

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST 1930

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST, 1930.

The SPEAKER (Hon. C. Taylor, Windsor) took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

LOAN CONVERSIONS, 1915-29.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked The Treasurer—

“1. What was the total amount of Queensland loans converted during the period from 30th June, 1915, to the 30th June, 1929?”

“2. What rate of interest was being paid in respect to each of such original loans, and what was the rate of interest charged on their conversion?”

“3. What is the annual increased interest charge on the consolidated revenue because of the higher rate of interest payable on the conversion of the loans referred to in (1)?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, Logan), for the TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, Wynnum), replied—

“1 to 3. I lay on the table a statement containing the information asked for by the hon. member for Herbert on the 6th August, 1930.”

PROSTITUTION AND REGISTRATION OF HOUSES OF ILL-FAME.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) asked the Home Secretary—

“1. Will he state if the houses of ill-fame existing in different parts of Queensland are registered?”

“2. Is it compulsory for these unfortunate girls to come up for medical examination, and, if so, in what centres are these examinations carried out and how often per month?”

“3. Do he and his Government countenance the existence of such houses of ill-fame?”

“4. Is he aware that, outside the ‘supposed recognised houses,’ there are dozens of young girls soliciting in Brisbane, and what steps does he intend taking to stamp out this sad state of affairs?”

“5. Will he make it his business to read the article in Brisbane ‘Truth’ of Sunday, the 3rd August, 1930, wherein appears a long interview with Sister Parr, who is apparently taking keen interest in girl rescue work, and state if the time has not more than arrived to appoint women police to grapple with these and other unfortunate cases?”

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

"1. No.

"2. (a) Yes. (b) In following fifteen centres:—Ayr, Bowen, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Cairns (and Babinda), Charters Towers, Cloncurry, Ingham, Innisfail (and Tully), Longreach, Mackay, Mossman (and Port Douglas), Rockhampton, Toowoomba, and Townsville. (c) Examined once in every three weeks, or more often if necessary, excepting at Bowen, Cloncurry, and Mossman, where action taken periodically only.

"3. Powers for the suppression of brothels and houses of ill-fame are vested in the local authority. Whilst Mayor of Rockhampton the hon. member had an excellent opportunity of cleaning up prostitution in that city.

"4. Action is taken, on receipt of police reports, to deal with street soliciting in accordance with the provisions of section 168 (1) (b) of 'The Health Acts, 1900 to 1922.'

"5. The appointment of women police has already been requested by Mrs. Longman, hon. member for Bulimba, and is receiving consideration."

TRANSFER OF SCHOOL TEACHER AT MAREEBA.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"Was H. A. Borland, a school teacher at Mareeba, recently transferred to Herberton?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*) replied—

"Yes; as from the 7th April, 1930."

TRANSFER OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES FROM MAREEBA.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"Were the following railway officials transferred from Mareeba recently:—T. Gorringe, assistant station-master, Mareeba to Cardwell; and W. Gardner, guard, Mareeba to Townsville?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

"In connection with the adjustment of staff at Mareeba, it became necessary for the assistant station-master to be a sound-reading telegraphist, and as Mr. Gorringe is not a sound-reader, he was prepared to accept a transfer, and this was arranged when an opportunity occurred. His application for a transfer from the coast will be kept in mind. As there is a surplus guard at Mareeba, Guard Gardner will be transferred to Townsville, the principal depot in the Northern division."

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"In view of the statement which appeared in the 'Cairns Times' of 1st August concerning W. Gardner, a guard in the Railway Department, and stationed at Mareeba, will he advise the reasons for Mr. Gardner's transfer to Townsville?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

"See reply to Question 4."

TRANSFER OF STOCK INSPECTOR FROM MAREEBA.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. (a) On what date was Mr. Ashe, stock inspector, transferred from Mareeba to Townsville? (b) On what date was he transferred back to Mareeba?"

"2. (a) For what period was he stationed at Mareeba prior to his transfer to Townsville? (b) Is it not the usual practice of the department to rearrange the stationing of stock inspectors at various intervals? (c) What was the reason for retransferring Mr. Ashe back to Mareeba?"

"3. Will he lay the papers relating to the matter on the table of the House?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. F. Walker, *Coorcora*) replied—

"1. (a) 16th May, 1929. (b) 29th May, 1930.

"2. (a) Nine years. (b) Stock inspectors are transferred from time to time to meet the exigencies of the service. (c) The exigencies of the service."

"3. The papers relating to the matter may be perused by any member, at the Office of the Department of Agriculture and Stock."

REWAN POLICE HORSE BREEDING STATION AND POLICE REMOUNTS.

Mr. A. JONES (*Burke*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. What is the total amount expended by the Government on the Rewan horse-breeding establishment since it was founded in 1909?"

"2. What is the amount expended by the Government for the upkeep of the said establishment during the financial year ended 30th June, 1930?"

"3. What is the total estimated value of remounts which have been bred at Rewan and sent for work at various police stations throughout the State for year ended 30th June, 1930?"

"4. What is the number of remounts sent from Rewan to police stations in northern and north-western districts of Queensland for seven months ended 31st July, 1930?"

"5. What is the average height and value of such remounts?"

"6. Is it correct that the better type of remount bred at Rewan is selected for work in the city of Brisbane, where they are given full feed?"

"7. Is it true that the culls from Rewan establishment are sent to the northern and north-western stations?"

"8. Is he aware that a superior type of properly broken police remount can be purchased throughout the Hughenden and Richmond districts at a price far below the cost of turning them out at Rewan?"

"9. Will he call upon his police in the horse-breeding districts throughout the State for a return of the available remounts therein and the approximate average price of same?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

- "1. Approximately £54,080.
- "2. £3,470 8s. 6d.
- "3. Estimated value, £420.
- "4. Twenty-six (fourteen to Townsville district and twelve to Cloncurry district). On account of drought conditions, delay occurred last year in turning out remounts.
- "5. Average height, about 15.1; average value, about £15 to £30.
- "6. No; special horses are not picked out for Brisbane, but all horses in the Depot Stables, Brisbane, get full feed.
- "7. No.
- "8. No. Indian buyers are prepared to pay big prices for suitable remounts for India, but they are very hard to obtain.
- "9. No; but reports are obtained from time to time in the northern and western districts if horses are needed there. This is found to be an advantage, as the horses so bought are acclimatised to the conditions of the district."

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*), without notice, asked the Home Secretary—

- "1. What is the numerical strength of police at Rowan police horse-breeding establishment?
- "2. Would it be necessary to have a police station in this locality if horse-breeding operations were discontinued?
- "3. What would be the approximate cost of upkeep as a police station in the locality?
- "4. What is the total—
(a) Cost of upkeep of Rowan establishment for the past three years?
(b) Revenue derived and from what source during the same period?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

- "1. One sub-inspector, two constables, and four trackers.
- "2. Yes.
- "3. The upkeep of a suitable police establishment would be approximately £1,000 per annum, exclusive of provision and upkeep of buildings, horses, etc.
- "4 (a) Total upkeep for the past three financial years was £9,815 2s. 11d.
- "(b)—

	£	s.
Proceeds of sale of cattle	4,808	0
Proceeds of sale of horses	267	10
Total	£5,075	10
Not including horses sent out for police service."		

AMOUNT RECEIVED BY ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MR. WALSH FOR APPEARING IN INDUSTRIAL COURT.

Mr. HYNES (*Townsville*), for Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*), asked the Attorney-General—

- "1. What amount was received by the Attorney-General for his work in con-

nection with the 48-hour question before the Arbitration Court?

- "2. What amount was received by Mr. Walsh for his work in connection with the 48-hour question before the Arbitration Court?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) replied—

- "1. The Attorney-General did not appear in connection with the 48-hour question before the Arbitration Court, and consequently received no fees.
- "2. Mr. Walsh did not appear in connection with the 48-hour question before the Arbitration Court, and consequently received no fees."

PAYMENT TO MR. A. D. MCGILL IN RE MUNGANA MINING COMMISSION.

Mr. HYNES (*Townsville*), for Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*), asked the Attorney-General—

- "In view of the fact that the Mungana Commission closed on the 28th June, and that the report was printed on the 4th July, what reason does the Attorney-General assign for Mr. McGill's account not being rendered?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) replied—

- "Apparently Mr. McGill is not grasping, and is in no hurry to be paid his fees."

RAILWAY FREIGHT CONCESSIONS TO MOUNT ISA COMPANY.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

- "1. Referring to my questions addressed to him on 29th November, 1929, and his replies thereto (which appear on page 1957 of 'Hansard' for 1929), relative to railway freight concessions to the Mount Isa Company, particularly in regard to Question 3, which read as follows:—

'If, as stated by him, an undue concession has been granted, will he take steps to see that the Railway Department gets what is due to it,'

and his reply to the effect that 'the intentions of this Government will be disclosed in due course.' Has this matter been the subject of the Government's consideration, and, if so, with what result and what has been the nature of any alteration made in the freight concessions referred to?

- "2. Does the Mount Isa Company enjoy any other freight concessions (besides those relating to concentrates and bullion), such as coal freights, etc.? If so, what are—(a) the ordinary rail freights and (b) the special rates quoted for each of such other commodity so involved?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Geoffrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

- "1. As the rates quoted by the previous Government were a condition on which the company incurred very considerable capital expenditure, there is

no alternative but to honour this arrangement in the meantime.

"2. Ycs. Coal and coke.

(a) Collinsville to Mount Isa—

	Per ton per mile.
Coal925d.
Coke	1.187d.

(b) Collinsville to Mount Isa—

Coal and coke4d."

RECEIPTS BY MINES DEPARTMENT FROM THE PRECIOUS METALS PROSPECTING FUND.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

"1. What amount has the Queensland Mines Department received from the precious metals prospecting fund?

"2. Is he aware that there is still an amount unallotted?

"3. Will he endeavour to obtain something from that fund for prospecting in this State?"

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. E. A. Atherton, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"1. £2,907 1s.

"2. Yes.

"3. Further claims will be submitted from time to time in accordance with the conditions governing payments from the fund."

PRICES PAID BY STATE SAWMILLS TO COUNTRY SAWMILLERS FOR HARDWOOD.

Mr. JAMIESON (*Lockyer*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"What prices are the State sawmills paying country sawmillers for hardwood, both first and second class in cottage sizes, on trucks, Brisbane?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. A. Deacon, *Cunningham*) replied—

"First class, 35s.; second class, 25s.; special, 25s. to 35s.; unclassified, 27s. 6d. Principal supplier, Railway Store-keeper."

FRUIT MACHINE TEST CASE IN ROCKHAMPTON.

Mr. O'KEEFE (*Cairns*) asked the Attorney-General—

"Will he state the reason why the test case in regard to fruit machines was withdrawn at Rockhampton?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) replied—

"No test case was commenced in Rockhampton, and consequently could not be withdrawn."

PAPERS.

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

Report by the Land Administration Board under "The Closer Settlement Acts, 1906 to 1929."

Eighth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply.

Report of the Police Investment Board for the year ended 31st December, 1929.

Fourth Annual Report of the Director of Infant Welfare.

Report upon the operations of the "Golden Casket" Art Union for the year ended 30th June, 1930.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Ordinances under "The City of Brisbane Act of 1924"—

Meters used in connection with private temporary water services, dated 7th August, 1930.

Exemption from rating of the University site, St. Lucia, dated 14th August, 1930.

Boarding-houses, Lodging-houses, Tenement Buildings, and Flat Buildings, dated 14th August, 1930.

Regulations Nos. 248 to 256, inclusive, under "The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1928."

BUREAU OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*): I beg to move—

"That the House will at its next sitting resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to provide for the establishment of a Bureau of Economics and Statistics; and for other purposes."

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. F. Walker, *Cooroola*): I am sure that every member of this House appreciates the way in which His Excellency the Governor has travelled the State, and is particularly appreciative of the amount of knowledge which His Excellency has imparted to various organisations and to the people generally as a result of his travels. Anyone who follows the position in Queensland, with its great primary production, must realise that the Governor, in his speeches, has given food for thought. We are particularly fortunate in having such an excellent gentleman as Sir John Goodwin in that position; indeed, we have been exceedingly fortunate in the fine type of gentleman who has occupied that high office in the last few years.

At the outset I desire to say that it would be a great pity—almost a tragedy—if Parliament were to develop into a mere political talking shop in these times of most serious depression. The position confronting not only Queensland and Australia but the whole of the British Empire is too grave to permit of other than common action, and I am particularly satisfied with the tone of speeches delivered in this Parliament so far during this session. Our difficulties are so great that no opportunity should be lost of helping to improve the position; and in the common objective of remedying the financial position here all our shoulders should be put to the wheel. I would urge hon. members on both sides to co-operate with the object of remedying the present financial difficulties. Although Queensland may be much better off

than some of the other States, due to the fact that we are a great producing country, we must not let that fact prevent us from putting forward our best energies. In my opinion, the position is as grave to-day as that existing when the Great War occurred. Just as the objective then was to win the war, so our aim at present should be to extricate the country from its present unsatisfactory position. That will take some time to accomplish; but we must recognise the seriousness of the position and realise that sacrifices may have to be made before we return to normal times.

Various reasons have been given for the present position; but probably one of the main factors has been the heavy war debt, in addition to which we have spent loan money in a particularly reckless manner, until to-day we are told in effect that we must limit our expenditure to the amount of money collected by way of revenue, or, in other words, live within our means.

In addressing myself to this question, I do not for one moment wish to contribute to this debate anything to assist to fan the flames of party bitterness. One hon. member opposite, speaking the other day, said that the Tory Government now in power was responsible for a great deal of the trouble that exists to-day. No matter what Government is in power to-day, or whether they are called Tories or not, the trouble would be the same. If hon. members opposite look round the Government benches, I think they will admit that there are no Tories sitting on this side of the House. Every hon. member on this side is a solid worker. No man on this side of the Chamber was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Hon. members opposite, when they were sitting on this side, were the greatest Tories of all. They lived the same as we do, only possibly they were a little more expensive. They travelled round in expensive touring cars; so, when it comes to a question of Toryism, hon. members opposite were just as big Tories as we are.

If we take into consideration the question of unemployment as it exists to-day, we can only come to one conclusion; and that is that the sympathy on this side of the House is just as sincere as the sympathy on the other side of the House.

Mr. BEDFORD: Sympathy is all you have.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Let us look at the position as it exists. The Government have only been in power twelve months, and we have already provided a fund. We have 7,000 workers working under that fund, and we are giving the unemployed something practicable in lieu of the empty sympathy which they got from hon. members opposite. I would also like to point out that unemployment existed many years ago. I admit that it has been growing, largely as a result of indiscriminate loan expenditure. We have not been able to pay our interest and other charges for the simple reason that our loan money has not been expended on reproductive works. Loan money used for that purpose rightly should have been used in order to keep the workers employed. The result is that we have to pay interest to-day on unproductive works; and it is hard to say where the position is going to end because of the indiscriminate expenditure of loan

money. On 30th June last the percentage of unemployment in the various States was—

	Per cent.
Queensland	10.1
South Australia (under a Labour Government)	17.6
Victoria (under a Labour Government)	21.0

I am not saying anything against those two Labour Governments. I say quite distinctly that the position is due to the unfortunate state which the whole of Australia is in to-day. While the present position is very serious, it has been brought about through no fault of the present Government. There were so many unemployed in Queensland prior to the last election that the electors put the then Government out of office and returned the present Government to power.

Let us take the cost of living index figures for the same period—

Queensland	1450
South Australia	1637
Victoria	1707

Those figures prove conclusively that Queensland is very much better off than the two States under Labour Governments. If that is the condition of affairs, why not blame those two Governments for the unemployed in those States and the high cost of living as well? Both States are under Labour Governments, and both States had greater deficits last year than we had; at the same time unemployment is greater and the cost of living higher than it is in Queensland.

As I have already pointed out, I do not think the present position is the fault of Labour or the fault of Tory Governments. Our present unfortunate position has been brought about by the indiscriminate expenditure of loan money. The past Government know more about the waste of loan money than hon. members on this side. We have only to take the State enterprises, which cost the Labour Government £5,000,000, and on which we have to pay an annual interest bill amounting to £250,000. If that money had been expended on railways or other reproductive works, the position would be quite all right, but, as a matter of fact, it is gone. The position would have

[3 p.m.] been much worse had it not been for this Government selling those

State enterprises at an opportune time and getting a better price than might have been expected. We have got rid of practically the whole of them, with the exception of one or two.

Mr. A. JONES: You have bought Swift's meatworks after getting rid of them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Even the late Government must have been convinced that disaster was not far away at the end of their term. If that were not so, I would ask the Leader of the Opposition why his Government left the enormous sum of £5,000,000 of loan money when they went out of office, and which he said on several occasions was husbanded to meet a period of depression. That alone proves conclusively that they saw what was coming. The late Premier, Mr. McCormack, was quite candid about the matter when he said years ago that he saw it coming; but he could not get his party to follow him in that respect. They left this large sum of money, and they are now blaming us for doing exactly what

Hon. H. F. Walker.]

they did—conserving loan money. Every man in this Chamber and in Queensland should take off his hat to the present Treasurer for conserving that money and providing for a time ahead when we shall not be able to get any loan money to carry out public works. The real cause of the present financial trouble is that the people of Australia were for many years deluded into the belief that the existing standard of living could be maintained by legislation and arbitration courts, irrespective of the wealth production of the community. That was the worst idea that anybody could get into his mind. We have been carrying on under a delusion by reason of the fact that we have been borrowing money to bolster up different industries without taking into consideration the cost of production and our ability to send our exports away to other countries. I know that we have a very good trade balance in comparison with the other States of the Commonwealth, but that does not alter the fact that in Queensland and Australia we are one people with regard to exports; and, while we are blessed with a wonderfully productive country, with regard particularly to wool and other primary products, the fact remains that we have to keep our own citizens in employment. We have borrowed too largely in the past, and our loan expenditure has not been sufficiently reproductive.

We have only to go back for the last five or six years to see that what I say is perfectly true. The present crisis has come about because of the compulsory cutting-off of our loan supplies from overseas, and we have large overdrafts and commitments to meet, whilst at the same time there has been a reduction in the price of our primary products. We know that the price of wool fell 50 per cent. a little while ago. As a matter of fact, it is down to pre-war price to-day, and we cannot produce many other of our primary products at a price which will enable them to be exported. The prices of exportable main products such as butter and sugar are very low compared with the prices realised eight or ten years ago.

Whether we like it or not, whatever Government may be in power and whatever artificial expedients we may adopt, we have to adjust our standards to our altered circumstances. We have had to resort to all sorts of uneconomic expedients in a desperate endeavour to avoid the consequences of our misdeeds; but it is becoming apparent that our industrial system is breaking down, and that new methods must be adopted.

I realise, like other hon. members, that it is essential for us gradually to build up manufacturing industries in Queensland; but under present circumstances, with a large overdraft, and something like £35,000,000 a year to be sent abroad which Australia has to pay in the shape of interest and other expenses, our primary industries are of outstanding importance to the Commonwealth and the States.

If we in Queensland could follow the advice given by the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Scullin, and produce more, we could improve our position to a great extent; but, unfortunately, we cannot do it at a moment's notice. It will take at least a few years to do so. The point, however, is that we should keep that end in mind, because there is really only one way of overcoming our financial difficulties, and that is to produce more, if possible, under the conditions prevailing to-day. If we have to take

less for our exports, it would be far better to do that than to allow any of our industries to languish, as is the case at the present time. In order to secure a favourable trade balance it is necessary to export one-half of the total production; and for that purpose manufacturing is and will continue to be practically a negligible quantity.

Let me give hon. members some idea of the ratio of our exports which our industries provide, in order to show the percentage of primary products exported as compared with the percentage of manufactures—

	Per cent.
Pastoral (mainly wool)	53
Agricultural (mainly wheat and flour)	25
Mining	10
Dairying, etc.	7
Forestry and fisheries	1
Total primary	96
Manufacturing	4

In other words, only 4 per cent. represents exports of manufactures. We have to be careful with regard to our export business. Queensland has a wonderful market not only in Great Britain, which is our best customer, but also in countries on the continent of Europe where we have had a very fine trade balance. Lately the tariff in Australia has been altered in such a way that we are likely to lose trade with many of these countries overseas which can take a large amount of our products. It is only natural to expect that, as our tariff does their export trade harm, so they will want to retaliate. The following figures show the favourable trade balances with some of these countries:—

	£
Belgium	8,133,817
France	11,500,000
Germany	5,500,000
Italy	3,750,000

Those figures represent the excess quantity of the goods they have been getting from us over what they have been sending to us. We do not want to risk losing that trade. We have to recover our position step by step; and it is only by overcoming the enormous difficulties which confront increased production that we can do so. We must not give these wonderful customers of ours any reason for retaliating and stopping taking our goods as they have done in the past. During the last year or two wool has fallen 50 per cent. in price; so that it is practically down to the pre-war level. Wheat—another exportable product—is also low in price; and, what with lower returns from other sources, all of which means a reduction in revenue from taxation, Australia is faced with a reduction in national income of £70,000,000 per annum. Under these conditions the importance of our primary industries cannot be over-rated. I do not intend to refer to the whole of them; but I would like to refer to some which come more particularly under the control of the Department of Agriculture, and in respect of which there have been certain developments since I have been Minister in charge of that department. I recognise that we have to produce, and that there are many things which we can produce at a reasonable cost. In other words, we have to increase our production in order to meet the situation.

[Hon. H. F. Walker.

In addition to older industries, we have undertaken experiments in the growing of tobacco; we have given a cotton guarantee; and we have made agreements in regard to wheat and barley. All these industries are, to a certain extent, new. Putting it in another way, the Government's policy has been remodelled, and these industries are being put on a better footing; and the result is that production is increasing, as I shall later show in greater detail. A rise in price, however, has been counteracted by a rise in wages, so that we are in the position of a dog trying to catch its own tail—we cannot reach finality. If we are going to produce the quantities of things that I would like to see Australia produce, we have, therefore, to reduce the cost of production. It can be done in a rough way by reducing wages; but the correct way is to aim at improved efficiency, and get more results from the work that we put into our production. This, at any rate, is the first method that should be adopted. Will anybody tell me that Queensland is at a dead end in regard to production?

I have heard it said from time to time that we are over-producing, and that it is useless to produce to any further extent. The sugar industry has been instanced as one in connection with which it would be useless to increase the present volume of production, but special reasons dictate that there should not be over-production in that industry at the present time.

There is room for tremendous expansion in other primary industries of the State. I propose to show the wonderful expansion in the primary industries over the last twelve months. When we speak of increased production we must first aim in the direction of inducing people to go upon the land, and to do so we must make conditions attractive not only for the older members of the community but particularly for the younger members of the community, who have a right to enjoy the amusements provided for their more fortunate brethren in the cities and towns. If we have the courage to face realities, then we shall be able to overcome our present difficulties. That end can be achieved only by setting aside party politics for the time being, although I should like to see party politics abolished for all time. We should work with the one common object of saving one of the greatest countries of the world. The prosperity of the State is bound up with the prosperity of the primary producer.

During my occupancy of the position of Secretary for Agriculture and prior thereto I have travelled extensively in Queensland with a view to securing first-hand information regarding the various industries in operation in this State. During the comparatively short period I have been in my present position I have been particularly active in moving about the State with this object in view, and I have devoted practically the whole of my spare time to travelling from north to south and to some extent into the west. Later I hope to travel to the "Woolly West" to ascertain the exact conditions prevailing in those parts. I was particularly interested in the speech delivered by the hon. member for Gregory a few weeks ago, when he stated that in some parts of his electorate the drought had not yet broken. As he is a competent authority upon pastoral matters, his remarks

must receive every consideration. In Queensland we have wonderful primary industries, from sugar in the North to fruit in the South, varying with climatic conditions possible only in a tropical country like our own. With these industries in mind, one can only come to the conclusion that there is vast room for the development of these industries, particularly in view of the statements made by hon. members representing rural districts who have fully backed up my opinion in this regard. I am satisfied that we could launch out in many directions as we have never done before.

This is the first opportunity I have had of speaking on the Address in Reply since taking office as a Minister of the Crown. I realise very much the responsibilities of my position, knowing full well that the ramifications of my department cannot be appreciated until one is placed in administrative control of it. One must keep in very close touch with all the new phases of agricultural and pastoral life, which can be achieved only by travel with a view to securing first-hand information. The Secretary for Agriculture can be admirably supported in his duties by hon. members who represent country constituencies. I have received considerable assistance from the fifteen or sixteen country members in this Assembly, which has enabled me probably to become more efficient in my ministerial office.

I sincerely hope that any steps proposed by the Government to foster our primary industries will not be viewed in a party political light. I hope that hon. members opposite will appreciate the assistance sought to be extended by the Government, and will lend their aid with a view to endeavouring to overcome our present difficulties.

I subscribe most heartily to the commodity marketing boards. They have exercised considerable influence on the agricultural development of this State. There are fourteen boards in existence at the present time, and during the past twelve months the various boards and pools have been remodelled administratively. I recognise that this is necessary every year to maintain the boards and pools upon an efficient basis and with a view to keeping the members concerned right up to the collar. A Minister must be particularly active to do this in order to get the very best results. As one who has been associated with the various boards and pools for many years, and as one who has had close association with the hon. member for Lockyer and the hon. member for Albert in connection with the butter stabilisation scheme of Australia and various other associations, I quite well recognise the position of the primary industries of the State. I also recognise the wonderful work that has been done by the various organisations concerned.

I am not talking now about the stabilisation of prices; I am talking about the economy which is effected by the efficient working of these boards. By remodelling their methods of working from year to year the commodity boards have arrived at such an efficient state of organisation that they can offer no excuse if anything should go wrong. I could refer to many separate boards as I go along. I gave my wholehearted support as a private member to the co-operative movement amongst farmers. I recognise that I was then able to do so only in a limited degree; but I now recognise that in my

Hon. H. F. Walker.]

capacity as Minister I can help them a great deal more. I shall depart from the usual procedure adopted by the Minister by giving the various organisations, whether it be the Wheat Board, the Butter Board, or any other board, the confidence of the Minister with a view to getting in return that reciprocal confidence which is necessary for the efficient and economic handling of that commodity. I, as one who has always taken the farmers into his confidence, recognised that by doing so in my speeches at the half-yearly meetings of the co-operative organisations, when I placed a certain amount of responsibility on their shoulders, realising that thereby I shall secure from them a greater measure of efficiency, and, what is more, a studied measure of economy in regard to their finances, which, perhaps, has not received the close attention in the past that it should have done. That is the policy I intend to pursue. By so doing I predict that in a year or two the country will realise to a greater degree what I am trying to convey to hon. members to-day. I realise the importance of the cultivation of good will as between co-operative bodies and business and financial interests. I could give many illustrations where they have made great mistakes. For instance, they are inclined to look upon any man not in the co-operative movement as a man who is dishonest. That is a fallacious notion. We have many of the finest characters in the world in our commercial circles—upright men, and men of integrity—and by eliminating them from trade you are going to create a position in connection with any commodity similar to that created by the primary producers of New Zealand when they went over to London and started a butter agency. The result was that they had about £2,000,000 worth of butter left on their hands. We all have to live; and one of the beliefs of the co-operative movement is that a man has the right to live, whether he believes in the co-operative movement or not. That is a policy which I intend to adopt. I recognise that, if there is any speculation of a dishonest character detrimental to the interests of the primary producer, we have the right to eliminate it; but it is wrong to attempt to eliminate the man who is in close touch with the primary producer, and who is endeavouring to carry on business on sound, honest lines.

As an illustration of studied economy as the result of organisation, I have but to quote the result of the operations of the Butter Board; and I doubt whether in any country where commodity boards exist a more efficient Butter Board than ours is in existence to-day. It is costing the Butter Board of this State the one hundred and eighty-sixth part of 1d. per lb. to sell that butter, or three-tenths of 1d. per box. That gives some idea of the economy that is practised by this board. Next year I hope to see greater economy practised, not only in respect of the Butter Board, but with respect to the Wheat Board and the many other boards in existence.

One industry occupying the minds of the Federal and State Governments as well as the public at the present time is the sugar industry. I would like to make a special plea, not only for fair treatment of that industry on the part of the Southern people, but more particularly that those in power in Britain should continue the preferential duties for Empire products.

At the present time our sugar industry has reached an efficient state of organisation and

[Hon. H. F. Walker.

production. It is as perfect as we can possibly get it. Some idea of the enormous importance of this industry to Queensland may be gauged by the fact that last year the output was valued at £10,508,587. Apart from the fact that an enormous number of people are engaged in the industry in all its phases, there is the national aspect of its importance to Australia. The portion of our coastline north of Townsville, which is almost solely devoted to sugar-growing, is practically unsuitable for any other form of production. It is far removed from markets, and the long transport would be too heavy an impost for any other business to be carried on there. The ships engaged in our coastal trade are practically without refrigerated space, and load practically nothing else but sugar from the North.

At the present time we are producing £10,508,587 worth of sugar per annum, whereas in 1902 the production totalled £653,901, which gives some idea of the almost mushroom-like growth of this wonderful industry. Further, it may interest hon. members to know that the sugar-growers pay half the administrative costs entailed in the business, and contribute half the cost of the experimental and scientific research work which has been so successful. All that goes to show what can be done by putting upon these people the responsibility to which I have alluded. Not more than thirty years ago a sugar-mill with a capacity of 50,000 tons of cane was considered a particularly big mill, whereas to-day the average capacity is 200,000 tons. Queensland leads the world in the standard of efficiency and economy in sugar management. Whereas some years ago 9.49 tons of cane were required to make a ton of sugar, to-day it takes only 6.92 tons. That gives some idea of the wonderful work of the scientists connected with the industry in increasing production and reducing the cost of production.

That brings me to another point—the question of entomologists. It may surprise hon. members to know that, if we wanted a new entomologist to-morrow, we could not get him locally, or even in Australia. What a shocking state of affairs that, although we have a university, we are not educating our own entomologists! At the present time I am obtaining a report as to the possibility of obtaining an entomologist from overseas; but it is rather unfortunate that we should have to import and acclimatise men, instead of concentrating on locally trained entomologists.

It may also interest hon. members to know that the sugar industry provides employment for 21,000 men in the field and 7,000 men in mills and refineries. Despite the general talk on the matter, only 3 per cent. of foreigners are employed in this industry. In that connection it is rather disappointing that some hon. members opposite should have had so much to say on the question of foreigners engaged in the industry, and also on the alleged high prices paid for sugar land. All that talk is merely providing ammunition for the opponents of our sugar industry in the South. As to the employment of foreigners in the industry, we have had extensive German settlement in years gone by, and I do not suppose one could get a finer type of settler than the German.

It may not be inopportune to discuss the question of the price paid for sugar. Various statements have been made in this House on the subject; but, for the information of

hon. members generally, I would mention that the export price of £9 17s. per ton and the local price of £26 16s. gave an average of £20 5s. 10d. per ton for all our sugar for 1929, which shows that those engaged in the industry did not get too much for their product. We should take off our hats to those who have tried to export the maximum amount of sugar which the industry will allow.

Much has been said about the embargo being removed; but, in my opinion, the embargo will never be removed. If the price is reduced, it will mean the closing up of the industry south of Townsville. In those circumstances, how could the people displaced be employed at a time like the present? No reduction at all is possible. They might stand a little reduction in the North, but to the south of Townsville certainly not, and the greatest quantity of sugar is produced south of Townsville. The agreement under which the sugar industry has been working has been of tremendous value to the industry, which, during the existence of the agreement, has been extended and has become more efficient from year to year. During the war Australia had to import sugar; but now we are exporting large quantities. Our greatest trouble to-day is due to the fact that the price of sugar in all other sugar-producing countries of the world is right down to bedrock, and in many cases they cannot sell the whole of the sugar produced. In some countries sugar is being sold at such a low price that, although it is grown by black labour, it is produced at a loss. All this calamity-howling in the South for a reduction in the price of sugar is due to the low price obtainable in countries where it is produced by black labour. The report of the West Indies Commission, headed by Lord Oliver, and appointed by the present Labour Government in Great Britain, shows that, even with the aid of British preference, these islands cannot produce sugar at present prices. Sir Francis Watts, of Mauritius, states that that island, where the cost of production is below that of all foreign countries except Java, is carrying on the industry at a loss.

These low prices, due to over-production, are mainly responsible for the Southern agitation against the industry in Queensland.

In the same way there is an accumulation of wheat throughout the grain producing countries of the world, there being a carry-over from last year of 600,000,000 bushels; and, outside of the United States of America, every wheat-growing country is going to have a record crop this year. The 5,000,000 tons output of sugar in Cuba is the controlling factor in the world's price, so it will be seen that the people in the South have chosen an opportune time to try to get a reduction in the price of sugar, for which they have been agitating for some years. I hope that Mr. Scullin and his Government will be sufficiently strong to give the sugar industry a "square go." If the Scullin Government only take notice of the evidence given before the tribunal about to be appointed, then we have nothing to fear, because already we are carrying out economies, not only in the mills but in the administration and in the fields. The result must be a win for the Queensland sugar industry; but we do not want any of these calamity-howlers and political nondescripts in the South coming forward and saying,

"We must have cheap sugar." The same men are never satisfied. They want cheap food, short hours, and big wages.

Mr. HANLON: If wages are coming down, you cannot blame the people for requiring cheap food.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When the hon. member was talking about wages coming down, he took up a different attitude altogether. If the cost of living comes down, then the basic wage should come down accordingly. We cannot have the basic wage going up and the cost of living coming down. At the same time there are highly protected industries down

South in connection with food-[3.30 p.m.] stuffs, preserved fruits, and other such things. We know that the difficult position in Queensland is due to the fact that taxation has been particularly high and we have not had the big commercial undertakings to provide users for our primary products. We have had to rely on Victoria, for instance, in regard to boots, a good many of which at the present come from that State. At the same time I think that Queensland boots would be found to be worn on this side of the House. We have taken an enormous amount of manufactured goods from Victoria, but the people in that State are not reciprocating. Take for instance the banana industry. The people in Victoria want to get bananas from Fiji, while we in Queensland are producing a better article than Fiji and at a lesser price. The position of Queensland in regard to the sugar embargo is unassailable.

I would like to refer to the arguments with regard to the over-supply of sugar. A little while ago a conference was held in the Department of Agriculture with regard to this question, and an arrangement was made which has given a great degree of satisfaction.

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

Mr. GRIMSTONE (*Stanley*): I beg to move—

"That the hon. member be granted an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech."

The SPEAKER: Is it the will of the House that the hon. member be granted an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I thank the House for allowing me to continue my speech. I was referring to the question of assignments in the sugar industry. I honestly think that 93 per cent. of the farmers are perfectly satisfied with the assignments granted by the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board. We certainly gave them a little privilege by giving them the benefit of an appeal court extending over a month in which to renew any further claim; and in some cases, on account of previous mistakes, applicants were permitted to put in fresh claims. There is nothing to stop any farmer from over-producing cane if he is prepared to accept world parity rates. We have not blocked sugar production; on the contrary we are doing everything possible to encourage our sugar producers.

The question of a peak year was gone into, and dealt with by the conference. The

Hon. H. F. Walker.]

sugar-growers made suggestions to me as a mediator, and satisfactory arrangements were made with regard to a peak year, and everything is now going on very smoothly.

Mr. BRUCE: What about the valuation of unassigned land?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If we assigned further areas, we would increase our production, and the farmer would never be able to carry on at the overseas export price. The result is that assigned areas cannot be extended at present. When these arrangements were come to between the Sugar Board and the sugar-growers, it was shown that the assignments were based on certain grounds, and every claim is considered on its merits. As Minister I have never interfered with the board, but have listened and gone into matters with the board, which has impartially dealt with all applications for assignments.

Another subject I would like to speak about is the increase which has taken place in the dairying industry in recent years. This matter has been dealt with very ably by two other members of the Country Party. This is an industry well worth fostering, and the production is greatly on the increase. It is truly wonderful what has been done in this industry, and what the farmers themselves are doing to reduce the cost of production. When I tell hon. members that there are 22,500 farmers in Queensland engaged in this industry, and that with their families and employees they are providing work for 38,000 persons, they will realise its vast importance. Last year we in Queensland produced £6,232,581 worth of butter, most of which was exported. That represented an increase over the preceding year of over £500,000, which was quite a considerable sum. This is where the cost of production enters into the problem in this industry. In the first place we have throughout the State a number of very fine factories, second to none in the world. They are managed by a lot of enthusiastic men, who are always concentrating on reducing the cost of production by every sound economic means, both in respect of factory methods, the introduction of the latest machinery, compulsory pasteurisation—which is now practically effected in the industry—and every other improvement which can be applied. These men are endeavouring by these means to manufacture butter at an economic cost. The same thing is common throughout the State, and one has only to travel through the country districts to realise it.

Similar steps are being taken to improve the breed of cattle. We find dairymen everywhere availing themselves of herd-testing facilities and the subsidies which the department offers for the purchase of sires—a system inaugurated by the late Government and which has been used more in the last twelve months than ever before, simply because we have put forward the scheme in such a way that the people concerned know how to take advantage of it. Unfortunately, however, we have had to reduce the subsidy in each case from £50 to £25 by reason of the fact that the system was being availed of to such an extent that we could see that the farmer was not getting the full benefit of it, but that it was mostly benefiting two or three breeders. We also have come to the conclusion that £25 is really a fair amount to allow, because, if a man wishes

to buy a bull worth £50 or more, the probability is that he is well able to afford it without Government assistance.

Here I would like to refer to the illustration we have had at the Brisbane Exhibition during the past week of the valuable results of the industry to this State, where we had a greater dairy show than could be seen in any other country in the world. That is probably a big statement to make, but I am given to understand by competent judges that the dairy show here was the biggest to be seen in any part of the world. That speaks well for Queensland and well for the industry. Moreover, one had only to look at the quality of the products exhibited to see that it would compare more than favourably with that which could be displayed by other countries, although they have larger numbers of stock and are longer in the industry. In regard to this industry, I would like to refer to the way in which the Government have endeavoured to assist it by experiments where they have been necessary. We have for years been investigating wood taint in butter. I and the experts of my department thought it wise to conduct exhaustive experiments to see whether the taint was really appearing in the butter from the wood of the boxes, and we made an exhaustive inquiry for that purpose with the assistance of Mr. Uhlmann and Mr. Saxelby, representing one of the associations engaged in the industry. We took that course because I wanted to get away from the department to a certain extent and have an independent inquiry. Those gentlemen made an exhaustive investigation, and it was discovered that no wood taint appeared to any extent in butter in boxes made from Queensland timbers. We have been suffering for years because those in authority in the old country, mostly Commonwealth officers, represented that wood taint did appear in Queensland and New Zealand butter. We found that quite the contrary was the case, and that wood taint appeared in Southern butter-boxes to a greater extent than in boxes made from our Queensland hoop and bunya pine, and we have been strongly recommended to go ahead and use our own white pine for butter-boxes as we have been doing in the past. In that way we have dealt with one of the things with which we have had to contend, and we have achieved good results for Queensland.

Another matter to which I would like to refer is the top-dressing of pastures in our coastal areas. We have been carrying on experiments to encourage farmers to go in for top-dressing their pastures with a view to bringing about greater production, and consequently reduce the cost of production. For example, if we could only get a cow to produce 10 lb. more of butter in a year, it would mean an annual increase in the export of £2,000,000 from Australia. Hon. members can see what a wonderful thing it would be if we could achieve even that result. The same thing applies to the sheep industry. If we could evolve a type of sheep which would grow an additional pound of wool, it would mean an additional £5,000,000 to the income of Australia.

I should also like to refer to the wheat industry, which is one of the most important primary industries in Queensland. One must be convinced on this point after an inspection

of the Darling Downs. I have come definitely to the conclusion that there is a great opportunity to launch out with a new wheat scheme. A scheme has already been entered upon, and up to the present it has indeed been highly successful. It is subject to a little criticism now and then—nothing serious—but criticism which may generally be termed useful. Queensland was producing approximately 2,500,000 bushels of wheat per annum and was consuming at the rate of 6,000,000 bushels per annum. With a view to greater production, a scheme was launched guaranteeing to the growers 4s. per bushel at country railway stations, with the result that this year the crop is estimated at 4,250,000 bushels, with every appearance of a 6,000,000-bushel crop next year. In other words, we are going to see that every Queenslander will be eating bread manufactured from Queensland flour. The millers agreed to take the wheat at certain figures, which really amount to 1d. per bushel over Darling Harbour rates. Both sections of the industry are particularly well pleased with the arrangement. I understand that the millers made a mistake in taking over an enormous quantity of standover wheat last season, and that they had a particularly bad time owing to the holding up of the gristing. Prior to our taking office it was estimated that approximately 150,000 bushels of wheat could not be accounted for on the Downs in the 1927-1928 season, and the Government acted wisely in endeavouring to save that loss in the 1927-1928 season to the community. This year the area under wheat has been increased by 10 per cent.; and by the conservation of moisture and improved farming methods it is estimated that the increase in production will be 25 per cent. as compared with last year. I have come to the conclusion that 6,000,000 bushels will be obtained under favourable conditions.

The cotton industry is a very important industry, but it is one that has been languishing and has been the political football of all parties for years. Last year the Government recognised that a guarantee must be given in order that the industry should be stimulated. The Government have guaranteed 5d. per lb. for cotton, with the result that this year 10,000 bales of cotton have been produced—truly a great achievement. There is every appearance of the output being doubled under favourable conditions. We have had to contend with many things. A certain type of grub, the corn-ear worm, was responsible for the destruction of the crop in some areas. I have always held the opinion that, if these little difficulties and obstacles are earnestly grappled with, they can be surmounted, although we might not have a good crop every year. The Government commenced by providing a guarantee of 5d. per lb., and then guaranteed the purchase of the ginneries at a sum of approximately £137,000. We then paid £18,000 for improvements and equipment of the ginneries so that they might be modernised. One of the latest devices in cotton-ginning will be installed in Rockhampton on Friday next. These things will give hon. members some idea of the sympathy of the Government towards the primary industries of the State. The Government have one object in view—to assist in production. It will be readily admitted that, with able representatives on the board who are prepared to shoulder their responsibilities, there must be efficiency

and economy. We permitted the growers to take over the ginneries twelve months earlier than was anticipated, resulting in a saving of £25,000 to £30,000 on the year's work. That is anticipated at the present time. So hon. members can see it is a sound business.

In order to help the cotton-grower to increase production we have launched out into many experiments. First of all, we have an experimental farm in the Dawson Valley area, as well as experimental cotton plots all over the place. Recently, on the suggestion and recommendation of Mr. Wells, the cotton expert, supported by the farmers, we introduced twelve different new varieties of cotton seed. We have to be extremely careful in this respect, for the simple reason that we might introduce many of the diseases in existence in America to-day. Even under the most stringent conditions and drastic treatment that science applies in germinating seed, we found that it was not wise to go any further at the present time. The new varieties of cotton seed which we are introducing inside the next twelve months will be sufficient to experiment with over the whole of our State to ascertain which type is the most suitable for our climatic conditions.

We have also launched out in regard to tobacco-growing. Hon. members, and more particularly the consulting committee, composed of some of the under secretaries of the various departments and departmental heads—I preside over the committee, which deliberates from month to month—have given me great help in the endeavour of the Government to extend this industry. We realise the wonderful opportunities that exist for this State in regard to tobacco-growing. Queensland appears to be one of the most suitable of the States to produce a bright flue-cured leaf of good texture and of suitable smoking quality. The Tobacco Investigation Committee resolved to plant plots in many areas as far north as Mareeba, covering an area approximately of 30,000 square miles. Our operations are guided by the Commonwealth committee, with Mr. Slagg as the director. We are not paying for these experiments, which are the result of an arrangement between the States and the Commonwealth. Mr. Slagg considers that Queensland is right out on her own in connection with the growing of a tobacco leaf of a suitable quality. The operations in the industry in Queensland have been conducted on a small scale in the past. The reason was that the ground selected was quite unsuitable for the purpose. It is not a question now of growing the fine long leaf which we were accustomed to hear about in the past, but the cultivation of a leaf with a fine aroma and of a smoking quality which we all appreciate. We have launched out in our investigations in a small way on thirty farms. I am particularly pleased with the results achieved, because one of my life's ambitions has been the development of the policy of opening lands for selection on the old homestead conditions, giving the selector the right of purchase at 2s. 6d. per acre on terms extending over thirty years. The Secretary for Public Lands has inaugurated such a scheme, and I trust that there will be a continuance of this policy for many years to come. Tobacco to-day is selling particularly well. Growers in the Texas district are receiving nearly £200 per acre for their leaf. A very

fine tobacco leaf is being grown at Texas, and experts have given the opinion that the industry which has been established there can be successfully extended. It is a long way from Texas to Mareeba, but there is nothing to prevent the development of the industry in the Mareeba district. The leaf produced in North Queensland was described in evidence given before the Federal parliamentary select committee as the best yet produced in the Commonwealth.

Much has been done in regard to the eradication of prickly-pear in Queensland. This work was started by the late Government, assisted by the Commonwealth Prickly-pear Board, which introduced the cactoblastis cactorum grub, which has done such good work and is continuing to do such good work to-day. From an Agricultural Department point of view we have to find something to produce on land where the prickly-pear used to grow, as useless grasses—certainly not as ugly as prickly-pear though equally as useless—are growing in the place of pear.

This year at Palardo we have carried out ten to twelve experiments on blocks of from 3 to 4 acres each. Grasses and fodder cereals have been grown, and the results achieved have been truly astounding. When I tell hon. members that in one patch alone the production was 14 tons per acre, they will realise the wonderful growth, and will appreciate how that will revolutionise a district from a dairying, cattle-raising, or sheep-raising point of view. That can be done for £1 per acre, which includes ringing, planting, and seeding. It is quite a cheap job, and well within the reach of any person with limited resources.

Another important industry in Queensland is the banana industry, which is worth £1,000,000 per annum. Action has had to be taken to exterminate the bananas grown in back yards in the metropolis and suburbs; and, although I am sorry that it has been necessary to take that action, had this action been taken four or five years ago there would be no "bunchy top" north of Brisbane to-day. As a matter of fact, we found that a very prominent person living two or three miles from Brisbane actually introduced plants from a "bunchy top" area and spread the disease in Brisbane. At all events, "bunchy top" is with us, and has to be combated.

Although the grading and quality of bananas have improved, there is still considerable room for improvement. The legislation passed last year has been responsible for improved work by giving greater power to create quarantine areas. It is particularly pleasing to know that "bunchy top" has not spread north during the last twelve months, for the simple reason that we have concentrated on that area by compelling owners to clean up affected plantations. I trust that within the next four or five years the disease will be completely exterminated from the Brisbane area.

We have also leaf spot and beetle borer with which to contend. The grower may carry out experiments with regard to the beetle borer and poisoning; but what can he do from a scientific point of view? The result is that we are up against big problems—firstly, from a shortage of money, and, secondly, by reason of the fact that we have not the experts available.

[Hon. H. F. Walker.

We have launched out in another pool—the barley pool. Over 100,000 bushels of barley are being produced in Queensland. Instead of getting their supplies from the South, the brewers of Queensland have come to our assistance, and are now purchasing most of their requirements locally.

Soil survey is another line of activity on which we have embarked. That is particularly useful in a country like Queensland, where men in the past have gone out into the wilderness to take pot luck, and would in many cases have failed had it not been for the wonderful variety of soils on the land which they selected. To-day we want a soil surveyor, and we cannot get one in Queensland. To meet the position we have had to send a junior officer to the Waite Institute in South Australia for a course of training in soil survey methods, but it will take twelve months before that training is completed.

Again I say that the students in our university should be trained to do this work. We do not want to take the first man that comes along, as he may not be suitable. We have not a soil surveyor at the present time, although we have a committee appointed. We have launched out by sending two surveyors, and they are going over an immense amount of our western land on which pear has been destroyed by the cactoblastis with a view to seeing whether that land can be put under wheat and so increase our wheat production.

We have also carried out experiments in regard to maize-growing, and, what is more, we are fighting the ravages of disease. The department has also carried out experiments in regard to tuberculosis, and it is only right that I should let the House know the results of these experiments. First of all, I should like to point out that we are losing £15,000 a year through tuberculosis in pigs. That enormous loss is passed on to the farmer. Previously there was no supervision in regard to pig breeding, but now the dairy expert has a dual position. When he goes upon a farm now, he has the duty of inspecting the piggeries with a view to cleaning them up. Experiments were carried out at Yeerongpilly with six pigs. Three of them were fed on pasteurised milk and three were not; and the experiment proved conclusively that the three pigs fed on milk direct from the cow were diseased, while those fed on pasteurised milk were not. That was confirmed by the bacon factories, as, when the pork was put into cold stores and cured, they found the germs were alive two months afterwards, showing conclusively that cold storage did not kill the germs. These are some of the things that the Department of Agriculture is doing. We are doing all we possibly can to help our industries.

We also have experimental plots in pastoral areas in connection with the growing of fodder on a small scale, for we recognise that the time is not opportune to launch out on a big scale. No one can say that in some areas where evaporation is not too great we cannot grow a certain amount of fodder. At any rate, the result will be beneficial, and will decide once and for all whether fodder can be grown for pastoral purposes.

At this stage of our national development I cannot stress too strongly that the well-being of the Commonwealth is bound up in agricultural and other rural pursuits. The only sound way to secure continued increase

in production is to improve farming methods, to eliminate the hazards of rural enterprize, and to apply the lessons of science to every branch of production. It has been said that every extra bushel of wheat per acre taken from the soil is worth £3,000,000 to Australia. Every insect and vegetable pest we learn to control saves enormous financial loss. Anyone who studies the temperature from Stanthorpe up to North Queensland must realise that it will require an enormous fund to cope with the various diseases. Every application of new knowledge to pasture and soil management and animal husbandry means an immense amount of added wealth to the country.

I have endeavoured to give the House some idea of what the Government have been doing. Hon. members must admit that we have not been altogether idle, and I am pleased to say that during this debate there has been hardly any criticism of the Department of Agriculture. While I appreciate that very much, I also recognise that healthy criticism does an enormous amount of good. Without criticism the department might be prone to sit back and do nothing.

I conclude by congratulating the mover and seconder of the motion for their very excellent addresses.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): I desire to offer my congratulations to the Secretary for Agriculture on the practical nature of his remarks on this occasion. He has clearly shown that the Government of

[4 p.m.] Queensland are doing all that is possible in their endeavour to put the affairs of Queensland on a satisfactory footing. I feel that the legislation forecast in the Governor's Speech and which will be placed on the statute-book during the present session will be in the interests of the people of Queensland and for the betterment of Australia.

We are passing through very serious times. We are told that there is financial depression, and there is a conference sitting at the moment in Melbourne of State and Federal Premiers and Treasurers, with Sir Otto Niemeyer representing the Bank of England. Whatever may be the result of the deliberations of that conference, one thing certain is that the people of Australia must get the country out of the trouble we are in. Whatever Governments may be in power controlling the destinies of the people, they should cater for every requirement of the people so that they can give of their best in the time of need. I believe that the primary producers in particular will be called upon to make greater efforts in producing those things which we must have to help the country in this time of need. This is going to be very hard, because at the present moment the prices of all primary products which have to be exported overseas have fallen. Consequently, when we have to urge primary producers to greater production, it is very hard for them when prices are so low; but I believe the primary producers of Queensland will respond to the appeal of the Prime Minister and the Premiers of the States to produce more so that we can balance our budgets and also balance our trade overseas. The position is that we have been having an adverse balance abroad for a number of years of such an extent that we are unable to get those loan moneys to adjust the trade balance that we obtained in days gone by. I find that in

1921-22 our credit balance abroad was some £51,100,000. In the six years following—1922-23 to 1928-29—there was an adverse balance of trade, including interest payable abroad, of something like £264,000,000. Therefore, at 30th June, 1929, our debit balance should have been £212,900,000. But during those years Australia borrowed something like £160,700,000, which left a debit balance on 30th June, 1929, of £52,200,000. We would have been in a much worse position so far as our debit trading balance was concerned had we not been able to borrow that money. The difficult position we are in to-day is owing to the fact that we are not able to borrow moneys overseas to balance our trading debit. This Government cannot be held responsible for what has taken place in the government of Queensland in years gone by or in connection with the other Governments of Australia.

At 4.4 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Roberts, *East Toowoomba*) relieved the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. BRAND: Yet the criticism offered by the Labour Party in this Chamber seems to indicate that hon. members opposite are of opinion that the Moore Government are wholly responsible for the position. We are told by hon. members on the other side that at this time, when money is so scarce, we should spend more money in order to help the people. Let me say at once that I believe that we should spend all that it is possible for us to spend in assisting the people of our State, but we cannot spend more than we have, and that we are spending to the limit is indicated by the statement in the Address in Reply that last year we experienced a very serious debit balance in our financing. I think it was the Leader of the Opposition who seemed to claim that we should spend more money than we are spending to-day, urging that a large sum had been left by the Labour Government for the benefit of this Government and that we should have spent it more freely.

Mr. PEASE: We did not. We said that you should spend the amount that Parliament appropriated.

Mr. BRAND: Hon. members opposite contended that we should spend more money, and that they had left a lot of money that we could have spent. We are spending the money that we have in the best way possible. If it is desirable to spend more, and if the criticism of the Labour Party is worth listening to, why did they not spend more than they actually did in the three months prior to going out of office at the beginning of last year? We are carrying on with the loan money available for the benefit of the people, and we are husbanding as much of those resources as it is possible for us to do, so that we shall not be left without any supplies of loan funds.

I said a moment ago that we were facing to-day the wretched position, not only of being unable to secure loan money overseas to help us in the further development of our State, but also of finding that the products we sell overseas are fetching prices much lower than last year and the years before. These together are making the position very difficult for us. I think it was the Labour Premier of Western Australia, Sir Robert Collier, who some eighteen

Mr. Brand.]

months ago at a Premier's Conference indicated what would happen if a serious fall in the prices of exportable products of Australia took place. At the conference held in Canberra in May, 1929, he said—

“We find to-day that because of our relatively high cost of production we are unable to compete with the other countries of the world. I venture to say that, if we had a severe drop in the prices of our staple produce, such as wool and wheat, associated with a bad season or two, Australia would be faced with the greatest crisis in its history. The cost of production must undoubtedly be reduced.”

That is the position we have reached to-day. To my mind it is unfortunate, because I do not like to see prices coming down. I believe that, if it is possible for us so to do, we should enjoy high prices. That is better for the people if it is possible; but we are unfortunately faced with the fact that the prices of our commodities have come down. The Governments throughout Australia should be very careful to see that at the same time the purchasing power of the people is not reduced. I believe that we should strain every effort to maintain the purchasing power of our people, but I believe that no State Government is able to achieve that result, and that it lies solely with the Federal Government who control the Customs duties. The duties imposed on products coming into this country have a great bearing on the cost of living, and the great mass of the people, who work for wages, undoubtedly have a vital interest in the cost of living. They desire that that cost of living should be in proportion to the wages they receive, and so, not only as a Government but also as representatives of the people living in rural areas we desire to see that the purchasing power of money shall not be seriously reduced, because that would affect the prices which we would receive for our commodities.

Mr. PEASE: Is that why the Government suspended the rural workers' award?

Mr. BRAND: The Government took action in conformity with their pre-election pledge, and they were supported wholeheartedly by the people in rural areas. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition appears to labour under the delusion that because that award was suspended wages were reduced. He appears to think that the only wage that can be paid to-day is a wage awarded by the Industrial Court. There is a very serious division of opinion on the matter, particularly among those who follow the hon. member in politics.

Mr. PEASE: You cannot expect the same price for sugar if you demand a reduction in wages.

Mr. BRAND: The purchasing power of the community should be maintained, and no Government is doing more to maintain the purchasing power of the community than is the Moore Government. Reduction of wages is not a matter confined to Nationalist Governments or to Labour Governments. We have in power in Australia to-day both Nationalist and Labour Governments; and in all Labour-governed States it has been found necessary to reduce the wages of the workers. Unfortunately, the action is necessary in view of the present financial position

[Mr. Brand.]

of Australia as a whole. The financial depression is seriously affecting us industrially, and is having a direct effect upon the worker, upon the primary producer, upon the business man—in fact, upon every person in the community. I would remind hon. members opposite, when they endeavour—as they have done during this debate—to criticise the Moore Government for reducing the basic wage and other wages, that their own Governments in other parts of Australia have done exactly the same thing as necessarily arose, and as hon. members opposite did when they were in power. It is not a question of Governments, but is definitely a matter of economic law. The Federal basic wage, as determined by a Federal court, subject to administration by the Federal Labour Government, has been fixed at £3 13s. per week for Queensland, whilst the basic wage declared by our Industrial Court is £4 a week, indicating that since our Government came into power there has been a reduction in the Federal basic wage of 7s. per week but a reduction of only 5s. per week in the basic wage awarded by the State Industrial Court. In the past we endeavoured to provide for the workers a high standard of living, with the result that an enormous number of workers are unable to secure employment. I am sure that all Queensland will congratulate the present Secretary for Labour and Industry for his painstaking and sympathetic endeavour to deal with this unfortunate problem by the introduction of a relief scheme which has enabled a very large number of people who hitherto were unable to secure work to obtain some of the necessaries of life. The unemployed workers should have our first consideration, and should be provided with sufficient work to enable them to secure some of the necessaries of life. The unemployment situation has become such a vital question that all Governments have been compelled to seek new avenues of employment for those who are unemployed; and I am pleased that the Minister in charge of the relief scheme in Queensland proposes to utilise the money available upon work of a reproductive character. That will possibly help to settle those out of work in permanent positions.

We want a more vigorous land settlement policy. I recognise that the man on the land to-day is faced with the problems of over-production and of glutted markets; consequently, the prices that he will receive for his product will be smaller. Some will say that we should not settle more people on the land at a time when there is an over-production of rural commodities; but I do not know of any other place where we can settle our people except by putting them on the land. Producers have invariably to face the problem of reduced market prices overseas; but the time will come when overseas prices will be better than they are to-day. The world's market prices are mainly the result of a residual market, because the prices received are the prices of commodities which have been dumped from every country. We cannot build up our industries on the basis of prices received overseas for our products; but we should have a vigorous land settlement scheme, as indicated by the Secretary for Agriculture, for the development of new industries which will place the producer in a much better position than many are in to-day.

The Speech of His Excellency indicated a more active land settlement policy, particularly with respect to those lands which were previously infested with prickly-pear. I was particularly interested in the speech of the Secretary for Agriculture, for he dwelt on the fact that, if increased production was desired, it was necessary for producers to make a more liberal use of fertilisers. There is no quicker way of increasing production than by the scientific use of fertilisers. The Government might well adopt the policy of New Zealand and other countries by conveying fertilisers consigned to producers free of cost over our railways. That might possibly assist the pastoralist to treat his land with fertiliser. To-day it is almost impossible for the agriculturist to apply lime to his land because of the exorbitant cost of carriage. If the Government cannot concede the free transport of fertilisers, they might do so in respect of lime. Lime can be a great help to the producer. There are other directions in which help can be extended to secure greater production. One of these directions is the means of transport both as regards railways and main roads. The Secretary for Railways is anxious to encourage development by the construction of main roads acting as feeders from the railways in those centres where it is possible to develop primary production. This policy will meet with the approval of settlers far removed from our railways, as it will enable them to connect with the railways and convey their produce to market more economically. This is a matter of great interest to those living in rural areas.

The Secretary for Agriculture dealt extensively with the sugar question. At this stage when the Federal Government have instituted an inquiry into the industry it is only right that hon. members addressing themselves to the sugar industry should state the facts clearly and fairly. We have no time in the industry for any person who overstates the facts in regard to it. We are desirous that the public should know everything about the industry, and know the facts as they really exist.

The Secretary for Agriculture quoted facts and figures this afternoon to show the wonderful progress made by the industry, particularly in the past year. His Excellency's Speech points out that 503,000 tons of raw sugar were manufactured in Queensland last season, that exports totalled 197,000 tons, and that the average return to the producer for the total output was £20 5s. 10d. per ton compared with £20 17s. 11d. for the previous season. If the figures are analysed, it will be found that for the past few years the sugar producers of Queensland have been receiving 33½ per cent. less price than that obtained in former years. Compared with the year previous to the one just closed, the average price of raw sugar was 12s. 1d. less during the past year.

The value of the sugar industry is all-important, and, in view of that, I was both surprised and disappointed at the speech made by the representative in this Parliament of such an important constituency as Cairns. During my ten years' association with this Chamber, in which period the sugar industry has had its ups and downs, I never before heard criticism of the sincerity of the Government towards the sugar industry. The speech of the hon. member for Cairns can serve no useful purpose in connection with the sugar industry. It is not the slightest

use any hon. member of the Labour Party endeavouring to manufacture a statement and attaching it to the Premier of this State. That sort of thing will get us nowhere.

Mr. DASH: This party did more for the sugar industry than ever you thought of.

Mr. BRAND: We are getting a sample of that in what Mr. Scullin intends to do.

Mr. POLLOCK: How do you know what he is going to do?

Mr. BRAND: We would like to know what he intends to do.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you want to make a political question of the embargo?

Mr. BRAND: I am not making it a political question, although the Leader of the Opposition is trying to draw me into a political controversy.

Statements made by hon. members in this House endeavouring to impute wrong motives to the Premier of this State in the control of the sugar industry are not doing any service to the sugar industry, to the State, or to the Commonwealth. The Premier has done everything possible to safeguard the sugar industry of Queensland. It is some years since a Premier felt impelled to leave Queensland for the South to interview the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth on the sugar question; yet on this occasion the Premier felt that the position was so important that he should journey to Canberra to help the sugar interests in their desire to secure a continuance of the sugar embargo and a stabilisation of the sugar agreement as it exists to-day.

Mr. DASH: Why don't you give credit to the workers' representative for going down South?

Mr. BRAND: I am not condemning the workers; I am congratulating the Premier of this State for doing something to assist the sugar industry. The hon. member for Cairns would have us believe that the Premier is not assisting the sugar industry of this State. That hon. member, when speaking the other day, made the rather peculiar statement that, if the working people of Queensland are not going to get a fair share of the prosperity of the sugar industry, then they might as well join hands with the people in the South and ask that the embargo be lifted. That is a most peculiar statement, because, even on the authority of the Leader of the Opposition in this State and of other Labour members, it has always been admitted that the worker gets a fair share out of the sugar industry in Queensland, and he is getting it to-day. Out of a gross value of £10,000,000 the worker gets 60 per cent.; therefore he is getting his fair share out of the industry. The Australian Workers' Union takes up quite a different attitude from that taken up by the hon. member for Cairns, and it is giving its wholehearted assistance to the sugar industry. All those interested in the sugar industry in Queensland, whether they are workers, farmers, millers, or refiners, are desirous of a continuance of the conditions operating at present; and we are all anxious to do what we can to bring about that continuance.

A great deal has been said about the foreign element in the sugar industry. The Secretary for Agriculture stated definitely this afternoon that he had taken out

Mr. Brand.]

exhaustive figures, and he had found that the foreign element in the sugar industry was only 8 per cent. of those engaged in the industry. On those figures no one will be able to say that the sugar industry is being overrun with a foreign element. That is something which is agitating the minds of the people in the South to-day. It is a great mistake for Australians or even Queenslanders, in debating the question of a continuance of the sugar embargo, to refer to the question of the foreign element. We should consider the industry from its value as a great Australian industry, which is developing the seaboard jungles of Northern Australia and establishing a white population there which will be a safeguard to national defence. That is the position from which we should consider the industry, and, if considered from that point of view, the sugar industry should receive every possible assistance from the Legislatures of Australia. Over a period of five years we have been exporting something like £2,000,000 worth of sugar from this country, and the total value of sugar produced in that period has been in the neighbourhood of £11,000,000. It is a great industry. It has settled something like 8,000 people on sugar farms throughout the State, and something like 28,000 people are working directly in the industry, while the industry gives indirect support to a much greater number of people.

It has been estimated by one [4.30 p.m.] authority that directly and indirectly it supports 100,000 people. An industry which is doing that is doing wonderfully well. There is an area of something like 300,000 acres under sugar-cane. I do not know what would happen to North Queensland if it was without this industry.

At 4.31 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. BRAND: It has been stated by some people in the South that the sugar industry is reaping large profits at the expense of the Australian consumer. If that were true, there might be some need for an investigating committee to inquire into the sugar industry, but there is no section engaged in the sugar industry of Queensland which is receiving more than a decent standard of living. The sugar-worker is receiving a little better than the basic wage, and no one can complain that he receives more than he should get. Sugar-cane work is very difficult and laborious, and the men engaged in it are entitled to a fair wage, and the wage they get is not more than what is paid in other primary industries, particularly those which have a harvesting period. The growers in the industry receive an average of 38s. 6d. per ton for their cane, and it costs them 35s. a ton to produce it. Those figures are taken from the records of the farmers themselves. The raw sugar-miller, who manufactures the sugar-cane into raw sugar, pays interest on the cost of his mill, running, perhaps, into £500,000, and in the case of the Tully mill it is at least £700,000; but he is able to do that, in addition to paying the cost of treatment for a lesser amount than the wholesaler and the grocer receive for distributing the sugar. The refiner in the industry is refining sugar for the Australian people for 4s. cheaper than is being done in America, and 10s. cheaper than in Great Britain, notwithstanding the fact that our costs in Australia are higher than in either of those countries. The sugar industry in all its phases is

[Mr. Brand.

working as economically as possible, and those engaged are entitled to the sympathy of the Australian consumer, particularly when they are not asking the Australian people to pay an excessive amount for sugar.

The people who are urging that the price of sugar should be reduced are principally confined to the manufacturer using sugar, the consumer, and the fruitgrower. The sugar industry is supplying sugar to the manufacturer for the products which he exports at £11 1s. 9d. for white refined sugar. He is getting a rebate on all sugars exported in his manufactured product overseas of £25 10s. per ton. In addition to that, if it goes to Great Britain, he further benefits in regard to the sugar contents of the product to the extent of £4 5s. per ton. Therefore, the manufacturer using sugar for exportable Australian products and receiving his sugar at the Australian equivalent of the world's parity is getting sugar at a price which he has no reason to complain about. During the fifty-nine meetings of the board which has fixed the price, and on which the manufacturer is represented, there have only been two occasions on which there has been a disagreement; there has been unanimity on fifty-seven occasions. In my opinion, the manufacturer has very little cause to grumble at the price he is paying for his sugar. Every comment I can find by way of public utterances in the South indicates that the people who are opposed to the sugar embargo and the agreement are very few indeed.

The householder is anxious to get his foodstuffs as cheaply as possible; but, when we take into consideration the fact that in Australia we have developed this industry under white-labour conditions—which has not been done anywhere else in the world—and that we have in addition been able to sell our sugar very little dearer than in other white countries of the world—we are justified in saying that we have done our share towards establishing the industry and making ourselves self-supporting in respect of this product. I notice that in other countries, such as Czecho-Slovakia, Germany, and France, where they produce beet sugar, the duty on white sugar ranges up to £20 15s. per ton, whereas in Australia it is something like £9 6s. 8d. per ton. We claim that on this occasion we are entitled to demand consideration from the Federal Government. Unfortunately, the committee which has been appointed to investigate the industry at this time consists of a number of representatives of factional interests. I think it was in 1912 that the Fisher Government appointed a commission, presided over by Mr. Justice Gordon, of South Australia. That commission presented a comprehensive report on the industry, and since that time we have had two further investigations. Now we are to have a third; yet this is the only body of inquiry on which the sugar interests of Queensland have not had adequate representation. It seems that the manufacturer, the consumer, and the fruit-grower possess greater influence with the present Commonwealth Government than do the sugar-growers of Queensland. That is unfortunate. It is a great pity that any committee of inquiry, consisting of factional interests, should be authorised to determine whether a great national industry such as the sugar industry should receive benefits from the Commonwealth, especially when,

without any such investigation, the Federal Government have recently given greater protection to many manufacturing industries than is enjoyed by the sugar industry. Sufficient data are available in the reports of the inquiries already made to enable anybody to come to a conclusion as to the case for the sugar industry, without bringing into being such a committee as is about to commence its work. Any of the men who have been chosen could sit down, and, without making any inquiry whatever into the industry in the centres where it is carried on in the North, make a report as to what should be done in the matter. He would have all the facts before him; there is no need whatever to commence another inquiry on 1st September. All I can say is that the sugar industry is not afraid of any inquiry, provided that it gets an impartial hearing and the report is made impartially. Unfortunately, however, I say again, the representation of factional interests on the committee is not likely to be in the best interests of the sugar industry of Queensland.

So far as the future of Queensland generally and our industrial life in particular is concerned, I believe that the government of this country is in safe hands. I am very pleased to know that every member of the Government is anxious to do his very best towards helping the people of our State. I believe that in their first fifteen months of office the Cabinet have shown themselves capable of grappling with the problems which confront Australia to-day; and I feel that in the coming year and the years which follow the Government on this side of the House will do well by the people of Queensland, and that this State will emerge from the difficulties that face us, financially and industrially, better than any other State in the Commonwealth. To-day we have honest representation by men who are anxious to give of their best and to do their bit for the welfare of Queensland as a whole.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): During the very interesting and very informative speech delivered by the Secretary for Agriculture, I was distinctly pleased to hear him make reference to the very excellent service rendered to the State and to the Empire by His Excellency the Governor. Although we have been favoured in the years that have been by representatives from abroad, I think I am safe in saying that never in all our history has a man more acceptable to the people been found than the gentleman who at present is the occupant of the very high office of Governor of this State.

I am glad to be able to congratulate the mover and seconder of this motion on their very able efforts in connection with the moving of the Address in Reply; but I regret that our friends on the Opposition side, with one or two exceptions, have not attempted to rise to the occasion which confronts this State and the whole of the Commonwealth at the present time. Never have an Opposition failed to the extent that the present Opposition have failed in the presentment of their realisation of the conditions that obtain throughout the whole of the land. By just bare references here and there by several hon. members opposite whom I can name, and by odd sentences, there is little indication or some vague evidence that they do realise that we are in the greatest straits we have ever been in as a State and as a

country. Surely at a time like this there should be a general effort on the part of everyone to help the country in a given direction out of the throes in which it finds itself to-day. Better things were expected from the Leader of the Opposition. He did give way here and there, and he did indicate a bigger sense of responsibility; but, on the whole, his arguments and his statements were quite below what might have been expected, and quite below that which frequently falls from his lips. After antagonistic references to the Loan Council to a degree in connection with loan moneys at the last moment, he did evidence the realisation that even his Government had been seized with a sense of the responsibilities, and that, when he attended a conference in the South, he had been seized with a sense of the responsibilities where it was realised that the brake should be placed upon expenditure, etc. Yet the general line of argument adopted by the hon. gentleman was in condemnation of the Government because they had not followed the jazz of expenditure that had operated for many years during the term of office of his own Government. He rose to the occasion momentarily when he spoke in terms like these—

“The difficulty of obtaining loan funds in future was also foreseen at that conference. Further, it was generally agreed that, having regard to Australia's indebtedness in all aspects and the heavy interest burden on the people, all the Governments of Australia should endeavour to curtail public expenditure, and, so far as was humanly possible, confine it to avenues of activity which would increase the capacity of the State to meet its obligations and to extend its wealth production. Queensland was the only State that carried out that understanding. During the last four years of the Labour Ministry approximately £1,000,000 less was spent than was provided for in the Budget.”

No one can find fault with that statement; but comparing that particular sentence with the general arguments of the hon. gentleman makes us wonder where we really are. It was also the case in another direction. When the Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Bill was before this House, the hon. member decried helping men out of work to the tune of £2 10s. or £3 a week, as the case may be; but, notwithstanding the argument adopted by hon. members opposite from the beginning to the end of the discussion, the Leader of the Opposition came down with this most significant amendment—

“After line 54, page 18, insert the following new clause, to follow clause 34:—

“In the month of August or as soon after as may be convenient in each year, the Minister shall cause a report to be laid before Parliament giving full information as to all operations and proceedings under this Act, including the tax collected thereunder during the last preceding financial year.”

And he added—

“It is quite obvious that this Bill will be continued for more than a year. It would be a good thing for all concerned if the necessity for it disappeared within a year; but he would be a super-optimist who believed that that would happen, particularly with the present Government in power.”

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

Yet the whole argument from hon. members opposite was absolutely contrary to these expressed sentiments! There is absolute evidence that this relief measure was one of the finest things that could have been done under the existing circumstances.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: Is your Government not going to reduce the income tax exemption?

MR. G. P. BARNES: I hope that they may be able to do so; but the disclosures made during the last twelve months, particularly in the last few months, go to show that it will be extremely difficult to reduce taxation.

MR. KIRWAN: You did not say that during the election.

MR. G. P. BARNES: The hon. member for Brisbane knows very well that conditions to-day are very different from what they were fourteen or fifteen months ago. This Government are charged with a very severe task in coping with existing conditions. The hon. member referred to the conditions existing in 1901-2, but they could not be compared with the conditions existing to-day. We know that the conditions which existed in 1901-2 were mainly the result of the reaction caused by the loss to the States of Customs revenue and their having to adjust themselves to new conditions then confronting them. There is no possible comparison between the two periods. Never before in our history, so far as I can remember, was our credit assailed as it is to-day. Never before was credit refused to us. We were always able to borrow in the old land when we desired to embark on public works or to convert our loans.

MR. POLLOCK: Where is the confidence which you stated would be restored if your party were returned to office?

MR. G. P. BARNES: The bug-bear of success of the conference of Premiers now being held in Melbourne is the representation of Labour. The Prime Minister, Mr. Scullin, is the one man responsible for holding back the endeavour that is being made to evolve a scheme whereby the States can emerge from their present difficulties. At any rate, the evidence seems to be in that direction, and it would appear that Mr. Scullin will have to come down from his platform.

The task confronting the Queensland Government is no easy one, as the Opposition well know. Surely at a time like this, even though men are in opposition, they would do some good if they would put forward some constructive thought to assist in a return to normal conditions. It would be an insult to hon. members opposite to say that they fail to realise the conditions that exist to-day. They cannot be oblivious to the truth, which is so palpable; therefore, would it not be well for them to come forward and lend a hand in the direction in which it is wanted?

MR. POLLOCK: Our complaint is that your party did not realise the position before the last election.

MR. G. P. BARNES: I am afraid our party did not realise the legacy that had been left by the preceding Government.

MR. KIRWAN: A legacy of £5,000,000 of loan money!

MR. G. P. BARNES: That was very gratefully received, and very carefully preserved.

[Mr. G. P. Barnes.

I think it was the hon. member for Gregory who put the position in this way: "Do you realise the position to which your Government have brought the workers?" I would point out, however, that the workers realised the position, or the Opposition would not be where they are to-day. A very pertinent question to ask to-day is: "After fifteen years of management by Labour?"—

MR. KIRWAN: Queensland will be the first State to turn the corner.

MR. G. P. BARNES: That is because it is a primary-producing country, and for no other reason. Do hon. members opposite realise what fifteen years of management by Labour has done? We need not have been in any trouble if we had not indulged in a wild orgy of expenditure—a position which obtained throughout the Commonwealth. I have frequently heard members of the Labour Party say that the loan expenditure should never exceed £2,000,000 per annum; and I remember Mr. Theodore stating distinctly on one occasion that expenditure on railways should be met out of revenue receipts. Yet in actual practice the Labour Governments doubled the national debt.

MR. POLLOCK: The reason you are not spending money is because you cannot get it.

MR. G. P. BARNES: The task before the present Government is a very arduous one. All must help. The expenditure per capita went up from £10 12s. 9d. to £18 8s. 9d. under the Labour Government. Then the Labour Government were lavish in some directions in departmental expenditure. In 1915 the departmental expenditure was £7 8s. 10s. per head of the population; by 1923-29 the Labour Government had increased it to £12 2s. 2d. per head. That is what we have inherited.

Then take the general expenditure, which again shows the lavishness with which the Labour Government carried on the affairs of the country. In round figures the general expenditure in 1915 was £7,200,000; in 1929 it had increased to £17,000,000; and that expenditure had to be defrayed largely from taxation. That also is something we inherited.

Now let us take the railways, which are our trouble to-day. They are a big charge upon our revenue. In 1914-15 it took only £2,401,679 to keep the railways going; in 1929 it took £6,200,804. That need not have been referred to if there had been increased production; but the trouble is that under the administration of the Labour Government production was not encouraged as it should have been. The cities were made too attractive. In 1914-15 the tonnage carried on the railways was 4,544,881 tons; in 1929, although meanwhile the Government expended £25,000,000 on railways, the tonnage carried on the railways amounted to only 4,553,099 tons, or just about the same quantity as was carried in 1914-15. The Labour Government were responsible for that position to a large extent. Notwithstanding all that has been said from the Opposition benches against the Governor's Speech, there is everything in that Speech that is helpful to us to-day. It may not contain some of the flamboyant language that we have had in the past; but, if you take half a dozen clauses in that Speech, it will be found that the Government have put their finger on the needs of to-day, and have pointed out the way in which our difficulties should be dealt with.

There is a paragraph with regard to depression which ends in this way—

“Every effort will be exerted to balance expenditure and receipts in the revenue account.”

Then we come to land tenure: and I am glad to note that the late Government are to be congratulated upon the success which attended their efforts in connection with pear destruction, so that there will be available for settlement in that connection no less than 1,250,000 acres of land. That is a very fine thing to assert. The Speech tells us that the resumption of land will be attended to; that closer settlement is to be followed; that Empire trade is to be encouraged, and so on. If our budgets are to be balanced, they can only be balanced by paying our way with the cost of goods exported. The Government are on right lines in that connection. There are other directions in which we can help; but production is the way in which we can assist to the greatest extent.

I want to pay a tribute at this serious juncture of our affairs to the help which has been afforded by the banks. Had it

[5 p.m.] not been for the banks generally having strengthened their position during the last ten or fifteen years, our difficulties to-day would have been more serious than they are. The banks have steadily improved their position until they were able to find £20,000,000 in order to meet the exigencies of finance on the other side of the world.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: If the banks increased their strength, it could only be as the result of the increased productivity of the people.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Everyone admits that during and following on the war things reached an abnormal value. Wool, wheat, and other commodities went up to an extreme price, and it is a good thing that the banks seized the opportunity of doubling their capital. At any rate, they have been able to serve us in a splendid way. They have handed over their gold to the Commonwealth Bank, and so depleted their own stocks to the tune of £20,503,000. If they had not been able to do that, it would have been a very serious matter. I believe that we shall be saved as the result of the very fine attitude of the banks in building up their reserves and capital accounts. For instance, in 1919 the assets of the banks were £222,800,000 in round figures, and in 1929 £355,400,000, showing an immense increase, whilst their capital in 1929 was £76,958,000, and their reserves carried forward £51,540,000. Their advances and investments in 1919 were £172,800,000, and in 1929 £292,223,000. That is a very fine record, and shows how much we owe to the banking institutions of our land.

Although reductions have been made in connection with the cost of administration of the affairs of our State, I feel that we shall have to go a long way further yet. No one likes to see the curbing of payments, because, when payments are not being made, there is no money floating about in the directions in which we want it, but I feel that we are up against a very serious position. I think there should be equal sacrifice all round, and the higher the position the greater should be the sacrifice. The working man cannot come down much lower, but I am afraid that men will be glad to have

even the £3 a week which has been referred to again and again before we are through our present trouble.

When I speak of equality of sacrifice, there is one gentleman—on a wage-earner—who is escaping, and I do not think he should escape. When I speak of the wage-earner who is escaping, I am referring to those who come under this head.

About two years ago I asked the Treasurer of the day, Mr. McCormack, a question in this House, and, in reply, he informed me that of the then public debt the sum of £26,554,379 had been raised in Australia free of State and Federal income tax, and that £12,848,313 had been raised in Australia free of State income tax, and that no loan had been raised by Queensland in the other States of Australia. I say that it is a crying shame that these sums have been dragged out of industry; that men have been invited to take quiet seats in life; and that they are now escaping the effect of our troubles, and are receiving a high rate of interest on about £40,000,000. How can we succeed under such circumstances? I look upon interest as the wage of capital; and I think I am right in saying that there will have to be a reduction in the rate of interest if we are to get through. This is a serious matter. Is the man who has been invited to take things easy to be the only man to escape? Is the other, who is keeping this, that, and the other industry going, to be the only man to be attacked, and to be called upon to pay the penalty of the disastrous times? I say the thing is absolutely wrong.

Mr. POLLOCK: If we said that, you would accuse us of repudiation.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not speaking of repudiation; but surely an appeal should be made to all of our people to forgo something! Surely those who are taking it easy, who have investments of this character, should be invited in some diplomatic manner to come to the rescue of the country! Why should it not be done in a time of dire distress such as this? No doubt the banks are helping; but their power to help is not very great, as may be seen from the value of their shares, because the value of the shares of any bank is determined by its reserves; but there are companies who are apparently seizing the opportunity in this time of stress of giving help to charge a higher rate of interest. Is that right? I am against such a course. I say that is unfair, and that the course I suggest requires consideration. I do not say that that result can be brought about; but, if we take the position of Queensland alone, we will realise its importance. Suppose that Queensland has £27,000,000 or £28,000,000 of her public debt raised in Australia, free of any income tax, and about the same amount overseas. Suppose we could bring about some arrangement with the bondholders even to defer for the present time the payment of half the interest, how much that would help us! It would be a big thing; and I am inclined to think that the moneyed men who have invested in our bonds should have such an appeal made to them. At any rate, it seems to me to be a very fair move to make.

I notice that a financial authority of the calibre of Sir Josiah Stamp, in giving evidence recently, expressed the opinion that

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

provision should be made for making good the present deficiency in capital, that there should be a greater supply of cheap capital than we have at the present time, and that anything which tends to encourage national saving is to be encouraged. This is a matter which has given rise to very serious thought, and one which should receive our wholehearted support. Whilst everyone is straining himself to meet the present difficulty, is it quite fair that those enjoying the reward of a quiet investment, and they alone, should escape? I do not quite think so.

I propose to say a few words now on what can be done. There are directions in which we can do things. Last year I dealt with the question of the distillation of oil from coal, and I referred to the wonderful strides that have been made elsewhere. I think I am right in asserting that £8,000,000 to £9,000,000 per annum are taken out of our land just now for petrol, oils, etc., which we could very well produce ourselves. If a country like Germany, possessing inferior coal deposits in comparison with our own, can serve the requirements of that nation with fuel secured from coal, then why cannot we, with wonderful veins of coal at our very door, provide similar fuel in this country? Surely we can give some encouragement, and invite someone to come along and put the undertaking into motion! At the present time we are spending no end of money in boring down into the earth for oil. There is no possibility of our coalbeds being exhausted for many years to come. I am not quite sure whether the present Government are making it as widely known as possible that a helping hand in this direction would be appreciated. Here we have coal at our very door, and we know that other places are doing certain things, and we should be doing them ourselves. I understand that the Swedes have succeeded in patenting a perfect plant for oil distillation purposes. There should be an inquiry into this matter. No great amount of time would be required to satisfy ourselves on this point; and, whilst we are engaged in the search for oil, it would be an easy matter to tack on the question of production by means of distillation.

This afternoon the hon. member for Rosewood gave notice of a question as to whether the Government would make representations to the American Consul with a view to supplying produce to meet the deficiency in the United States of America following upon the disastrous drought in that country. Why, we are not even supplying ourselves! I do not know that we could get a shipload together—our production is so poor. We can increase our production, and we should increase our production. Our present difficulties are due to the fact that we have not been doing this. Last year we brought into Queensland 30,000 tons of produce from New South Wales via Wallangarra; and I cannot say how much came by other routes. I can inform hon. members of some things that came by other routes. During the past six months 30,000 tons were brought into Queensland via Wallangarra and 40,000 tons the year before. We are not producing sufficient to meet our own requirements. Quite a lot has been said about wheat and about wheat pools and boards. Why, 5,664 tons of flour for centres between Bundaberg and Bowen came in during the first six months of the year! We could not supply the flour. Someone

might ask, why? Some people have spoken of geographical advantages; but, when it is known that the Queensland buyer has to pay 5½d. more per bushel for wheat than it can be bought for in Sydney, and the vendor who holds that wheat in Sydney can send it to Townsville at 7s. 3d. per ton less than the Queensland buyer could deliver it by rail, where does the geographical advantage come in? The consequence is that flour which should be manufactured, sold, and distributed in Queensland comes from the South. We cannot hold our own in that trade. We cannot develop under farcical and fictitious conditions like that.

Again, poultry-feed is being imported over the border into Queensland simply because a price is demanded for the local article in excess of what it is worth in other States. There is an immense market here in those directions. The cry is to produce more, and we must produce if we are to balance our budget. The report of the British Economic Mission, presented to the Federal Parliament on 7th January, 1929, enumerates a list of articles imported into Great Britain in 1926. This list embraces butter, cheese, wheat, wheat products (meal and flour), other grain, eggs and poultry, fruit, skins and hides, lard, leather, meat, olive oil, sugar (unrefined), milk (condensed and unsweetened), tallow, honey, wool, cotton, wine, and copper ore, but of these articles Australia only supplied £53,622,703 worth, whereas Britain imported from all sources £560,438,603 worth. Hon. members will see that there is a tremendous market awaiting us. Part of the policy of this Government is in the direction of developing an understanding with the Empire in order that it may take what we can produce in that direction. We have the power to produce if our people only have the will and the way. I say calmly and distinctly to-day that, although we only have about 1,000,000 acres of land under cultivation, there is nothing to prevent us doubling or trebling our cultivable land and production. We would then have some chance of meeting the demands of markets abroad.

In some directions we can help ourselves. The Secretary for Railways is losing heaps of money in connection with transport, and will lose much more in the future if he is not careful. People who to-day are loyal to the railways will by and by have to do as others are doing if they are to compete successfully with them. No person has the right to sit down while people are taking his trade away. The Minister will have to meet the competition he is receiving in transport. They are meeting that competition in other places. With the good roads that are being constructed, a position similar to that which has arisen in England will arise, and thousands of tons of goods will be carried over the roads. Where will the Minister's chances be under a system of that kind? In 1928 Parliament granted to four large English railway companies power to conduct motor traffic. A newspaper statement dealing with the subject said—

“These identified themselves with the leading road groups, which resulted in a great road and rail combination with control throughout Britain, ending the cut-throat competition.”

[Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

We are told that no one has any thought of preventing the development of our country. We want to develop it, but at the same time we want to protect our wonderful assets, such as our railways. There are plenty of directions in which men with motor lorries could be encouraged to conduct services which would act as feeders to our railways.

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

Mr. DUFFY (*Eacham*): In supporting the motion before the House, I desire to congratulate both the mover and seconder for the very able manner in which they dealt with the position. The hon. member for Ipswich, particularly, delivered a very thoughtful address, and attempted to deal with the position facing Queensland and Australia to-day.

I feel sure that all hon. members will agree that the most important problem confronting us to-day is how we are to extricate ourselves from the present difficult position. We all realise that we are going through a period of depression; but we have not yet had any clear explanation of it from leaders of public thought or from the press. We are told that the position is due to the fact that we have over-borrowed. I do not subscribe to that view, because it does not matter how much is borrowed; rather is it a question of how the money is expended, and whether it will become a burden on the community. I have been attempting to get further loan money for ventures in my electorate. I have been unable to get the money, because it is not available; but I claim that, if it were made available, that money would not be a burden on the taxpayers of Queensland.

Mr. Bow: Do you not think the banks would be willing to advance it to you?

Mr. DUFFY: I have no doubt they would if they had it to lend. As I say, the question is as to how the loan money has been expended, and whether it has been utilised for productive purposes so that it will at least repay the interest on the capital sum involved. If borrowed money would produce exportable goods that would meet the situation overseas, then it would be a good thing to borrow another £5,000,000 or £10,000,000. If we had directions in which that money could be spent reproductively, it would be a good thing for us to spend it.

The next theory advanced to account for the present position is that we have been living too extravagantly. I do not subscribe to the view that that has been wholly responsible for the position; but the majority of people have not had explained to them what is meant by the phrase "living too extravagantly." The average man and woman on reading such a statement will immediately ask themselves in what way they have been living too extravagantly. The answer is to be found in our importations. It does not matter how extravagantly we live if we only buy goods produced in Queensland or Australia, because in that way we are helping one another; but, when we import goods and do not produce something that will repay the amount of our importations, then we are living too extravagantly. It is in that direction that I subscribe to the statement that we have been living too extravagantly.

Another reason advanced was stated in the "Daily Standard" a few days ago, when Mr. Collings ascribed the present position to the fact that the banks had put a tight rein on all money. The figures given by the hon. member for Warwick will show, however, that the banks have strained their resources in order to help in every direction. A few years ago it would have been considered highly dangerous for banks to make advances to the extent to which the banks have been doing until recently.

I have heard the Leader of the Opposition say that high wages mean prosperity. I think that should be reversed: High wages do not lead to prosperity, but prosperity may lead to high wages. Prosperity does not necessarily mean high wages. Prosperity should only be judged by the standard of comfort that the people are able to secure for the wages received, and if the State is able to provide profitable work for the whole of the community. That is how one should judge prosperity, and not by pounds, shillings, and pence or the basic wage, as some members of the Opposition do.

We have to-day with us probably the most important visitor Australia has had for quite a long time. I refer to Sir Otto Niemeyer. Probably he will ask the conference in Melbourne what goods we propose to send overseas to balance our trade. What answer can the members of the conference give him to such a question? What can they tell him? It is a most deplorable position to say that we have not any products that we can export to-day that would be profitable to the people producing. That is an extraordinary position.

Mr. Bow: Do you include sugar?

Mr. DUFFY: Not even sugar.

Mr. Bow: What about butter?

Mr. DUFFY: Butter cannot be exported at a profit either. Butter is profitable to the producer to-day because we levy on our consumers in order to increase the export price. The sugar we export is profitable for the same reason. Everything we produce in Australia would show a loss to the producers if exported. That is a very extraordinary position for a country to be in. No one for a moment would claim that we have reached the limit in production. We have only commenced on it. When we assure the people that by doubling or trebling production it will be profitable to them and we can arrange financial assistance for those who are willing to embark in industry, there will be no more unemployment. We shall be looking for double the population we have here to-day. To say that we are at a dead-end in regard to production and that we cannot export at a profit must make every intelligent man and woman in Australia think.

The Federal Government recently passed an Act placing an embargo on the importation of certain goods and rationing the importation of other goods. In the near future that should assist to a great extent in providing a large amount of employment for our own workers. That was a step in the right direction, and every hon. member in this Chamber will wish every success in regard to that matter. We sincerely hope that the effect of that measure will be what the Federal Labour Government desire. But there is another side to it. In order to balance his overdraft, Mr. Scullin has had

Mr. Duffy.]

to increase taxation, and thereby increase the cost of living to our own people; and I am afraid that that is going to have a very serious effect on the production of goods for export. That is the serious part of it, I am sorry to say, because it is a bold step to take.

It is interesting to study what happened during the last few years in France when that country was in a similar position to what we in Australia are to-day. France is admitted to be the most [5.30 p.m.] prosperous nation in Europe to-day; but a few years ago she did not know which way to turn to get out of her financial difficulties. My attention was recently drawn while in the North to an article in the "World To-Day," setting out the position obtaining in that country. This is what the writer had to say—

"Those who delight to witness, in the course of human experience, the operation of a law of compensation or the dispensation of Providence, will turn with relief from the United States to France, from the nation which acquired immense gains in the world war, to the nation which, in proportion to population and resources, suffered most of all.

At 5.31 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. DUFFY:

"Of France it may be said that she stands to-day the most happy of nations. She has no unemployment, no want. Her people have ample for their requirements, sufficient for a cultured life on a plane probably the highest on earth. Her people are not herded in congested and hideous manufacturing centres. The second city of France has a population of only 650,000. Fifty-three per cent. of her population is rural. Of the hundreds of small communities scattered over her fruitful land, each has evolved and maintained its own life and individuality. In a phrase, France is not a product of mass production; throughout her vicissitudes she has preserved her character and has saved her soul.

"Bled almost white by the war, her territories ravaged, her industries ruined, and her finances in chaos, the years immediately following the war were of immense difficulty. 1920 was a year of bad trade and unemployment. Again, for five months in 1927, following Poincaré's drastic reforms, many workmen were thrown out of work. But since 1927, France has never looked backwards. To-day her industries are re-equipped and reorganised; her agriculture is conducted on the most scientific lines; wages, measured in purchasing power, are higher than in 1913; the burden of taxation is relatively light; there is no unemployment. An attractive feature of French life is that one can enjoy a little luxury without paying an exorbitant price. A glass of good wine or of cognac, for example, can be obtained at a trifling cost.

"The failure to balance the budget, the extravagances of the Cartel des Gauches, the jugglery of M. Caillaux and his failure to settle the American debt, precipitated a crisis. The State coffers were almost empty, the accommodation of the Bank of France was at an end; the Government was virtually bankrupt and the franc had reached 243

to the pound on its cruise after the mark, when M. Poincaré took the helm, and all political parties, for fear of national shipwreck, bowed to his domination.

"After balancing the budget by imposing fresh taxation, and having raised funds from a combination of banks, M. Poincaré applied himself to purging the administration. His work may thus be summarised: 106 sub-prefectures (with staffs complete) out of a total of 274 were abolished; 360 local councils were condemned as useless and suppressed; 87 general secretariats were reduced to 17; 359 minor courts were reduced to 131; 396 magistrates and 223 clerks were discharged.

"French prosperity has increased to such an extent that at the close of the last financial year there was a surplus of £250,000,000, which is being applied to reduction of taxation."

That goes to show that when a nation tackles its troubles in the right way and goes in for sound government, it is possible in a few years to bring the State back to prosperity, have no unemployment, light taxation, a big surplus, and cheap necessities. We could do a lot worse than study what has happened in France, but I believe that Australia, having played such an important part—

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you think we could do what France did in connection with her financial liabilities?

Mr. DUFFY: Yes, with the co-operation of all classes of the people.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: With all their financial liabilities?

Mr. DUFFY: But we have not anything like their financial liabilities.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: France had to ask Britain to carry a good deal of her debt.

Mr. DUFFY: And I think that, if Great Britain carried such an enormous amount for France, she would carry a bit for us. All that the British Government are asking us to-day is to see that we make provision within our own borders for our own future. Britain is not turning us down altogether, but she refuses to carry the burden to the extent of lending us money to pay her own interest.

Amongst the proposals mentioned in the Governor's Speech is a Land Act Amendment Bill. I am pleased to see that at last some change is to be made in that Act, although I am aware that a big change was made in it last session. The greatest alteration we made then probably was the return to freehold tenure, but to my mind some of the terms offered to tenants who wished to convert are still too onerous. Only ten years' terms are offered for the conversion for a perpetual leasehold town allotment, and in many cases that would fall too heavily on the lessees. I would like to see that term extended to twenty years, and I hope that provision will be made in that direction. When making provision for freehold, I hope that the same option will be given to holders of special leases where the land involved is no longer required for the purpose for which it was originally set aside. I do not feel at all satisfied with the progress in making land available for settlement. I feel that we

[Mr. Duffy.]

have been far too slow. Much more energy should be put into getting the land that is available opened for selection. I believe that by spreading our people out over the State and getting settlers to take up such land we shall be taking the quickest and easiest way to give permanent relief to the unemployed in our midst.

Mr. KIRWAN: You have a majority in caucus. What is wrong?

Mr. DUFFY: I am giving hon. members my views. If I had my way, there would be a great deal more settlement in Queensland than we have at present. I hope the Minister will be able to liven his department up. I did not come here to agree with everything the department did, and I am not going to do so either. Every fresh settler is making work, not only for the men who improve his selection, but also for others who handle his produce, and he also provides more revenue for the Government.

I do not subscribe to the statement made by the Secretary for Public Lands in this Chamber a few days ago when he said that it was a wrong policy to make land available upon a very cheap basis. I do not hold with his view that the settlers should pay a good price for the country. He said that, when further areas were opened for settlement in the future we should see that the State secured the ruling price of adjoining lands. It would be profitable to this State to place the people on the land quite apart from the question of capital cost. (Hear, hear!) It is quite wrong to quibble over the price to be charged for the land. The land to-day is producing nothing, whereas, if it were brought under production, further revenue would be secured to the State. We should aim at bringing the land under production, quite regardless of whether or not a charge is made for the land.

I was very pleased to know that a scheme has been launched, as mentioned by the Secretary for Agriculture, to enable settlers to embark upon the production of tobacco in the Mareeba district. The Minister informed the House that the land would be made available at 2s. 6d. per acre. The land should be made available on the basis of a low price, similar to that mentioned by the Minister. It must be made available cheaply in order that it may attract desirable settlers. There should be an inducement to every individual, whether he has money or not, provided that he is prepared to work. I do not suggest that settlers should be drawn solely from the ranks of the unemployed; but I am hopeful that those who are at present in employment will gladly forsake their present jobs to go on the land to become producers. I am sure that such would be the case if conditions were made sufficiently attractive. It has been proved beyond doubt that tobacco can be profitably grown in the Mareeba district. At the present stage there is an element of risk, and settlers should not embark upon the industry on a large scale. However, reports to hand indicate that the industry can be made a decided success. The industry is now to the district, and I understand that considerable care is necessary in producing tobacco acceptable to the palate of Australian smokers. I hope that care will be taken by the Government to see that the settlers are not placed upon areas unsuited to the production of tobacco acceptable to the Australian public. We have

Mr. Howell, a Federal officer, in charge of tobacco investigation and experiments in North Queensland, and I suggest that the Government should secure his services for the settlers who propose to engage in this industry. The importance of correct and sound advice at the outset is so vital that no stone should be left unturned to see that the settlers embark upon this enterprise on the right lines. The land available in the Mareeba district can be obtained very cheaply, is handy to the railway and to the town, and is situated in a district which enjoys an excellent climate; and, if the tobacco industry can be developed along sound lines, this district will become one of the most progressive parts of Queensland in a very few years.

The next department in importance in the matter of land settlement is the Agricultural Bank. Whilst I admit that the institution is being more sympathetically administered than has been the case for many years past, it still falls a mighty long way short of the service that it should be to the settlers. It is not functioning to the satisfaction of the settlers. As I have previously stated, there are a large number of workers who have saved a little money and are anxious and have sufficient ambition to endeavour to depart from the wages field with a view to going upon the land; but I am afraid that, if they have to depend upon the Agricultural Bank for the assistance necessary to place them upon a production basis, then they had better stick to their present jobs and leave land settlement to those who have had a great deal of experience in land settlement. The position at present is not as it should be, but I am hopeful that it will be remedied.

Far too many settlers are assisted by the banks to a stage when they have expended all the advances it is possible for them to get. They are not in a position to produce sufficient to keep themselves and their families on the selections, and, in consequence, have to leave to obtain work to keep the selections instead of the selections keeping them. That is where the bank fails in its duty to the selector. I noticed recently that the New South Wales Government were inviting applications for loans from settlers who were prepared to carry out work and improvements on their holdings. They realised that the best form of work to relieve unemployment was that which was likely to return to the State interest on the money expended. That would mean a great deal more to the State than constructing roads around cities. Most of this money, when expended, would add to the revenue of the State, including the railways. During the past year I have had occasion to call at the Agricultural Bank on behalf of many of its clients who were unable to meet their commitments, and wherever a good case was made out and the bank was satisfied that the settler was not neglecting his holding, but was looking after and endeavouring to make a living on it, it extended leniency towards him. I found that there was a strong disinclination on the part of the bank to foreclose on the settler living on his block, and who was not allowing it to slip back into a state of disrepair. To be successful, the bank should have a given sum set aside for it to operate on, and not, as has been done, be voted a given amount every year. Then, as the loans are repaid to the bank, they can be again

Mr. Duffy.]

leaned. Under such a system the bank will know just how it stands. I was very pleased to see a statement published from the Premier this morning stating that whatever expenditure was curtailed the operations of the Agricultural Bank would not be interfered with.

A good deal has been published and spoken of on the sugar industry, whose future is in the air at the moment. I believe, with those hon. members who have spoken on the subject, that the embargo is not likely to be removed, notwithstanding that a committee has been appointed by the Federal Government to conduct an inquiry. I feel very confident that the agreement will be renewed.

Mr. PEASE: You know Mr. Scullin.

Mr. DUFFY: If Mr. Scullin and the Federal Government agreed to the extension of the embargo and agreement, I feel sure that they will do so, realising that it is only their duty so to act. I also feel sure that the evidence before the committee will be only in one direction, and that the committee will recommend the renewal of the agreement. The sugar industry has set a very fine example to other primary industries of Queensland. A few years ago Mr. Hughes, when Prime Minister, agreed to a certain price in regard to sugar, and, although the price of sugar has to-day dropped to £21 per ton to the grower, the industry during the whole of that time has been able to pay the same wages as when the price to the grower was 30 per cent. higher. That is a very creditable performance, and is due to the successful organisation of every part of the industry. It has been thoroughly organised, and its cultivation, as well as its mills, is conducted on a most efficient basis. As a result, from 35 to 40 per cent. of the sugar crop is exported and returns very little to the grower, and the averaging of the price enables the standard of efficiency to be maintained. The Secretary for Agriculture remarked on the increased efficiency of the sugar-mills, and we know that the present position, when less than 7 tons of sugar-cane will produce 1 ton of raw sugar, is a world's record. We have also passed the experimental stage so far as power alcohol is concerned, and it is hoped that, as a result of further experiments, the value of other sugar by-products will be considerably enhanced.

Comment has been made upon the price paid for sugar farms; indeed, that is a question on which most of the objection to the renewal of the embargo is based. I venture to say, however, that, if the whole of the circumstances surrounding the sales of sugar farms were known, most of the criticism would be removed. Many people do not know that included in the sale price of a farm is a very valuable plant—£2,000 is a moderate value in respect of some farms—whilst there is also a standing crop of cane, worth from £30 to £40 per acre in many cases, included in the purchase. The expenditure of much labour and fertiliser has been involved in the cultivation of such a crop. Further, the purchaser also acquires a considerable interest in the sugar-mill, to which the farm has been paying for a number of years in order to liquidate the debt entailed in erecting the mill.

Again, the terms of sale in respect of sugar properties are such that holders of big city properties would not offer their properties for sale under similar circumstances; they

[Mr. Duffy.

would be astonished at the easy terms on which sugar properties can be acquired. If the sale were on a straightout cash or a half-cash basis, it would be found that the price was not very much in excess of the improvements. After all, improving a sugar farm is a very expensive business, because clearing virgin soil may entail an expenditure of £40 per acre. For these reasons I say advisedly that the people who comment adversely on the prices of sugar properties are not fully conversant with the position.

Whilst on the sugar question I would suggest that, with the adoption of the peak-year system of mill supplies, the granting of assignments and permits to grow cane for supply to the mill should be given to the directors of each mill. Over-production is fully insured against by that peak-year system, and a mill is not likely to exceed the limits assigned to it.

The directors are in the best position to see when their supplies are likely to fall off, and in such an event they could immediately remedy the position by granting additional permits to grow cane. Many of the growers might take exception to the directors having that power, and say that the directors might grant permits to their friends to the detriment of others. To overcome that objection the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board could act as a board of appeal if any grower was dissatisfied with the decision of the mill directorate. Many of the small growers in the North are dissatisfied with the areas allotted to them, but, unfortunately, they were not growing cane in the early days, and in the policy laid down by the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board it must consider the position of Queensland as a whole, whereas a mill would only have its own interests to look to. The position would be clearly defined under the peak-year scheme, and I think it would be very wise if that power were put in the hands of the directors.

His Excellency in his Speech mentions that Parliament will give close attention to the forestry problem in Queensland, and that it is anticipated that a Forestry Bill will be introduced during the session. When that Bill is introduced, I hope that it will definitely fix that a proportion of the royalty received from timber shall be expended on silviculture and reforestation work. In the past the whole of the money received from royalties has been put into consolidated revenue, and money provided out of loan funds for silvicultural work. That is not right, and I hope the Bill will lay down that a definite percentage of the royalties must be expended on reforestation. During the year, with other hon. members, I visited many of the timber reserves and State forests, and I am pleased to say that, with the success of the hoop and kauri pine plantations and hardwood reserves, the future is assured in these timbers if we can carry out that work on a large scale, but up to the present there is no indication that we shall be able to do so. I am not at all convinced that it would be advisable to spend large sums of money on the planting of maple and other cabinet timbers owing to the long time they take to mature. These timbers are of very little value as cabinet timbers until they are matured. Pine and hardwood are different, as these timbers can be used when quite young.

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

[7 p.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*): I beg to move—

“That the hon. member for Eacham be granted an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech.”

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member for Eacham be granted an extension of time to enable him to complete his speech?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUFFY: I must thank hon. members for granting me an extension of time. I was congratulating the Forestry Department on the silvicultural and reforestation operations with a special reference to kauri, hoop, and cypress pine, and also hardwood. The experience and knowledge gained by the department has satisfied me that these timbers can be profitably grown for the State if values are going to keep up to anything like they are to-day. My only regret is that there is such a small amount of money being provided for the Forestry Department to press forward with this work. I think at least £100,000 per annum could safely be taken out of the timber royalties and specially voted for this purpose. Quite a lot of land is held by the Forestry Department. I do not think it holds too much or even sufficient in some districts; but a lot of the land held which is quite convenient to railways and main roads and near to towns should be opened up for settlement. It would be settled immediately, and the settlers thereon would not be out in the backblocks at the beginning of their career. I do not mean that the Forestry Department should be robbed of any land, as we could reserve as much as the department would be able to plant and work; but there is not much use in holding land needed for settlement which the department is not likely to touch for, say, forty, fifty, or sixty years, and I hope that policy will be altered in the near future.

Mr. CLAYTON: Especially in the Mary Valley.

Mr. DUFFY: There is some good land there which should be opened up for settlement, and we could give the Forestry Department other land in place of it. If these forests are planted and grow as we anticipate and the demand for timber is as great in fifty years' time as it is to-day, it would pay us at that time to resume land for forestry operations, if required. If we capitalise the present value of land for fifty years as against what we might purchase it for at that time, all the argument is in favour of opening up the land for settlement to-day. Of course, it may be said that nobody knows what the value of land will be in forty or fifty years; but, if the land is so valuable that it is going to cost us a lot of money to resume it in forty or fifty years, that in itself will be sufficient proof that Queensland has made wonderful progress, and we shall not lose anything by it, and it will be all the better for the State. The reason why I claim that a lot of this land should be opened for settlement in areas where it is needed is because the settlers in those districts have already committed themselves to fairly heavy liabilities in regard to

facilities, such as main roads and so on, and have incurred liabilities for rates to shire councils. If these areas were opened up for settlement, the burden would be shared by a greater number of settlers. It would mean immediate settlement because it is so handy. Other areas that are not so suitable for settlement could be devoted to forestry. The Forestry Department claims that we are unfair in wanting to push it out back from the railways. It says that the handling of the timber in such areas would be expensive in years to come; but I would point out that the cost of handling timber from areas that are well back from a railway to-day is no guide as to what the cost will be in forty years. If the timber on such areas was so heavy and every tree was so marketable that it would pay to run light tramlines 20 or 30 miles out from the railway, the proposition would be altogether different from what it is to-day, when such means of getting the timber to the railway would not be warranted because it is so scattered. Light tramways are not expensive. In cane areas we have hundreds of miles of them, and in the South Johnstone area in particular it has been proved that long haulages can be undertaken economically. I am in favour of having as much land set aside for forestry purposes as the department is likely to be able to use, and no more. It is quite useless to do as we are doing—make provision for a hundred years hence and let selectors go looking for land in far distant areas. I said earlier that I did not think it was wise to spend too much money on walnut and similar cabinet timbers. They are certainly valuable varieties, but they take from 150 to 200 years to reach maturity, and it would not pay us to lay out money on the cultivation of such trees, especially when we remember the progress that science has made already in handling our valuable timbers. Those of us who visited the Exhibition last week may have noticed the beautiful specimens of veneer made by Messrs. Beale and Company, and shown in one of the exhibits. The sections of the trees from which those veneers were cut were considered absolutely valueless two or three years ago. To-day they are cut from the stumps and the crotches—timber which but a few years ago was condemned when supplied to the mills. Under the new methods of treatment such timber yields the most beautiful figuring one could wish to see. That is one of the advances science has made, although two or three years ago such a thing was unknown, or at least was not brought into general use. The result is that timbers of which we would use inch boards a few years ago we can now cut into twenty or thirty sheets, using in between them any timber that appears to be suitable. Nobody has any idea of the extent to which science may assist us by getting fine effects from our cheaper timbers fifty years hence. It may then be possible to manufacture any figure or design on our cheaper timbers by photography, or in ways that I cannot even imagine; or perhaps we may get the same effects on something that is not timber at all; so that to provide for 200 or 300 years ahead would be waste on the part of this Government.

To-day the sawmilling and timber industry is hard up against it, and those connected with the industry are obliged to look for work elsewhere. For years I opposed the policy of the late Government—which assisted those interested in the importation

Mr. Duffy.]

of foreign timbers—a policy that acted very detrimentally to our own industry. When there was an excellent demand for Queensland timbers the Government permitted prices to soar so high, aided by the rationing of timber supplies, that Southern merchants were compelled to look elsewhere for supplies. Whilst seeking for further supplies, Queensland was able to extract high prices for some of her timbers; but it was not very long before Southern merchants discovered that they could secure supplies of timber very cheaply from New Caledonia and Vanikoro, in the case of kauri pine, and from the Philippine Islands and British Borneo, for Pacific maple and Japanese oak. Everybody knows the history of Oregon pine. The result to-day is that our cabinet timbers have been flooded off the market by importations from outside Australia. Only a few weeks ago the *s.s.* "Urilla," a boat well known in the trade on the coast, which usually proceeds to Cairns to load logs for southern ports, passed Brisbane carrying over 600,000 feet of kauri pine from Vanikoro. Apropos of this the Brisbane press contained the following paragraph:—

"After discharging about 40 tons of general cargo and several head of sheep and cattle, the vessel loaded kauri pine, some of which measured 43 feet long and had a girth of 17 feet. The logs, which were rafted out from the shore by natives, were brought to the ship's side by a launch, and hoisted aboard by the ship's gear. The loading operations took a week, and the "Urilla" left the port at 7 a.m. on 29th June. The harbour of Vanikoro is an expansive one. It is essentially a timber port and wireless station, with a handful of white men."

That shipload of 600,000 feet of kauri pine should have been secured in North Queensland, and would have been secured if the Forestry Board had done its job. Unfortunately, it "kidded" itself and most of the people of Queensland that it had something very valuable, something that could not be obtained anywhere else, and all that it had to do was to demand a price and the rest of Australia would pay it. We must come down to earth in connection with our timber supplies, and we should initiate a move in the direction of securing the markets, irrespective of whatever reduction in price or cost may be necessary. We must provide work for those usually employed in the industry, and, above all, we should retain the money in Australia, instead of exporting it for the purpose of purchasing foreign timbers. We should not import heavy supplies of foreign timbers and at the same time hold up our own timbers for another fifty years.

Mr. CLAYTON: And have our own timbers decaying in the scrubs.

Mr. DUFFY: That has happened. Recently I appeared before the Tariff Board in Melbourne when evidence was given on behalf of Australia's native timbers. We were endeavouring to induce the Tariff Board to recommend to the Federal Government that ample protection should be given to our timbers. We all know that the first decision gave no protection whatever to Queensland timbers; but pressure was brought to bear, and the duty on Oregon pine was raised by 4s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet.

[Mr. Duffy.

Unfortunately for North Queensland, cabinet timbers—the very timbers we were interested in—received no extra protection worth mentioning. They certainly did receive an increase in tariff rates from 10 to 30 per cent.; but that only represented an increase from approximately 10d. to 2s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet. The actual effect of the increase will not give us the desired relief in so far as the importation of log timber is concerned. At that meeting it was pointed out that of the total labour involved in producing sawn timber 60 per cent. must be allotted to bringing the logs from the scrub to the mill, and 40 per cent. in producing the sawn timber; yet, for some reason or other, sawn timber receives protection to the extent of 12s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet as against 2s. 6d. protection given to logs. The relative protection is out of all proportion. If we could only induce the Government to protect our cabinet timbers to the same extent as the protection given to sawn timber, we could revive the timber industry in North Queensland again. It is heart-breaking to go around the timber districts, which eighteen months ago were a hive of industry, and witness the almost complete idleness of the industry. The men engaged in the industry do work—they are not time-killers; and the whole of the plant is at present idle, with no prospect of any immediate recovery. It has been stated that the industry is idle because the trade is not there; but importations from other countries are arriving just the same. I doubt very much whether, even when there is a revival in the timber industry, we shall recover the trade in cabinet timbers unless we receive added protection. It would not be fair to ask for higher tariff duties on imported cabinet timbers unless we did something ourselves to meet the situation. To that end a substantial reduction should be made in stump values and a big reduction in the railing of timber. It costs as much to rail a truck of logs 100 miles as it does to ship timber from the Philippine Islands to Sydney or from New York to Sydney. The railway freight charge is quite absurd.

We have also been told that the slump in the timber industry in North Queensland is accounted for by shippers shipping unsuitable timbers overseas, especially to America, but that assertion is quite wrong. The contributing factor in the slump of Queensland timbers overseas is, firstly, the financial crash which occurred in America last September and October, rendering the radio manufacturers and other large users of our timbers bankrupt; and, secondly, to the refusal of American interests to allow Queensland walnut to be designated as such. Permission was refused to describe the timber as Australian walnut. In fact, the Tariff Board refused to allow it even to be known as walnut. We are told that there is sufficient of our timber to last the trade in America for nine to twelve months, and at the end of that period portion of our trade will be recovered.

Recently in North Queensland a scheme was mooted, which we hope to bring to a successful fruition, to use our secondary and cheap timbers which are to-day burnt in the scrub when farm-clearing. With this timber we hope to be able to replace the cheap timber imported from Norway and Sweden. If the scheme is successful, it will assist settlers on scrub lands, inasmuch as it will give them something for what to-day costs them quite a few pounds per acre to clear.

I believe that many considerations that have been taken into account in the past in regard to the timber industry will have to be thrown overboard immediately, because we cannot have our own men walking about looking for work and our plants idle, whilst at the same time imported timbers are being used in the country.

One of the big losses sustained in Queensland is in respect of the railways; indeed, practically the whole of the deficit in years gone by has been due to the losses incurred in railway working. I do not believe it possible to balance the railway accounts immediately.

Mr. KIRWAN: You don't?

Mr. DUFFY: No, and neither does the hon. member; but I believe the loss can be reduced by at least 50 per cent., and possibly 75 per cent. Of course, the balancing process would take a long period. I would like to see some scheme evolved under which the railway employees would be given some further interest in assisting to reduce the deficit on the railways. It would go a long way if those men were given a hand in the management and an interest in any reduction of losses which they effected. To-day there are some men in the Railway Department who do not pull their weight; yet the good, conscientious worker, who works in the interests of the department, gets no more consideration than the other man. If a scheme were introduced by which railwaymen would participate in any savings which were effected on the railways, then I think we would secure the active co-operation of 90 per cent. of railway employees in an effort to wipe out the deficit. If we were relieved of 50 per cent. or 75 per cent. of the loss on the railways, it would mean that many reductions that will probably be made in other votes for this year would not take place.

I join with other members in regretting the necessity for some of the means which the Government will have to take this year to balance the ledger; but it seems to me that those people who think they have a grievance to-day in regard to any action that the Government may take will look back in a year or two and view the position much as we did when, as boys, our mothers administered castor oil; although it was very nasty and very unpleasant at the time, we grew to recognise that it was given to us for our benefit. (Laughter.) So will the workers of Queensland for the next year or so realise that the steps the Government will have to take will be, after all, for their benefit and for the benefit of those who follow them.

It is useless attempting to keep up the present wage when we know that the whole world is against us. We have to face the position, and the Government will have to face the position, whether it is pleasant or not. If we can get a better understanding amongst the people of Queensland as to why this should be done, then we shall not have the meetings of protest that we have had recently by some of those who have suffered reductions. I regret that it was necessary to make those reductions, but I hope that the reduced cost of living and the general prosperity that we hope will follow shortly will more than compensate them, and will also give better opportunities for their boys and girls in the near future.

Question—"That the Address in Reply be adopted"—put and passed.

SUPPLY.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*): I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."

Question put and passed.

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*): I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."

Question put and passed.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Roberts, *East Toowoomba*, in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*): I beg to move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend 'The Inspection of Machinery Acts, 1915 to 1925,' and other Acts in certain particulars."

The Bill, although containing twenty-three clauses, is of very minor importance. There are only three principles involved. The first alteration is due to the fact that the Government have transferred the administration of the Inspection of Machinery Act from the Department of Public Works to the Department of Labour and Industry. This has necessitated certain verbal alterations in the present Act.

The next principle makes provision for the examination of motor mechanics. We are providing for the holding of examinations whereby motor mechanics may receive certificates of competency according to the pass obtained.

Mr. BULCOCK: Will the examination be mandatory?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No—not mandatory—purely voluntary. On the other hand, it is proposed that Queensland University students who have obtained their qualification [7.30 p.m.] degree in engineering, and who have served sixteen months in a practical workshop, shall be allowed to sit for the examination held by the department.

Another point is that where machinery—boilers particularly—is known to be efficient, the Bill gives the chief inspector discretionary power as to whether the boiler shall be inspected every year or at such other periods as he may think necessary.

Mr. HYNES: That is dangerous, is it not?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No. The chief inspector of machinery says it is not dangerous at all;

Hon. H. E. Sizer.]

and, where a boiler is known to be efficient, he will defer the inspection for two years or whatever period in his discretion he deems necessary. The chief inspector advises that there will be no loss of efficiency involved. This is a general power giving the chief inspector more latitude in certain directions. We must assume that he will use his discretion to the best advantage without impairing the efficiency of boilers or engines.

The other point is purely consequential on that principle. A difficulty has cropped up in the department in connection with minor prosecutions. It is found from recent experience that the mode of procedure to secure recovery of fees is extremely cumbersome. On one occasion the chief inspector of machinery, the chief clerk, and four or five other officers of the department were kept waiting all day at a cost of about ten times more than the fees in question. This amendment with regard to fees is being made on the advice of the Crown Law Department.

That practically covers all there is in the Bill, which is one entirely for discussion in Committee.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Are there any provisions relating to machinery used in shearing sheds?

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Small engines under 60 circular inches will be exempt from the operations of the Bill. I do not think there is any further information needed at this stage. As the Bill is purely a machinery Bill, I do not propose to say much on the second reading; but I will supply all the information necessary when we get to the Committee stage.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH (Mackay): I have listened very carefully to the information which the Minister gave on moving the motion. There can be no doubt that the Bill is one that can be dealt with more fully at the Committee stage; but it is well to remember that at this stage we establish the relevancy of any amendments that may be made to the Bill; in other words, the principles on which the Bill is founded are laid down at this stage of the proceedings.

The first point mentioned by the Minister is the intention to transfer the administration of the Act from the Department of Public Works to that of Labour and Industry. I can understand that, from the point of view of general administration, that may be a distinct convenience. Of course, as in the case of all other Acts of Parliament, that is a matter of internal arrangement for the Government of the day. The principal Act says that it shall be administered by the Secretary for Public Works or such other Minister as may be from time to time charged with that duty; so that no change of principle is involved.

The next point raised by the Minister has been discussed very fully in various quarters. The Royal Automobile Club of Queensland, for example, has been pressing for the registration of motor mechanics for some time, its point of view being that a certificate of competency would be a protection to the general public who have occasion to use the services of such artisans. I have quite an open mind at this stage on this section of the Bill. Certainly the public have a right, when they hand over any machinery to be

repaired or otherwise dealt with, to have some guarantee that the work will be carried out by competent men; and, generally speaking, a certificate of competency issued under a statute of this kind would, without doubt, be some form of such guarantee; but in the discussions that have taken place as to the desirability of registering motor mechanics I sometimes think that the mechanic has often been blamed for faulty work, whereas the general administration of the garage or factory was responsible for the defect. The executive in control of any class of work involving skill and craftsmanship lays down the standard of skill or workmanship required from his employees. If cheap and faulty material is used, that is the fault of the executive. If insufficient time is allowed or inefficient appliances are available for the use of the mechanic, that is not the fault of a mechanic. I have sometimes thought that, rather than seek to obtain a remedy by the granting of a certificate to the employee, which would be liable to cancellation in the event of defective work being found, it might be worth considering the registration of motor garages, for example, and making the owners responsible for the quality of the work executed in their respective workshops. It is an old trick on the part of some people to blame faulty workmanship on the employee, whereas it has been the executive control of the factory that has been to blame. However, the point to safeguard is that no close corporation shall be formed under a measure of this kind. Parliament from time to time, with the best intention in the world, has placed on the statute-book in the public interest laws which have unwittingly resulted in the creation of close corporations which have enabled certain persons to exploit the general public.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is why this Bill is wanted.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: For instance, the Opticians Act was passed in the best interests of the people who, like myself, require the aid of glasses. What has been the result? I am informed on the very best authority that the public are being charged prices for the services of registered opticians that are far in excess of the real economic value of the work. I could give concrete evidence on that point. Close corporations in the interests of certain people which enable them to exploit the general public are entirely undesirable; and in granting certificates of competency of any character showing special ability, Parliament will have to scrutinise all clauses in Bills very closely in the future, so that the public will be protected. The public have the right to be protected against the quack. They have the right to be protected against faulty workmanship or faulty professional work, and, in addition, they have the right to be protected against the harpies who charge unduly high prices for their services by means of an opportunity given them under a statute that did not intend such a thing to be done.

The proposal to permit university students to sit for examination after sixteen months' practical work is probably quite all right. I know that in Queensland, under the faculty of engineering at the university, excellent work has been done, and that the degree of Bachelor of Engineering of the Queensland University, having regard to the men who have been trained there, is recognised as being of a high standard wherever such a

degree is known. The faculty of engineering at the Queensland University is one of which the State has every reason to be proud.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is one of the highest standards in Australia.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Seven or eight years ago a proposal was made at a Premiers' Conference that the laws relating to machinery and engineering generally should be brought into conformity in all the States in the Commonwealth; and it was decided at the conference that the Queensland Act should be taken as the basis for the other States to follow. At the present time there is no reciprocity between the States on the question of the granting of certificates. That is to say, a certificate under the Queensland Act for an engine-driver is not of necessity accepted by New South Wales, and vice versa. The object of the agreement at the Premiers' Conference was to bring the law into conformity in the various States, so that there would be one standard for the various classes of skilled work throughout the Commonwealth, and the Queensland Act was accepted as the basis. The Minister will find in the department a large amount of correspondence in regard to the matter. During my time as Secretary for Public Works we could not proceed because of the fact that in other States they had not brought their standard up to that of Queensland. I should like to know from the Minister whether anything has been done in the matter of reciprocity between the various States, and whether any further progress has been made in regard to the adoption of a uniform standard as between the various States. A year or two ago a conference of responsible officers of the various States was held, but I am unable to say whether any finality was reached.

The question of whether boilers should be inspected every two years instead of annually is one with which we can deal more fully when discussing the details of the Bill. Whether a boiler requires attention every year or every two years depends, first of all, upon the original construction of the boiler itself, upon the care with which it has been attended, the uses to which it has been put, and its age.

The real basis of this Bill is to protect human lives, and it would be very undesirable to save a few fees if human lives were endangered in the administration of this law. Certain people controlling machinery will be released from the advantage of having that machinery inspected, and there will be no policing of it. This law has application chiefly to persons who would do little or nothing in regard to the maintenance of machinery unless compelled to do so. That is a matter which has to be scrutinised very closely.

Then the passage of this Bill will result in a loss of revenue to the department. Fees are only collected as a result of the actual inspection of machinery, and owners of boilers relieved from an annual inspection will to that extent be saved the payment of fees, and the wisdom of doing so, from the point of view of actual safety to those in attendance on those boilers and to the factories adjacent thereto, will have to be discussed during the later stages of the Bill before I, personally, will be prepared to support that principle.

The Bill also, as the Minister states, does away with the provision requiring certifi-

cated men to look after certain classes of machinery. The full extent of the operations of that clause is one which, too, will have to be scrutinised very carefully, and I will reserve comment on that aspect of the Bill until I have seen the whole of it.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

Second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

CORONERS BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Roberts, East Toowoomba, in the chair.*)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to consolidate and amend the law relating to the holding of inquests of death and inquests concerning fires.”

The object of this measure is to bring the law relating to the holding of inquests of death and inquests concerning fires to a more up-to-date form. The Inquests of Death Act is dated 1866, and the Inquests on Fires Act is dated 1863. There has been no change in the law since that period, and events happened last year which were brought very forcibly before the public notice which made it appear to everybody that the law in this matter was antiquated and incomplete, and that it was desirable that new legislation should be placed on the statute-book bringing the matter up to date. Under this legislation coroners will be appointed in every district. The police magistrate, in the first instance, will be the coroner in every district or town; failing the police magistrate, the acting police magistrate; failing both these officials, the clerk of petty sessions or acting clerk of petty sessions; and, failing all of these persons, a justice of the peace.

Provision is also made in the Bill for the appointment for a coroner in the Brisbane area, and in any other town where deemed necessary by the Governor in Council.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you propose to have inquests in all cases?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is provision that a coroner shall hold an inquest of death under certain conditions set out. Inquests on fires will be held at the discretion of the coroner, at the direction of the Minister, or on the specific application of any insurance company. It is proposed to repeal section 26 of the Insurance Act, which provides that, in the case of a loss exceeding £50, it is imperative to hold an inquest concerning that fire.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: What are the conditions which will determine whether an inquest shall be held in the case of a person's death?

Hon. N. F. Macgroarty.]

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Those are all set out, and will be explained later. If any insurance company wants an inquest concerning a fire, it will be provided with the necessary machinery.

A view of the body in connection with an inquest of death will not be necessary unless ordered by the Minister.

There will be the usual power of summoning witnesses and inflicting fines for the non-attendance of witnesses.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you removing the provision that enables two persons to secure an inquest?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: What about viewing the body?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: An inquest of death will be imperative in certain cases.

Mr. POLLOCK: What are those cases?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You will get that on the second reading.

Mr. POLLOCK: It is usual to give the information now.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Very well. Clause 5 provides that every coroner shall have jurisdiction throughout Queensland to inquire into the manner and cause of death of any person who is killed, found drowned, or dies a sudden death, the cause unknown; or dies under suspicious or unusual circumstances; dies while under an anæsthetic in the course of a medical, surgical, or dental operation; dies and no certificate of a medical practitioner has been given as to the cause of death; dies within a year and a day from the date of any accident where the cause of death is directly attributable to such accident; dies under such circumstances that, in the opinion of the Minister, the cause and circumstances of such death should be more clearly and definitely ascertained; or dies in any prison hospital, hospital for the insane, or in any institution under such circumstances as to require an inquest in pursuance of the Act or any other Act. It shall be the duty of the coroner to inquire into the manner and cause of any death under any of the circumstances set forth in the Act.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I listened very carefully to the explanation given by the Attorney-General. There is no doubt that there is a public demand for a measure of this kind. There is a public opinion in favour of modernising and bringing up to date the law relating to inquiries into the cause of death under certain circumstances. In the past it has been the practice of the Police Department to investigate in cases of violent death, and where suspicious circumstances surrounded the matter a magisterial inquiry was held. It was not compulsory that such an inquiry should be held. If, however, two persons demanded that an inquiry should be held, then under the law that inquiry was usually held, but very largely it was left to the discretion of the Home Secretary, who acted on the police report as to whether an inquiry should be held or not. Quite a number of cases occur in which all the circumstances are clear and definite. Where the circumstances are clear and definite and point to nothing in the nature of criminal action, then there is no need to hold an inquiry to establish what is already known, and in those cases the

[*Hon. N. F. Macgroarty.*

Home Secretary does not proceed. However, as the Attorney-General pointed out, last year there was considerable public demand in connection with this law, and it has been felt that the matter should be placed beyond any question of expediency as to whether an inquiry should be held or not. In other words, the opportunity should not exist for citizens of the State to feel that an inquiry would be held if desired, or that an inquiry would be suppressed if desired for any reason. That is why it is desirable

that the Minister should place [8 p.m.] beyond any shadow of doubt the conditions under which a coroner shall carry out the purpose of his office within the meaning of the terms of this measure. The Minister, I understand, resurrected some defects in the law which demanded that the magistrates should inspect the body pending inquiry, and I happen to know that magistrates found this difficult to honour without any public purpose being served. I have met magistrates who have told me that, in the case of fatal accident or sudden death from various causes, they have been called upon by the police immediately to view the body where no public purpose could be served under such conditions.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In view of the decisions of the court.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Yes. The Minister has not given us any information, or, if he did, I did not follow him clearly, as to whether that is necessary under this new law.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; it is specially provided that it is not necessary to view the body.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Bill is one which we can go into more carefully when we have the opportunity of considering its clauses; but there can be no doubt at all that it is desirable that the law relating to inquiries into deaths under certain circumstances should be placed beyond any shadow of doubt and the public be relieved entirely of any idea that inquiries can be held or withheld for certain reasons.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

Second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ART UNION REGULATION BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Roberts, East Toowoomba, in the chair.*)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to make better provision in relation to lotteries and art unions, raffles, and drawings of a like nature, and for other purposes.”

The object of the Bill is to place the law and practice with regard to the granting and refusing of art unions and similar proceedings on a sounder basis than at present. Section 234 of the Criminal Code provides—

“Any person who opens, keeps, or uses any place for carrying on a lottery of any kind whatever is guilty of a misdemeanour, and is liable to imprisonment with hard labour for three years.

“The term ‘lottery’ includes any scheme or device for the sale, gift, disposal, or distribution of any property depending upon or to be determined by lot or chance, whether by the throwing or casting of dice, or the drawing of tickets, cards, lots, numbers, or figures, or by means of a wheel or trained animal, or otherwise howsoever.

“This section does not apply to any lottery which has obtained the sanction of a Crown law officer.”

That appears to be the only authority for the sanctioning of any lottery or art union.

Mr. MULLAN: Does not the Gaming Act deal with it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No. Regulations have been framed to deal with the conduct of art unions and drawings; but it is problematical whether they would have the force of law if contested; so that the Bill really proposes to make legal art unions and lotteries irrespective of any provision under the Gaming Act or of the Criminal Code. It will, of course, be read in conjunction with the Code and any provisions of the Gaming Act which might be held to deal with the matter in any way.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you going to legalise fruit machines?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No: that does not come into it.

Mr. POLLOCK: Well, you should. You collect license fees from them.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about racing?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is a matter for another Act, and it is proposed to amend the Racecourses Act.

Mr. KIRWAN: Is it proposed to legalise the “Golden Casket” under this Bill?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. HYNES: Will the Eight-hour Art Union be enabled to operate under it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Let me explain. The Bill will provide for art unions or lotteries in connection with carnivals or fairs; or independently of them, for any charitable or educational purpose, or for the purpose of assisting hospitals, ambulances, returned soldiers and sailors’ associations, and institutions of fine arts, for example.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Political purposes?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No, not political. People in necessitous circumstances will be dealt with on similar lines to those at present followed.

Mr. POLLOCK: Will it cover side-shows at the Exhibition?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Side-shows cannot be brought under the heading of art unions or lotteries.

Mr. CLAYTON: What is a side-show?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That will be defined in the Act. I propose to deal

with them in a different way. With regard to art unions, whether they be connected with carnivals, fairs, or otherwise, the present regulations will be effective, and further regulations may be proclaimed.

Mr. POLLOCK: What steps will be taken by a person desirous of securing permission to hold an art union or a raffle for charitable purposes?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He will apply to the department, as is done now.

Mr. POLLOCK: What will be the difference when the Bill is passed?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: At the present time there are regulations governing the matter; but it is doubtful whether the regulations would have any force in law, if they were contested.

Mr. DUNLOP: What about “Liberty Fair”?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am coming to that. The Minister, in his discretion, will be able to grant permits, and will be able to cancel permits.

Provision is made in the Bill for the audit and proper keeping of books in regard to unclaimed prize money, and penalties ensue in respect of misappropriation of prizes, fraudulent drawings, and for using funds other than for the purpose approved. It was thought desirable that the Minister should take the necessary power to grant permission to conduct carnivals, bazaars, fairs, side shows, and such like prior to any permission or license being granted by the local authority. At the present time permission can be granted by a local authority to conduct carnivals, fairs, etc. It is proposed by the Bill that a license must first be obtained from the department before the sanction of the local authority can be granted, subject, of course, to the by-laws of the local authority. Side-shows are enumerated in the Bill. Permission will first of all have to be obtained from the department before a side-show or a carnival will be sanctioned by an agricultural or show society. After obtaining permission from the department, the person concerned is at liberty to obtain the necessary permission from the municipality or the agricultural or show society.

Mr. KIRWAN: They will have to give a demonstration to an officer of your department?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That will be provided for. The idea is to sanction side-shows and to exclude those that are not desirable.

Mr. POLLOCK: By whose permission do they operate at the present time?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They operate entirely at the discretion of those who conduct the agricultural shows. They will be dealt with by the Bill.

Mr. POLLOCK: At the present time those in control of these gambling devices and games of chance have not to secure permission from your department?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No. They would obtain permission from those controlling the agricultural show. The only remedy in the hands of the Crown is to instruct the police to prevent certain gambling devices under the Gaming Acts. At the present time there is no necessity for permission to be secured from the department

any more than permission was necessary from the department to conduct a bazaar or carnival at Ipswich or Toowoomba, for instance. Certainly, on many occasions there people have found it necessary to apply to the department for permission to conduct art unions in conjunction with carnivals and fairs. The Bill proposes that permission for all these things must first of all be obtained from the department.

Mr. FOLEY: What conditions apply in respect of side-shows and gambling devices?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is a special provision dealing with side-shows.

Mr. FOLEY: What about the "chocolate wheel" at the show?

Mr. HYNES: Or the "tattooed lady"?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is a side-show. (Laughter.) There is a clear distinction between lotteries or art unions and side-shows. Side-shows operating in connection with annual shows, whether held in Brisbane or in any other town, have first to obtain permission from the department. We also propose under this Bill to charge them a fee.

Mr. KIRWAN: You are out after revenue, then?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We are going to get a bit of revenue out of them. We propose to charge a fee in regard to art unions or lotteries.

Mr. O'KEEFE: If an art union is run for a hospital, you propose to obtain revenue from it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We are going to charge a fee in respect of them all.

Mr. HYNES: That means that a branch of the Australian Labour Party will not be able to run an art union.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They will come within the definition of the bodies which are prohibited from holding an art union.

Mr. HYNES: You are trying to hamstring organised labour.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. member for Townsville seems quite concerned about the prohibition.

Mr. HYNES: I am concerned about it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I can assure the hon. member for Townsville that on no account will a political body receive permission to conduct anything in the nature of an art union. It is not necessary for those bodies to do so; and, according to the regulations that have been in force, there never has been authority to confer that permission upon them.

Mr. HYNES: That is the real object of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is not so. The object of the Bill is to regulate art unions, lotteries, and side-shows, and get a little revenue out of them.

Mr. HYNES: And prevent the Australian Labour Party from getting a little revenue by that means.

Mr. MULLAN (*Flinders*): The Criminal Code declares art unions, guessing competitions, and lotteries of all kinds unlawful unless the Minister grants permits. The Minister now has full power to deal with them. Under the Gaming Act there is

power to prevent them being held. As a matter of fact, there is a clear inconsistency between the Suppression of Gambling Act and the Criminal Code in respect of these matters. As mentioned by the Minister, the Suppression of Gambling Act declares art unions and lotteries illegal, whereas under the Criminal Code, although they are illegal, they may be permitted by the Attorney-General. That is the position. The law is certainly unsatisfactory in relation to gambling devices of this kind.

Mr. POLLOCK: It will remain unsatisfactory after this Bill is passed.

Mr. MULLAN: In some respects it will be more unsatisfactory; but in other respects there may be some improvement. The Bill proposes to deal with raffles, art unions, guessing competitions, and gambling of all kinds. The Minister has pointed out that he proposes to charge a fee with respect to all permits granted. I doubt the wisdom of the Government charging a fee for such permits if they happen to be granted for charitable, religious, educational, or patriotic purposes. The Minister has intimated that the Government are prepared to augment their revenue by participating in the profits of funds raised by means of art unions, lotteries, or guessing competitions for charitable, religious, educational, or patriotic purposes. In that regard I must differ from the proposal of the Minister. It is only fair to say that the department is involved in a very considerable expenditure in connection with this matter. Still, we are committed to a great amount of expenditure in hundreds of other ways less important; and there is no reason why we should single out this particular administrative act of government for the purpose of deriving revenue. I honestly think that the Government are proceeding on unsound lines when they seek to augment the revenue from the proceeds of lotteries, art unions, raffles, etc., held for the purposes defined by the Minister. I hope the Attorney-General will be broad in his outlook in defining charity, religion, education, and patriotism. I frankly admit that, when I held the portfolio of Attorney-General and granted permits, I tried as far as possible to meet what I considered to be the public opinion on the matter. I was very liberal, particularly on the matter of education, which I construed very widely. I tried to meet the wishes of hon. members generally on that question. Some hon. members said that I went so far as to grant permits for the raising of funds which were later on devoted to political purposes. They may have come to the conclusion, which I confess, I shared at times, that the public wanted a great deal of education on political matters generally; and it was for that reason that I gave considerable latitude in the granting of permits.

Mr. BRAND: Why should you augment your political funds from those sources?

Mr. MULLAN: I did not augment my political funds. I merely listened to requests from hon. members; and I was honest and innocent enough to believe them! (Laughter.)

We have not yet had an opportunity of perusing this Bill. That would have been of considerable advantage to us in enabling a considered opinion to be given on the whole matter. At this stage one cannot criticise the Bill, and I do not propose to commit myself one way or the other at present.

[*Hon. N. P. Macgoarty.*]

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): By interjection, I asked the Attorney-General what was his attitude in regard to fruit machines and other similar devices. I am not in favour of allowing these fruit machines to continue. I think they are a method of robbing the general public. I know of people who have purchased these fruit machines at a cost of £100 to £140 each, and in four of these cases they paid for themselves in a fortnight by a process of robbery of the general public. There is no other term to use. Two of the persons who installed these fruit machines admitted to me that they ought to be disallowed by the Government because they were absolutely unfair in their operation. It is the method of allowing these machines to continue that I find fault with.

Mr. BLACKLEY: They are stopped now.

Mr. POLLOCK: They are stopped now, but there is nothing in this Bill which says that they will not be allowed to operate in the future, or that some other similar gambling method will not be allowed to operate. A man wrote to me from Winton some six months ago asking whether fruit machines were legal. He was a hotelkeeper, and desired to instal one. He had heard they were a good thing, and desired to be in on it. In my innocence I did not then know what a fruit machine was. (Laughter.) At that stage there was only one operating in Brisbane. I rang up Mr. Terry Ahern, who was running an orange drink machine, and asked what a fruit machine was. I thought it was a machine for making orange drinks. He told me that it was a machine operating in a similar fashion to the poker machines in hotel bars. I went to the Justice Department and asked them for information about these machines, and they told me there was no embargo upon their use.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Who told you that?

Mr. POLLOCK: Mr. Carter, the Under Secretary.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Why did you go to him?

Mr. POLLOCK: He is the responsible officer.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He is a responsible officer of that department, but don't go to him for a legal opinion.

Mr. POLLOCK: I go to him for information as to the policy of the department. In the absence of the Minister whom else can I approach?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The Crown Solicitor.

Mr. POLLOCK: Mr. Carter told me that the use of fruit machines was not prohibited. At that time their use was not prohibited, because they were being used in almost every hotel bar in Brisbane, and they were also being used in Tattersall's Club. I saw them operating there.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: When was this?

Mr. POLLOCK: Up to a few weeks ago. However, they were operating almost generally, not only in Brisbane but throughout the State, and it is no use the Minister saying he did not know, because, if he did not know, he did not know his job.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Why did you not come to me?

Mr. POLLOCK: Because half the time I cannot get through the hon. gentleman's bodyguard, so I go to the responsible officer of the department. It is a well-known fact that it is as hard to see the Attorney-General as it is to see the Czar of Russia, and he has been dead for many years. I merely want to add in regard to these fruit machines that the answer given to me by the responsible head of the department—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I deny that he is the responsible head of the department on a question of law.

Mr. POLLOCK: It is not a question of law; it is a question purely of departmental policy.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. POLLOCK: If the Under Secretary does not know the policy of the department, then he should not be there. We have to go to Under Secretaries. We trust them and everybody else trusts them to be able to give a definite reply. I am going to get to the point if I stay here all night. The point is this—that the Under Secretary informed me that the police were the people who could stop these fruit machines from being used if they thought they were unfair. That was the information given to me. The objection I am taking to-night is not [8.30 p.m.] a frivolous one. I say that in matters of this kind the police should have no authority to be able to allow or to stop things of that kind.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Why do you think they have such authority?

Mr. POLLOCK: I can only assume that the hon. gentleman's department does not know its business. This is what his officer told me, and I believed him, and passed along the information to the people who trusted me to obtain it for them.

Mr. BRAND: Mr. Carter did not give anybody else that information.

Mr. POLLOCK: I can only give the information he gave me. I am not endeavouring to tell lies about the thing. This is a matter of public policy. We are asked to agree to a Bill which provides for the control of certain forms of gambling. This has been allowed by the department. I was told by the department that the police were the people who would stop this if there was any abuse; and I put it to Mr. Carter whether it was a fair thing to allow the police to have control of matters such as this, as it was open to too much abuse. Anybody who was on particularly good terms with the police would apparently be allowed to operate a fruit machine. (Government dissent.) What other view could be taken? If one does not happen to be on very favourable terms with the police—that is to say, if the police do not like the colour of your hair, then you cannot operate the machine.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is a libel on the police.

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. gentleman may say it is a libel on the police, but, if we give these powers to the police instead of either allowing these machines to be worked or preventing them from being worked without the authority of the head of the department himself—a man who is responsible to Parliament or the public—then we must expect abuses of that kind.

Mr. Pollock.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The police are not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice.

Mr. POLLOCK: I know that; but it is well known that all of the departments depend on the police to some extent in matters of administration.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The man who can stand up and say what you are doing ought to be ashamed of himself.

Mr. POLLOCK: Does the hon. gentleman mean to say that I am not telling the truth about the matter? I am giving an actual concrete case and, if the Minister's Under Secretary is wrong, he ought to make it his business to know what the policy of the department is. If this is going out to the public as being the policy of the department, and the Minister says it is wrong, then it is high time he took certain action; but that is the information given to me.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I took action some time ago.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Are not these machines illegal?

Mr. POLLOCK: They are illegal at the moment. They have been declared illegal—so the Minister says—but there is just the same power as the Minister always had to legalise them again if he wants them, or to legalise any other form of gambling. Let me give an illustration. I suppose I gamble as much as anyone. This is not a high and moral stand that I am taking.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You object to other people having a little gamble while you go elsewhere and gamble.

Mr. POLLOCK: I gamble as much as anybody, and everybody knows it; and I know enough about gambling to know about fair and unfair methods.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You are condemning illegal gambling when you are engaged in illegal gambling yourself.

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not. You are a liar if you say I indulge in illegal gambling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*): I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Gregory in order in saying that the Attorney-General is a liar?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member knows that such language is unparliamentary, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. POLLOCK: Certainly, I will withdraw it. That is my only method of calling attention to the statement of the Minister. The words he used to me were offensive. He said I engaged in illegal gambling. I ask you to see that those words are withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the Attorney-General to withdraw those words.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I withdraw them.

Mr. POLLOCK: On the general question of gambling, the gambling devices of the side-shows are also, in my opinion, just as unfair as the "fruit" machines. They are still allowed to continue, and provision is to be made in this measure for the department to grant permits to the people who run them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is not so. I distinctly said that side-shows are not gambling devices.

[*Mr. Pollock.*

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not talking of side-shows. I will give the hon. gentleman an illustration, if he cares to listen. First, there are those concerns where a number of celluloid balls are blown up out of a funnel and a stick with a net on it somewhat similar to a miniature lacrosse stick is used to catch them. It is supposed to be partly a game of skill. It is a pure gambling device, where the odds are about twenty to one against the persons who engage in it. I stood there for an hour and worked out the odds on the basis of the results arrived at; and I know something about gambling, and I know what are fair odds and what are not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I thought you said you did not engage in gambling.

Mr. POLLOCK: I said I did not do any illegal gambling. I do a lot of gambling, but not illegally. I do it in public, and I do not gamble in the foodstuffs of the public like a good many members on the other side of the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark—"Gambling in the foodstuffs of the public like members on the other side."

Mr. POLLOCK: I was referring to the Treasurer, Mr. Roberts, but I will withdraw it if you wish. The chances on that particular concern are just as much against the individual who invests as the chances of the individual on the poker machine. They are about twenty to one against him. These are the games at the side-shows to which I refer which are supposed to be games partly of skill and partly of chance—these and those "Aunt Sallics"—the concerns where you play a game that is more like "bobs" or billiards than any other I have seen—the games where you roll balls into holes. That is purely chance. The odds are just as much against the public as on the fruit machines or any other device. A huge number of people are allowed to live on the proceeds of these concerns without doing a day's honest work from one year's end to the other; and it is proposed to allow this to continue under special permission from the Minister when in the same breath he says he is not going to allow art unions to raise funds for political purposes. That is the objection I take. I say that people who desire to secure money for the purpose of returning certain candidates to Parliament are just as much entitled to a permit—and more entitled to a permit—for that particular purpose than people who are simply using these things to fleece the public and get money for their own devices.

Is not politics worthy of entry? Is it not right that every citizen should take an interest in his representation? If it is right that he should take an interest in that representation, is it not a fair thing that he should have the opportunity, by gambling devices, to raise money for that purpose by means of fairs? Surely the crowd who frequent side-shows at Exhibition time—you see them here and all over the country—who live on the side-shows, are not serving as good a purpose as the public men of this country. We object very strenuously—at any rate, I object personally—to this method of refusing the Labour Party the right to hold art unions and raffles for political purposes, when the same right is given to people who have no such good object to serve, and who have not the same cause to advance as we have.

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*): With the hon. member for Gregory, I believe that the granting of permission for art unions should be given equally for political purposes or trades union purposes as for any public purpose. If there is any justification for permission to conduct an art union or raffle, then it should be upon the condition that no person is to secure any private profit from such art union or raffle. So long as art unions are conducted for the purpose of raising public funds, and so long as the funds are applied honestly for some public purpose and do not enter the pockets of any individual, the Minister should give permission equally for political or trade union purposes as for any other purpose.

I rose mainly to reply to the statement by the Minister that it was proposed to raise revenue by issuing permits for art unions. I think the Government are getting down to fairly paltry tactics if they are going to endeavour to take something from the unfortunate person in distress who obtains permission to conduct an art union to relieve his distress. I have case after case in my own district—every hon. member has the same experience—of people who are in distressful circumstances, perhaps through losing the breadwinner by accident or through sickness. Perhaps the person concerned secures permission to run an art union; but surely the Government are not in such a bad way for money that they are going to endeavour to raise funds by giving such permission! There is no justification under any circumstances for the Government endeavouring to raise funds out of the issue of permits to conduct art unions or raffles. If the Minister sticks strictly to the list of funds in respect of which permits will be granted, such as charitable, educational, or religious purposes, then in no case is there any justification for the Government claiming to make a profit out of such permits. According to the statement of the Minister, an additional tax is being put upon those people who contribute to any charitable or public art union. In addition to the ordinary expenses of management, printing of tickets, expenses of advertising, and conducting the art union, an additional overhead charge will now be imposed upon those for whom the art union is conducted in order to pay some fee to the Government in an endeavour to satisfy the Treasury. No matter for what purpose an art union is granted, there is no justification for the Government stepping in and trying to get their share from the people in distress. Only a couple of weeks ago a carpenter in my district was broken down in health, and his family and himself found themselves in most distressing circumstances. The Minister granted permission to that man to conduct an art union to dispose of his tools in order to secure a few shillings to enable him to obtain medical attention. About £30 was raised.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You do not think I would impose a fee in that case—certainly not.

Mr. HANLON: I have only the statement of the Minister to go upon. I think it would be a scandalous thing to do so in that case. This week the Minister granted permission to the secretary of the local school of arts in my district to conduct an art union to pay off the debt on the school of arts building. Will a fee be chargeable in that case?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. HANLON: The people of the district are being asked to subscribe funds to pay off this debt on their school of arts, and the Minister says that he is going to step in and take some of that money.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Will the imposition of the fee be at the discretion of the Minister?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. HANLON: Who will say whether a fee will be charged or not? Within the past few weeks permission has been granted in two cases to conduct art unions in my district. On the one hand the Minister said he would not dream of charging a fee, and in the other case he said that he would charge a fee. Who will decide whether fees will be chargeable or not? There should be no fee at all. I cannot see any necessity or any justice on the part of the Government stepping in and taking some of the proceeds of the art union in respect of the school of arts debt.

Mr. EDWARDS: What about side-shows?

Mr. HANLON: I am not dealing with side-shows. I have no side-shows out my way, but I have a number of deserving cases, both in respect of people and of institutions that are dependent upon art unions to raise funds to maintain themselves and the various institutions. That is the point which strikes me. People in my district who are paying every other tax that the Government demand are called upon by the committee of the local school of arts to subscribe and clear off the debt on that building. The Minister now says they are going to be taxed because of their public-spiritedness. Every resident in a district where a school of arts is established receives an advantage by reason of its existence, but the Minister is now going to tax them because they are public-spirited enough to subscribe funds for their building.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is taxing their social hall—that is all. It is not taxing their school of arts or their literature.

Mr. HANLON: It does not matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It makes all the difference.

Mr. HANLON: The position is that a certain small percentage of the public are sufficiently high-minded and public-spirited enough in the progress of their own district to subscribe to clear off the debt of the hall attached to the school of arts. They are to be specially taxed because they have the decency to subscribe to a fund for the advancement of their district. Those who do not subscribe anything towards the erection of a school of arts escape this tax. The thing is unjust. I hope that, before the Bill goes through, the Minister will reconsider his attitude in respect to that matter. I cannot conceive of any possible application granted by the Minister where he would be justified in taking a percentage of the proceeds. Take an art union for the erection of a church, a church hall, or a school. Is it honest to tax people who subscribe funds for such purposes? Take the case of a hospital or an ambulance brigade. Is it right that people should be taxed because they subscribe to the funds of a hospital or an ambulance? Under this Bill the Minister would tax those who did subscribe to those funds, and those who did not subscribe would escape. The Crown is not justified in

Mr. Hanlon.]

taking any part of the proceeds of any art union which is run for charitable, educational, or religious purposes. If there is any justification for the Crown taking any percentage of the proceeds, the Minister, to my mind, would have no right to grant a permit at all. Either the permit should be free of all Government tax or the art union should not be permitted. It is a departure that is open to a lot of abuse.

Mr. NIMMO: Who is to pay the cost of supervising these things?

Mr. HANLON: There is already a good deal of expense in running art unions, and it would be much more to the point if the Minister devoted a little of his time to evolving a scheme for the reduction of these costs. It should be a condition precedent to the granting of any application for an art union or even the holding of a ball in Lennon's hotel that the expenses in connection with such benefit should be limited to a certain percentage.

There is another matter that I hope the Minister will include in this Bill, for he has not mentioned it. It is very desirable indeed that a provision should be attached to each permit for an art union that the prize-winners should be notified by registered letter. Many prize-winners in art unions do not see the results when published in newspapers, and, consequently, some prizes are never claimed. It would not mean a great deal of expense to include a provision in any permit for an art union that the winner shall be notified by registered post. Then, if a winner cannot be found through a change of postal address, the fault will not lie with those running the art union.

Again, many complaints are continually being heard of people getting permits to run art unions in connection with which the prizes are not distributed. I hope the Minister will consider taking some steps to see that every endeavour is made to distribute prizes in any art union for which he gives a permit.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): It is interesting to note that in his explanation of this Bill the Minister intimates a new form of taxation which is being adopted by the Government. In other words, we have the spectacle of the Government again searching the pockets of the poor for money with which to increase the consolidated revenue of the State. Here we have a Government composed of a party which for many years denounced the "Golden Casket." As a matter of fact, the Treasurer refused to accept a cheque for a well-known public institution because it represented the proceeds of a "Golden Casket"; yet we have this Government to-day legalising forms of art unions and lotteries and introducing a new form of taxation so that the State shall benefit from the proceeds! Unquestionably this is a new method of taxation, and is but another instance of the action of the Moore Government in searching the pockets of the poor. As a matter of fact, most of the people who buy tickets in art unions are people who have very small incomes, but who give their support in that way to public institutions who run art unions for various social purposes. Men may not be able to give large donations to a school of arts or a very necessary public hall, but they are prepared to invest a shilling in an art union the proceeds of which will be devoted to a purpose of which they approve. The present Govern-

[*Mr. Hanlon.*

ment, composed of a party that for years denounced the "Golden Casket," which was used for and on behalf of the public hospitals of the State, have not only swallowed the "Golden Casket" but have gone a great deal further, and are taking a percentage of the proceeds of every form of lottery that is permitted by the State—a new and insidious form of taxation that is unsound in many respects.

The Minister has stated that under this Bill he will legalise and control in an orderly fashion the method of giving permits, which shall only be granted for charitable, educational, or religious purposes. Now, the term "educational" is capable of a very wide definition. The Minister has stated that he does not intend to allow any political institution to conduct an art union. I do not propose to deal with that point, but I do raise this question: As Attorney-General the hon. gentleman has already refused permission to the 8-hour day committees in various portions of the State to hold art unions in connection with the celebration of the 8-hour day movement. That movement has been celebrated in Brisbane for many years past, and long before the Labour Government assumed office it was the practice to grant an art union permit in connection with the 8-hour day celebration. The purchase of a ticket in that art union carried with it the chance of a prize, besides granting admission to the various functions which were held. The 8-hour day committee is clearly an educational body. The Brisbane Trades Hall Council, of which the 8-hour day committee is a subsidiary activity, is not of necessity a political institution. It is comprised of unions many of which have no political affiliation at all. One of the main purposes for celebrating the movement is educational. I take it that historical education should not be confined to the dynasty of kings, to giving the history of various royal families or the dates of battles or wars. The youth of the nation, in order to become good citizens, should know something of the economic history of the nation and of the people to which they belong.

What better purpose could we serve than educating the people in the great moral movements which had for their purpose a demand for a higher state of civilisation than they had previously enjoyed? All those movements had a moral basis. The trade union movement as such has been one of the greatest moral factors of human progress in the past and present century; and, despite the Attorney-General or any member of the Government or any National Party, will continue to exert a similar influence and carry on a similar form of education. The eight-hour movement is one that every citizen has a right to be proud of; and it is a matter for grave regret that Queensland is the only State in Australasia that has not got a statutory eight-hour day at the present time. Why, even the League of Nations, comprised in many cases of countries that are supposed to be reactionary in their ideas in regard to industrial matters, agreed to the eight-hour principle; and the Australian States, which are members of the League of Nations, were requested to carry out the decision of the League of Nations by legislating for an eight-hour day. Yet the Attorney-General—not for any good purpose—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is your opinion.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is my opinion, and I shall establish reasons for my opinion. The reasons for my opinion are these: The eight-hour movement, as carried out in the various centres of population in Australia, affords an opportunity of educating the workers of this country in the great movements that have taken place in the past that have resulted in benefit to them and in the meaning and significance of those movements in regard to future activities. What is wrong with such a proposal? There is as good a case for an art union being granted to the eight-hour day committee as any other institution that may get an art union permit. After all is said and done, I could understand the attitude of a Government that took the view that, because art unions and lotteries were gambling devices, they would legislate against them all. No one can attempt to defend gambling on moral grounds. They may defend it, perhaps, on psychological grounds. The basis of all forms of gambling is the desire to get something for nothing; and that is the basis of most of the social and economic evils in the world to-day. If the Government were waking up that attitude, then it is an attitude that could be defended and thoroughly understood; but the Government are not taking that attitude. They are taking the attitude that they shall discriminate as to what are educational institutions and what are not; and those institutions that gain the hall-mark of their political approval are regarded by them as educational institutions; but other institutions that are not so favourably regarded by the Government are ruled out of court, and denied permits by the Government of the day.

I shall deal with that position more fully at a later stage of the Bill; but it is significant that this Nationalist-Country Party that raise their hands in pious horror about the "Golden Casket" art union, initiated to assist the hospitals, have not only sawlowed lock, stock, and barrel everything associated with the "Golden Casket," but have gone further and proposed a new form of taxation by levying a tax on every permit issued within the ambit of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*): I would just like to reply to a few things that have been said—first of all, to what has been said by the hon. member for Gregory [9 p.m.] with regard to the fruit machines. I can assure the hon. member that, in my opinion and that of other people, the operations of the fruit machines are contrary to the Gaming Act, and are therefore illegal, and they will not be dealt with in any way under this measure. It has already been decided by the Government under the Police Offences Bill to declare fruit machines to be illegal.

Mr. A. JONES: It took you a long time to wake up.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It did not take me a long time to wake up. Some little time ago the matter of the fruit machines was mentioned to me, and I had interviews with the police officers. I was told that the police had made inquiries in Rockhampton with a view to taking proceedings. I said, "Very well, go ahead." Some little time later I was informed that the case in Rockhampton had fallen through for reasons that can happen in department like the Police Department when something

goes wrong. I immediately instructed the police to take further action in Brisbane. You cannot issue a summons against anybody unless you have evidence in support. Under my direction the police went around Brisbane and got evidence as to who was using fruit machines and the manner in which they were being used. Those reports were submitted to me, whereupon I issued instructions that the fruit machines were to be discontinued after a certain date.

Mr. POLLOCK: You said you did not instruct the police at all, and so did the Deputy Leader of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I did not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I never said anything of the sort. The fruit machines were stopped at a certain date. I can assure hon. members that I took reasonably early action in conjunction with the police to stop the fruit machines in Brisbane.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I did so mainly because in my opinion they are not fair, and the people who operate on them have little or no chance. I gave them a reasonable opportunity to get rid of their machines. I gave the hotelkeepers a reasonable opportunity to refrain from buying them if they were going to do so; and I think I acted fairly in conjunction with the Home Office and the police. They are illegal under the Gaming Act, and they will probably be declared illegal under the Police Offences Bill.

With regard to the catching of balloons, that, in my opinion, is a game of skill, and no legislation can affect a game of skill. With regard to the "Aunt Sallies" and the knocking down of those things with wooden balls, all gambling games which took place on the Exhibition grounds in that respect were illegal; and I went out of my way to send a message through the Home Department to the police that any gambling games that were going on at the Exhibition were to be stopped.

Mr. MULLIN: If you were to prohibit "Aunt Sallies" you would put a lot of people out of work.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In my opinion, as the law now stands, "Aunt Sallies" are not illegal. Any game which is illegal at these carnivals will be prohibited and not allowed except by special permit.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*): I just rise to say a few words. I am very pleased indeed to know that at last a Bill is to be introduced in connection with this particular matter. I certainly pride myself on not being a "wowsler," and I do not care who knows where I stand on this matter. I certainly commend the hon. member for Gregory on the stand he has taken, although he received a lot of "chiacking" from Government members. He honestly owned up to the fact that whatever he took part in was legal. (Laughter.) I say he is to be commended for his statement on the floor of the House. I think the general public will think more of him for having done so in spite of the "chiseking" that has come from the Government benches. It is all very well for the Minister concerned to say that his department will deal with the matter first, and that then the local authorities will have their say.

Mr. Dunlop.]

My experience is that in Rockhampton the department threw the onus on local authorities instead of taking it on themselves, with the result that the question of party entered into the game amongst the councillors, just as on the floor of this Chamber, and permits were granted "under the cushion" and the matter was smothered up. I know that the parting of the ways with the Labour Party came when I was mayor of Rockhampton. I had to be fair to everyone; and, because I would not give a permit "under the cushion," as it were, to help the Trades Hall, I got into the bad graces of the party, and then, of course, there was a "hullabulloo." That, of course, did not concern me—I took my stand, and I did not care who knew it. The Minister's department knew quite well that gambling affairs such as "Liberty Fairs" and "King Carnivals" came to Rockhampton. I would like to know how they got permits.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You gave a permit yourself when you were mayor.

Mr. DUNLOP: I did not. When I was mayor I refused to give a permit except to legitimate games.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You gave them to carnivals.

Mr. DUNLOP: I gave no permits during my term as mayor. That was why I got into bad odour. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the 8-hour art union has taken place for many years past; but the Minister, through party spleen, now wishes to cut it out. Have not the workers just as much right to run an art union as anybody else? In my opinion, it is just as educational as some of the things for which permits are granted by the Minister, of which we as members get copies from time to time.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You refused a permit, and you now object to my refusing one.

Mr. DUNLOP: The Rockhampton Trades Hall Council asked for a permit for a legitimate undertaking in connection with the library, which was quite distinct from the 8-hour art union; but the Minister would not grant a permit. Surely two-thirds of the permits he does grant are for purposes more absurd! I only hope that, when the Bill comes on for discussion, he will go the whole way and tighten things up generally. I would like to see provision made for the regulation of such scandalous shows as wax-works, to which I took strong exception when mayor of Rockhampton. I found that I could not stop them, but it is not very nice for children or anyone else to see the wax figures of murderers and other notorious individuals that are taken around the country.

I would also like to see table games where people are taken down dealt with at the same time. Let the hon. gentleman show us that he is really an Attorney-General who can take a broad stand! On the contrary, I agree with what Opposition members have said—that he is one of the hardest Ministers to see. I have gone to his office time and again, but repeatedly have failed to see him, except on one occasion when I got in for two or three minutes. The result is that, when I cannot get in, I have to take the next-best advice, as pointed out by the hon. member for Gregory. Now the hon. gentleman has an opportunity to let the public see what he is made of, and we shall have an oppor-

tunity of criticising him fairly on the second reading stage of this Bill.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

Second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 9.13 p.m.

[*Mr. Dunlop.*]