme of apprenticeship will not have the advantage of a system of technical training, because the classes are not established in those particular colleges.

I want to draw the attention of the Minister to what I think is the most important town in Queensland—I suppose he calls it a city—I am referring to Toowoomba, where they have started a sewerage scheme, simultaneously with which they have started a plumbing class at the technical college, but it is in a very crude state. I understand that a teacher has been appointed, but the accommodation for the class is by no means sufficient. I hope the Minister will early take steps to secure better accommodation. Not only will it be compulsory for the boys to attend that class, but a large number of the journeymen plumbers in the town will take advantage of the technical education offering, so that they will be competent to do the work which will have to be done when the sewerage system is brought about in Toowoomba.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Further accommodation will be required.

Mr. HANSON: Yes, I know what is required.

Mr. Bulcock.

The other matter I wish to mention is the payment of the fees of apprentices attending technical colleges. I admit that the Government have reduced the fees which were formerly payable by apprentices to half the ordinary amount, but I want to remind the Minister that the Labour platform stands for the abolition of payment of fees for apprentices at technical colleges. Whilst the Labour platform stands for free technical tuition, I think a good starting point would be to abolish the fees which apprentices now have to pay. I know that the question of financial stringency will be raised. I have here a table showing what the cost is under present conditions and giving the number of apprentices in attendance at technical colleges. I want to draw the attention of the Minister to a very important conference held on 18th July last under the presidency of the Public Service Commissioner. That conference was thoroughly representative of employers and employees in the various skilled trades. During the course of the conference a recommendation was unanimously carried recommending the Minister to abolish these fees. I sincerely hope that the Government will take serious notice of and give early effect to this recommendation, which comes from that conference with a unanimous vote. These figures give the position up to a fortnight ago—

	No. of Apprentices.
Electrical trade	55
Engineering trade	185
Building trade	282
Furniture trade	148
Printing trade	101
Leather trade	46
Sheet-metal trade	26
Baking trade	12
Coach and motor trade	17
Coopers' trade	3
Dental mechanical trade	1
Boot trade	14
Clothing trade	2
Watchmaking trade	2
	894

Fees payable, 894 at £1 7s. = £1,206 18s.

Hon. members will see from those figures that, although 894 apprentices have been placed in various trades, there are not classes for all of them at the technical colleges. As a matter of fact, last year 46 apprentices in the leather trade, 17 in the coach and motor trade, 3 in the coopering trade, 1 in the dental mechanical trade, 14 in the boot trade, 2 in the clothing trade, and 2 in the watchmaking trade were not able to attend classes at all. Nevertheless, we may say that approximately 850 apprentices attended classes at an average cost of £1 7s.—or a total of £1,147 10s. per year. That shows the importance of the point I have raised. I would remind the Minister that the plank of the Labour platform to which I refer has been in existence since January, 1918, and I think the Government should take this opportunity of rectifying the position and removing the burden, small as it may seem, from the shoulders of the working man.

There is another aspect of the question. It is laid down under the regulations dealing with apprenticeship—and the practice will be continued under the Apprenticeship Act—that all apprentices are compelled to attend technical classes. The apprentices have to pay their fees in advance, and the

officials at the Technical College often have a great difficulty in collecting them as most apprentices are the sons of working men and women, and that furnishes another argument why the Government should remove this disability from the shoulders of the working man, as I suggest.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I should like to say something on the item, "Railway Fares and Freights, Printing, Stationery, etc.," which this year is reduced from £2,400 to £2,000. I have already referred to the necessity for some reform in the matter of the stationery used in the public service, and I understand that something has been done in the Railway Department. It would be very nice if this department could join with the other departments with a view to obtaining some reform in this direction. I am aware that probably it is just as hard to get them to do that as to get the other States to agree to a particular matter. I understand that the Commissioner for Railways approved of the suggestion made by Mr. Keogh for the standardisation of paper in that department and paid him a bonus of £20, and it is estimated that that department will save £5,000 per annum as a result. It is stated that some Government departments are using paper costing as much as 3s. and 4s. a lb. That is quite unnecessary. I understand that the other States are going into this matter, and it seems to me that there is a foundation here for something of a reformative nature. At any rate, I hope it will eventuate, because at the present time it is quite obvious that there is a considerable waste. The State Children Department has already initiated a reform in the size and quality of paper used in formal replies.

From almost every department we get letters of acknowledgement on the very best paper. That costs the whole of the departments a great deal of money, and there is a great deal of scope for economy in that direction. The basis of economy should be to keep an eye on these relatively small but actually large amounts. Some years ago the Treasurer made inquiries as to the waste in paper, and the report obtained furnished a great deal of information. I suggest that the Secretary for Public Instruction go into this matter so far as it affects his department, and I hope that other departments will follow suit.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): Last year the expenditure in connection with this vote was £81,349, but this year we are appropriating only £75,662. The hon. member for Buranda pointed out that, when the new Apprenticeship Bill becomes law, there will be need for a greater amount of expenditure. I do not think anyone will offer any objection to that expenditure, as it is very necessary to give a good deal of consideration to technical education. There is a technical college in Toowoomba, which is in the Minister's electorate. Considerable improvement has been made there during recent years. The gentleman in charge is a very capable officer, and is able to give the necessary instruction to those attending that college. There is one want, however, and that is increased ground accommodation for further improvements. Some reference was made by the Toowoomba City Council to a proposal to take portion of Queen's Park for military purposes, and for an exchange of land adjoining the college to be made with the military authorities. While

I realise that land is necessary for military requirements, I certainly would stress the point that no portion of Queen's Park should be taken for that purpose. Money should be found to acquire land elsewhere for military requirements, leaving the park to the people of the city of Toowoomba.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. T. Brennan, *Toowoomba*): The department has already given consideration to the action of the Federal Government in taking over certain land for defence purposes. The Federal authorities are agreeable to give us certain land on which to erect the buildings, but in the meantime we have to continue our present position.

I appreciate references made by the hon. member for Buranda, and the hon. member for South Brisbane in connection with certain matters, and I promise to give full consideration to them. The technical colleges are doing great work, which is appreciated not only by the Government but by the people generally throughout the State. The Apprenticeship Committee is co-operating with the officers of my department, and very satisfactory work is being accomplished. There is a Women's Committee composed of a number of noble ladies who attend and do very valuable work for the department at the Technical College as an advisory committee.

This debate has been protracted, but most interesting. The Opposition marshalled their forces, trained their guns, but found their powder damp and their target impregnable; they were forced to retire like greyhounds after an unsuccessful chase and they now look about as dejected.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES.

CHIEF OFFICE.

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

"That £17,415 be granted for 'Chief Office.'"

The expenditure last year exceeded the amount voted by this Committee and amounted to £18,680 lls. 8d. This year it is not expected that the expenditure will reach that level, but we are asking for an increase of about £2,000 over last year's Estimates.

Mr. BEDFORD (*Warrego*): It is to be regretted that the search for petroleum in Queensland has not so far succeeded in bringing in a well, but the idea that an immense territory of marine tertiary beds proved to exist in this country should therefore be considered as hopeless is quite in opposition to the experience of petroleum prospectors in other countries. While I was in America a big official of a very important oil company asked me how much the average working capital of a petroleum prospecting company had in Australia. When I replied that £30,000 cash working capital was considered something considerable, although the South Australian Oil Wells Company has spent, I believe, about £60,000, he laughed and said that one company he was connected with had spent on the Mid-Continental Oil Field a sum of 7,500,000 dollars, about £1,500,000, and they were now committed to the further expenditure of 20,000,000 dollars, although all the data they had been able to collect during their early drilling campaign had been of an almost negative character. That is to say, they had spent 7,500,000 dollars and had

Mr. Bedford.]

never in the number of holes sunk brought in oil. The very occurrence of petroleum naturally explains that because there have been cases, as in the Spindle Top Oil Field, where over a stretch of country about half a mile in diameter the productive wells were so numerous that the legs of the derricks were interlacing one another. Immediately outside of that area although millions of dollars had been spent in drilling, no oil had been got outside of those particular holes. As further indicating the difficulties of successful petroleum prospecting, I would point out that in another case three or four feet outside a line where oil occurs in a crevice pool and where productive wells exist, holes that were sunk proved absolutely dry. The United States have a tremendous amount of capital, the capital of 120,000,000 people. They calmly take hold of a job and although they may sink 15,000 to 20,000 dry wells are not sufficiently disappointed to throw up the game when those wells are proved duffers. In Australia very little money, comparatively speaking, has been spent up to date. I was for some time associated with the South Australian Oil Wells Company, which is prospecting in a country described by Dr. Wade, now employed by the Commonwealth Government as petroleum geologist, as merely a thin sheet of marine tertiary formation covering an older landscape. We went down 4,500 feet in that comparatively thin sheet and we were still in the thin sheet. At intervals from 400 feet down we had gas brashes and certain showing of oil—just about enough to swear by, but not commercially valuable. That has been the case in the Roma district, which offers in Australia the best possible chances for successful petroleum prospecting to-day. The amount of bitter criticism that has been thrown on the failure to date to produce a payable oil well has very unjustly extended to the Minister. In point of fact it was necessary for two members of this Chamber the other day to review some hostile and badly-reported statement of the Minister in London about a railway to Mount Isa being already booked. A charge of boosting was made against the Minister, although the real charge was against the bad reporter. The hon. gentleman brought back with him the statement he had made in London and in no sense did that statement tally with the statement in the Press.

Getting on to the matter of Mount Isa, here is a case where there are over a very large area a series of ore channels up to a mile in width, outcropping for 5 miles and probably payable for three. Part of the criticism that was levelled at the Minister was also levelled at anybody who had any connection with that field. The criticism was by men who are not only continually turning down socialism, but shrieking of the immorality of it, yet they consider the proper duty of the Government was to preserve that field for the Government, and that the Government should be introduced into the highly speculative business of metaliferous mining. So far as the story of the working miners on the field not having had results, the fact remains that certain people who occupy such territory must pay before they come into full ownership of the property the sum of £40,000 to the working miners aforesaid.

Some statements have been made as to the value of the field, which, of course, is

[*Mr. Bedford.*]

partly still in the air. A large amount of ore is already showing. Length in mining parlance means depth. The depth we have gone down to is about 120 to 130 feet, and is still showing a zone very heavily leached. The hard silification of the surface rocks has maintained most of the values at the surface, but immediately below the surface meteoric waters have leached the values in silver and lead. We expect that high secondary enrichment will occur at something like 200 feet. The statements made with regard to the Secretary for Public Mines and Mount Isa were on a par with the statements made about petroleum. Of course, the statement was made by a gentleman whose only knowledge of mining, I believe, is that he deals in spectacles which are dug out of the earth in some form or other. Judging by his success as a legislator, I presume his success in his own line has been on a par. His greatest success as a spectacle merchant should be in selling spectacles to the blind, who cannot criticise. He said that the Secretary for Mines stated that the field would be retained for the working miner. In a great base metal proposition such as this, no working miner—no gouger—would be able to make salt.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I never said that.

Mr. BEDFORD: I am not saying you did. I am answering the criticism of the hon. member for Kurilpa. He asked, "Who are the working miners controlling the field to-day?" And then, of course, all the parrots over on the other side said, "The member for Warrego." The hon. member for Kurilpa talks of socialism as a rotten thing, yet he advocated a policy of communism; that is to say, after the metal was proved to be in the field, he said that the Government should immediately confiscate the lot and run the field as a communistic enterprise. Still nothing is surprising from the boy scout of Kurilpa.

Mr. KELSO: Or the winner of the Carrington States.

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the reflection on the hon. member for Kurilpa.

Mr. BEDFORD: I withdraw it certainly. The other critic of the Government and of the Minister was the hon. member for East Toowoomba. The hon. member for East Toowoomba was tremendously exercised with the wild idea that the Minister had made these statements in London in order to give his friends time to unload. There is not much mining in Wales of any sort that is valuable for Australian comparisons, but apparently the hon. member for East Toowoomba does not understand the existence in Australia of men who are as much interested in mining propositions for the game as for the stake. Mining in Wales came down to the position of having taught the whole of the smelting world how best to rob the miner. In Lithgow, New South Wales, where there was a smelter working for some time, the miners noticed after having been swindled in fifteen different ways that the smelter swindles the miner, that there was an item of 5s. for canal dues, and when they objected to the words "canal dues," knowing that there were no canals in New South Wales, and that the ore was brought by railway, they were told that that was

always a charge in connection with Welsh smelters, and that it was generally known as "Betsy." If the hon. member for East Toowoomba thinks the miners are only in it for "Betsy" he makes a tremendous mistake. The work done by the Minister on behalf of mining has been sound. We kept away from the mistakes the other States made in connection with petroleum or petroleum prospecting by deciding to stick to Australians who at least knew Australian geology. Dr. Wade was brought here by the Commonwealth, in whose service he made a tremendous mistake, as I have already mentioned, in deciding that the great tertiary beds of South-East and South Australia were only thin sheets covering an older landscape. He was engaged by the Commonwealth Government, although they knew he had had no field experience. He was a geologist who knew every rock between Brompton Oratory and the Thames Embankment, but when it came to a knowledge of actual working conditions he was hopelessly at sea. The Agent-General for West Australia cabled of Dr. Wade to the West Australia Minister for Mines that Dr. Wade was appointed by G. H. Reid—after dinner. In this State we have had the assistance of probably one of the best geological staffs that Australia has ever seen, and the Department and the Minister and this party have backed them up to an extent unimaginable in any State that was not under a Labour régime. Work has been done in the establishing of State batteries in small fields which come up and have their little day and die, and those conditions will no doubt be repeated. I have not the slightest doubt that, as prospecting is proceeded with—not the prospecting that puts up a little working capital and then decides to have a fly on the market and do all its mining on the Stock Exchange—as honest mining is given the capital to go on with in this State, so must the Golden Age of mineral and metal production revert to Queensland.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): The hon. member for Warrego made some reference to my remarks regarding Mount Isa.

Mr. BEDFORD: Yes, libellous remarks.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You know nothing about it.

Mr. FRY: The Minister can speak by-and-by. My remarks were to the effect that the Government policy is the nationalisation or socialisation of mining.

Mr. BEDFORD: It is not communistic.

Mr. FRY: It is easy to see where the hon. member stands. The Government nationalised the Chillagoe mines at a big price when they were not paying. They also bought Mungana, and it did not pay, but when it came to a virgin field at Mount Isa they let it go out of their hands.

Mr. BEDFORD: It was never in their hands.

Mr. FRY: It was a virgin field, and the Government had the power of preventing the mining speculators of Melbourne and Sydney and members sitting on the Government benches from making it a gambling concern on the Stock Exchange. I previously used words to that effect, and I repeat the statement again, and say it straight out. It is contrary to the policy of the party to which the Minister and the hon. member for Warrego belong to permit this virgin

field, which the Government have claimed is likely to be one of the wealthiest fields in the world, to slip into the hands of mining speculators, jazzers, and members of his own party.

Mr. BEDFORD: If you are not merely ignorant, you are a "Quilp."

Mr. FRY: The hon. member cannot deny that it has been the policy of his party.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Your arguments apply to other people for taking it up.

Mr. FRY: I am asking you to be consistent. What I am saying is this: If you are going to take Mount Isa as an example, then you are not sincere. The argument which I put forward earlier in the session is one that cannot be successfully assailed by any member of the Labour party. I challenge them to rise up one after another and assail that position, if they dare. I challenge them man to man to assail that position, because they are proving to the world that they are not sincere in their policy, and in matters affecting their own personal interests as wobbly as a reed in a varying wind.

At 4.11 p.m.,

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

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I am not going to say that it is my policy to advocate that fields like Mount Isa should be handled by the State. I think it is quite a reasonable policy that those who are successful in finding wealth should enjoy it, considering that we are endeavouring to encourage people to go out and find new fields and new wealth which will be enjoyed by the whole community. I trust that those who went first to Mount Isa and who were fortunate to peg out the ground will reap their reward. I hope that many others who are looking for treasure in other parts of the State will be successful. Unfortunately we are not successful in all our mining ventures, whether it be for metals or for oil. It is not so long ago that I disagreed with a provision in the Petroleum Bill giving to outsiders and foreigners an opportunity to come in and secure wealth by mining for petroleum in this State. The only opportunity was through Dr. Milsom and any of his party who may be Americans. We know that after a certain amount of Australian capital had been put into this Milsom bore at Orallo, and after it had been opened by the Minister, we were told by the hon. gentleman that he was able to say that oil had been struck. We were very pleased to know that he was sanguine to that extent, but, unfortunately, his statement has not been borne out by facts or by the opinions of Government experts. Since the Government or the Minister were so early made aware of the discovery of oil it seems strange that neither the Minister, the department, nor any member of the Government knew of the obstruction which has been deliberately or otherwise placed in the bore. It has not been made clear whether the obstruction was placed there by accident or deliberate act. The Minister has not been able even at this late date to give us any information on that point, although he was able to give us the good information at a very early stage. We would like to know whether any of the foreigners who enjoyed privileges under the Act to which I refer were able to unload on the people. We would also like to know if these foreigners

Mr. Corser.]

are still in the country. When the Bill was introduced the Minister made it clear that it was intended to protect Australian interests, to do away with bogus concerns, and protect the investor. One of the things the investor wants to find out at an early date about any venture is whether something is wrong or not, so that the other fellow may not get the advantage. It has not been made clear who was aware of the obstruction in the bore, or whether any monetary advantage was secured by those who were aware of it to the detriment of the present shareholders. I would like to know, too, from the Minister what information he has with regard to the principals, with whom he evidently was familiar—at any rate so far as their movements were concerned—in the early working of the bore. We would like to know whether they are in the country, and I think it would be a good thing if the Government took upon themselves the duty which they said devolved upon them when the Petroleum Bill was before the House of protecting the shareholders in the State. They should let the country know just what the position is at Orallo. If it is safe and sound, it is not fair to those who have their money in it that these things should be said, and that there should be so much secrecy.

Mr. HARTLEY: It is a private company. Why can they not look after themselves?

Mr. CORSER: The Act gives the Government power to protect those private individuals.

Mr. HARTLEY: You believe in individualism, do you not?

Mr. CORSER: If I do believe in individualism, I nevertheless disagreed when the Bill was going through with the provision giving to certain foreigners the same rights as Australians enjoy, that is, the right to participate—after the agreement had been drawn up and ratified by Parliament—in the concession of a very large area of country.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is an Australian company.

Mr. CORSER: It is not an Australian company. It was floated in Australia, but certain Americans were successful in enjoying the right to which Australians were entitled. These Yankees or outsiders were unable to enjoy that right except in this way. Section 10 of the Petroleum Act gave them that right.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman will not be in order in discussing an Act of Parliament on this vote. He will be in order in discussing the administration of this department.

Mr. CORSER: That section proves that what I say is right. If I am not right, why were certain words omitted from the Act?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I say they are not foreigners.

Mr. CORSER: I say there is no necessity for them to be Australians or Briti-hers.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I say they are.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. gentleman to confine his remarks to the vote.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I gave the names when the hon. gentleman raised the question.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman did not give us information about a lot of other

points that were raised. He did not tell us whether there was going to be any trouble in connection with the bore. He did not tell us when the trouble got there, but he was the first in Australia to inform the public that they had struck oil, and since then a great amount of money has been invested by Australians.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I qualified that statement.

Mr. CORSER: Since then certain trouble has occurred, and the Minister does not know anything about it to-day. He does not claim to know where the principal of the company is to-day. The public have not been able to secure that information from the Minister. There are a number of shareholders in Australia who would like to know more about this serious matter. The Minister was the first to give them the information some months ago that oil had been struck, but he cannot give them any information now.

There is another matter which is of great importance to the State, and that is the coal mining industry in Central and Northern Queensland. It would be very interesting to know the total cost per ton to the Railway Department of coal from the Styx River coalfield, the Baralaba coalfield, the Bowen coalfield, and the Mount Mulligan coalfield.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I shall be glad to give the hon. gentleman that information.

Mr. CORSER: Probably the Minister will be able to explain the difference between the different charges to the Railway Department. In 1923 the Styx River coal cost 32s. 2d. per ton on trucks, and was sold to the Railway Department at 25s. per ton, which means a loss of 7s. 2d. per ton to the mine. The Blair Athol coalfield, which is being starved because of the opening of these State coalfields, is able to supply coal to the department at 10s. 6d. per ton, which is 14s. 6d. per ton less than the cost of the Styx River coal.

Mr. FOLEY: You want to be fair and add the freight from Blair Athol.

Mr. CORSER: What about the freight from Mount Mulligan? If the hon. gentleman added the freight from Mount Mulligan, he would get an unfair comparison from another point of view. The cost of coal at Baralaba is 18s. 9d. per ton, and it is sold to the Railway Department at 14s. 10d. per ton, which is a loss of 3s. 11d. per ton to the mine. Those are the figures that Mr. Monaghan compiled from the 1923 figures.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are wrong.

Mr. CORSER: We know that the State Labour Organiser, Mr. Joseph Silver Collings, addressed a meeting at the Blair Athol mine about the end of June, and tried to smooth things over. A report of the meeting was sent to the official organ of the party, but apparently it did not give the same satisfaction that the organiser's speech did at Blair Athol. The speech of the organiser gave every satisfaction when he was there, but there has been no result of his visit and speech. The miners at Blair Athol have made a very honest public appeal on behalf of the mine and on behalf of the calling they are following. The men there are not getting quarter time, and are living on with their wives

(Mr. Corser.

and families in the hope that the Government will allow this field to be opened up by fair competition. It is not the proprietors alone who are asking this, but the miners and their wives.

Mr. MAXWELL: They are being starved out.

Mr. CORSER: Something should be done by the Government to enable this wonderfully rich coal mine to be worked on full time to secure a full profit to the company, full wages to the miners, and good coal to the consumers. Such a policy would result in a profit to the State. On the other hand, the State coal mines are being worked at a loss and the coal is being secured by the Railway Department at a loss. When the charges on that coal are compared with the charges made for the Blair Athol coal, a far greater loss is exhibited. Whatever can be said about State enterprises and the argument of the Government that they give to their workers better conditions, which enable them to secure better results and produce a better article at a cheaper rate, the fact remains that the Government will not allow any competition so far as the Blair Athol coal mine is concerned.

Mr. COLLINS: What nonsense! We have competition up at Bowen from a proprietary coal mine right alongside the State mine.

Mr. CORSER: This valuable mine at Blair Athol is hampered because the Government will not allow the mine to operate by giving it a contract, even though such action would result in a saving to the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is handicapped by distance.

Mr. CORSER: It is not handicapped by distance when compared with Mount Mulligan. The handicap in the case of Blair Athol is not distance. At a recent mining delegates' meeting at Ipswich the following figures were given as to the cost of producing a ton of coal at the State coal mines and the selling rates:—

—	Cost per Ton.	Selling Rate per Ton.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bowen	0 19 8	0 16 0
Baralaba	0 18 9	0 14 10
Styx	1 12 2	1 0 0
Mount Mulligan .. .	1 12 0	1 12 2

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not right.

Mr. CORSER: Then why were these figures given at the mining delegates' meeting at Ipswich? The loss on the Baralaba State coal mine for the six months was £2,400. When hon. members look at those figures and realise that the Blair Athol company could sell for less and secure a profit, the men could secure high wages and enjoy reasonable conditions for their wives and families, and the State could effect a saving by purchasing this coal, they will agree something is being done to boom and give unfair advantages to the State coal mines. Whatever argument might be adduced for socialism and the socialisation of our industries, it cannot stand criticism, as these figures show that State socialistic enterprises are being run at a loss against the operations of private enterprise, which can take a similar article from the earth at a profit.

Mr. COLLINS: Are you quoting from figures which were compiled before the advent of the State coal mines?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member will find it very difficult to make a comparison of prices as they exist to-day. We know that in most industries where there is no competition there is a possibility of an excess price being charged, but to-day, with the development of Blair Athol, they are able to produce coal at the advantage I have stated. It will be very hard for members of the Government to justify this privilege to the State field and this starving of a proprietary field and the starving of the men there who should be working under an award and receiving a remuneration that would provide a decent living.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): I think the vote of the Department of Mines is a very important one, and one that should receive some consideration. No doubt we have recently had a stir in connection with the mining industry of the State, more especially in the Northern parts of Queensland. Quite recently there was a big move caused by the discovery of payable ore on the Mount Isa field. Up to the present we have had nothing definite or practical about Mount Isa. It remains for the field to prove itself before anyone can make any statements with regard to its value or otherwise. No doubt, as a result of Mr. Saint Smith taking over the management of the Mount Isa Mines, Limited, the public were given a lead and some people invested in the field with great confidence. That was mainly because Mr. Saint Smith left his position in the Department of Mines and went to Mount Isa as manager. Evidently there was a string to his job in reserve so that after twelve months Mr. Saint Smith might return to the department. He has recently resigned from the Mount Isa Mines, Limited, and is going back to the department, and the result may be a diminishing of public enthusiasm for the field. The Lawn Hill mine was worked many years ago, and is a far better proposition than Mount Isa. Mr. Ellis, of Cloncurry, went along to Lawn Hill and opened it up. To-day he has thirty men working there, and is giving a good practical demonstration of what he is prepared to do as a prospector in opening up mines far distant from any port. Everyone will wish Mr. Ellis success, as he is one of the good old pioneers of North Queensland, and one who does not go about boosting things.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RIORDAN: He sets about the matter quietly, and in a practical fashion. By the last trip of the s.s. "Kallatina" he shipped from Burketown 50 tons, and by the next trip he has 80 tons of ore for shipment. I think the assays received from Lawn Hill will show some justification for my saying that it is a better field than Mount Isa. The assays from Lawn Hill show 70 per cent. lead and 40 ounces of silver to the ton. I have here a report from the warden, Mr. McLean, of Croydon, who recently visited the field, in which he says—

"I feel sure the field will be given a good trial and success will be assured if we can only get railway communication."

Everyone knows that railway communication is desirable, but before the Government build a railway to a mining [4.30 p.m.] field they should see that the field is first established. There would be some justification for the building

Mr. Riordan.]

of a railway line from Burketown to Lawn Hill, and the justification is that the country around Lawn Hill is quite as good as the country in the Gympie district, and in the event of the mines giving out, that country would support a sufficient population to enable the railway to pay. Mr. McLean, continuing his report, says—

“Although high-grade ore (70 per cent. lead and 40 ounces silver) has only been exposed in any great quantities on the Lilydale, Mended Hill, Silver King, and Greater Britain leases, there is no reason why it should not be forthcoming in other leases on development work being undertaken. On the other hand, there is no lack of lower-grade carbonates (20 per cent. lead) which could be treated on the field by smelting, for which purposes there is plenty of wood and water available.”

Previously, when these mines were worked, it cost £8 a ton to transport the ore from Lawn Hill down to Burketown; then lighterage cost £1 10s. a ton, and freight £2 10s. a ton, and the cost practically killed the mine at that time. Since Mr. Ellis has started there the teamsters have reduced their charge for carriage to Burketown to £4 a ton, and the lighters have reduced their charge to 10s. a ton. The freight on the “Kallatina” is £1 a ton, and harbour dues 9d. a ton, making the cost £5 10s. 9d. a ton landed on the Cairns wharf. Mr. Ellis expects to produce 300 tons of ore a week in the very near future, so there is some justification for assisting a man of the type of Mr. Ellis, who is prepared to do the practical work. The warden continues—

“Apart from mining, the country is splendidly adapted for pastoral (sheep and cattle) and agricultural purposes. It possesses two wonderful running rivers in the Gregory and Lawn Hill Creek, the like of which I have not seen in any part of Queensland.”

I am doubtful whether he has seen anything better than the Gregory River in any part of Australia. I am doubtful if there is a river in Australia that has a greater volume of water going to waste. The same applies to the Lawn Hill Creek. There are 60,000 gallons a day running to waste down the Lawn Hill Creek. The warden continues—

“If this country were opened for closer settlement it would be rushed, and if the field were worked, a suitable market would be close at hand. When mining diminished, a population would be established, as at Gympie.

“From my experience of the Gulf, I must say that neither Normanton nor Croydon possesses anything to be compared with the hinterland of Burketown for richness of natural resources, and the provision of railway communication from Dobbyn to Burketown, via Gregory Downs, would open up one of the fairest provinces of our great Commonwealth. Sheep and cattle thrive on its pastures, its mineral contents are rich and varied, and its running streams provide the means of irrigation for its arable lands, which, to my own knowledge, grows super-excellent vegetables and tropical fruits. Mr. George Phillips, C.E., also states that sugar-cane should flourish here, and experiments with cotton have proved successful.

[Mr. Riordan.

“This is indeed a land of promise, but, in my opinion, that promise cannot be fulfilled until it is linked up by railway with a port. It is a land of vast distances, and those distances must be bridged before metals or produce can be handled with success.”

I think that report would justify some action being taken to assist this field. If the time is not ripe for the building of a light railway from Burketown to the Lawn Hill field, then the Main Roads Board might well send a man across to report on a road from Lawn Hill down to the ballast ground at Burketown. This, I think, should be one of the main roads.

Mr. KELSO: What is the distance?

Mr. RIORDAN: It is between 130 and 140 miles to the ballast ground. This field would serve as a feeder to Chillagoe until such time as the Government can assist Mr. Ellis to establish his own works. Mr. Ellis is a very enterprising man. When it is necessary to have the mining and concentration work done on the field, he will have no hesitation in setting about the erection of a plant there. With a combination of the Cloncurry and Lawn Hill fields it might be practicable to establish a smelting works at Burketown, where this ore could be treated.

As the Public Works Commission intend to make a report in regard to railway communication with Mount Isa, I fail to see why the Government should continue the foolish policy of hauling goods and ores 600 or 700 miles to Townsville when there is a port within a couple of hundred miles of the field. I think that policy is a bad one and that these minerals should go to the natural port. Even if it is continued now, that policy will eventually have to be altered. Mr. McLean, who has recently visited the district, says there is nothing to compare with the Burketown district in regard to mineral, pastoral, and agricultural wealth, and eventually we shall have a big population up there. There is nothing like mining to give a town a start. A mining township will spring up in a night. When on their visit to make a report in connection with a railway from Kajibbi to Mount Isa and thence to a Gulf port, the Public Works Commission might well pay a visit to the Lawn Hill mine and up as far as the Gregory Hotel. I think that, in justice to the Gulf and Cloncurry districts, the Commission should also travel from Burketown to Normanton and take evidence in both places. Normanton has been left practically without attention from any Government for the past half century. Governments have done well out of the Gulf country in connection with mining, but very little of the money collected on those mining fields has been expended to try and keep the place going after mining has commenced to go down. It is regrettable that metals have to be carried from Cloncurry to Townsville by rail, a distance of 500 miles, when they could be taken by water to a good port within a couple of hundred miles from where the metal is produced. I think that the Lawn Hill field will, in the very near future, be one of our very big mining fields, because the proprietors of the s.s. “Kallatina” have been very generous in their reduction of freight, and the teamsters and the people who are conducting the lightering at Burketown have been very considerate also.

I want to say something about the Mining Act and its administration. Miners and prospectors have great difficulty in getting miners' rights and in getting to wardens, who are stationed only at places like Croydon, Cloncurry, and other big centres. That means that the prospector has to come a long way in before he can do any business. What is wrong with making every police constable and officer in charge of a police station an acting warden?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Giving them more duties?

Mr. RIORDAN: It would not mean putting another policeman there to carry out the duties, and, with all the duties which the policeman has to perform, I have not seen one of them who was bent and lean as a result. (Laughter.) I am not going to pull my own leg about the policeman having too much to do. He does the little jobs that come his way willingly and without complaint, and I am sure would be only too pleased to do what I suggest in Northern and Western Queensland in order to assist the miner and prospector. There would then be no difficulty regarding applications. I think that the Mining Act might also be amended to provide that all police stations on mining fields shall be appointed as mining registries, to help in the granting of mineral areas and leases. That would be of great assistance to the prospector. The man must be either a fool or a knave who will not admit that the prospector has been the pioneer of the country I speak of, and that he has been responsible for the opening of many a place like Gympie, Charters Towers, Croydon, and Cloncurry, which otherwise would have taken many years to build up, and which have given many a big lift to Governments during trying periods in our history.

I also think that the Act should be amended to provide that no mineral claim other than a gold area tenable under a miner's right should contain less than 5 acres. It is held that the area tenable under the Act at present is too limited to enable successful operations to be carried on. To a man who has spent six or twelve months in prospecting, and who then lands on something good, anything smaller than 5 acres is absolutely no good. We see what happened at Mount Isa. I suppose the prospectors got more out of Mount Isa than they have ever got before, and that was the result of the Government fixing the area of the lease at 5 acres. It was a good thing for the prospector. Previously he had been eaten up by sharks, who gave him shares and then squeezed him by means of calls until they got his shares for practically nothing, and then they brought on the boom. Until Mount Isa the prospector has never been successful in getting anything much out of a find.

Mr. FRY: You will have to settle with the hon. member for Warrego for what you said about Mount Isa.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. member for Warrego is no different from the hon. member for Kurilpa. It is very interesting to hear the statement of the hon. member for Kurilpa, but he should remember that he is not very often here when I am speaking.

Mr. FRY: You do not agree with the hon. member for Warrego about Mount Isa?

Mr. RIORDAN: It would not matter to me if King George was there. If that was my opinion I would express it. It is a matter of indifference to me who is in the business. If the hon. member has accused the hon. member for Warrego of being a mining speculator that is not my fault. I do not agree with him that the hon. member is a mining speculator. The hon. member for Kurilpa is running a sideline in selling spectacles, and surely the hon. member for Warrego has as much right to carry on some other occupation.

Areas should be set aside on mining fields as reserves for grazing purposes. That is found necessary, as the shire councils at times must reserve and impound the horses of the public. It could be provided that the number of stock possessed by any person should be limited to ten head. It is necessary to have some such provision in our mining laws. A reserve would not be much good unless there was water on it, and I can hardly imagine any Land Commissioner coming along—although they do stupid things at times—and setting aside a reserve without water on it. If there is no water on the reserve, it will be useless as a reserve.

Let me now deal with the question of the miner's right. A prospector makes application for a miner's right and receives it, but it is not very clear in the Act as to what powers the miner's right gives him. You may be prospecting on someone's run, and he may come along and hand you over to the police. An instance has occurred where two men were found on a lease and were fined £5 for prospecting—which was trespassing—on that property. Some definition should be placed in the mining laws as to what are the rights of a prospector who holds a miner's right. He cannot prospect on private property, and he cannot prospect within 200 yards of certain workings. A man may hold a miner's right and may make application for a lease, and still not be able to carry out prospecting on that lease.

At 4.51 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He cannot prospect on private property now except for silver and gold.

Mr. RIORDAN: No. Take the Chillagoe district. There are great areas held under lease there, but nobody has the right to prospect them. Even if the Government do hold those leases as reserves, or as a protection against certain things, they should give permission to prospectors to prospect on them. Unless you get the prospector working on this ground you are going to get nothing out of it, because the prospector is the man who will find the ore for you. He is the man who will give a practical demonstration as to whether the ore is there or not. Some provision should be made for the protection of both the leaseholder and the prospector, and some compensation should be given also to the discoverer of payable ore-bodies. A prospector could be given permission to prospect unworked leases. Take the area around Dobbyn and other such areas. The mines in those districts have not been worked for some time because of the state of the copper market. While we have men who follow the occupation of prospecting, and while we have men who are looking for rations, and while we have men who are willing to work and get the ore out of any of these leases that have not been

Mr. Riordan.]

worked for so long, we should allow the prospector to get that ore out in the interests of the State rather than that he should be thrown on the unemployed market and be compelled to obtain Government relief or draw unemployment insurance.

Now let me refer to exemptions. There is no limit to the period for which exemptions may be granted. They are subject to periodical review, but they should have a limit, say, of two years. If at the end of twelve months the whole of the conditions of exemption, such as the manning of leases, etc., have not been fulfilled, the area should revert to the Crown. It is not advisable to allow any one company, prospector, or anyone else to hold on to land if there are people who are able and eager to work it and raise the ore that is upon it. The Government should give every assistance to enable those who are willing to work the land to secure and work it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed by the Standing Orders.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I have lately been reading the report of the department for last year, which is well worth studying. On the first page of the report I observe the following words—

“Under the circumstances, therefore, the coming year may be faced with optimism.”

We have been told that for a good number of years.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Why become a pessimist just on the eve of success? (Laughter.)

Mr. TAYLOR: Since the present Minister has had charge of the department, he always commences the operations for the year with optimism, but ends the year with huge financial losses and deficits on the undertakings in which the department has been engaged.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: All miners are optimists. They would not be miners if they were not.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am aware of that, and I think the Minister is the boss optimist of the whole of them. Of all the financial ventures in which the Government have indulged and which have made such enormous losses, the ventures in connection with mining in the Chillagoe district simply take the cake. I have stated in this Chamber on more than one occasion that State enterprises can only be justified when they can be shown to be of benefit to the whole of the community. That is not the case in connection with the mining ventures which have been under the administration of the Minister for some considerable time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The State coal mines are all right. What about them?

Mr. TAYLOR: I believe that, if anyone suggested to the Minister that there was a possibility of securing coal in the sun, he would try to send someone there to prospect.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I would not listen to some of your party who tried to get me to take on one or two of their old mines.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know what members of my party did, but I do know that the operations of the department have resulted

[*Mr. Riordan.*]

in the loss of tens of thousands of pounds which could have been spent more profitably in developmental work and other channels. The manager of the Chillagoe mines, Mr. Goddard, at page 100 of his report, says—

“The installation of contract work generally on this field would be a great factor financially in assisting this enterprise.”

That is a perfectly clear statement. The Minister has a duty to perform. When a responsible man like Mr. Goddard, who has charge of such enormous works as are being operated at Chillagoe, makes use of words like that, it is the duty of the Minister to see that the recommendation is carried out. He is charged with a tremendous expenditure of money, which is covered by the vote with which we are now dealing; he is a trustee of the public funds, and he has a right so to spend and invest that public money that there will be a fair return. I commend that recommendation to the Minister for his consideration and for the consideration of the Government.

Mr. COLLINS: Now quote the second last line of Mr. Goddard's report.

Mr. TAYLOR: I will give the hon. member Mr. Goddard's report in a little while. I have it here for the express purpose of enlightening the hon. member. If there is any member who wants enlightening, it is the hon. member for Bowen. The hon. member is always talking about the dark ages, but I do not think he has ever emerged from the dark ages. (Laughter.) This is what Mr. Goddard has to say with regard to the smelting works—

“The smelting works can only be run intermittently, due to insufficient ore supplies. The plant is capable of treating 300 tons of ore per day, but the available supplies only totalled about 60 per cent. of the required tonnage, which means an excessive smelting cost.”

These are the remarks of the gentleman who has been in charge in Chillagoe for a number of years and knows what he is talking about. The report continues—

“The smelting plant generally is very scattered and not economically laid out, and this considerably increases the cost of handling.”

Mr. COLLINS: Good old private enterprise! We took it over from them.

Mr. TAYLOR: The bigger “mugs” you to take it over. To continue—

“In addition, the buildings and machinery are very old, and maintenance and renewals are accordingly excessively high. During the wet season nearly 300 feet of our inclined flue chambers leading to the stack at the summit of the hill fell in and had to be rebuilt with reinforced concrete.”

Mr. COLLINS: It was built by private enterprise.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman will not be in order in discussing this matter on this vote. The hon. member is discussing a question which may be discussed under the Trust and Special Funds, on page 120 of the Estimates.

Mr. TAYLOR: I thought I could discuss it under this vote. This is what Mr. Goddard had to say with regard to the Mount Mulligan State coal mine—

“The cost per ton for the year aver-

aged 32s. 1.01d., and the selling price per ton on railway trucks at Mount Mulligan 28s. 9.4d."

There is another unprofitable mining venture. We were told, of course, when the Government took over Mount Mulligan that it was going to mean a tremendous saving in the cost of coal in every possible direction, and, instead of that, we find that the cost is 32s. and the selling price 28s.

Mr. GLEDSON: You do not suggest that is the price they get for it?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am quoting Mr. Goddard's report, and he says that is the cost per ton and the selling price per ton.

Mr. GLEDSON: It is being sold at the wrong time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We had to clear up their mess. The Government had £140,000 invested in it.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Government simply allowed themselves to be submerged. Continuing—

"Having conclusively demonstrated that a suitable coke can be manufactured, the future operations of this department rests with the cost of coal production from the mine, the latter item being accountable to a large extent for the loss on coke manufacturing, which is set out at £4,887 0s. 8d."

[5 p.m.]

In the same report the loss on the year's operations in connection with Mount Mulligan alone is set down at £17,575 12s. 7d., and Mr. Goddard says that loss can be attributed to the following causes:—

1. Over capitalisation.
2. Private royalty.
3. Coke loss.
4. Faults encountered.
5. Stone-dusting and watering.
6. Excessive dirt filled with coal.

"1. Over capitalisation.—The interest incurred amounted to £8,032 3s., and works out at 3s. 2d. per ton on the output.

"2. Private royalty.—This now paid to the liquidator of the Irvinebank Mining Company is fixed at 1s. per ton, and represents £2,344 11s. 1d. on the year's output.

"3. Coke loss.—See section 3, Coking Operations."

That is what I have already read—

"4. Faults encountered.—Too long wall faces transversed disturbed areas, No. 11 south wall being in faulted ground the whole year. Although the faults are of no great magnitude, they reduced the output and consequently increased the cost.

"6. Excessive dirt filled with coal.—The amount of refuse taken from the washer and picked by hand was 3,797.1 tons, or approximately 7½ per cent. of the total output."

These are some of the reasons for the losses which are being incurred in connection with the Mount Mulligan mine. The report says further—

"Section 10.

"General.

"When the State took over the mine on 1st July, 1923, the underground work-

ings were in a very unsatisfactory condition, due mainly to the financial difficulty under which Chillagoe, Limited, laboured during the last few months of its operations, also to the conditions caused by the disaster, which had been left in abeyance."

We appreciate and understand that. Mr. Goddard further says—

"Many conveyers were also in operation, but, after giving them an exhaustive trial, it was decided, owing to the high cost of production from the faces where these were in operation, to discontinue using them."

These are some of the things in the report of the Department of Mines for the year 1923, which show clearly that the sooner the Government get out of their mining ventures the better it will be for Queensland. If the same amount of money had been spent in permanent developmental work, it would have provided the same amount of employment as has been provided by the Chillagoe mines.

It would be interesting to know what were the reasons for Mr. Saint Smith resigning from his position as manager of the Mount Isa Mines, Limited. We have been given no reason whatever. I should say that the rate of pay he was going to receive—I do not know what it was—from the Mount Isa Mines, Limited, would be very much higher than he was receiving from the Department of Mines, and it would be interesting to know the reasons which prompted his resignation.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He only went there for a time.

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope that Mount Isa will prove to be a real permanent mining field. Everyone would like to see that, because really something of the kind is wanted to revive mining in Northern Queensland. It is regrettable to know that there has been no improvement in copper, and that the stagnation which has been in existence for some years still continues.

It is pleasing to know that there has been a considerable increase in the quantity of coal raised and in the value of that coal. It is also pleasing to note that there has been an increase in the yield of gold for the last year as compared with previous years. After having made all these allowances, the Government would be well advised at the first opportunity to get out of their mining ventures as quickly as they possibly can, but unfortunately they are in such a quagmire that it is quite impossible to extricate themselves.

Mr. HARTLEY: Does that refer to the coal-mines, too?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am not referring to coal-mines. I am referring principally to the Government's ventures at Chillagoe, which I consider have been most disastrous for the State, and the sooner we get out of those ventures the better it will be for the people of Queensland.

There is another mine which certainly gives promise of some return. I am referring to the arsenic mine at Stanthorpe. There was a justification for starting that mine, as there was no other arsenic mine in the State. Although there has been a lot of money lost in connection with it, we are told that there

Mr. Taylor.]

is another find at the mine which promises as fast as they can with a view to submitting a definite proposition to the Government which will be the means of building up an export trade. I would like to point out to the hon. member for Burnett that he cannot rely too much on the source from which he got the figures he quoted this afternoon. I have had quite a lot of correspondence regarding the cost of producing State coal and pointing out that Blair Athol coal could be supplied to the Railway Department much more cheaply, but I find on making inquiries that the figures which my informants have supplied are not correct. I am not going to boost up the State coal mines, because no member of this Chamber can say that they are showing a profit—I am referring particularly to the Styx and Baralaba Mines. But that is beside the point. The fact remains that the Government started off a few years ago to exploit those coal deposits in the hope that they would be able to supply coal to the Railway Department much more cheaply than before. If they have failed, or if they do eventually fail, nobody can charge us with not having exploited these deposits in an endeavour to supply cheap coal. I find that the difficulty at Blair Athol is not that the seam is so big but that it is too far from the point of consumption. As a Government we have done everything possible to keep the mining operations going there in the hope that at a future date it will be possible to work up an export trade and establish the prosperity of the field. I find from figures supplied by the Railway Department that during the last financial year the department adopted the practice of giving every mining district a share of orders. During the period from the 1st July, 1923, to the 17th June, 1924, the department took the following quantities of coal:—

	Tons.
Styx	18 591
Baralaba	12 960
Blair Athol (various mines) ..	24,067

That means that the two State coalmines supplied 31,551 tons, as compared with 24,867 tons from Blair Athol. That is a fair quota—the department is doing the fair thing. It is using Blair Athol coal in the Emerald district, and using State coal where it is close to the point of consumption and thus shows a saving to the department.

When the member for the district is faced with such a position, it is impossible to ask him to remedy the position by arranging for all orders to go to Blair Athol, and I do not intend to take up that attitude. In the working tests of coal I find that the Styx River and Baralaba coal mixture shows a value of 20s. per ton, the Bowen coal 19s. per ton, the Blair Athol coal 16s. per ton, and the Baralaba coal 15s. per ton. When you come to consider that the cost to the Railway Department of landing coal in Rockhampton from Baralaba—taking a half-penny per ton per mile as the freight rate—only amounts to 17s. 6d. per ton, the Styx River coal costs about £1 3s. 4d. per ton, and the Blair Athol coal £1 0s. 6d. per ton, the Railway Department certainly has some excuse for using the Styx River and Baralaba coal, if the reports on it are correct. The only solution for Blair Athol is an export trade. The closing down of the Styx River field and the Baralaba State coal mine would not solve the difficulty at Blair

is another find at the mine which promises excellent results.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We show a profit on that mine this year.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am pleased to know that. With regard to oil, I am rather astounded, if the statements in the Press are correct, that the Minister has no cognisance of the facts.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not a Government bore.

Mr. TAYLOR: In connection with the Orallo bore the syndicate are supposed, under the agreement, to tell the Government what strata they pass through and everything in connection with the bore. It is rather extraordinary that the Minister, as head of the Mines Department, should have no knowledge of the statement which has been published in the Press, if it is true.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are insisting on a periodical report in accordance with the provisions of the Petroleum Act and the regulations.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am glad to hear that. When anything like that occurs the Mines Department should be the first to know of it. However, we have to pass the vote. I am in favour every time of encouraging the prospector to the fullest extent financially and otherwise, and to give prospectors every encouragement. It is to the prospector that we have to look for future developments in that industry. The prospectors do very hard work for very little pay, and I would like to see the prospecting vote made as liberal as it is possible for the Mines Department to make it.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*): When reading the report of the Mines Department one cannot help but note that mining generally in Queensland appears to be on the down grade. I wish to refer particularly to the depression existing in mineral mining in the Clermont district, where at one time a large quantity of gold was produced, but practically none is being found there at all to-day. A few years ago the coal mines in that district mainly supplied the coal users in the Central district, but we find that owing to the opening of the State coal mines the production of those mines has been considerably reduced. The result is that many of the miners, owing to the fact that they have built their homes there in the past, have had to hang on and remain in the district, and are not in a position at the present time to earn the basic wage. Remarks have been made by the hon. member for Burnett in reference to the Government adopting the policy of not using Blair Athol coal with a view to keeping the State mines operating. Most hon. members recognise the value of the coal deposits at Blair Athol. We recognise that there is a deposit of coal there which is second to none in the world as regards quantity, and something should be done for the purpose of exploiting that seam to its fullest extent. I have been working actively for a considerable time with the Premier and the Secretary for Railways, and I have their assurance that anything they can possibly do to build up an export trade will be done, provided the mining companies show their bona fides. That is only a fair proposition, and it is only to-day that I learned from a director of one of the companies that they are working

[Mr. Taylor.

Athol. Certainly a few more orders would be placed there, but immediately the orders came along more miners would be put on to produce the coal, with the result that there would be a very small increase in the working week of the miner and in his earnings. I would suggest that consideration be given to assisting the Blair Athol mining companies as much as possible to work up an export trade. The difficulty is an economic one. The distance from the seat of coal consumption, or the main seat of coal consumption—Rockhampton and the cane districts—is too far to enable Blair Athol to land coal at a price that will enable it to compete with the mines near those places of consumption. The only way we can hope to rejuvenate Blair Athol is to get as much assistance as possible from the Government to enable the companies to put coal on board boats at Rockhampton or Broadsound at a price that will enable them to work up a trade with the East, where quite a lot of coal goes from various parts of the world at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They should carry out their operations more economically.

Mr. FOLEY: It is all very well for the Minister to say that the mine should be worked in a more economical way. At the present time we are working in a much more economical way than the State mines are working their seams. (Opposition laughter.) The position that the companies are faced with to-day is not that they cannot produce coal, but that they have not yet definitely found out whether Blair Athol coal will take with the coal users in the East. Up to date they have not been in a position to supply coal to the East on account of the lack of loading facilities at our Central Queensland ports. Those facilities are now being provided, and immediately they are provided the directors of the Blair Athol companies will load 1,000 tons or 2,000 tons of coal to be distributed amongst the big users in the East, and reports will be obtained from them. They will then be in a position to quote prices, and find out if it is possible to open up operations on a large scale.

Mr. WEIR: The hon. gentleman is making out a good case against State enterprises.

Mr. FOLEY: I am not making out a good case against State enterprises at all. The hon. member for Maryborough has certainly misunderstood my remarks if that is the deduction he draws from them. I am referring to the fact that something must be done to assist in working up an export trade for that field, otherwise it will fall into decay. I would point out for the benefit of the hon. member who interjected that, if the production costs at the State coal mines are not reduced by about one-third, there is no hope of an export trade from those mines. It is impossible for our State coal mines to export coal to the coal markets overseas unless they can produce coal at a lower cost than Newcastle, New South Wales. That fact will have to be faced. The last figures in regard to Newcastle show that the average cost works out at £1 1s. 5d. per ton. Bowen might be able to place coal on the market at £1 1s. 6d. per ton, but the average cost that I have obtained regarding Styx River works out at about £1 7s. per ton.

Mr. HARTLEY: The Styx River mine has not been opened up yet. It has not developed beyond the prospecting stage.

Mr. FOLEY: I am speaking of the figures that are available up to date. I would say to hon. members who represent electorates adjoining State coal mines that they should not pull their legs in respect to the possibilities of an export trade in coal unless the production costs can be reduced below those at present obtaining. Those are real live facts to be considered. With regard to cutting down production costs at Blair Athol, I wish to say that the possibilities of producing coal there at a very low price are very favourable, but no company could possibly undertake to instal steam shovels, expensive machinery, and remove many hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of overburden to open up the seam unless they could get a guarantee that coal users in the East will take their coal in considerable quantities. With our present development we could supply from Blair Athol somewhere in the vicinity of 1,000 to 1,500 tons of coal a day from one mine; but I would not advise the company to go in for any expensive machinery until it could be proved that they could sell their coal at a price landed in the East which would command a trade. I do not intend to deal any further with that matter beyond giving a word of warning to the Minister to get busy regarding our State coal mines and find out what are the causes of the present handicaps. There is no use blinking our eyes to the fact that the cost of production at all our State coal mines is excessively heavy. That is recognised by all men who have any knowledge of the industry. The hon. gentleman should see whether the causes are administrative, whether they are due to the managers, to the men working in the mines, or whether they are all partly blamable. He should get to the bottom of it, and try to reduce the costs in the interests of the State coal mines.

At 5.25 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.