

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 1932

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. G. Pollock, *Gregory*) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

PAPERS.

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

Thirtieth annual report of the manager of the Agricultural Bank for the year ended 30th June, 1932.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Order in Council under "The Grazing Districts Improvement Act of 1930," dated 13th October, 1932.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SEVENTH AND EIGHTH ALLOTTED DAYS.

(*Mr. Hanson, Buranda, in the chair.*)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

CHIEF OFFICE.

Question stated:—

"That £27,330 be granted for 'Department of Public Instruction—Chief Office.'"

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) [10.34]: This is a very important vote, and very great benefits accrue to the community from the money expended by the Department of Public Instruction. I think hon. members on this side should have something to say in connection with the statements made during the last election, when we were told by Labour candidates that the Moore Government had starved this department, and that the poor man's child was not given the same educational opportunity that was given to the child of the wealthy man. Of course, there are people who swallow that kind of dope because they consider that the word of a man who desires to represent them in Parliament is worth taking; but, on reviewing the Estimates, it will be found that the Labour Government have cut down the vote by £44,345 as compared with the amount voted by the Moore Government last year. I appreciate the Minister's position. I know the difficulties under which he is labouring on account of the lack of funds; but I

resent very much members of the Labour Party telling the people that, under the Moore Government, the working man's child was starved as regards education, and that we were only catering for the child of the wealthy man. What a ridiculous statement to make! All we have to do is to search the annals of the Department of Public Instruction to see that the children of the working man have predominated in the winning of scholarships and the blue ribbons of our public life on their merits, which shows that all the brains are not possessed by the children of wealthy men.

We owe a very great debt to the Department of Public Instruction, and I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without paying a tribute to the memory of a man whom we all respected, and who did a great amount of good in our technical colleges in the cause of education. The late Mr. Wearne was a most estimable gentleman—one of nature's gentlemen—a man who left the world better than he found it. I was associated with him on certain committees, and I know that his ambition was to do good to others. His ideal was expressed in the old saying, "I pass through the world only once, and any good that I can do let me do it now." I pay this tribute to his memory.

I am very pleased to learn that Mr. Edwards, the Chief Inspector, is progressing after his very serious illness. I am sure that every hon. member will be delighted to know that he has sufficiently recovered to take his place in the position which he adorns so well.

I do not propose to speak in any carping spirit. Things have occurred which have made it essential that expenditure should be cut to the bone, and, whilst we do not like to starve the education vote—while we do not like to starve any vote—the attention of hon. members and of the country should be called to the amount that is being spent for this purpose. I would not mind if the country had the money, for I am one of those who think that the best is not good enough for any child who shows a special aptitude; but, when we have not got the money, and when we cannot possibly get it, and when sacrifices are being made all round, I think I am justified in suggesting to the Minister that the position should be reviewed. I agree with the ex-Secretary for Public Instruction that we are rearing a race of individuals for the professions—not for rural pursuits, not for trades. I appreciate the work that the technical colleges have done, although I realise that in many instances it is difficult for the students to earn anything because of the slackness in certain trades; but I wish to emphasise with all the power I possess, that we are spending money that we have not got. That is a peculiar thing to say, nevertheless it is true. We are leaving the payment to posterity. We are spending millions of pounds—which would be all very well, if we had the money.

An hon. member on the other side said that wealthy people were availing themselves of the privileges given by our State Education Acts. I am sure that the ex-Minister shares with me the opinion that the provisions to which the hon. member referred were introduced to give to the child of the worker, who could not otherwise afford it, the same opportunity as the wealthy man's child of going to the highest seats of learning. They constitute the very best asset a State can have.

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Financial circumstances compel us now to review the expenditure by this department. In 1930 I drew attention to the position of certain schools. I said then, and I repeat now, that it is difficult for any Government to maintain the expenditure upon our educational system. It was difficult enough to do that in times that were considered to be favourable, but it is far more difficult to-day. Frantic efforts have been made to maintain a very high rate of expenditure, but no serious attempt has been made courageously to face the problem. The taxpayers have been called upon to bear the burden, and they have been bearing it in an admirable manner; but there is a limit to human endurance. Revenue expended in the interests of one section must be denied to another. I hold the view that every educational facility should be extended to those children who exhibited an aptitude for learning; but to-day there is a distinct disinclination on the part of our youth to enter trades and businesses or to undertake domestic work. The disinclination extends also to the parents, who are determined that their children shall not follow their avocations or their experiences in life. It is all very nice to join a profession; but we can have no better asset than the tradesmen of the community. The youth of the country could not embark upon a finer calling. There is a tendency to concentrate our efforts in the direction of providing opportunities for youths to enter professions, which inevitably means that the opportunities for entry into industry are sadly neglected. In many cases a large number of young people who are trained for professions are more adapted to work in industry. I dealt with a certain phase of this subject in 1930, and my remarks were received with a considerable amount of criticism, but that will not prevent me from expressing my views. My information was derived from a return issued by the Department of Public Instruction, showing all the schools in operation to 30th June, 1929, with the attendance of pupils and the status and emoluments of the teachers employed. So far as I can gather, this is the only report issued dealing with this important subject; and this is the information that I obtained from that return—

	Average Attend- ance.	Cost per annum.
		£
Bundaberg State High School and Technical College	132	2,055
Cairns State High School and Technical College	137	2,263
Charters Towers State High School and Technical College ..	112	2,687
Gympie State High School and Technical College	174	3,225
Technical High School, Brisbane	321	8,370
Commercial High School, Brisbane	644	7,165
Brisbane State High School ..	472	10,271
Lockyer State High School ..	104	1,850
Mackay State High School and Technical College	107	2,620
Mount Morgan State High School and Technical College	150	3,335
Rockhampton State High School and Technical College	251	4,440
Roma State High School and Technical College	56	1,641
Toowoomba State High School and Technical College	164	3,925
Townsville State High School ..	155	3,298
Warwick State High School and Technical College	135	3,700

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When we analyse these figures it appears, on the surface, a tremendous amount of money to expend for the results obtained. The Minister could very well look into this matter and give some information to the Committee. I know that in two or three instances teachers in these institutions were absent on leave, which would decrease the amount to a certain extent, but the fact cannot be overlooked that in times like the present business methods must be employed in carrying on our institutions. Most of us would like to carry out certain improvements about our homes and to go in for certain luxuries, but the financial aspect imposes restrictions on our desires. We must ask ourselves when thinking along these lines, have we the money wherewith to purchase these things? If we have not the money then we must do without. The same principle should govern all governmental expenditure. When suggestions of this nature are made, they are met with the cry that we do not desire to give the children of the poor man the same opportunities educationally as the child of the rich man. That is a wrong idea, and public men are false to their duty in inculcating such thoughts in the minds of the people. I ask the Minister with my utmost reasoning powers to go into this expenditure, and see if it is not possible to make some reduction. Hon. members have only to go into the question themselves and see what it costs per head to educate the children in these institutions to realise that there is room for some action. I do not for one moment say that the children attending State high schools and colleges are not receiving a good education; neither do I say that those associated with their training are not competent. I believe that the children are being well educated and that their tutors are competent; but I believe we are overdoing it. We must sit up and take stock of the situation. We are continually being told by our economists in Australia that economically there is a point beyond which Governments cannot go. Some one asked me the other day if I believed that the position of affairs in Australia had reached the economic bottom. I replied that we had reached that point, and, in fact, passed beyond it. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley said the other day that he did not think things had improved. Neither do I. I am sorry to have to admit that. Until Governments give a lead to the people and show an example, no improvement can be expected in the economic position.

I also desire some information on the vote of £7,215 for the teachers' training college. It might be said that by referring to this matter I am arguing along the lines that what was good enough for our fathers is good enough for our children. I know full well that, as a nation develops, different methods must be employed; but we had some wonderful teachers in the early days of this State. I will just mention several. One was the late Mr. J. S. Kerr. No one can say that he was a product of a teachers' training college. No one can say that our esteemed friend, Mr. A. Exley, had an opportunity of being trained in a teachers' training college. The same can be said of the late Mr. Christopher Hurworth, with whom I had the good fortune to be associated when he was head master of the State school in Fortitude Valley, or the late Mr. D. T. Lyons, of Eagle Junction, the late Mr. A. S. Kennedy, the late Mr. William

Bebbington, the father of our esteemed friend in the Department of Public Instruction, and the late Mr. Gripp. I knew all these men. They were a wonderful type. They were all character builders. I do not infer that the present teachers are not character builders, for I believe they are doing good work in this direction. My object in referring to this matter is to emphasise that economic circumstances will only permit the State to go a certain distance. I have also to mention the late Miss Berry and Miss McLeod, who subsequently became Mrs. J. S. Kerr. They were all a splendid type of teachers, and attained great success without the aid of any training college. In times like the present, when the people outside have to pay the taxation—and the worker indirectly helps—the position should be considered, and, wherever possible, the pruning knife should be applied. I have heard from various sources that the teachers' training college is an excellent institution, and I want the Minister to tell us of the good work that it has done; but we have arrived at a stage in our history when we cannot afford ornamentals.

Mr. WILSON: The teachers' training college is one of the keys to the whole situation.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. member may be correct, but I want the Minister to tell me. I am merely stating what was done formerly by men whose memories we revere—men who laid the foundation stone of our educational system—men who carried on without such an institution. If they did that, why should not our teachers do likewise in a time like the present?

Mr. GLEDSON: All of these men were trained educationalists.

Mr. MAXWELL: I know what I am talking about, because I knew them all; they were educated in the ordinary schools. It seems to me that there is a tendency for the State to compete with other schools. I may be wrong, and, if the Minister can convince me that I am wrong, I shall be satisfied; but I want to impress upon him that he has a big spending department under his jurisdiction, and I trust that he will do his best in the interests of all the people.

Let me stress again the fact that, although people to-day are labouring under a heavy burden of taxation, there is a tendency to impress upon boys and girls that they should not enter what have been wrongly termed the humbler walks of life. To me, one of the noblest walks of life that a boy can follow is that of a tradesman, and in the case of a girl I think she should be trained to take her place in the home, because, after all, the girls of to-day will be the mothers of the future. The whole system should be reviewed. I am expressing my own opinion. For a long time I have felt that we are over-reaching ourselves, as it were. We have to mind our step and not go too far. Consider for a moment the number of children who are attending the educational institution adjacent to Parliament House. How many of these boys and girls are being equipped to follow trades and jobs in various business establishments? Very few. What is going to happen to them? As the ex-Secretary for Public Instruction said, most of them want to join the ranks of the "starved collar" brigade.

Mr. PETERSON (*Fitzroy*) [10.58 a.m.]: Following up the remarks of the hon. member for Toowong, I desire to express a few sentiments in relation to that subject. Anyone noticing the attendances during the past few years at the various technical colleges cannot fail to recognise that we are up against a serious problem, not only educationally, but also from the point of view that the State is paying a tremendous sum of money to educate boys and girls to secure the highest education, only to find that when thus equipped there is very little opportunity for them in the ordinary life of the community. The question has crossed my mind whether it would not be wise at the present juncture to take stock of the position. I dare say that every hon. member is besieged with hundreds of letters from people who desire to secure positions for their boys and girls in the public service.

Mr. O'KEEFE: Or any other job.

Mr. PETERSON: Yes, but, in the first instance, in the public service. That brings me to this point: What is to become of the hundreds of boys and girls who can daily be seen going to the central technical college close by? The Department of Public Instruction—and I say it without bitterness—has set too much importance on a girl having typewriting or shorthand writing qualifications rather than on being fully equipped in regard to domestic hygiene. I would like to see a system introduced whereby the girls who go through a course of domestic hygiene and thus better fit themselves to be wives are given a higher degree than those who merely tick a typewriter all day long. We should call a halt in that direction. If you go to Rockhampton, Brisbane, Townsville, or wherever we have technical colleges, you find a desire on the part of the parents—not the children so much—to have their children belong to the educated class of workers, if we may use that term. That can be overcome to a large extent by endeavouring to inculcate, particularly in the girls in the various schools, that it is a great honour to become an efficient housewife and thoroughly to understand domestic hygiene in all its branches, not so much for the purpose of becoming a serf to her husband, but to put her in a position to conduct her own home and, if necessary, her own business. The department should set its mind in this direction in the future, and, instead of trying to cram our boys and girls into clerical positions, they should try to raise the status and make it noble to have a diploma in domestic hygiene that will fit the girls to play their part as the future wives in this State.

Mr. O'KEEFE: That is the result of the present system of using girls to reduce wages.

Mr. PETERSON: Wages are fixed by the Industrial Court. Of course, when the girls become twenty-one, they are usually put off and juniors taken on. But that does not get away from the point that the difficulty is in placing these girls in positions, and that difficulty will continue for many years to come. It would be far better to do our best to raise the standard of domestic hygiene, and, if necessary, place a halo on those girls who pass highest in domestic hygiene. What is wrong with a girl knowing how to make dresses? What is wrong with a girl knowing how to be a good milliner in her own home. What is wrong with a girl becoming a good

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cook in her own home. Yet that is looked down on by practically every girl who goes to a technical college. We should inculcate in the girls the idea that something higher is required of our girls than just to be typists.

Mr. O'KEEFE: What is wrong with giving the men jobs so that they can marry?

Mr. PETERSON: The hon. member for Cairns is right to a certain extent, but we cannot alter in a day a system which has taken years to reach its present stage. No nation was ever built up on an army of clerks, or on an army of female typists. The old pioneers' wives paved the way for their husbands' success. We have to do the very best for our girls and boys to make them better fitted to be the future citizens of this State. I hope more interest will be taken in this matter. Personally I think the lady who is a good cook and who can set a table properly is just as good as the lady who is a good typist. Home contentment is a very great factor, and the wife to a very large extent rules the home in that, if she makes it sufficiently attractive to induce her husband to stay at home at night, nine times out of ten he will be only too glad to stay at home and not go wandering like some of them do.

The next question I wish to touch on is in relation to the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Institution. Until recently that institution was under the Home Department; and, whilst in charge of that department, I visited the institution on numerous occasions, and I do not know of any institution which is being better conducted. While the rooms of the domestic staff may be improved on the lines suggested by the hon. member for South Brisbane, the work of Mr. Holle and other members of the staff deserves very great credit indeed. I am glad that the Department of Public Instruction has taken over the institution, as it actually belongs to that department, and I do not know why it was ever placed under the Home Department. I hope the Minister, if he has a few minutes to spare, will visit the institution, and see the good work accomplished by the staff. I know, Mr. Hanson, that you take a very great interest in that institution, and you and your committee deserve great credit for the work you have done for those children. Any member who goes there and sees the success with which they are taught lip reading will be staggered. No educational institution is doing better work for the boys and girls of Queensland.

This brings me to another matter which has been brought up previously. We have the deaf and dumb school to which I have referred, and other institutions, and these and other facts should convince any Government that it is wise to recognise that in many cases there is a definite cause for blindness and many of the troubles that lead to dumbness. When one takes the trouble to go through statistics and discover how many children are born blind, one readily recognises that the time is ripe for sexual education in the schools. I remember speaking on this question previously and producing appalling figures to show some of the results of sexual indiscretions. These facts remind us of the saying of the Old Book that the sins of the fathers and mothers are visited upon the children. We cannot shut our eyes to the facts. Are we going to continue as we have been doing, or are

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we going to be brave enough to meet the criticism that may be levelled at us if we take steps to cope with the scourge in the way I suggest? I suggest to the Minister and his excellent officers that they go into this phase of the question, and see if it is not possible to do in Queensland what is done in other parts of the world, where boys and girls on the point of leaving school are given instruction similar to that which our soldiers got when they went to the front. I believe that, just as the education which children now get in our schools stands to them for the rest of their lives, so instruction in sex matters will stand to them and help them to avoid the snares of the future, and that we shall thus help to build up a better and a purer race, and that those who realise what has been done for them in this way will recognise that we have given them a precious heritage.

Mr. WELLINGTON (*Charters Towers*) [11.9 a.m.]: I have listened very carefully to the various speakers, and I agree with many of them that Queensland has an educational system which compares most favourably with any other in the Commonwealth. With regard to the primary schools in Charters Towers, I ask for nothing. The various committees attend to what is necessary, and, if anything crops up which is worthy of support, they ask the department for that support, and generally they get what they require.

There was some opposition to the establishment of an intermediate school in Charters Towers, but the Director of Education visited the town and overcame that opposition completely. There is also a high school at Charters Towers, which is doing very fine work. There are several secondary schools, including the Church of England schools—All Souls for boys and St. Gabriel's for girls—the Presbyterian and Methodist schools—Thornburgh for boys and Blackheath for girls—and the Roman Catholic schools—Mount Carmel for boys and St. Mary's for girls. Many of the denominational schools find it difficult to carry on, nevertheless they all do excellent work educationally, and in every other way. The boys have their cricket and football, the girls basket ball and tennis.

At the technical college domestic science is taught to the girls, including dressmaking and cooking, and, in fact, everything they need to know in after life. The boys learn carpentry and every other trade that is necessary for a man who must take his place in the world.

I desire to take the opportunity of thanking the officers for the courtesy they have shown me, but I do not believe in the old maxim, "You scratch my back and I will scratch yours." I prefer to vary it, and say, "You scratch your back and I will scratch my own."

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [11.12 a.m.]: I express my appreciation of the treatment meted out to my electorate by the officers of the department during the last three years.

I have waited with interest to see the stand that would be taken by the Government in regard to this vote. The late Government were severely criticised prior to and during the election campaign for their attitude towards education in Queensland. Illustrations appeared in the public press purporting to show that the children who attended the schools were starving; but the Labour propagandists neglected to note that

a photograph was being taken of children who were very well dressed. The contention that school children were starving was blown to pieces by anti-Labour candidates during the campaign, and the people were convinced that the photographs represented nothing more than mere political propaganda. The Labour Government were returned to power to some extent on the strength of a promise to remedy the unsatisfactory position created by the late Government. Unfortunately, there are some people associated with politics who endeavour to score politically quite regardless of the serious consequences of their actions. I am sure that there is not one hon. member who is not desirous of doing everything possible for the benefit of the rising generation; but economies that are forced upon us have to be recognised. An examination of the expenditure upon our educational system over a period of years will disclose that Queensland has not been backward in her duty in this matter. I hold the opinion that Queensland ranks second to no other State in the Commonwealth in the provision of modern educational facilities. No matter how anxious and ambitious we may be to extend educational facilities in the interests of the children, we are bound to consider whether, in times of depression, the existing rate of expenditure can be maintained. The provision of a modern educational system, in common with all other social services, depends almost entirely upon the amount of finance available. These figures will show the enormous increase in the rate of expenditure upon our educational system over periods of five years—

	Expenditure.	Increase.
	£	£
1914-15	... 576,324	... ..
1919-20	... 1,024,786	... 448,462
1924-25	... 1,404,467	... 379,681
1929-30	... 1,692,525	... 288,058
		Decrease.
1931-32	... 1,361,822	... 330,703

The average increase per year from 1915 to 1930 was £74,413, which shows conclusively that Queensland recognised her duty to the people and to the rising generation. We have advanced far in our educational system; but we are now compelled to ask to what extent expenditure can be increased in this direction. No Government was responsible for the prevailing depression which brought about a cessation of oversea borrowing and a heavy decline in our national income. Even if no depression had visited Australia, it would have been the duty of any Government to decide just how much further the educational system could be extended. In 1929-30 the expenditure upon our educational system represented 15 per cent. of the total expenditure of the State, exclusive of the amount required to pay interest on the public debt, and it represented over 30 per cent. of the total expenditure, exclusive of the amount required to pay interest on the public debt and the expenditure in the Railway Department.

I am aware that considerable criticism may be levelled at me for making these comments. An endeavour will be made to misconstrue my statements in the direction of suggesting that I am advocating that a certain section of the community should be deprived of some benefits. There are always people who are ever ready to take up the

cudgels on their behalf merely for the purpose of making political propaganda. I am expressing my own personal opinion that the financial and economic circumstances of to-day make it imperative for every hon. member to give serious consideration to this question. The Labour candidates in the recent election campaign had no foundation for their condemnation of the late Government in this connection. The Labour Party attained power as a result of that propaganda, yet they are continuing the very economies which were introduced by their predecessors. They recognise now that the previous Government only did their duty. As a matter of fact, the present Government are going further than we went. Why? Because they cannot get away from the position which faces the country. I do not condemn them, because, in facing a position such as that which confronts us at the present time, we must not do so from the point of view of party political gain, but from the viewpoint of the interests of the people. That is why we resented the criticisms levelled by our opponents during the election campaign. The Government have not only accepted the advantages of the economies effected by the Moore Government, but they are economising in other directions. It is unfortunate that these economies will be at the expense of the country and the children in the country districts. The appropriation for scholarships is £8,000 less this year than last. I admit that the Minister has a good argument in that respect; but, if he proceeds to increase the number of scholarships, he will need increased appropriation.

During the election campaign Labour candidates condemned the reduction made in teachers' salaries, and promised that, if they were returned, those reductions would be restored.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That promise was not made.

MR. KENNY: That promise was made by implication by practically every Labour candidate. They roundly condemned the late Government to such an extent that school teachers really believed that, if the Labour Party were returned to power, they would have their salary reductions restored. In support of this statement I quote the following article from the "Queensland Teachers' Journal" of the 12th instant—just fifteen days ago; and hon. members will be able to judge for themselves whether or not school teachers expected action from the Government in the direction I have indicated—

"The economic trend of the conditions of Queensland teachers is far from reassuring. The deplorable fact to be faced in its stern reality is that these conditions are not only not improving but are even becoming worse in several directions. It is a very unpleasant task to be referring from time to time to the drastic reduction made in teachers' salaries through the operations of the Salaries Act."

Did the teachers not expect some action from the Government because of the condemnatory remarks of Labour candidates regarding the reductions.

MR. WATERS: If your Government had been returned, they would have received a further 10 per cent. cut.

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Mr. KENNY: That interjection by the hon. member for Kelvin Grove is like the suggestion he made yesterday when he said that children of twelve years of age should be taught elementary economics. He said that children of that age could understand elementary political economy.

Mr. WATERS: Your mental age is twelve years.

Mr. KENNY: If the hon. member studied a little political economy, it would be of benefit to himself and the people he represents, and be of greater benefit to them than the interjections he makes. The "Teachers' Journal" further says—

"It has been freely stated that but for the swing of the political pendulum in June last the reduction would have been even greater, but of that we have no official knowledge. We do know, however, that all the economies budgeted for by the previous administration are still being exercised, while one or two have been added to keep them company. For instance, the allowances to teachers in charge of rural and vocational schools have been recently cut into or cut out entirely. While the Government is dealing with the matter of allowances it might possibly take into account some of the big allowances made to highly paid public servants . . ."

That article is in condemnation of the statements made by the Government candidates at the last election. I do not want to score politically off them by quoting this article. We told the people on the hustings that the position had to be faced. I told my electors that I did not wish to be returned on any misleading statements; and I informed them that there was no hope of the reductions being restored until the economic position righted itself. That policy was not adopted by Labour speakers, and I say definitely that the teachers definitely expected the Government to carry out something which, if not actually promised, was implied.

The article goes on to say—

"We have made reference elsewhere to the unfair incidence of the Unemployment Relief Tax recently imposed by the Government. Everyone admits that it is one of the primary duties of the Government to make suitable provision for the wants of the unfortunate people who cannot find employment. The framers of the Act, however, have made rather a crude job of it. There are 118 teachers receiving salary at the rate of £208 5s. per annum, and these are taxed at the rate of 9d. in the £1, whereas if they were drawing £208, their tax would be at the rate of 6d. in the £1. Provision should have been made that these teachers and others, if there are others similarly situated, should not have their salaries reduced, by the operation of the Act, to an amount lower than would be the case if they were receiving the salary of £208 per annum and were taxed at the rate of 6d. in the £1. The Act has now become operative and apparently it is too late to take any effective measures during the current financial year to rectify a very obvious anomaly."

The Minister may say that these promises were not made; but the fact remains that the teachers had certain expectations, and, as the result of what was told them by

Labour candidates, did not expect the economies to be continued. Labour candidates definitely promised that the economies effected under what was termed the deflation policy of the Moore Government would be rectified. The "Teachers' Journal" proves conclusively that people were misled into voting for the Labour Party, and that the members of that party have betrayed their trust.

Queensland should aim at the very highest primary education, and there should be an extension of the rural school system of education. I represent a sparsely populated electorate, in which there is no high school. Children in the outback deserve every consideration, and an extension of the rural school system would give the children there that knowledge which will equip them to deal with the practical side of life. If the rural education of the outback children is to be sacrificed for reasons of economy, then it would be better to reconsider the whole policy regarding high schools. We have denominational and grammar schools doing very effective service, and capable of carrying on secondary education, whilst at the same time a higher primary education is given to outback children. Some people may disagree with me; but, in my opinion, 90 per cent. of the education of a person is obtained after leaving school when he or she encounters the practical experience of life. We can educate the children to the point at which they may take advantage of the theory that is taught them; but, if they cannot apply that theory in practice, they will become failures. The aim of the educational system should be to turn out practical citizens—citizens who are prepared to take their place in industry. Moreover, the children should be taught to be self-reliant, and not to depend on a Government job after leaving school. A spirit of self-reliance will enable them to apply the theoretical knowledge to the practical problems of everyday life.

The hon. member for Nanango was condemned for his statement yesterday—that our children were not getting the necessary practical education. To a great extent I agree with the hon. member, but I disagree with those hon. members on the Government side who suggested that the hon. member was condemning the system of education. At no other time in the history of Queensland was it so vitally necessary to educate the farmer as it is to-day. The farmer must be educated so that he can carry out his farming activities successfully. I do not say that the farmers cannot get that education through the primary and rural schools; but it is unnecessary to give university training in order to make the successful farmer. Of course, if it is desired to enter the professions, then university facilities must be utilised; but what I emphasise is the necessity to look to the practical side of life.

To show that the country districts have been sacrificed, I need only point out that there has been a reduction in the vote for dental colleges and dental inspections. I say definitely before any reduction should take place in regard to those matters there should have been a curtailment of expenditure in the bigger cities of the State.

I advocate an extension of the rural school system in country districts such as I represent. There should be an agricultural high school in conjunction with the Gatton College on the Atherton Tableland. That is

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necessary to make available a higher education to children there whose parents are not in a position to send them away for a secondary education. If that facility is provided, it will fill a long-felt want. It may be all right to have high schools in the bigger cities throughout the State; but, as the representative of a very sparsely populated portion of the State, I say the country districts are entitled to some consideration. The children in North Queensland have no opportunity of attending a high school unless their parents are in a position to pay their board while away from home. That opportunity should be given in rural districts by the establishment of agricultural high schools.

Another point I wish to raise is the necessity for action on the part of the Government to provide educational facilities in the Mareeba tobacco areas in North Queensland. The population of that district is growing fast. Children are going there, and to develop that industry as we would like, there is an urgent necessity for schools to be built throughout the area. Schools are required at Bilwon, Koha, Emerald Creek, Chewko, Morcan Settlement, and Euluma. Those are new areas that are going ahead every day; and the Minister would be wise to look into the question of establishing schools there. I am not out to embarrass the Minister in any way, as I realise the difficult position the department is placed in. I realise that the new settlers cannot afford very high-class houses to live in; and they are compelled to suffer inconveniences so that they can make a success of their undertaking. To provide school accommodation also means that the teacher must be provided with accommodation on a farm. That is necessary from the point of view of the teacher; but the teachers themselves must be prepared to make sacrifices in the interests of development. They must be prepared to put up with hardships, the same as the pioneers in the tobacco industry have to suffer. They must be prepared to live under similar conditions to the farmers in the settlement. I think it is wrong to send girls to places like that. Usually a girl is sent out to small localities where there are one-teacher schools. I say definitely that a number of schools in charge of girls to-day should be in charge of men. No girl should be expected to go into some of the localities where they are sent to-day. If the position were altered, the men in charge of these schools would have to put up with the same inconveniences as are suffered by the settlers. I realise the difficulty of the Minister, and I suggest that the Director of Education is a practical man. If he has the opportunity, he should go into these tobacco areas and see for himself. Let him get into touch with the different settlers; let him talk to the parents; and he will come back and make a recommendation as to where schools should be built. I am satisfied that, if the Director is sent there, we shall get a satisfactory solution of the whole problem. At the present time it is not possible for the children in these places to travel to school by rail. I did see a suggestion from a very brainy individual in the North that the children could walk 4 miles to the railway siding, catch the train, and travel another 8 miles to school.

Mr. O'KEEFE: He must have been a Nationalist.

Mr. KENNY; No; he was my opponent—a Labour man. As one writer said, "The intelligence of those people who aim at being members of the Legislative Assembly is wonderful." These children cannot undertake an 8-mile walk each day and a 16-mile journey by train. I do not wish to stress the position, as I realise the difficulty of the Minister and the Director of Education. But my suggestion is that, if the Director is sent up there, he will find a way out.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) [11.36 a.m.]: I have always recognised that this vote is discussed from a non-party standpoint, and, although recently some attempt may have been made to use it for political purposes, I think that it is well to realise that education is a responsibility of all the people, and not merely of one section of them, and I hope that we shall endeavour to avoid the political aspect of the matter.

I rose to make a suggestion to the Minister from the point of view of people in the country. We all know that it is essential that every effort should be made to settle people on the land if Queensland is to progress and overcome her difficulties; and much of the Government's activity is directed to this end. For that purpose married as well as single people must be encouraged to take up farming and other rural pursuits; and one of the main factors that any such settler considers is the facilities that offer for the education of his children. I know of several cases where share-farming has been offered to married people, which would give them homes and the opportunity of making good livings, but the offers were turned down because there was no possibility of their children attending schools. Parents regard very seriously the outlook for their children, and desire to give them as good an education as possible. I believe that country people need general education more than people in the cities, who may specialise in one or two activities, whereas the young man in the country cannot leave home; and the only way in which he can learn new methods of production from time to time is by educating himself from books. He must, therefore, be in a position to understand and apply what he reads. I realise that it is necessary for the department to have certain regulations regarding the establishment of schools; but I suggest seriously that, if we are to get more people on the land, the time is ripe for either straining or varying the regulations that exist. The present regulations may have been suitable in the past; but, when we wish to encourage people to go out into the country in greater numbers, we must offer them reasonable facilities.

I do not want to raise the question of the education of the country children as against that afforded to city children; but I want to point out that in my electorate a rather serious position has arisen. It is an important district, with a large number of children, whose parents are very concerned about it—I think with some reason. I do not want to say anything more about the matter, because I know the Minister has taken a personal interest in it; and I hope that negotiations now pending will result in the difficulty being overcome.

The benefits which accrue from project clubs and rural schools are very great. Quite a number of project clubs exist in my electorate, and the interest taken in them by the teachers is extraordinary. The teachers

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demonstrate that, although they may not have been reared on the land, they are keenly interested in the matter; and the boys and girls gain a surprising amount of knowledge, which is not only beneficial in itself but also gives them a love for the land, for the growing of crops, and other rural occupations; and these are the people who will not rush to the cities for work. The education given by these project clubs and rural schools is excellent, and every encouragement should be given to the teachers.

In view of the financial position, I have no further criticism to offer on this vote. I realise that everything cannot be accomplished immediately. We should all realise that; and we should all endeavour to provide the people in the rural districts with the opportunity to secure the best education possible for their children.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. A. Bruce, *The Tableland*) [11.43 a.m.]: Much to my surprise, I find myself in accord with the hon. member for Cook. It is just as well that matters of importance to country people should be emphasised by hon. members on both sides of the Chamber. It is a fact that the accommodation provided for school teachers in some districts is somewhat unsuitable; and it is also astonishing to find that it is the invariable practice to transfer female, and not male, teachers to these places. A large foreign population has settled on the Herbert River in the Kennedy electorate, which I previously represented; but their economic misfortunes did not enable them to provide suitable accommodation for a school teacher, with the result that accommodation was difficult to secure. I repeat, that as a general rule, female teachers are to be found in these places instead of men. Male teachers would be much more capable of adapting themselves to these difficult situations. The same difficult conditions arise at times in farming areas where suitable accommodation is difficult to secure. It would be much more convenient for a male teacher to reach the school by the use of a bicycle or other means. My remarks could be appropriately applied to the electorate of *The Tableland*, which I now represent.

The hon. member for Albert suggested that children should be conveyed to certain areas to obtain schooling facilities. Owing to the suitability of the land for tobacco cultivation, an area extending from Mareeba to Chillagoe has suddenly become available as one of the finest tobacco areas in the Commonwealth.

Mr. KENNY: From Kuranda to Chillagoe.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The country is somewhat rocky around Kuranda. Prospective tobacco-growers have been attracted to this area, some of them with large families; and a schooling population has sprung up within a comparatively very short period. We could hardly expect the department to have provided schooling accommodation up to the present time, particularly when it is realised that country which previously was not worth 2s. per square mile and did not carry any population at all immediately became valuable as tobacco land. It has been one of the most surprising developments in the history of Queensland, and, on a miniature scale, it is comparable with the early gold rushes of Australia. It is surprising to behold the number of people who have settled on the area

during the past few months, and there is now an urgent need for the provision of adequate educational facilities. I refer to the matter merely to impress it upon the Minister and upon the Director of Education. A number of new tobacco-growers have allowed their families to remain in other places because of the lack of schooling facilities on the new tobacco area; but I am satisfied that, if schools were provided, the families would be brought to their new locality and in this way the unemployment market would be considerably eased. A number of new workers would be available for engagement in a useful occupation, and the younger members of the family would be assured of a first-class education.

Mr. BRAND (*Isis*) [11.47 a.m.]: I congratulate the Secretary for Public Works upon so improving his political ideas as to find that he can get in behind the hon. member for Cook. It has been stated that the future of Australia as a nation lies in an enlightened community. We cannot complain that the Department of Public Instruction in Queensland has failed in its duty to provide that enlightened community. I have no complaints whatever to find with the activities of the department. It has been stated during the course of the debate that secondary education should be extended to providing an education to fit the young people of the country to embark upon rural pursuits. I certainly favour activities along the lines of rural education. In travelling through the country districts of my electorate I find that the department is doing a great deal in furtherance of rural education along practical lines. The department recognises that it is its duty to educate the child to fit him or her for after life. If that were not the objective, then the system would fail. The hon. member for Logan, the ex-Secretary for Public Instruction, stated yesterday that there should be more development along these lines. I desire to pay a tribute of praise to the officers of the department who are working in the direction of extending rural education, particularly in my electorate. I have been very much surprised in going through the new areas of my electorate to find the great progress that has been made in this connection. Those members of Parliament who do not represent country areas would be surprised at the results achieved if they spent a day with the children who belong to the home project clubs. The information which they would gather would compel them to recognise that the methods being imparted by the teachers will enable the boys and girls to become expert in industry when they reach manhood and womanhood. The results achieved by the home project clubs at Biggenden, Coalstoun Lakes, Dallarnil, and Woowoonga are commendable, not only to the department but to the teachers engaged in the work. If hon. members had any knowledge of what has been done in this respect, they could come to no other conclusion than that the teachers are living up to the highest traditions of their profession. Many of these teachers, after concluding their school work in the afternoon, go off in their motor cars to the homes of the children to watch the work they do in the dairy yards and in the fields. They take this interest in the work of the children in order to assist them in their desire to obtain knowledge of rural activities. I commend the work of the home project clubs,

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because it is educating the children along practical lines. These clubs are compelling the parents also to take a keen interest in the work. As a result of the work accomplished among the children and the keenness of the parents in it, stud book stock are now being introduced in centres where they were rarely seen before. Generally speaking, previously stud book stock were to be found only in those dairying districts where breeders were engaged in the work; but, as a result of the home project clubs, many cattle in our dairying districts are now being included in the stud book. That means that the child is going to take a greater interest in the development of our dairy herds, and the other industries which the home project clubs cover. To-day the average annual production per cow in the dairying industry is something like 150 lb. of butter. The department believes that, by the knowledge imparted to members of the home project clubs, it will be possible to start a boy out in the dairying industry ten years sooner than otherwise. I believe that the work of these clubs will go even further, and that they will be the means of a boy starting out in the industry with a herd which will enable him to secure an adequate competency. We all know that there is great room for development in the dairying industry in the matter of increasing the production per cow. As the result of the activities of the department, in some districts over 200 dairy beasts eligible for the stud book have been introduced. That work will be of great help in the development of the State.

Another feature of the work of the children which particularly attracted my attention was their conduct of meetings; and in this connection the department is training the boys and girls to take an early part in the activities of the various agricultural and other associations for primary producers. In the dairying industry particularly, where in some respects the business is conducted on co-operative lines, the training of the boys and girls under the home project movement will enable those boys and girls to take an active part in later life on the councils of the various associations. I commend the work of the department, which has apparently found a way of applying science to industry. By inculcating the idea in the minds of the boys and girls to-day, the department is doing work that will be of lasting benefit.

I was also particularly interested in the various exhibits produced by the children as the result of experiments conducted on various grasses, and carried out by the children under the supervision of the teachers. Such work must undoubtedly make for the progress of the industry and for the general good of the State. The department and its teachers are to be congratulated upon the keen interest displayed in equipping the children for the practical problems they will have to face when they go out into the world.

The department is also to be congratulated on its determination to have no other than fully qualified teachers in its service. In the past two or three years much good service has been rendered in that direction, and we need have no fear now of an inefficient teacher being entrusted with the education of our children.

I commend to the Minister the wisdom of not restricting the departmental activities

in regard to rural education. The vote discloses that £44,345 less is being appropriated this year than last year, and we know that last year the departmental estimates were considerably reduced. That naturally creates difficulty for the department, coupled with the numerous representations that are made by members of Parliament. Under the circumstances, the department is doing good work. I particularly rose to congratulate the department on the progress of the home project work, which I trust the Minister will see is continued in the future.

Mr. LLEWELYN (*Toowoomba*) [11.59 a.m.]: As the representative of a constituency whose educational importance is second only to that of the metropolis, I first of all add my meed of thanks to the department for the courtesy and assistance which I have invariably received from its officers.

At 12 noon,

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

Mr. LLEWELYN: During this discussion much has been said as to the necessity for saving money, if at all possible. At one time in this Chamber I quoted Edward Everitt as having said, "Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army." I think every hon. member will agree with that sentiment. At the end of 1914 the population of Queensland was 678,864, and the amount voted for education was £523,958. If we compare with those figures the amount voted this year for educational purposes and the present population of the State, it will be readily recognised that the cost of education per head of population to-day is no greater than it was in 1914. If anything, it is a little less. I submit that the money spent on education is giving a greater return to-day than formerly.

Let us cast our minds back to the conditions in 1914. At that time there were no vocational schools. Our high schools had not developed to the state we enjoy to-day. The university was not opened until 1910. It is interesting to enumerate the subjects that were taught at the university in that year. At that time there were only four faculties—classics, mathematics and physics, chemistry and geometry, and engineering. To-day we have professors teaching biology, and several professors teach geology and physics.

While I am on the subject of the university, I would like to stress the need for the establishment of a faculty of medicine. I think such a suggestion meets with the approbation of every member of this Chamber and of the general community. We recognise the disadvantages that many people have to suffer through not being able to meet the cost of sending their boys and girls away from the State to take a course of medicine. If we established a chair of medicine at the university, that faculty would be availed of to a very great extent. Having regard to the higher standard of education required to-day, and the fact that a more versatile class of teacher is required, the value received for the money expended on education to-day is greater than was the case in the past. The total vote to-day for education is £1,344,376, and it has been said that some of that money is not being spent wisely. It has been suggested that some of the money devoted to secondary education could, with

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advantage, be devoted to primary education. There may be something in that contention that calls for serious consideration. I consider that the amount of money spent on high schools and technical colleges, and more particularly on the high schools in the different centres of population, appears rather large. If we are to chesepare in the far-distant portions of the State to enable the city children to get an education, we must not do it without serious consideration. Perhaps the Minister may be able to enlighten the Committee on that point when he replies.

Another factor to be borne in mind is the changed value of money. We realise our tremendous task and responsibility in the education of our children, and our standard of education compares very favourably indeed with that of any of the other States. We have 1,700 schools, entailing a great amount of anxiety and trouble upon the Director of Education and his officers. The sovereign in 1914 was worth 20s., and we were able to spend the full 20s. on our schools. To-day we have a paper currency; and, when we compare the value of that currency with that of the sovereign in 1914, we have an argument in favour of the contention that we are getting greater value for the money spent.

Mention has been made of the opportunity classes and the good work which is being done by the teachers in connection therewith. I add my tribute of praise for the splendid care given to the children in these classes and the results which have been achieved by the segregation of the children in classes apart from others under the control of a teacher imbued with the necessary vision.

The hon. member for Cook said that he did not approve of the transfer of girl teachers to country schools long distances from their homes, and he suggested that the Director of Education should consider the sending of young men wherever possible. With that sentiment I am heartily in accord.

If there is any discussion in which the working of the parish pump may be excused, it is perhaps that on this vote; and I, therefore, take the opportunity of saying that some of the schools in my district require the attention of the Department of Public Works. I proposed to mention this matter on the Estimates of that department, but I was advised by the officers to defer my remarks until this vote was before the Committee. It is not conducive to the physical wellbeing of the children, for instance, that they should have to work at desks which are not as good as they ought to be. In one of my schools a desk has even had to be improvised from a box—a condition of things that should not be allowed to continue.

It has been suggested that health is of greater importance than education itself. If our children are to be educated as we desire them to be, let us pay due regard at all times to their health. I happen to know that specifications are being prepared for a septic system for the South Toowoomba school, and I submit that, wherever there is a large number of children, this matter is of paramount importance to the community, and it is the duty of the department to see that the work is carried out, so far as it is consistent with the Government's ability to pay.

Attention should be given to the style of forms used in some of our schools. Some-

times we find that children have to sit in positions which are not conducive to giving their best attention to their studies. I join with other speakers in expressing the hope that the money voted for this department will be wisely expended.

Mr. TOZER (*Gympie*) [12.12 p.m.]: I think that every hon. member considers this department one of the most important departments of the State. They recognise that the children of to-day, who are to be the men and women of the future, must be taught those subjects that will develop character upon proper lines. The mind of the child is very plastic and extremely receptive, and much depends upon the subjects that are taught to them.

I whole-heartedly approve of our system of education; but I do not approve of the action of certain teachers who endeavour at times to impart political views to their scholars. I believe in Bible teaching in State schools and in children having a certain amount of religious training. Of course, I realise that hon. members hold diversified views upon this subject; but, as a basic principle, it is absolutely necessary that every child should be given a good grounding in religious beliefs. The amount appropriated for the department this year is £44,345 less than the amount appropriated last year. When the Estimates of this department were under discussion last year, members of the then Opposition freely condemned the Government for failing to expend a larger amount upon education. We were compelled by force of economic circumstances to reduce the appropriation last year; and they are compelled by force of economic circumstances to reduce the vote still further this year. I sincerely hope that the financial position will improve, and that the reductions made in the various items will be restored. I offer this interesting information relating to our State for the benefit of hon. members—

Population	...	...	965,934
State schools	...	...	1,726
Private schools	...	...	201
Teachers—			
State schools	...	...	4,266
Private schools	...	...	1,264
Scholars—			
State schools	...	...	137,683
Private schools	...	...	32,244
Average attendance—			
State schools	...	...	115,267
Private schools	...	...	27,335

That information has been compiled up to 1930, but it has been found impossible to bring it absolutely up to date. The type of school building now erected is a considerable improvement upon the type of school erected in the days that have gone. I have in mind in particular two schools in my electorate at Wolvi and Coondoo. A number of the schools could be renovated or improved with considerable advantage, and I should like the department to give earnest consideration to that matter at the earliest possible date. This would be in the interests not only of the children but also of the teachers. The schools in the large centres of population are provided with the utmost conveniences; but the same cannot be said of a very large number of country schools. Most of the country schools comprise practically one room, with a front and back veranda. There is no adequate accommodation to cope with wet weather or with

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the dusty periods of dry weather. Of course it is an advantage to board up and to concrete the underneath portions of the schools. That provides some protection for the children. I desire particularly to refer to the One-Mile Girls and Infants' school at Gympie. It was considered advisable about two years ago, on the initiative of the inspector of the department, to make alterations to that school. It was held that the light was bad, and that the conveniences were unsuitable. The building was a very old one; and it was suggested that certain improvements should be effected. The matter was referred to the committee, and this body was quite willing to have the improvements carried out, and naturally thought the work would be done. After a lapse of twelve months it was found that nothing was being done. I thought the work had been attended to. I took the matter up again, but was informed by the department that the work could not be done because funds were not available. I hope the Minister will do something in this direction when funds are available, because, if the light is bad, and this is affecting the eyesight of the children, something should be done to rectify matters.

What surprises me most in connection with this vote is the reduction in the appropriation for additional endowment to grammar schools, and scholarships and allowances to the secondary schools. When this vote was being considered last year, this reduction formed the subject-matter of serious comment, and various hon. members of the then Opposition seriously condemned the Government accordingly. The Government of the day were forced to make that reduction, notwithstanding the outcry which their action caused. I understand that the reduction in the number of scholarships made by the late Government will not cause such a great demand on the vote this year, but there will be a greater demand on it next year because the Government have announced that they will increase the number of scholarships. Extra money will have to be found for these new scholarships. I certainly think that the late Government made a mistake in reducing the number of scholarships. I expressed myself in those terms at the time, and time has not caused me to alter my opinion. I look upon the matter in this light: Parents in the outside centres are naturally ambitious to give the best education possible to their children; but people engaged in rural pursuits have not the money available which parents in the city have; and the best they can do is to send their children to school at a good deal of inconvenience, and, when a child returns home, he must assist his parents in working the farm. The objective of these parents is to see that their child obtains a scholarship so that he can pass from the small country school to the larger school in the city. This entails a hardship, because a child must leave home and be boarded in the city. Some provision is made for those cases under the scholarship system, but the allowance is insufficient, and must always be amplified. My point is that parents aim to improve the educational standards of their children; and that objective can be arrived at only by the amount of the scholarship vote being as liberal as possible in order to give those children who show promise an opportunity to win scholarships. Although the amount of this vote

might be considered high, we ought to stretch a point in order to help these children.

We must also look at the question from the point of view of the private schools. These schools give considerable help to the State in educating our children. They all must find a certain expenditure to carry on. It is true that grammar schools get a certain amount of endowment; but what helps them considerably is the number of children who take out their scholarships with them. Naturally, when the number of scholarships was reduced, these private schools were affected, so that the reduction in the number of scholarships not only affected the parents and the children, but it affected those schools which, to some extent, depended upon the scholarships. I am pleased that the number of scholarships has been extended, but I cannot see how the appropriation for this purpose will be sufficient. However, the Minister and his officers have more knowledge on the subject than I have; but, if the late Government could not maintain the number of scholarships on a reduced appropriation, I cannot see how the present Government with the reduced vote can extend the number of scholarships. If they do so, then the amount appropriated for the purpose will be insufficient.

I also wish to refer to those districts where it is desired that provisional schools should be established. Where a district is progressing—and no one can say for a moment that the Gympie district is not progressing—something should be done where people are prepared to build a school and merely desire the department to supply a teacher and the furniture. Sometimes a request of that nature is granted, and at other times it is refused. In one particular instance, at Scrubby Creek, I have made representations on the matter; but the inspector says that the school attendance, which is fifteen or sixteen, does not justify the granting of a school. The residents in that district are so anxious to get a school that they are willing to provide it, so long as the department will supply a teacher and the furniture. In another case at Brooklyn, the promise has been made that the department will supply a teacher and the furniture. The residents are providing the school building. The matter of furnishing is a small one, generally comprising one table, one chair, two blackboards, and a small supply of stationery and ink. At one school I visited, although there were two blackboards, one was broken in two places. Certainly when the matter was brought under the notice of the department it was adjusted; but surely there is an inspector who could report on these matters, which should not be left for the member of Parliament to deal with!

Although in the country districts we have not the difficulty that metropolitan schools have, so far as playground accommodation is concerned, nevertheless in many country districts the land is not level, the school in some instances being built on the side of a hill. School committees, with the aid of working bees, do a great deal in the matter; but some of the heavier work has to be done by outside labour. I think the Minister should have some fund from which assistance can be given to school committees in that direction.

I commend the work of the department in holding a home project day and a hobby day. I have had the privilege of seeing the calves and pigs which form so striking a

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feature of home project clubs, and I can commend the educational advantages of such clubs, which give to the younger generation that practical knowledge which is so essential in all education. The hobby day has its advantages. It encourages the children to develop a hobby—and what man or woman is not better off for the cultivation of some hobby? I approve of the excellent work done under both schemes. The teachers seem to be very enthusiastic, and take a great interest in their work. Anyone who takes on a life occupation should be interested in his work. If the teachers are not interested in their work, they are not going to make a success of their schools. I presume that it is the aim of every teacher to get to the top of the tree and to get charge of one of the big schools in the city. The only way in which to reach the top is to take an active interest in their work, and when they do that it encourages the children to be more friendly and take a greater interest in their teachers. Recently in my electorate district sports associations have been established in connection with the combined schools. Each school has its own colours and badge, and all the teachers take a great interest in the sports teams and in the pupils who compete. That is the right spirit, and if we encourage that sort of thing we shall do some good. I trust the Minister, when he is able, will give more financial assistance to country education, as by doing so he will be assisting in the development of our lands and in encouraging these young people not to want to get into the cities. If they are encouraged to stop on the land and the land is made available for them, then the State must progress.

I trust the Minister will give due consideration to the different requests that I have made. They have not been made in a spirit of carping criticism but in order to assist the children in the country centres.

Mr. MAHER (*West Moreton*) [12.32 p.m.]: In the position in which Queensland finds itself to-day we realise that the aspect of the educational Estimates which requires most consideration is that of cost. The amount we are asked to vote in connection with the Department of Public Instruction this year totals £1,344,000, and it is interesting to pause for a moment and reflect on the fact that the total amount of income tax received during the last financial year amounted to £1,674,876. We budgeted for an amount of £2,500,000 income tax, but, owing to the abnormal conditions ruling in the State, the income tax receipts fell away by the sum of £881,000. It will, therefore, be seen that the amount of money which Parliament is asked to vote to maintain our educational facilities in the State is almost equal to the total amount collected by way of income tax in Queensland to-day; therefore, it is necessary to approach this matter from the point of view as to whether we are able as a people who are more or less impoverished to maintain the expenditure on this very necessary education. I am one of those who believe that, whilst there may have been some justification when times were good for free education in Queensland, to-day we should revise our views in that respect. We realise that, despite the parlous condition of the State, many people are still able to afford something towards the education of their children. When we are passing through difficult times such as these, I do not think anyone can justify such an enormous expenditure

on free education in our primary and secondary schools, involving free books, free equipment, and many other things free, which impose a definite tax on the people to-day. I suggest that it would be a good thing if the Government took stock of the position in regard to free education and drew a line at the basic wage earner. I would exempt the basic wage earner and anyone earning less than the basic wage from paying school fees. I would feel inclined to exempt also parents of large families. This is a matter which needs careful consideration by the Government, and the school fees and exemptions could be calculated on a scale suitable to the purpose.

The next point that arises for consideration is scholarships and secondary education generally. It is a great pity that the State has entered into the field of secondary education. It has assumed a tremendous burden. The obligation on the State is to provide a good primary education, with liberal provision for scholarships and bursaries for brilliant students of sufficient promise to justify the expenditure of money on them. It is very obvious, however, that a great number of mediocrities are able to scramble through a scholarship examination on a 50 per cent. pass basis, with the result that the State is called upon to bear the strain of an increasing cost of education for a class of youth who can get no further because of the lack of capacity. A system which provides that any boy or girl who can scramble through with 50 per cent. shall be educated by the State in a secondary school is wrong; and the State should not be called upon to pay money to assist boys and girls who can never get beyond that point. There are, of course, numbers of them in that category. Parents are inclined to think that because their child passes the scholarship examination they have an intellectual prodigy; and they frequently exert themselves and spend a great deal more money than they should in trying to assist it, with disappointing results in the final analysis. I hold the view that the main thing is to train a boy or girl up to a point where he or she can be said to have a reasonably good primary education, and thus give the child a chance to tackle the problems of life well equipped for the purpose. The State system does that to-day, but our scholarship system is far too liberal. The Moore Government were criticised by members of the party opposite because we found it necessary to make a substantial reduction in the numbers of scholarships. Many leaders of thought and men connected with secondary schools hold the view I have expressed. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition quoted His Grace Archbishop Duhig as being of the opinion that too many scholarships were granted. He also cited the opinion of Mr. Stephenson, the head master of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, who has the same view. Dr. David Horn, speaking at the annual distribution of prizes at the Toowoomba Grammar School last year, remarked—

"The last few years have been marked by indiscriminate distribution of scholarships. We have been given far too many scholarships by the Education Department. A great many of those that were allotted were given to boys and girls who had no chance of doing any good for themselves or anybody else. It is no use a boy or girl gaining a

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scholarship unless he or she is going further, and following some profession. One of the worst features of the reduction of scholarships is that they are going to limit the usefulness of institutions like the Toowoomba Grammar School. It would be a calamity to limit the number of those who could benefit by secondary education, by closing the doors of the grammar school."

That is precisely my own view—that the 50 per cent. basis gives an opportunity to a mediocre class of students. They cannot go any further, and are only encouraged to entertain vain hopes, and their parents likewise.

I have the feeling that the cost of secondary education is too great, and that, if the State vacated the whole field and left it to approved secondary schools—denominational schools and grammar schools—we would really be achieving something useful for the taxpayers of this State. Under present circumstances the job is the thing. That is what every boy is looking for; and diplomas and certificates and medals will not help him to secure that very necessary thing. Frequently, in following up the scholarship will o' the wisp, he misses the opportunity of securing a job. When finally he fails to qualify for the junior or senior standard and has proceeded a certain way along his professional career, he decides to look for a job in industry; but an employer is not inclined then to pay him the wage that is provided by the Industrial Court award. He cannot afford to pay him the wage prescribed for a youth fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years of age; and, because of his inexperience, preference is given to the boy fourteen years of age who is just leaving school. These boys who have been encouraged to go in for scholarships have more or less lost their opportunities. I feel that two things can be considered. First, that, where practicable, the high schools should be converted into grammar schools. The grammar schools are very fine institutions. There is a spirit attached to them whereby the old boys usually associate together to try to assist the old school in which they have been educated. They combine to give encouragement to the young pupils and to secure representation on the controlling board. Frequently they put their hands into their pockets to subscribe to the cost of football jerseys and cricket gear for boys who are in poor circumstances, but may be brilliant scholars.

Mr. W. T. KING: That is done in all secondary schools.

Mr. MAHER: No doubt what the hon. member for Maree says is correct. I know that it is particularly so with the grammar schools. Moreover, the grammar school has justified itself. At Ipswich the average cost per capita per annum to the State is £15. At a conference about four years ago Mr. Kellow, the head master of the Rockhampton grammar school, stated that the cost per capita to the State was £35 for the training of students at State high schools, and that in the case of grammar schools the cost was £27. The grammar schools are providing first-class secondary education at a great deal lesser cost than State high schools.

According to the report of the department for the financial year 1930-31, the number of scholarship-holders was 4,872. That is the

latest report available. It is rather interesting to note that 1,781 of this number attended grammar schools and 2,028 attended denominational schools and other approved secondary schools, making a total of 3,809. The scholarships to these schools cost the State £95,160 gross. Only 1,063 scholarship-holders attended the State high schools, and the cost was £69,886. If those figures are worked out on a proportional basis, it will be found that, if the State had been suddenly called upon to educate the whole of the 4,872 scholarship-holders in 1930, it would have been mulcted in an expenditure of well over £300,000. It will be evident to the Committee that the approved secondary schools, the denominational schools, and the grammar schools are doing the bulk of the work in educating scholarship-holders. The State high schools are the least patronised; yet the cost of educating nearly 4,000 scholarship-holders in secondary schools, grammar schools, and denominational schools can be done for £95,000, whereas it costs two-thirds of that amount—£69,000—to educate 1,063 scholarship-holders at the State high schools.

Mr. W. T. KING: What is the amount per head?

Mr. MAHER: I have not worked that out, but it can be easily ascertained. I am speaking of the gross cost, and not of the actual teaching cost. I am not against the principle of scholarships. I believe in a liberal system of scholarships, but a limited number. I am also of the opinion that the standard of the examination should be raised. I repeat that it would be a good thing if the State were to abandon entirely the field of secondary education and leave it to the denominational schools, the grammar schools, and the approved secondary schools to carry on this useful work, and if the existing State high schools were converted into grammar schools, where practicable.

Alternatively, I would suggest that the department should concentrate more on taking hold of the 4,000 scholarship-holders with a view to diverting them into the rural and technical schools, where they might learn something which would be of value and assistance to them in after life. There cannot be much outlook for them as tradesmen under the present depressed conditions; but we hope that these conditions will not be with us always, and that, as time passes, there will be more demand for skilled labour in industry. If we go on encouraging boys and girls to qualify for scholarships and educate them along the present lines without equipping them in other directions, what outlook have they got unless conditions improve? We are simply rearing reasonably educated young men without any outstanding ability. It is time that we took stock of the position, and strove to do something along the lines of giving these boys a rural and technical education in order to give them greater opportunities in life.

Mr. W. T. KING: Do you think that the percentage qualifying for a scholarship should be raised above 50 per cent?

Mr. MAHER: I certainly do.

Mr. W. T. KING: What do you suggest?

Mr. MAHER: It is not my function to make any suggestion; the officers in the department are well qualified in that respect. I personally believe that the standard should

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be raised to not less than 65 per cent. A boy who cannot secure a pass equal to 65 per cent. should not have the benefit of a scholarship.

Splendid social service work is done by the department. The medical and ophthalmic work is very valuable, particularly to the Western people, where the nomadic conditions do not place their children in as favourable circumstances as those in the closely settled areas.

The opportunity classes also perform a very valuable work. I have seen the work performed by the teachers in the opportunity class in Ipswich, and their work among the mentally defective and children whose education has been retarded through illness cannot be too highly commended.

The encouragement of thrift by the establishment of savings banks in schools is also to be commended. Generally speaking, I have the highest regard for the work performed by this valuable department; and my only regret is that lack of prosperity should dictate a restriction of educational facilities. It is a pity that such valuable work should in some respects be restricted by finance. I congratulate the officers of the department on the keenness and enthusiasm which characterise their work. The teachers also are an excellent body, and are performing a very great and useful service throughout the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [12.53 p.m.]: I am sure that the officers of the department appreciate the words of praise which hon. members have seen fit to bestow upon them. I also appreciate their appreciation on this the first vote I have moved. In the twenty-one speeches made throughout the debate not one word was said against the administration. The hon. member for Logan, the ex-Secretary for Public Instruction, opened his remarks by praising the departmental heads, and practically every member who followed him echoed his sentiments. On behalf of the heads of the department, I thank hon. members for this appreciation of their work.

The outstanding feature of the debate has been the misunderstanding of the aims and objects of secondary education. The hon. member for Logan said that, in his opinion, scholarships were an honour. Hon. members, including the hon. members for West Moreton and Toowong, spoke of scholarships being granted to the brilliant boys and girls. So far as I am concerned, and so far as the department is concerned, that is not the idea at the back of the system at all, or the basis of the secondary educational system of this State. The desire is not to make the brilliant child more brilliant, but to give an opportunity to the average child to continue the education begun in the primary schools. We are progressing as a nation, because of a broad educational policy, and not because we have 5 per cent. of highly educated people and 95 per cent. of drudges. We are progressing as an empire because education is becoming more widespread and is attaining a much higher level. We are civilised according to the amount of education we have; and any nation that neglects the general education of its children is likely to fall back. It is said that many of England's great victories were won upon the playing fields of Eton; but the great position that

England holds to-day is due entirely to the fact that she has fostered the education of the whole of her people. Australia as a nation ranks high amongst the nations of the world because her standard of education is generally higher than that in many other parts of the world. Later on I may refer to the aspect of scholarships.

Referring to some of the matters brought forward by hon. members, the hon. member for Ipswich made reference to the need for an intermediate school at Ipswich. The hon. member will be pleased to know that steps have already been taken to make inquiries regarding that matter. As a matter of fact, there is an amount of overlapping in connection with secondary education at Ipswich that might well be eradicated to the betterment of education in that centre and to the betterment of the centre generally.

In the few moments available to me before the luncheon adjournment I may be able to answer the objections to education particularly raised by the hon. member for Nanango. If I wished to be unkind to the hon. member—and I do not wish to be unkind—I would say that there are those who will misread his remarks as an attempt on his part to prove that you must be ignorant to be a successful farmer. I know, of course, the hon. member did not mean that.

Mr. EDWARDS: And I did not say it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That construction might be placed upon the hon. member's remarks. Is not a boy or a man all the better in any walk of life for having a higher education? Education is the knowledge of how to do things, and a man may be educated in many walks of life to his intellectual and material advancement. The boy who is educated for a tradesman later on is a better labourer than if he had no education at all along that line. The man who has the higher education in every walk of life is indeed the better man. I will deal later with the hon. member's remarks in reference to the Queensland Agricultural High School and College.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove made reference to the teaching of economics in schools. In very many parts of the world that is already recognised as a necessary subject. There are certain views on economics, which may now be classed as an exact science, and those parts which may be classed in that way can well be taught in the schools.

I think it was the hon. member for Cook who pooh-poohed the idea; but it may interest the hon. member to know that in many of the schools in the Southern States economics is being taught.

Mr. KENNY: I was referring to teaching the subject to children of twelve years of age.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is being taught to children of twelve years of age and to even younger children. In our own State schools we are teaching civics to children of six, seven, and eight years of age, and they will be all the better for that teaching in the days to come.

With reference to the dental inspection referred to by the hon. member for Normanby and to the disadvantages that children who live away from the railway lines suffer from, the hon. member will be pleased to learn that the road dental clinic which we thought would have to remain off the road

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through lack of funds will be restored. Investigation has proved that that wagon will run for some considerable period with the expenditure of a little money; and that money is to be expended. The wagon will be put on the road again for the benefit of outback children, and will be maintained for some considerable time.

With reference to the position at Cracow, tent accommodation has been provided for the teacher, and furniture has been despatched. The department has been in communication with the secretary of the progress association there in reference to a building. There is a dance floor which is not covered, and the progress association has asked the department to cover it. The department offered to do so, provided the progress association would refund the cost later on; but there seems to be some hitch in that matter at the present time.

Mr. MAHER: You cannot have much faith in the field.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Why should we put up a building at our own expense for a private dance hall? We are quite prepared to meet the situation. A surveyor is already engaged in surveying a site for the erection of our own school on our own land when the field is proved. If the field makes as much progress in gold production as the department is doing in education, then the field is all right.

At 2 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: In reply to the remarks of the hon. member for Nanango in reference to Gatton College, I wish to say that a proper investigation of that college will show that it is doing most efficient work. It is an established fact that at least 80 per cent. of the students find their way back to the land. If that is so, that is a very fine work indeed, and, judging by the reports of the various agricultural colleges of the other States, it is clear that more practical work is done at Gatton College than anywhere else in the Commonwealth. The charge against the college that no sufficient practical work is being done is not sustained; indeed, if we were to confine it solely to practical work, there would probably be no need to take boys there until they were sixteen or seventeen years of age. It is much better that their schooling should be continued from the age of fourteen onwards; and I have no doubt in my own mind that the college is serving a very useful purpose indeed, that it is doing very good work in a very good way, and that it will continue to do that good work if it is allowed to function along the present lines.

The hon. member for Murilla made some statements with regard to secondary education; and he said that his belief was that we had no right to give a secondary education while there were children not getting a primary education. That is a view with which I do not agree, and I am sure that the hon. member, when Minister for Transport, would have ridiculed the idea of not giving a second train to certain parts of Queensland because there were some parts of the State that had no train at all. Simply because there are children in certain parts of the State who cannot get a primary

education, that is no reason why children in other parts of the State, where every facility is afforded, should not get a higher and a better education. As a matter of fact, this idea that nobody should get more than anybody else has a communistic taint about it. Probably the hon. member for Murilla may be coquetting with false gods. One never knows. At any rate, it certainly has that taint.

The hon. member is also rather sceptical about the good work being done by the correspondence school; and he instanced one case of a child who won a scholarship, and he said it was not due to the good work done by the correspondence school but to the fact that the child's mother had been a school teacher. It may be interesting to the hon. member for Murilla to know that sixty-five pupils of the correspondence school will sit for the scholarship examination this year. It is not possible that all those children have mothers who were school teachers. As a matter of fact, the correspondence school is doing remarkably good work, and this fact has been established that, where pupils have gone from the correspondence school to a secondary school, they shoot right ahead of the other students of the secondary school in certain things. The reason for that is not very clear; but I understand that the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has been asked to investigate that aspect of education. The hon. member for Murilla reminded me of that very eminent Irishman who examined a Home Rule Bill and passed his judgment upon it. The hon. member's judgment of the correspondence school was not put so clearly or so definitely as was the opinion I mention, but the Irishman's expression after reading the Bill was: "Well, compared with something, it is nothing; but, compared with nothing, it is something." I think we can say much more of the correspondence school than that. It is doing a very fine work. There are over 5,000 pupils enrolled in the school, and parents write frequently testifying to the very good work this school has done and is doing, and indeed many parents have enrolled themselves in the school so that they may continue with the children the very fine education they are getting. That speaks well for the work being done by the correspondence school.

The hon. member for South Brisbane spoke of the school for the blind and deaf. I shall certainly see that attention is given to the complaints he made. Another member also had something to say about the school. Hon. members may be interested to know that it is now practically self-supporting. Hon. members will notice that there is a bigger vote this year than last year; but that is due to the fact that it may be necessary to spend a larger amount because, owing to the depression continuing, people may find themselves in the position of not being able to pay for their children at the institution.

Mr. R. M. KING: Last year the vote was £5,522; this year it is £4,885.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I shall be able to explain that. Credit is due for the improvement that has taken place in this school, and I would like to give some of the credit where a great deal of it ought really to be given. I want to give some credit to the school committee. A school committee can do a

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tremendous amount of good, and the committee connected with this school has done a tremendous amount of good. A school committee may be good or bad according to whether the chairman is a good or a bad chairman. If the chairman is a good chairman, you can depend upon it that the work of the committee will be very good indeed. I understand, Mr. Hanson, that the chairman of that committee is yourself, and I congratulate you on the very fine work that your committee is doing for this school.

The hon. member for Windsor referred to the Wilson ophthalmic school hostel. I appreciate what the hon. member said, and I am sure that the officials do too. He and other hon. members will be pleased to know that steps are being taken to enlarge that very fine institution. If we can double its capacity and double its work we shall be doing very well indeed.

The hon. member for Toowong spoke of the difference between the vote for the department last year and the amount this year. He made the discovery that we are voting £44,000 less this year than last year, and consequently he said we were probably making the educational system suffer to this extent. The hon. member for Cook, the hon. member for Isis, and the hon. member for Gympie also drew attention to the reduction in the vote. There are times when I have questioned the need for the amount of printing that is supplied to Parliament. We have the Treasurer's tables, the Auditor-General's report, and the facts and figures supplied to us, and these are such that had those hon. members examined them they would have discovered that the expenditure last year was not up to the amount voted.

Mr. KENNY: You are not going to cut out the report of the department this year?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are not cutting it out; but the hon. member is trying to sidetrack me on to that question. The hon. member for Cook appears to be worried about the report. He has not read the Treasurer's tables yet, or the Auditor-General's report.

Mr. KENNY: That is untrue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I accept the denial of the hon. member; but I must say that, if he has perused those reports, then he has not profited by what he has read. Had he read those reports carefully, and had he read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested what was prepared there, he would have discovered that the Government last year spent £27,000 less than the amount voted.

Mr. KENNY: Quite right.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Quite right! If the hon. member knew that it was quite right, what was he attempting to do when he told the Committee that the difference was £44,000?

Mr. KENNY: I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Was he attempting to mislead them? If he was, it is conduct of which no member of this Committee should be guilty.

Mr. KENNY: That is a lie. I did not mention £44,000 at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MAXWELL: It was I who did.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Cook made use of the word

"lie." I am not going to permit the use of that word. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr. KENNY: I have much pleasure in withdrawing, but I must protect myself. I ask that the hon. gentleman be called upon to withdraw the statement he attributed to me, because I did not attempt to create that impression.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If the hon. member had been paying attention to me, he would have noticed that I said "If." I did not accuse him of saying that it was so, and "Hansard" will show just what I did say. I did not accuse him of saying it; but his uncorrected "Hansard" proof will show just what he did say. If those hon. members who are so much concerned with the reduction in the appropriation this year will examine the Estimates, they will find many things to account for the difference of £17,000 between the expenditure last year and the appropriation this year. There is a difference of £8,000 in the matter of scholarships. If they will examine the Estimates carefully, they will find that the £17,000 is easily accounted for.

The hon. member for Toowong criticised the teachers' training college. The hon. member claims to be a tradesman, and I believe that he is a high-class tradesman and one thoroughly versed in his trade; and I am absolutely astonished that a tradesman of his ability should object to a person securing the benefits of an apprenticeship to another calling which he undoubtedly needs. The training college is the place where school teachers serve their apprenticeship, and where they learn something about the job that they are to undertake. Presumably the hon. member believes that any person can be grabbed off the street and, so long as he has a certain standard of education, he can become a successful teacher. He might be a successful teacher after a considerable amount of training; but I believe that every person should be trained for his particular occupation. Of course, the hon. member for Toowong knows that in the olden days, before the establishment of the training college, the pupil teacher was trained by the head master, and a considerable amount of his time had to be devoted to this training. He had his own class to supervise; and, in addition, he had to supervise the class that was under the instruction of the pupil teacher. That system was superseded by the system provided by the establishment of the training college. It is necessary that the teachers should be given a preliminary training at the training college, and at practising schools. It is necessary that they should serve an apprenticeship, if they are to be efficient teachers. It is now suggested that the institution should be abandoned. If we were to do that, the Queensland department would be the only department, not only in the Commonwealth but also throughout the civilised world, to do such a thing. The United States of America, England, France, Germany, Switzerland, and practically all countries of importance in the world have their training colleges. The system is responsible for better teachers; and the time of the head teachers who would otherwise have to train them is devoted to another purpose.

The hon. member for Toowong was also of the opinion that in granting scholarships

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to secondary schools we were catering for the "white collar" brigade.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not say anything of the kind.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I know that the hon. member did not, but I am saying it. To use his own expression, he said that we were turning them from the humbler walks of life. What has turned these people from the humbler walks of life? It is the commercial system that operates throughout the world to-day. The hon. member for Toowong, who cannot see beyond his own State, does not know that the United States of America, the greatest country in agricultural production in the world, and the most highly mechanised country in the world, has been losing its agricultural population for the past fifteen years.

Mr. KENNY: Why?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Because of the improved agricultural machinery, the better means of cultivation, and the better means of production.

Mr. EDWARDS: No. It is because of the greater attractions in the large centres of population.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The percentage of agricultural population in the United States of America is becoming smaller and smaller because there is no call for their occupation on the land. Why? If we are to have a better rural population, then why in the name of fortune can we not make rural life a little more attractive?

Mr. EDWARDS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Let us make a start. Let us give them a little more remuneration for the work they do. Let the hon. member for Nanango move on next private members' day that the rural workers' award be restored. He will then be doing something to make rural life a little more attractive.

Mr. EDWARDS: Shift the taxation burden from their shoulders!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It would not be proper for me to enter upon a dissertation on the subject of taxation. There will be a time for that, and we shall be able to prove to the hon. member for Nanango that the taxation upon the country worker is very low indeed. The hon. member for Toowong, being the representative of big capitalistic interests in this community, makes it appear that the burden of taxation rests upon the farmer, and not upon his people. He knows where the big burden of taxation rests. It is not upon the farmer so far as this State is concerned.

Mr. MAXWELL: You are not talking according to your lesson. You are saying something which I never said.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If I am doing so, then I am letting the hon. member down rather lightly.

Mr. KENNY: You are imitating Charlie Chaplin.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: There is nothing wrong in a person imitating an artist, but there is something wrong in a person imitating a blundering fool.

The hon. member for Fitzroy also spoke of the training that was being given in the domestic science classes. Much training is being done along those lines, and that method of education is being gradually extended.

I want to thank the hon. member for Charters Towers for the compliment he paid to the heads of the department. They know as I know, and as all hon. members know, that the hon. member for Charters Towers, by the quiet manner in which he attends to the requirements of his electors, receives a great deal of attention, which his electors appreciate.

I also want to thank the hon. member for Cook for his helpful opening remarks. I hope I do not misrepresent him, but I understood him to say that it was not the right thing, particularly on a vote of this kind, to attempt to score off other people. I think he made reference to this party attempting to score off the Nationalists in the matter of scholarships. I regret that before the hon. member went very far he attempted to score off the Government by saying that the Labour candidates, when before the electors, promised the restoration of all awards, but the Government have not yet honoured that promise in so far as the school teachers are concerned. What the candidates of the Labour Party said was that every section of the community would get an opportunity of approaching the industrial court again. The Premier in his policy speech was most careful in that regard; and, in answer to questions in almost every centre, he made the statement that those workers who were taken from the court would be given the opportunity of approaching the court again.

Mr. KENNY: Why don't you give them that opportunity?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That will all come in good time.

Mr. KENNY: Like the Labour objective.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: An amendment of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act would have become law by this time had the hon. member for Cook not taken up the time of the Chamber with his speeches. There are reasons for everything; and probably the reason for the delay in amending that Act is that the hon. member for Cook has spoken so often.

That hon. member also drew attention to the fact that the vote for education had increased greatly since 1915. That is perfectly true. It was necessary to increase that vote because Governments prior to that date did not give the attention to educational matters that might have been expected of them. As the State became prosperous and money plentiful, the Labour Government saw that the children got their fair share of what was going by increasing the educational facilities to a remarkable extent.

Mr. MAXWELL: Money is now scarce, but the vote is still soaring.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: When money is scarce, the Government are still keeping up that standard of education which it believes to be necessary for the welfare of the children. We cannot fit ourselves to govern this great State unless we produce men and women

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with educational standards as high as it is possible to bestow upon them. It would be very wrong on our part to neglect their education.

The hon. member for Cook read an extract from the "Queensland Teachers' Journal," which stated that its editor had no official knowledge of the 10 per cent. reduction which was to come about had the Nationalist Party been returned to power. The people took very good care to see that they would have no official knowledge of it. Had they not been so careful, and had they returned the Nationalist Party to power, they would have had a very full knowledge of that 10 per cent. reduction.

The hon. member also referred to the necessity for establishing school facilities in the Northern tobacco areas. The department is fully seized with the necessity for those areas receiving consideration to which they are entitled. It is very necessary, first and foremost, to make sure that that industry is well established—and we hope that all the tobacco areas are well established and will become prosperous settlements. It will be found that the department will not be behind-hand in providing those facilities to which the children are undoubtedly entitled.

Mr. KENNY: That industry is more stable than Cracow.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Possibly. The dairying industry has given more wealth to Gympie than was obtained from the bowels of the earth; and it is quite possible that the tobacco areas will bring us greater riches than Mount Morgan or Gympie. At the same time, we would be foolish to rush in and spend thousands of pounds until we are satisfied that these areas are right. It was asked that the Director of Education should make a visit of inspection. I can assure the hon. member concerned that the inspectors who do this work are competent and reliable, and that their reports can be acted upon.

The hon. member for Albert suggested that we should get people upon the land; and to get them upon the land we should provide educational facilities where those facilities do not exist. The hon. member spoke about offers of share farming that would not be taken up because there were no school facilities. I can quite see that many a man might refuse an opportunity like that rather than injure his children in the matter of education; but I would like to point out that we might do even better than that. We might make available the undeveloped land that is in the vicinity of established schools. There is plenty of it; and, if we could do something to bring that land into production, we would be avoiding considerable expense both in transport and in education. The suggestion is a good one.

The hon. member for Isis spoke of the project clubs; and everything he said can be endorsed. A few weeks ago I was speaking to a gentleman in the country, who said, "I want to tell you something about these project clubs. I have been a member of a show committee for over forty years, and I can assure you that in this district at any rate the project clubs that have been established in our schools during the last three or four years have done more for agriculture in the district than the agri-

cultural society has done in forty-five years."

Mr. CLAYTON: Quite true.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member for Isis backed that up. He said that prior to the introduction of the project club the stud book was practically unknown on the dairy farm, notwithstanding that we have had agricultural shows for the last forty-five years. This particular phase of education, teaching the boy what is a good thing in his sphere of life, will bring us a reward of which we have no proper measure just now. The project clubs are doing very fine work indeed.

I would like to advise the hon. member for Toowoomba that the matters he spoke about are now in the hands of the Department of Public Works.

The hon. member for Gympie also spoke of the repairs necessary for country schools. If the hon. member looks at the Estimates, he will see that we are making provision for a very fair amount of repairs to country schools.

Mr. LARCOMBE: What about the broken blackboard? (Government laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member said that it was rather a pity that the inspector had not reported the matter, and that it should be left for the member for the district to do so. As a matter of fact, there are three or four people who might have reported the matter other than the member for the district. For example, it could have been reported by the head master, by the inspector, or by the school committee; and I am rather astonished to think that none of these agencies could have got the information to the department, and that it was left for the hon. member to do so.

I would like to say a word or two about the speech delivered by the hon. member for West Moreton. The hon. member is opposed to free education, and I am surprised that at this time we should have people in our midst who are opposed to free education. I am sure that the country will not endorse the hon. member's remarks. The Labour Party has stood for many years for free and compulsory education. It would be difficult indeed to draw the line at primary education. When free education was asked for by people throughout the length and breadth of Australia—not by the Labour Party, but years before the Labour Party was in existence—secondary education did not come into the minds of the people; but, having made education free so far as the primary schools are concerned, have we not a right to carry on that facility in order to make education free to those who pass the standard set by the Department of Public Instruction?

There may be people enjoying incomes of £1,000 or £2,000 per annum who take advantage of the scholarship system. Well, they are at liberty to do so. If they had the higher ideal that some of us possibly have, they would pay for the education of their own children and enable some one else to enjoy the privilege they get; but the Department of Public Instruction makes no comment. It provides that education, and it provides the scholarships; and in doing so it gives to those children who win

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scholarships the education that is covered by them.

The chief complaint of the hon. member for West Moreton was that we were giving an indiscriminate number of scholarships. He quoted Archbishop Duhig as having said there were too many scholarships. I do not think he quoted him correctly—I do not think he did it deliberately—but I do not think the Archbishop inferred that we were giving too many scholarships. It is quite true that Mr. Stephenson, the head master of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, did say so. The great majority of the people differ from that view. The majority of the people think we should give more and more secondary education. Hon. members ask what are we to do with our leisure? With better production and better government we shall have much more leisure; and one of the things that will be done will be that our children will be continued at school until they are sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen years old, and later on until they are twenty and twenty-one years old. There will be no need in the years to come for people to rush their children into industries. There is no need to rush children into industry to-day because there is no room for them in industry. If 50 per cent. of the scholarships that we now give were not given, would it give these children jobs one day earlier? Of course it would not. Our boys and girls are not getting jobs to-day because there are no jobs for them; and it is a very fine thing that the State is able to give them an education while they are not able to get employment. Education must get broader and wider; and why should we give an education only to the brilliant child? How many brilliant children are there that fail? How many members of Parliament have been visited by mothers and fathers who say, "My boy got 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. at school; yet, when he sat for the scholarship, he failed." Why? Because he is nervous; he is a highly strung boy, and consequently he fails in his examination. But the 50 per cent. condition allows many a child who is scared of the examination to get through who otherwise would not get through. He is infinitely superior from the educational standpoint to the phlegmatic boy who can sit down and take what is coming without becoming flurried. The 50 per cent. condition gives a reasonable opportunity to the average child to secure the average standard of education in the State; and, while we have that, we shall not be doing anything wrong. I fear what would happen to Australia if we stood for—to put it bluntly—"buttering the fat pig." Surely we do not need to pay attention to the brilliant child. Our job is to pay attention to those who are not so brilliant; and bring them up to a higher standard. In that way I believe we shall do much better work than we have done in the past.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [2.34 p.m.]: I am pleased to know that the Minister is so enthusiastic over his job. Evidently the hon. gentleman believes that everything is quite all right. I should like to congratulate the heads and officers of the department for their courtesy and attention at all times. They are always ready to do their utmost, and never refuse a reasonable request. It has been my experience that, if I could put up a good case, I always got attended to.

I wish to say a few words on the scholarship question. I am not quite sure where

I stand. Before the election and ever since we have been told by hon. members opposite that a great deal was going to be done for the pupils who passed the scholarship. We were told that the number who could take out scholarships was to be unlimited; now we have the Minister cutting down the vote for scholarships.

The vote for allowances has been cut down by £8,000; yet the Minister tells us there are going to be more scholarships taken out this year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes.

Mr. DEACON: Then the Minister must be going to allow them less than they got previously.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No.

Mr. DEACON: If the vote is £8,000 less and there are more students—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are not going to have more students.

Mr. DEACON: More scholarships?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes; we are giving more scholarships.

Mr. DEACON: The late Government cut down the number of scholarships, which cost them £57,000. The Minister says he is going to have more scholarships, yet he deliberately cuts down the amount they are going to get.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No.

Mr. DEACON: Yes—£8,000 less. We have been told in this Chamber ever since the election that the Government were going to do very much more for education—a wonderful thing for the children. Yet they have cut down the amount of the vote by £44,000. Who is going to suffer? The schools in the country will suffer. The city children do not need so much attention. It stands to reason that, if the amount is reduced, the department must cut down somewhere. They will have more children to educate, but less money to do it with. Every year there is an increase in the number of children to be educated; and this year the department will have more in the country than in previous years; yet they have to do it with less money. Somebody will go short. The Government are providing £44,000 less than last year, in spite of the fact that we were told at the elections of the wonderful things they were going to do! That cannot be done without money. I know there will be skimping somewhere; and very likely the schools which are just short of the required attendance will be closed.

Mr. G. C. TAYLOR: They may be in your electorate.

Mr. DEACON: They will be in every country member's electorate. The children in the country need more attention than those in the city. They have not the same opportunities for education. They are handicapped in many ways. They are handicapped by reason of the fact that they have only one teacher to forty odd children, and all the classes in that school are under that teacher. I admit that it is very difficult to cope with the difficulty and keep up the same standard as in the city; but something has to be cut out, and it seems to me quite certain that the fellow up country will

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suffer, and that the schools which are just on the border line, with a child less than the required quota of attendance will be closed. The Government will probably close such schools a little more quickly than ordinary and instruct the children by means of the correspondence school. No doubt that school does good work, but it is not as efficient as when there is actually a teacher in a school with the children. It may give as good results where parents are able to help the children, but generally it cannot. I have had cases—and every other hon. member has had them in the country—where the teacher of a school in the bush did not like it, and deliberately got the children to go away, or made it hard for them to stay in order that the school would be closed and the teacher would get a transfer. That has been done. I suggest that, when the department has a school on the border line, the teacher should have the option of continuing at a lower salary or of leaving the service. If that school has to be closed, then obviously that teacher is not needed; yet the Government take that teacher somewhere else. If the teacher knew that his job depended on keeping the school going—

Mr. WELLINGTON: Do you want him to scab?

Mr. DEACON: If he looks after his school, will he be a "scab"? It is absolutely wrong for any teacher to endeavour to close his school so that he may be transferred from a locality that is not entirely to his liking. I am sure that the officials of the department know that this is done in some cases. It is only human nature, and it is an easy way out to make it unpleasant for the children or for the parents, and so have the school closed. Fortunately, such cases are rare, but they do occur sometimes.

The Minister has promised to give some explanation as to why a greater number of scholarships is to be provided for a lesser amount of money. I shall await his reply before making any further comment on the matter.

Mr. RUSSELL (*Hamilton*) [2.43 p.m.]: We pride ourselves upon having an educational system second to none in the Commonwealth. Probably no part of the world has a more liberal educational system than Queensland. Owing to the exigencies of federation, we have been saddled with an unproductive department. I have always contended that it was very unfair in the final settlement of the constitutional problems relating to the Commonwealth that this State should be saddled with a department like the Department of Public Instruction, which demands a tremendous annual expenditure, and against which the receipts are a very small item indeed. Naturally, with the growth of our democratic ideas, we are all inclined to be more liberal in providing an education for the young folk. When we contrast the conditions to-day with those that obtained, say, a quarter of a century ago, we must be satisfied that we have done our duty by the younger people. Year by year the State has assumed greater educational responsibilities.

The late Government were subject to a good deal of adverse criticism for the policy they adopted last year. Unfortunately, owing to the financial situation, we were compelled to apply the pruning knife to many Government departments, and in that drive for economy the Department of Public

Instruction had to subscribe to the general desire for economy. Hon. members opposite certainly cajoled the electors to the extent of persuading a great number of them that we were determined to act detrimentally to the interests of the young people. When we consider what has been done in Queensland in regard to the whole educational system, and when we consider the tremendous expenditure in regard to scholarships, I do not think that any blame can be attached to the late Government for endeavouring to live within their means, and including within the scope of their economy measures cuts in educational expenditure.

The present Government have made certain promises, but so far the burden of those promises has not yet fallen upon them. We can see that, if they carry out their promises in regard to expenditure by this department, the Estimates will have to provide for greater expenditure for next year and the following year. I think we all agree that we should extend every possible educational facility to the younger people to enable them to obtain better advantages than those who have preceded them; but the question arises—How far must the State go in giving these educational advantages to the young people? There are some who advocate that the greatest privileges should be extended to the boys and girls until they reach the university standard. It is contended that, by the gradual extension of educational facilities, the young people will be able to secure a better education than their fathers and mothers, and that we shall thereby inculcate in the young minds of the next generation the wherewithal to formulate deliberate opinions upon policies that may be adopted by political parties. It is contended that the extension of educational facilities prevents the growth of communistic doctrines, and stop the growth of societies which might have for their object the tearing down of the fabric of society. That is why most of us think we should extend to the younger generation every educational facility possible; but we must be governed by the depth of our purse. The question is—How far can the State go in regard to the extension of educational facilities? What is the bounden duty of the older generation in providing education for the younger generation? What are our obligations, and what liability can we honestly assume, so that we can say to the younger generation that we have done our duty honestly by them? Under the old system a boy or girl was educated up to the age of fourteen years, when primary education ceased. It was considered then that the State had done its duty. With the growth of humanitarian principles it has been considered that we should go further than that, and afford secondary educational facilities to those boys and girls who were successful in passing a certain examination. How far can we go on with that system? The time has arrived when we should decide at what precise moment the duty of the State should finish in the education of our young people.

Hon. members opposite have a very ambitious programme. While I am prepared, if the finances permit, to give every boy and girl with the necessary aptitude the benefits of the higher education, still we must be governed by the power of the purse. We must institute a system whereby we can extend to those boys and girls who have passed the necessary examination the advantages of a secondary education. It is

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just a question of what is a fair percentage to adopt for these examinations. While the State was prosperous, we extended all these facilities. We granted scholarships amounting to over 2,000 per year. Can we afford to continue on that basis? If we can, then I say "Yes," because it is our bounden duty to extend educational facilities to those boys and girls who are intelligent and willing to learn to attain the greatest honours educationally.

We should extend to country people even greater privileges than we extend to them to-day. We must all admit that the boys and girls in the backblocks suffer great disadvantages. No one can object to the extension to them of greater educational facilities. The correspondence system is one of the finest features of our educational system; and I strongly urge that it be extended by every possible means so that every boy and girl in the country can be given the greatest privileges possible to enable them to receive not only a good primary education, but also a secondary education provided he or she is willing to study.

MR. W. T. KING: You were saying a few moments ago that you wanted to cut those facilities down; now you want to extend them.

MR. RUSSELL: I never said a word on the lines suggested. We should give greater advantages to dwellers in the country, because the boy and girl in the city have all the facilities necessary within easy reach. Take my own Electorate, Hamilton. We have five very fine primary schools which are turning out splendid scholars. They have only a very short distance to travel. In passing, let me say that we are grateful to the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Public Works both in the present and past Administrations for having done their utmost for the comfort of scholars. Both Administrations have provided a good deal of comfort for the boys and girls; and the unemployed engaged on intermittent relief work schemes could not be better employed than on work which will increase the assets of our State schools and add to the comfort of the scholars. I think I can speak generally when I say that those advantages have been appreciated by every hon. member.

While we are all desirous of extending every facility possible, we must be guided by the depth of our purse. In regard to the scholarship system, it is just a question as to whether the system under which we have been working for some years is not entirely wrong in its general incidence. Formerly when a boy or a girl won a scholarship, he or she would be entitled to free tuition for three years at an approved secondary school. Later, in order to grant those privileges to a greater number of scholars, the term of the scholarship was reduced to two years. I have always been of the opinion that it was impossible for a boy or girl to absorb the education necessary to fit him or her for a vocation by cramming into two years the education that was formerly spread over three years. I am backed up in that assertion by the head master of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, who quite recently said that the idea of every secondary school should be to instil into the mind of the boy or the girl the idea that the education they were receiving would be of material benefit to them in after life. Undoubtedly the great schools of

the Empire have had a tremendous impression on the students they have put through. As Mr. Stephenson pointed out, you do not get the hall-mark of the school in two years, and, in order that these secondary schools may fulfil the duties for which they were established, it is necessary that the scholars should be allowed to take their scholarships out for a period of three years so that they may get a thorough grounding in the subjects they study which will fit them for their future vocations. This sentiment has been expressed, not only by Mr. Stephenson, who is the head master of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, but also by many other notable authorities. I would urge upon the Government that, in granting these scholarships, the boys and girls who have the aptitude should be allowed to have their scholarships extended to three years. The boys and girls who do not show the same merit or the same aptitude for a secondary education might be allowed to take out shorter scholarships; but what we want to do is to make special provision for the elite of these scholars who are by nature endowed with such qualities that they are the people to whom we must look to occupy positions in the higher professions. Undoubtedly under our system of education we are turning out a great number of boys and girls who might be designated the "white collar" brigade—boys and girls who are educated simply to occupy clerical positions. But, with the tremendous change which has taken place in every State of the Commonwealth, it is necessary that those boys and girls should be educated for different vocations than hitherto. It has been stated by the Director of Education, Mr. McKenna, by Mr. Thomas Henderson, the head teacher of Ascot State School, and by Mr. Blunt, a former president of the Queensland Teachers' Union, that a radical change in our system of education is imperative, and that, in view of the fact that the welfare of our State must be dependent upon the greatest development of the primary industries, a great number of the students must have their activities directed towards subjects that will be applicable to the full development of the primary industries, whilst at the same time the education of boys and girls for occupations in the cities as artisans, clerks, or in the professions must not be neglected. As a writer in the Sydney "Bulletin" pointed out some weeks ago, it would be far better to breed and educate a number of satisfied artisans or farmers than a great number of dissatisfied masters of art or professors. That puts the matter in a nutshell. The current sentiment among those who have studied the question is that we must radically alter our present system of education. There is nothing ignoble in a boy following the science of agriculture or kindred subjects, and, instead of deprecating the education of boys in those sciences, we should rather encourage it to the fullest extent, and make it clear to the public that the pursuit of agriculture and kindred callings is quite as noble and useful as being a doctor, architect, or member of any other profession. There is nothing ignoble in a boy or girl being put to a useful occupation in industry; and the sooner we recognise that fact the better, and the sooner we shall get away from the snobbery that now exists in connection with a certain class of men and women in the higher professions.

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There is nothing ignoble in work, and the sooner the public recognise that the better.

In the present Minister we have a man who is really sympathetic with the department. I am very pleased to see him there, because of the whole members of the Ministry he is probably the best man for the job. Although I am opposed to some part of his policy, I must say that he has endeavoured to carry out the best traditions of the department.

The Minister was very unwise at the teachers' conference to approve of preference to unionists. I am sorry he did that. We recognise, of course, that it is one of the cardinal principles of the Labour Party that there must be preference to unionists. Preference was a principle that the unionists fought against many years ago; but, after being converted to this idea, they have incorporated it as a plank in their platform. While there may be some arguments in its favour—I do not admit that there are—I think there are more arguments against the so-called principle. It is generally alleged that the granting of preference to unionists will bring about peace in industry. That might be so if we had a system of collective bargaining between employers and employees. We are told that, if the employers had to deal with a body of men in the unions, they would get better conditions and peace in industry. There might be some argument in favour of that, but I do not think there is. What has happened in the past? Despite the fact that preference to unionists has been granted under various awards, under Labour rule there has been no peace in industry; but there has been peace in industry while anti-Labour forces were in charge.

It is a wrong thing to extend this so-called principle to public servants. With public servants there is one employer—the Government—whereas in private industry you have hundreds or thousands of employers engaged in the same industry, so the conditions are not analogous. The only test that should be applied to a public servant is that of efficiency, irrespective of his political opinion and irrespective of anything else; and it amounts to an act of coercion to say to public servants that "You must join a union." The Minister has hinted to the teachers, "If you do not join the teachers' union, you will get the sack." That is the inference I draw from the hon. gentleman's remarks at the teachers' conference.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You are wrong.

Mr. RUSSELL: On 3rd August last the hon. gentleman said, "We give preference in our community to those who are willing to obey the law in the community, and your claim for preference is a very good claim indeed." What does that mean except—"If you do not join a union, you will get the sack"? All this talk about obeying the law is pure piffle. Every man is expected to obey the law, whether he joins a union or not. The law applies to the rich and the poor, to the unionist and the non-unionist; and the Minister exceeded his duty in practically telling the teachers that, if they desired to retain their positions, they must join the teachers' union. I would ask the Minister to explain his remarks. We think that, while he did not say so, it was a direct threat to these men and women that, unless they joined the union—which must subscribe to the funds of the Labour Party—they would

lose their positions. I say that, while it may have some arguments in its favour in regard to industry, it is a wrong thing to apply any coercion to public servants, who should be allowed to do as they like in this matter. We want men who are not dictated to by political parties, and who will deal out evenhanded justice to every section of the community. The hon. gentleman also said—

"Individualism leads to rivalry, which leads to competition; and competition leads to conflict."

The very essence in this department is competition. It is the thing which decides whether its officers are to get ahead of others—whether they show ability and aptitude for their jobs. The very essence in the service is competition between teacher and teacher, and I think the best men should be selected for the highest jobs. That shows that the Minister was talking absolute piffle.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [3.7 p.m.]: A very Daniel come to judgment! I admit that in the remarks to which the hon. member referred I made some remarks regarding individualism and about individualism as against co-operation; and I believe that co-operation even in the butter industry has led to a better position in that part of the community. I did draw a parallel between individualism and co-operation. I also said that in a community that men got preference who obeyed the law. It is a long while ago, but I think I remember what I said. I did not say that we ejected from the community men who did not obey the law.

Mr. MAHER: Do you approve of unions closing their books to prevent men from getting a job?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member has closed more than one book in his time, as I can prove.

Mr. MAHER: What kind of book?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: A rabbit book, in the matter of the supply of rabbits.

Mr. MAHER: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Hanson. What is the insinuation contained in the statement by the Minister

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretary for Public Instruction.

Mr. MAHER: I rise to a joint of order. The Minister made the statement that I had closed more than one book. Just what does he mean. Is he reflecting on me?

The CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. MAHER: The point of order is that I take it that that is a reflection on me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I will say that the hon. member never closed a book, if that will suit. It is necessary to open a book before it can be closed.

Mr. MAHER: What sort of nonsense is that?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I believe that in the remarks quoted by the hon. member for Hamilton I did refer to members of the community who obeyed the law, and said that they had certain privileges, and that members of the

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community who did not obey the law had certain privileges taken from them, and that was considered to be a just thing; but the statement that I said or insinuated that any teacher who would not join the union would be put out of the service is entirely wrong.

Mr. RUSSELL: The paper reported it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I do not know what the paper puts in. What paper is it?

Mr. RUSSELL: The "Courier" of 4th August.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member knows that a newspaper report cannot give a full report, and that it may print a remark in a speech immediately after another remark made ten minutes previously, and give a wrong impression even to the reporter who reported the speech.

Mr. CLAYTON: You do not believe in preference to unionists in the public service?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I have made many announcements on the subject. The hon. member will find many records in "Hansard" of what I have said on the matter. The inference to be drawn from the remarks of some hon. members opposite is that, although schools are closed, no new schools are ever opened. Of course, when a new school is opened, an additional teacher is required, and it is possible that a teacher may be transferred to that school from the closed school.

It was news to me that there are teachers who have worked for the closing of schools in order that they might get transfers—that by the ill-treatment of children—(Opposition dissent)—that statement was made by the hon. member for Cunningham—that by ill-treatment and irritating tactics they forced children away until the attendance was lower than the necessary number and the school was closed.

Mr. DEACON: There have been such cases.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If any such cases are brought under my notice and the facts are proved, that teacher will not get an opportunity for a transfer, except a transfer right out of the service. I expect the teachers at these small schools to use every effort to keep up the attendance. The matter mentioned by the hon. member for Cunningham presents a new aspect of the matter upon which I shall keep a very sharp eye. When a proposal comes before me to close a school, I shall make inquiries from the parents as to what effort the teacher has made to keep the school open, and, if he has not made what I consider to be a proper effort, he will leave the service, and will not be given another opportunity to deprive children of an education.

I hope now to be able to satisfy the hon. member for Cunningham upon the question of scholarships. He will remember that the system was changed on 1st January, 1930, from a scholarship of two and a-half years to a scholarship of two years. In that year 2,490 scholarships were granted. Those scholarships expired at the end of 1931, after having run the two years. There were 1,540 extension scholarships granted in that year. At the beginning of 1931 the restricted

scholarship scheme came into being. The Moore Government, on 1st January, 1931, granted 1,003 scholarships. They will expire at the end of this year after having run the two years, and it is anticipated, on the law of averages, that there will be 350 extension scholarships granted out of the 1,003 scholarships. It will be seen that there will be practically 1,200 scholarships less to be financed this financial year. That is a tremendous drop in the number, and accounts for the difference in the amount of money required. The hon. member will see that, instead of having to provide for 1,540 extension scholarships, we shall probably have to provide for only 350.

Mr. DEACON: Have you not forgotten that some others may take them up?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are making provision for the children who are taking up the extension scholarships.

Mr. DEACON: There might be back pupils who will come next year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are making provision for the back pupils. A big number will have finished their extension scholarships—not the two-year scholarships, but a total of four years. They will be finished at the end of this year, consequently, there is no need to provide for them; they go out.

Mr. DEACON: You are removing the barrier.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That does not apply to the past scholarships. That will apply to the new scholarships to be granted.

Mr. DEACON: Does it not also apply to some of the first 1,000?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are making provision for the 350 that are anticipated, whereas the Moore Government had to provide for 1,540 extension scholarships, being the number who secured scholarships under the scheme provided by the previous Labour Government. Two years ago the Moore Government restricted the number to 1,000, which means that we shall have to provide for only 350 extension scholarships. The cost of an extension scholarship is £13 for a boy and £11 for a girl, or an average of £12 for the first two years. The cost of a scholarship is £10 for a boy and £8 for a girl, or an average of £9. The cost will be less per scholarship than the cost of the extension scholarships that are expiring. The latter have had their four years—the two years for the first scholarship and the two years for the extension scholarship. I have already stated that 1,540 are running out.

Mr. DEACON: You are not accounting for them all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am. There will be 1,540 that will expire, and there will be 350 new extension scholarships, or a difference of approximately 1,200, for which we shall not have to provide. They have served their four years, and they have got all that the State promised them. We have not promised to provide for 1,540, but we shall have to provide for 350 new extension scholarships.

Mr. R. M. KING: There will be a limited number of extensions because of the limited

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number of scholarships granted. You cannot extend something that never existed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Quite so; consequently a tremendous amount will be saved during this financial year, and to some extent during the next financial year too, because from 1st January, 1932, the scholarships granted by the Moore Government numbered only 1,112. We shall probably have to provide more money next year, and a greater amount again during the third year; but we believe that it can be provided, otherwise we would not have entered into the scholarship agreement promulgated this year. I am satisfied that the hon. member will now see that the saving in this vote is not being effected by cutting down the number of scholarships. As I have pointed out, less provision is necessary for extension scholarships. That being so, there is no need for an additional vote.

I must confess that I am not in a position to judge the merits of the two-years' course. I must leave that to people who have given some study to the subject. I have been a trustee of the Ipswich Boys' Grammar School for some years, and the headmaster there believes that by cutting down certain subjects which, in his opinion, are not necessary, we could very well get through on a two-years' course. The junior standard in Queensland is higher than the corresponding standard for the universities of Sydney and Melbourne. That is necessary because a young university wants to establish itself as a high-class scholastic institution. Still, we get there. The Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has investigated the arithmetic of the primary schools in the various States of the Commonwealth. Its decision, which was given quite recently, was that the arithmetic in the State schools of Queensland was on a much higher level than the arithmetic in similar schools in other States. I am given to understand that the same applies to English as taught in our primary schools. That is, our English standard in the primary schools is higher than the standard in the primary schools of the other States; therefore, our children have a much better opportunity of completing the junior standard in the two-years' course than the children in other States. There may not be the requisite time to get what is called the right atmosphere of the Brisbane Grammar School, but there is a difference of opinion as to what is the right atmosphere. I make bold to say that there is a very fine standing amongst the boys in secondary schools in this State, and a very fine standard equal to that which exists in connection with the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School. I know that the headmaster of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, Mr. Stephenson, holds that the adoption of the two years' junior course is wrong. He may be right, or he may be a voice crying in the wilderness; but men with his experience must be listened to with respect. At the same time, educational methods, in common with other matters, are advancing; and educational experts to-day might consider certain things unnecessary which Mr. Stephenson believes to be necessary. It is possible that before long there will be a revision of our educational standards in certain directions. If in moving forward educationally we leave some people behind, then it is to be regretted.

Item (Chief Office) agreed to.

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INSPECTION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [3.22 p.m.]: I move—

“That £15,559 be granted for ‘Inspection.’”

This vote provides for the salaries and travelling expenses of the inspectorial staff. The amount required is approximately £700 less than the appropriation for 1931-32. The reduction has been effected by a reorganisation of travelling arrangements with a view to keeping travelling costs within the limit of the funds available. The vote now stands at the minimum consistent with the safety and effective maintenance of this most important service. Of the £4,000 for travelling expenses approximately £1,100 is paid to the Railway Department. Regular inspections of all schools are carried out not less than once biennially, and in most cases annually, which is essential for the maintenance of discipline and efficiency throughout the large service scattered in many remote portions of the State. It is also the basis of all promotion.

The following resolution was carried at the recent conference of Directors of Education of all the States, and I quote it because it is of interest in respect of this matter—

“It was generally considered that slackness and inefficiency in teaching would result from any diminution in the work of inspection. The annual inspection of schools and the regular assessment of each teacher's efficiency are regarded as of vital importance. It is considered advisable, therefore, to exhaust other methods of affecting economies in expenditure before reducing the number of inspectors or making such additions to their duties as would prevent them from effectively carrying out their work.”

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [3.23 p.m.]: I rise not so much to discuss this vote as to express my deepest sympathy with the Chief Inspector, Mr. Edwards, in his serious illness. He is a most capable and painstaking officer. He was stricken down a few weeks ago, and I regret to say that he has not recovered from his illness as speedily as was expected and hoped. However, it is pleasing to note that he is making some progress towards recovery, and I am sure it is the wish of every hon. member that he will be speedily restored to good health.

I notice that the amount appropriated is practically the same as was spent last year. It is satisfactory to hear the Minister's assurance that the inspection of schools will not be impaired. I appreciate the position that the Minister finds himself in so far as the finances are concerned; and, although there is some small saving, I am pleased to have the hon. gentleman's assurance that the work of inspection, which is so vitally necessary to maintain the higher standard, will not be impaired.

Item (Inspection) agreed to.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSPECTION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [3.25 p.m.]: I move—

“That £15,441 be granted for ‘Medical and Dental Inspection.’”

May I at the outset thank the hon. member for Logan for his references to Mr. Edwards, who, I am sure, we all hope will soon be restored to health.

This vote shows a total reduction of £2,696, of which a reduction in salaries accounts for £2,197, and in "Contingencies" for £499. These reductions have been effected after the fullest consideration by the Government, which, on the recommendation of, and in association with, the Public Service Commissioner, has now in hand the reorganisation of these services generally.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [3.26 p.m.]: This is a phase of the department's activities which has been of excellent service, and I regret that the Government have seen fit to dispense with the services of two of the medical officers—Doctors Bean and Orchard. It has been stated during the debate on these Estimates that the health of the scholar is of paramount importance. I subscribe to that view. When it is considered that the Government have seen fit to go to a greater expense in increasing the number of scholarships, I can only come to the conclusion that they are neglecting the most important feature of the child's life—namely, his health—because they are impairing the efficiency of the department in not carrying out a very great social service for the benefit of the young life of the community. In their anxiety to economise, the Government might save money in a direction which is not so justifiable as the provision of funds to maintain the health of the children.

Mr. WILSON (*Fortitude Valley*) [3.29 p.m.]: I am sorry that financial exigencies have necessitated a reduction in this vote, because those who have been associated with the department know what valuable work has been carried out in this phase of the departmental activity. When I was Minister, we had a large number of letters complaining of the unfortunate position of many children in the western districts of Queensland who were suffering from blight. Dr. St. Vincent Welch was sent to inspect, and his report was the result of a great deal of time spent in the affected districts. The plight of the unfortunate children who were suffering from blight brought tears to the eyes of the strongest man. Physically perfect children with eyes gaping up to heaven, as it were, were a sad sight to behold. I acted on the recommendation of Dr. St. Vincent Welch, and had copies of his report prepared. As a result the ophthalmic hostel was established at Windsor for the treatment of blight and other eye diseases. When the matter was submitted to Cabinet, the Labour Government immediately approved of the establishment of that hostel. That hostel is doing a very great service. As a matter of fact, on account of the number of boys and girls who go in and out of the institution, the expenses in connection with the blind, deaf, and dumb institution have been considerably lessened. The hostel has carried out a splendid work. I am very sorry indeed to know that some of the dental inspection work has been cut out. I suppose that, with the depression existing at the present time, it is difficult to carry on the work.

The travelling dental clinic was appreciated greatly by the children in the rail centres in the West. We also had a motor car fitted up as a dental clinic, and we utilised the correspondence school and 4QG to let the children in the outposts of civili-

sation know where the dental motor would be at certain times, so that they could come along and be treated. The adults paid a small fee, and that reduced the expenses of the clinic. During the time that I was Minister there was no department in the whole ramifications of the Government that gave more assistance to the people outback than the Department of Public Instruction. I can only speak in the highest terms of Mr. McKenna, the Under Secretary, and also the Chief Inspector, Mr. Edwards, and all other officers in the department. I never wish to be associated with a finer set of officers. The late Mr. Wearne was mentioned by the hon. member for Toowoong. In Mr. Wearne we had a very highly qualified officer. I cannot speak too highly of other officers connected with the technical colleges. I could not allow this vote to pass without making a few comments, and I am very sorry that we cannot keep the vote up to the amount appropriated in former years.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [3.34 p.m.]: We all remember the drastic criticisms levelled at the Government last year by hon. members sitting opposite at the reduction in this vote. I am not criticising the reduction, because I realise the impossibility of keeping up social services at the level that existed when things were prosperous and there was plenty of money available. But we know that hon. members opposite, for party political purposes, went throughout the length and breadth of the country and criticised the Government of the time up hill and down dale for doing exactly what the Labour Government are doing to-day. That is the hypocrisy of the whole thing. If we had cut down the vote for medical and dental assistance in the way this vote has been cut down, I can imagine how we would have been howled at by hon. members on the other side. We would have been told: "Why should not the wealthy people in this State be taxed in order to get sufficient money to allow these poor children to be attended to?" We have been told that time after time in this Chamber; but, when hon. members opposite come in as a Government, they realise the difficulties of the financial position, and they have to curtail their expenses and do exactly what we had to do.

Mr. O'KEEFE: The electors made you pretty sick.

Mr. MOORE: The electors were just as ignorant as, or probably more ignorant, than hon. members opposite who sat on this side last year. We all recognise that when a Government gets in it has to accept its responsibilities and keep its expenditure within its revenue. We all recognise that.

Mr. GLEDSON: You did not recognise that in 1929 when you promised £2,000,000 and 10,000 jobs.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member has only room for one idea in his head. It has been there for three years, and now he has his own promise to provide £2,500,000 to redeem. It is all very fine to say at the beginning of a session that we are going to do this and we have carried out that. The hon. member has three years in which to carry out all the promises of his party. Very likely at the end of three years we shall find that the absurd promises made by the hon. member for Ipswich and very many other hon. members opposite cannot be redeemed. We are

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facing a position that is extraordinarily difficult. Many members on the other side do not seem to realise it. Anybody who has studied the financial position and the movement of prices and the amount of money coming into the country, understands that Governments are compelled, by force of circumstances, to reduce expenditure exactly as Mr. Scullin was forced to do, and the only thing to which I am objecting is the criticism levelled at the late Government for doing what the present Government find themselves compelled to do. In fact, the present Government find it necessary to curtail expenditure still further. It is time that the people outside were told the truth by both sides of the Chamber—that there is not sufficient money in this country to enable them to maintain the conditions which were possible three or four years ago.

Mr. GLEDSON: Is that an argument in favour of low wages?

Mr. MOORE: I do not know whether the hon. member agrees with the reduction. I do not, but I recognise that there is a necessity in this case, and that, just as Mr. Lyons said to a deputation the other day, "I can pay out only what you people are prepared to pay in," the people of the country have to pay for all these privileges of social service and education. For a long time we were able to borrow from people on the other side of the world just what we required, and we brought about a condition of affairs that we could not afford to continue any longer; and now we have to find the money out of our own earnings or pay it out of our own pockets. Everybody must recognise that; and the people ought to be told plainly and definitely that they cannot have many things to which they were accustomed in prosperous times. I do not suppose for one instance that the Secretary for Public Instruction would reduce this vote if he could avoid it. We found ourselves in exactly the same position; and we had to curtail expenditure, just as the Government find it necessary to-day. It was all very well for hon. members opposite, when in Opposition, to say, "We would not do that," and talk about the things they would do; but, if money is not available, those things cannot be done, and we have to make the best of it. We must give as much assistance to the people most in need of it as we can.

Mr. O'KEEFE: You gave the Deputy Commissioner of Taxes an increase of £100 a year the day before the election.

Mr. MOORE: I will not go into that. The hon. member's interjections are not honest. We have had experience of telegrams sent by the hon. member so that they would get in before ordinary people would know what they were getting. I am talking about the necessity for not misleading the people by telling them that they can continue to have what they had before, and then going back on it. It is only fair that the people should be told that they cannot afford these things, and that, while Australia is in her present position, we must curtail expenditure on many social activities until the people can again afford to pay for them. There is no doubt that to-day we are paying many people on an absurd scale, and that we are not getting value, and therefore, we have to curtail expenditure in directions in which it would do infinitely more good.

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At 3.40 p.m..

Mr. O'KEEFE (*Cairns*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. MOORE: I suppose that this expenditure returns greater value to the country than anything else. The health of the children is an important factor in that it enables them to assimilate the instruction given to them. If they are sick, they are kept back. It would be infinitely better to reduce the cost of education in other ways and provide the same facilities for medical and dental inspection and assistance.

Mr. W. T. KING: Can you suggest an item where that can be done?

Mr. MOORE: I could suggest half a dozen quite easily. This appears to be one of the most important from the point of view of the child. His health enables him to take advantage of the education provided for him. It is infinitely more important than the granting of extra scholarships. If the children are sick, a great deal of our money will be wasted—and, after all, as the vote is small, a great deal of curtailment would not have to be made elsewhere to maintain this vote at its previous level. I recognise that the financial position is most difficult and that expenditure has to be cut in every possible direction. We do not want to get into the position in which Mr. Scullin found himself—that, if things went on as they were, he would be able to pay only 12s. in the £.

Mr. W. T. KING: The Government are reducing expenditure by £220,000.

Mr. MOORE: According to the Budget, the expenditure is to be reduced by £220,000; but the evidences are to the effect that expenditure is increasing. We can only resort to the Treasury returns for the first three months as published in the press. I am sure that the hon. member for Maree, who is a legal man, would not accept the evidence put forward in this Chamber in support of the contention that expenditure was being reduced, when it must be quite patent to him that it is increasing.

Mr. W. T. KING: We have your goodwill to live on yet.

Mr. MOORE: We have shown our goodwill. We have endeavoured to advise the Government that they should curb their expenditure, and that they should remove the burdensome load of taxation from the people; otherwise there will be less money to spend with consequent greater unemployment. We have endeavoured to assist them generally; but they have not seen fit to accept our advice. The people will have to suffer the results of the legislation that is to be passed and of the extravagant expenditure which proceeds apace to-day. We cannot have our cake and eat it. If the Government are prepared to spend money in one direction in the purchase of votes, then those who have no votes—that is, the children—will have to suffer.

Mr. W. T. KING: You cannot substantiate that charge.

Mr. MOORE: Of course I can. The pages of "Hansard" for this session, the press reports, and the Treasury returns for the first three months of this financial year are full of substantiation. It is a mistake to curtail expenditure upon medical and dental

inspection when it is quite possible to save a small amount upon other items. It should not have been a very difficult task to save this small amount out of a vote involving over £1,000,000. It may be possible to give the same service with the reduced amount of money. I should imagine that, if the services of two doctors are dispensed with, the operations of this service must necessarily be restricted. I regard the item "Medical and Dental Inspection" as being the most important in the departmental vote. I appreciate the fact that cards are distributed amongst the parents by the school teachers pointing out what is best in the hygienic training of the children, but that is not sufficient. Medical and dental attention is required. The departmental doctors have been able to discover, and, perhaps, to remedy, many defects in the mouths of children, and in this way improve their digestion. It is essential that a child should enjoy good health if it is to give the maximum amount of attention to its school studies. It is a pity that this item should be reduced. However, that is a matter for the Government, and the country will have to put up with it. I have no desire to criticise the Government adversely. I recognise that the financial position is difficult; and I have no wish to emulate their example when they sat in opposition, when they complained that the action of the late Government in reducing the appropriation of this department was, in effect, an attack upon the workers and the children. Of course, that was not so. Our Government had to live within their income so far as it was possible, and the present Government will have to do the same. It is well that the people should realise that fact, and that in future they will not be led by ridiculous propaganda to believe that the financial position of the country warrants the maintenance of social services at the standard that prevailed during a time of alleged prosperity.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremner*) [3.47 p.m.]: I am sorry that I did not explain the vote more fully and thereby save the Leader of the Opposition a considerable amount of time. Certain factors compelled attention to be given to the item of "Medical and Dental Inspection." One of the factors was the death, in 1930, of Dr. R. T. Johnson, late ophthalmologist in charge of ophthalmic work among the school children in the remote western areas of the State and of the treatment of serious cases in the ophthalmic hostel in Brisbane, and the consequential disarrangement of departmental plans for the carrying on and extension of this important activity. Dr. Ethel Pitt, who had been assisting Dr. Johnson to an extent, carried on the work after his death, but has since resigned. There was also the resignation of a dental inspector at the beginning of 1932. Those breaks in the service occurred before the Labour Government came into power. Then in May, 1932, the Commonwealth Government notified that it was discontinuing its grant in aid of the hookworm campaign, and the nurses engaged in that work were transferred to the sub-department of Health in the Home Department; therefore, the Department of Public Instruction has been relieved of the payment of those nurses, which accounts for a fair amount of the reduction to which the Leader of the Opposition has drawn attention.

As these things have happened, it is necessary for the department to lay down a policy for the future. Briefly, this is the policy. Certain nurses hitherto directly controlled by the department have been transferred to the sub-department of Health, Home Secretary's Department, which will in future maintain and control the hookworm campaign on behalf of this State. Then the number of full-time officers, exclusive of an ophthalmologist and of the staff of the Wilston Ophthalmic Hostel, necessary for the efficient working of the medical and dental services of the department, will be twenty-three. This number will include one chief medical officer, one chief dental inspector, fourteen dental officers, and seven school nurses. The medical and dental branch of the department will be reorganised and readjusted to provide for—

- (1) Operation of the State schools' nursing service simultaneously in the Southern, Central, and Northern sections of the State as separate from the operations of the hookworm campaign.
- (2) Medical review of certain cases of deficiency reported by the schools' nursing service.

We intend to appoint a surgeon to fill the position of ophthalmologist in charge of ophthalmic work, vice Dr. Johnson, deceased, to take charge of the Wilston Ophthalmic Hostel.

There will be a continuance of the operations of the travelling dental clinics, both by rail and road. That being so, the inroads which hon. members fear have been made on the medical and dental services are not an actuality. We believe that, by a proper reorganisation of the various staffs, we shall be able to give as efficient service as has been given in the past. I honestly believe that will be so. No doubt, as opportunity offers, the medical and dental services will be expanded.

It is just as well for me to mention that the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition is quite beside the mark, as the Estimates for this Department did not come before this Committee either in 1930 or 1931.

MR. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [3.52 p.m.]: I was aware that certain nurses in the department had been seconded for duty in connection with the hookworm campaign, now controlled by the Home Department, but at the same time I hope that the service will be kept up to its fullest capacity.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is still being kept up to its working capacity.

MR. R. M. KING: I hope so. I hope that the transfer of these nurses to the Home Department is not going to interfere with the work carried on by the nurses engaged in the medical and dental inspection.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Not in the slightest.

MR. R. M. KING: The dental inspector who resigned was a very efficient officer, and, if that position is not filled, its service to the community will suffer. I hope that the Minister will see that someone is appointed in his place. So far as Dr. Johnson is concerned, the department carried on without filling his position for some considerable

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time. I believe that Dr. Ethel Pitt, one of the staff, resigned to go to the Old Country.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: She has been away for twelve months.

Mr. R. M. KING: I hope that her position will be filled.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is being filled.

Mr. R. M. KING: I desire to supplement the remarks of the hon. members for Windsor and Fortitude Valley about the wonderful work that is being done at the ophthalmic hostel. The Government who established that hostel did the right thing. I had the privilege of making a tour of the western districts, accompanied by the Director of Education, with the sole purpose of seeing some of the school children who were suffering from blight and other ophthalmic troubles. I had previously been out there years ago and had seen the condition that some of these children were in. I also saw the deplorable neglect on the part of parents in not looking after their children when afflicted with ophthalmic troubles. I was very anxious to see if our work had been effective, and I accordingly made an inspection to the West—to Charleville, Quilpie, Cunnamulla, St. George, etc., where I saw the ravages of the blight amongst the children, and became more than ever convinced that the establishment of the ophthalmic hostel was warranted. The manner in which that hostel is conducted must meet with the approval of every person who knows anything about it. It would be a good idea if some hon. members visited the hostel. I have seen children come there in a deplorable state owing to eye trouble. Looking at them there appeared to be no hope of their recovery, but with careful dieting and medical attention most of them fully recover. The best attention and most sympathetic treatment are given by the doctors, matron, and nurses. The children are quite at home; they love being there, and are really sorry to leave, although it means going home. The strongest affection is felt by them for those who are responsible for the wonderful treatment they receive. The Country Women's Association is doing a great service in meeting children coming to and returning from the hostel. I have been able to interest the Country Womens' Association at Coorparoo in this hostel, and the members are now devoting their attention to helping in the good work that is being done. I had the pleasure of attending a Christmas treat that was given at the hostel, and I can testify to the splendid co-operation of the administrative staff of the department, and also the hostel staff, for their efforts to make the children happy. The hostel is doing a great work, and the Government of the day were well advised when they accepted the recommendation of those responsible for its establishment. I congratulate Dr. St. Vincent Welch on the splendid work he is doing.

Item (Medical and Dental Inspection) agreed to.

QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [3.58 p.m.]: I move—

“That £7,000 be granted for ‘Queensland University.’”

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [3.59 p.m.]: Before this vote goes through I desire to

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make a few remarks, not on the question of the teaching at the university, but on the wide view that the Queensland University takes on current problems. I think the sending of Dr. A. C. V. Melbourne to inquire into the trade possibilities of Japan and China will be a very great assistance, not only to Queensland but to Australia generally. In his report the Public Service Commissioner points out the reason for sending Dr. Melbourne to the East, and shows that the University immediately agreed when the suggestion was put forward that an independent and neutral authority might investigate the position. The report which has been presented by Dr. Melbourne is an exceptionally valuable one; indeed, it is one of the most valuable we have ever had dealing with the possibilities of Australian trade with Japan and China. Dr. Melbourne has shown the avenues in which trade may be increased. That is one of the big factors we have to consider in connection with the question of marketing our primary products instead of being dependent on one or two commodities. The only thing I am afraid of is that the report has not been distributed widely enough, and that not enough people are taking advantage of the information contained in it. It is not at all a technical report. It was written for business men and for the information of the general community, and I am satisfied that the information contained therein will not only benefit Queensland but will be of benefit to the whole of Australia.

The university is also taking up the question of the amalgamation of the different laboratories. The select committee consists of Dr. W. N. Robertson, Vice-Chancellor of the university, Dr. Lockhart Gibson, Professor Alcock, Professor Parnell, Dr. Melbourne, Professor Richards, and Professor Goddard. The select committee was given power to co-opt such person or persons as it may deem necessary for the purposes of the inquiry. The committee was appointed to inquire into the question of evolving a unified plan of future development, the securing of a greater measure of co-ordination, the preventing, as far as possible, of avoidable overlapping, the securing of a more efficient control of expenditure, and the securing of greater efficiency. When the university is taking into consideration all these matters, it shows that it is not only interested in the teaching of children, but is taking a wide view, which will be of benefit to the students themselves. When you have the senate and the professorial staff of the university doing these things, it shows that they are not entirely centred on education; and the university is to be congratulated on the attitude it has taken up and on sending Professor Melbourne to the East and also on its general outlook towards problems that affect production in Queensland. It shows that the university is a people's university, and not merely an academic institution. I think the university is doing very fine work, and it is just as well that it should be recognised. It does not want any pat on the back, and it does not want any approbation, because the staff recognise that what they are doing is in the interests of the country as a whole. It is a very good thing that the university is taking such an interest in industry, and is doing something not only for the benefit of Queensland but very possibly for the benefit of the whole of Australia.

Item (Queensland University) agreed to.

TRAINING COLLEGE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [4.5 p.m.]: I move—

“That £17,815 be granted for ‘Training College.’”

This vote provides for the salaries of the teachers and office staff and general maintenance of the training college, and for allowances, railway fares, etc., to both senior and junior teachers who at present hold scholarships at the college, and on account of the senior and junior scholarships to be awarded from January, 1933. There is a slight increase due to adjustments in the staff and to the fact that one of the junior officers reached the age of 21, and is now paid the basic wage.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [4.6 p.m.]: Some divergent views have been expressed by hon. members in regard to the training college. I say without the slightest hesitation that I look upon it as a necessary part of our educational system. I am hoping that, when finances improve, we shall be able to send more students to the college to be trained as teachers for the future. It was a splendid idea to establish the college, because the children can have their education only once, and, if they miss that chance, they miss it for all time. If they are taught by teachers who have no qualifications for teaching, their prospects are very much less than otherwise. Whilst the old system was sufficient for its time—it was the only system we had, and it worked very well and the old teachers who never had the advantages of to-day did their work very well—we must not forget the fact, which I have heard expressed by the Director of Education, that we cannot apply nineteenth century methods to twentieth century requirements. Whilst one Government may not have done a certain thing simply because it was never mooted in their time, another Government may be able to develop an idea that is of distinct advantage to the children. That is the way the world progresses. It is the way the Queensland Department of Public Instruction progresses. What may have been sufficient in the past is not sufficient for the requirements of the future. We have to live up to the times and adapt our methods to the needs of the present. We have to discard antediluvian methods.

The teachers' training college is centralised in Brisbane. Some in authority think that it would be wise to decentralise it, and have branches in different parts of the State. I am rather inclined to think otherwise, because I look forward to the time when it will be an adjunct or part and parcel of our University, so that teachers will be able to get diplomas of teaching there. Some people say the old methods are as good as the new, but new methods are constantly being introduced. How would the old people have regarded the kindergarten? Did they ever think about opportunity schools for sub-normal children? Did they know anything about the Montessori or the Dalton system? All these new ideas have been put into effect by Governments as a result of conferences and suggestions throughout Australia and elsewhere. They open up new avenues in the education of children, methods which do not consist in driving learning into children with the help of the cane or other punishment, but of developing their mental powers and powers of observation so that they will be

more efficient than under the old methods. The department is quite right to bring these things before the Government of the day. New systems are constantly being suggested by those charged with the great responsibility of providing for the education of the young. I was reading a very interesting article in “The Journal of the National Education Association,” an American publication, in reference to teachers' colleges, from which I take this extract:—

“It is much more difficult to observe the mistakes of the crude teacher than it is the errors of the ignorant physician. The teacher does not have the undertaker checking up on him, but the mistakes in the realm of the mind are no less disastrous. Who knows how fatal a wrong attitude may prove; what baneful results may follow the wrong habit; how expensive and imperfect skill may be; and how damnable the wrong ideal?”

“Yet these are the injuries constantly being inflicted upon plastic minds by those who may know the subject-matter and not know how to teach. A high quality of teaching skill is probably one of the most difficult arts to attain in the whole gamut of human achievement. How then can the public expect teaching skill to be acquired in any but a college whose business it is to perfect this skill in its students? To the teachers' colleges of America is gradually being assigned the task of the preparation of the practitioners of that profession which has the greatest possibility of affecting human welfare. The public, as attested by the Acts of Legislatures in establishing and maintaining teachers' colleges, is committed to the idea that teachers henceforth shall be educated in professional schools of college level. And very shortly, even within our lifetime, you are going to demand that every teacher of children be a college graduate. Presently, we are going to abandon the old notion which has so long been current that anyone who has a limited education can teach little children. The public will find out, as the profession has already discovered, that it really takes more teaching ability to teach young children than older ones.”

That sums up the position very well indeed. The children are entitled to the best education that they can possibly get. Under the old system teachers held the opinion that, if a child did not readily understand, the only way to make it understand was to impose additional punishment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am sorry to say that that opinion is still held by some of the teachers.

Mr. R. M. KING: It is gradually disappearing from our educational system. Teachers are now endeavouring to understand the psychology of the child. No good can be achieved merely by punishing a child because it has done something wrong. That is only appealing to its fear and to its timidity, and does not overcome the difficulty. We should endeavour to ascertain the cause. The teachers' training college is doing very fine work in carrying out the new and beneficial ideas, and the teachers are gaining knowledge that they are afterwards to impart to the pupils. The young

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mind is very plastic and very impressionable, and furnishes a very fertile ground upon which to operate educationally. I am a very strong believer in the teachers' training college, and I express the fervent hope that it will be able to do still greater work. We depend upon this institution to provide the right type of teacher to train the children to become fine, useful citizens.

Mr. WILSON (*Fortitude Valley*) [4.15 p.m.]: I entirely reciprocate the remarks of the hon. member for Logan. I was deeply interested in this matter during my occupancy of the ministerial position in this department. Some hon. members opposite have complained about the alleged wasteful expenditure by this department, and others have referred in this connection to the teachers' training college. I regard this institution as a kind of power-house from which we draw our educational energy. During 1930 and 1931 the attendance at the college was forty odd; but during the time that I was Secretary for Public Instruction the attendance numbered 180, and it was the ambition of the department to increase the number to 200. In the days that are gone pupil teachers were frequently appointed to take charge of schools in the Western portions of the State, but a different system operates to-day. We are able to obtain the cream of the rising generation for the teaching staff of the State. I recollect the visit of the Empire Parliamentary Delegation to Queensland, and it was with pride that I overheard the remarks of three or four members of that delegation outside the Belle Vue Hotel in George street when the children were proceeding to the Central Technical College. They were discussing the fact that they had been informed that the climate of Queensland was hot and unbearable, and I overheard them say that the children on their way to the technical college were the finest stamp of boys and girls that they had seen during the whole of their tour.

The training college is under the supervision of Mr. Morris, and contains as fine a type of boy and girl as one would wish to see. After the applicants pass their examination for admission to the college, they are submitted to a personal inspection by the principal. He has a heart to heart talk with them for the purpose of detecting any outward sign which might unfit them for the position of teachers. Many a boy or girl might be able to pass any examination and still be unsuitable for a teacher. They may possess an impediment of speech—a lisp, or some other disadvantage—which can be readily detected by personal contact. If that interview is successful, the boy or girl is passed on for medical examination. If that is successful, entrance is gained to the college. They must run the gamut of a series of examinations before finally entering the college. One could only expect the best type of teacher to be produced from such a college. I strongly advise any hon. member who has not paid a visit to the college to do so.

Mr. BRAND: There were wonderful teachers under the old system.

Mr. WILSON: Through the establishment of this college, we have some very fine material to draw upon to staff our many fine educational establishments. Some hon. members condemned the college and said that it was costing too much. I maintain that the college has justified itself by the class of teacher it has produced, and the results

which have been obtained. We shall never be short of teachers of the very highest standard while the present system is in vogue; and in this respect the schools in the country will benefit equally with those in the city in securing the cream of our young men and women as teachers for our boys and girls.

Much has been said concerning the correspondence system of education. Several hon. members seem to cast a certain amount of suspicion on the system, and to suggest that something is being done which is hopelessly wrong. They have also said that the Government were spending far too much on education generally. It is the birthright of every boy and girl to get the best education they can possibly receive, especially if they display intelligence above the normal. We should not place any bar in the way of any boy or girl who desires to take full advantage of the complete system of education provided by this State. I trust that the Minister will see that this great privilege of the boys and girls will be preserved, and that the teachers' training college will be maintained at its present standard of efficiency.

Item—(Training College) agreed to.

QUEENSLAND AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremor*) [4.22 p.m.]: I move—

“That £17,628 be granted for ‘Queensland Agricultural High School and College.’”

The vote asked for shows a total reduction of £1,346 in comparison with 1931-32. The small reduction in the vote for salaries is due mainly to the appointment of a junior typist in lieu of the senior typist, resigned. The vote “Contingencies,” which provides for wages of farm, stock, and other employees, equipment, fodder, fuel, repairs, tools, provisions, railway fares, office costs, etc., in various sections of the institution shows a reduction, in common with all services, of £1,293. In view of the financial position, provision has been made only for the ordinary requirements of the institution and the carrying on of its essential services during the current financial year.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [4.24 p.m.]: I want to take this opportunity to reply to the criticism indulged in by the Minister in connection with my remarks on the Queensland Agricultural High School and College, and also in regard to my remarks concerning rural training and education. The Minister, intentionally or otherwise, based his remarks on a misconception of my statements. There are none so blind as those who definitely refuse to see; and the remarks of the Minister this afternoon show that he is completely self-satisfied. He is apparently convinced that everything is going along smoothly. That, however, is not the best attitude to take up. There is room for improvement, particularly in the education supplied to those who will follow rural pursuits. The bald statement of the Minister that 75 per cent. of the pupils at the Queensland Agricultural High School and College return to the land means nothing to me. What I am desirous of ensuring is that the pupils will return to the land and make a success of their lives. Naturally most of

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them will return to the land, because in the majority of cases they are the sons of settlers on the land. The point is what sort of time does the old dad get at home if he cannot buy the machinery and other appliances that the boys have been educated to use at the college? That is where the difficulty comes in. I am like tens of thousands of old settlers who have not had the advantage of a superior education. I have had to fight my way through life; but, if we are not satisfied that the best is being done for the young people, whether the educational system is responsible for it or not, the matter should be inquired into. Too many of the educated boys at the present time are prepared to lean on someone else to get a living. Whenever I have the opportunity to do so, I appeal that we should try to give the boys the necessary understanding of the position. It is not only the passing of an educational standard in an agricultural college or anywhere else that is important; the boys must be encouraged along lines that will make for their later success. It is in that direction that I have the feeling that the Queensland Agricultural High School and College is not doing sufficient. It is all very well to say that a great percentage of the pupils return to the land; but let us examine what success they make in comparison with the boy who has been trained on the land in a practical way and has cost the State no more than the cost of a primary education.

To insinuate that in making these remarks I am suggesting that the college should be abolished is entirely wrong. If the institution is not doing what it should do in the interests of the State, then we should carefully consider the matter from every angle with the object of placing it on a better footing. I repeat that this college should be under the control of the Department of Agriculture, seeing that its function is to train boys to make a success of agricultural pursuits. I have been told that when it was under the control of that department it was not so successful as it is to-day. If that is the case, I can only say that there is something wrong with the officers of the Department of Agriculture if they cannot administer such an institution in the interests of providing an agricultural training.

The Minister must know that it is not only a question of imparting knowledge. We have to inculcate in them an independent, self-reliant spirit, so that they will not lean on the Government when they get into difficulties. I do not depreciate the value of education. To do so would be foolish; nevertheless, the present system encourages a large number of well educated people to come to the large centres of population and attempt to get jobs under all sorts of systems. That is to the advantage neither of the State nor of the persons concerned. Let us inculcate in the boys a spirit that will enable them to establish themselves with a minimum of assistance from the State and from their parents. I repeat what I said the other day, that many of the old pioneers are left on their farms while their boys have drifted away to the cities, not because they could not make a living on the land—because some of the land I refer to is of the best—but because conditions in the larger centres of population were more congenial. That is why I am speaking as I am to-day. I realise that this is the most serious question that we can discuss in this Chamber. If primary production is to save Australia, it is up to

us to encourage the young life of the State to turn their eyes in the direction of agriculture. I do not think there is any other way to do it but by training the boys along these lines so that, when they have to fend for themselves, they will understand the practical side. I do not make any bones about saying that many of our highly educated men—professors, economists, and others—are of little value, because they surround themselves with a well-satisfied air—"We know, and the other fellow doesn't! We have had an education, and the ordinary rank and file who have not had the same opportunity should be guided by us." That is an unfortunate attitude to take up. I do not say that is the attitude taken up in every case; nevertheless that attitude is taken up in some cases. Such advice may often be wrong, therefore, we should be careful to see that the person who is receiving education is guided along the right lines. I hope the Minister will not attempt, for party political purposes, to misconstrue statements made on this side of the Chamber in regard to such an important matter as education.

Item (Queensland Agricultural High School and College) agreed to.

ENDOWMENT, FEES, AND ALLOWANCES (SECONDARY EDUCATION).

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [4.34 p.m.]: I move—

"That £54,800 be granted for 'Endowment, Fees, and Allowances (Secondary Education).'"

This vote covers the additional endowment to grammar schools, and scholarships and allowances to secondary schools. We discussed this matter fairly fully on the vote for "Chief Office," and I do not think there is any need to discuss it any further.

Mr. R. M. KING: Have you nothing to say about the Women's College?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The Women's College is a residential college, and is supported by private subscriptions. The college in the past received a subsidy, but I believe it is now fairly well established, and does not require any further subsidy.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [4.35 p.m.]: Does the hon. gentleman know of his own knowledge that the college does not require a subsidy?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: There is no vote for the Women's College provided in the Estimates, so that the hon. member will not be in order in discussing it.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [4.36 p.m.]: I understand that since some of these amounts spent in endowment, fees, and allowances are spent in respect of the agricultural high school and college at Gatton, I shall be in order in making some reference to that institution. I notice that an amount of nearly £8,000 is required for wages, in addition to the salaries of the teaching staff. That is an enormous sum of money for an institution such as this, especially as the students themselves do some work.

Mr. SPARKES: They do not do any work.

Mr. DEACON: That is what I want to find out. Do they do any actual work? While the Minister gets that information, I would like to point out that the students go there to learn, and they cannot learn

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farming unless they are prepared to carry out a full day's farming work. They cannot learn by spending a short time at the job. They must be trained in the work they have to do afterwards as farmers; but it does not seem possible that they have to do much work if £8,000 is paid in wages.

At 4.39 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. DEACON: On an ordinary farm of that size a farmer would not pay a fraction of £8,000.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is speaking on the wrong vote. The question before the Committee is the vote for "Endowment, Fees, and Allowances (Secondary Education)."

Mr. DEACON: I understand that some of these allowances are paid in respect of scholarships taken out at Gatton College.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the vote. I cannot allow him to wander all over the place.

Mr. DEACON: Some of the scholarships in respect of which these allowances are paid are taken out at Gatton College. The students go there to be taught how to work on the land, and, if they are not taught, they do not get a full education.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [4.41 p.m.]: The hon. member ought to know that there are certain periods for instruction, and that farming work must go on nevertheless. The hon. member must also know that it takes a certain amount of time to do farming work. It would be well for all hon. members to visit Gatton College and see it for themselves.

Mr. SPARKES: I have seen it, and I have never seen the boys working too much.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member has seen them working, but perhaps not from 6 o'clock in the morning till 6 o'clock at night.

Mr. SPARKES: Nor a quarter of that time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: A certain amount of time is required to give the boys agricultural education; they must spend that time in study. I am prepared to give the information privately to the hon. member for Cunningham, but I am not going to reopen a discussion on the Queensland agricultural high school and college.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [4.42 p.m.]: The student at the Queensland agricultural high school and college must learn to do the actual work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He does, too.

Mr. DEACON: He cannot do that merely by being engaged upon the actual work for an hour or two. He must be engaged upon the work for the whole of the day and for weeks. If he is to be a success upon his own farm, he must learn to do the actual work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am not going to initiate a full debate upon the item "Queensland Agricultural High School and College." That item has been agreed to by the Committee.

Item (Endowment, Fees, and Allowances (Secondary Education) agreed to.

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STATE SCHOOLS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [4.44 p.m.]: I move—

"That £1,099,986 be granted for 'State Schools.'"

This vote is the main vote of the department, and is required to meet all expenditure on account of salaries and contingencies in connection with primary, intermediate, and State high schools and the many services which are enumerated in the Estimates. The vote shows a total reduction of £20,700, of which the reduction in salaries is £9,724, and in "Contingencies" £10,976.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Vanango*) [4.45 p.m.]: I very much regret that the appropriation for this year in respect of "Home Project Clubs" and "Agricultural Education, Rural Schools," has been reduced. Politicians and leaders of thought generally have continually proclaimed that, if Australia is to be saved, she can be saved only by means of her primary production. Despite those oft-repeated proclamations, the Government have seen fit to make the same proportionate reduction in these items as in the other items of the Estimates of this department. The home project clubs have been encouraged during the past two or three years, and they provide a class of education that admirably fits their members to become efficient sons of the soil. They develop initiative in the young members to become associated with the land. The members of the clubs vie with one another in keen competition in endeavouring to secure the prizes awarded periodically for their exhibits. This training creates the essential sentiment amongst those who are pledged to a life upon the land.

Everyone with a knowledge of the rural schools speaks in glowing terms of the beneficial rural education that is imparted to the boys and girls commencing a life upon the land. The education is beneficial in the extreme, and enables the students to follow rural pursuits in after life with a lesser degree of drudgery than, perhaps, hitherto obtained. The amount provided for these items should have been maintained, and greater economies effected in other sections of the department. The Government are failing in their duty to the country people in reducing these items. Again I express my utmost regret that a reduction should be made in respect of items that really supply the lifeblood of rural development.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [4.48 p.m.]: Like the Leader of the Opposition, I realise that we must expect a reduction in certain votes. It is a question, not of what we would like, but of what we can afford. During the election campaign my Labour opponent, when at Gayndah, took great exception to the boys and girls attending the rural school there selling small articles which they made themselves, because, he contended, by doing so they entered into competition with business people. The results of these sales went to swell the funds of the school. I have been wondering whether that is a reason for a reduction in the appropriation for home project clubs. I would like some assurance from the Minister in that respect.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*) [4.50 p.m.]: I, too, regret the reduction in this vote. I think some alternative could be suggested. Before reducing this vote the

department might have given some consideration to cutting down the vote on the previous item. Such a reduction would have been infinitely preferable. In the previous item we had a number of men provided for at £250 a year. Seeing that the general trend of things is in the direction of helping rural instruction, it would have been very much better to increase this vote. There are men in the various rural districts who would be quite ready to lend a hand to the department in providing rural instruction. I have already spoken of the advantages of the State High School and the Intermediate School at Warwick. The Intermediate School will shortly be in full operation. I have spoken to the Mayor of Warwick, who has assured me that the Warwick Town Council will provide any accommodation necessary in Queen's Park for the purpose of enabling the children to get rural instruction. Further, I can put my hand on a number of men who have been successful in agricultural pursuits who are patriotic enough to lend the Government a helping hand in order to make the education of these boys effective for rural work. If this suggestion is acted upon by the department, it will find a response not only in my district but in other districts which will be surprising.

The hon. member for Nanango did not emphasise too strongly the high importance of rural instruction and the necessity of paying greater attention to it. Avenues of work are becoming less and less in many directions. Here is an opening. The Government are giving minute attention to land settlement. It is known that they have an idea of carrying out some system of irrigation which will enable settlers to engage in intense cultivation. Our boys could then enter on that work in its true and active form. Effective work can be done by the department if it lays itself out to secure that sympathetic support for rural education which is available.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [4.54 p.m.]: I would point out to hon. members that the Estimates show the appropriation for 1931-32 and the appropriation asked for this financial year. There is sometimes a difference between the appropriation—the amount voted—and what is actually spent. That applies to rural schools, where £4,492 was actually spent last year. That was less than the amount appropriated. This year we are proposing to spend at least as much as was spent last year. There will be no reduction.

With reference to the home project clubs, I am pleased that the hon. member for Nanango has drawn attention to the matter. It would be very serious to interfere with the efficiency of these clubs in any way whatever. The Estimates show that there were three organisers provided for last year and two this year; the reduction is due to the fact that one of the organisers is at present taking a special course in agriculture which will fit him the better for this work. His place is being taken by another officer whose salary will be paid out of the "Chief Office" vote; thus, there is no reduction in the number of men engaged in this work, nor will there be any reduction in the amount expended on rural schools. I am pleased that hon. members are keen in this matter, because the department has forged ahead in this special phase of its activities.

Mr. TOZER (*Gympie*) [4.56 p.m.]: I notice that this vote shows a reduction of £20,700 compared with the appropriation last year. The Minister has referred to one particular item I had in mind—that of home project clubs, in which there is a reduced appropriation of £320.

I notice also a reduction of £295 for an itinerant teacher, and a reduction of £415 in "Contingencies." Was the work of the itinerant teacher unsatisfactory?

A reduced appropriation is asked for in connection with provisional schools. That is a matter to which I referred on the Estimates of another department, when I was reminded that this was the appropriate vote on which to refer to the matter. I have in mind the Monkland State School at Gympie. This is a building 50 feet by 20 feet, which had a wing or a T piece also 50 feet by 20 feet. The recent tornado experienced in the Gympie district blew off the roof of the wing, leaving only the uprights and sides standing. The department intend to dismantle that wing and carry on with the one room, which is expected to accommodate 125 pupils. My information is that 105 pupils attend the school, although the average attendance is stated to be ninety-five. I think the department should provide the increased accommodation, particularly as the hot weather will soon be with us, and is with us for nine months of the year. It is urged that the floor space necessary for each child is 8 square feet, but in considering that the department apparently does not regard the forms and desks, which take up a good deal of space. Moreover, it is not conducive to comfort or to efficiency to conduct five classes in such a restricted area. The furniture most certainly reduces the floor space available for each pupil. The Monkland School was a much bigger school some years ago, but it only requires mining to be encouraged there again for the number of pupils to increase. A proposition was put before the Mines Department to unwater what is known as the Scottish Gympie mine, which adjoins the Monkland School on the Gympie Goldfield area. If the mine is unwatered the whole of the Monkland will go ahead, and it will then be necessary to put an extra wing on the school for the accommodation of the pupils.

I also spoke previously in connection with the One-mile School, and I would again like to bring that question before the Minister. That work is necessary, and should be done, as there are sufficient pupils attending the school.

In regard to provisional schools, the people show their bona fides when they actually provide the ground and the building; and all they ask is that the department shall supply a teacher and furniture. When the people show their bona fides to that extent, the department should make an effort to comply with their wishes, as the amount required would not be very great. The teacher is not paid very much, and the furniture usually supplied is of very small value.

I notice that it is intended to close the school at Bell's Bridge. The average attendance at that school has fallen simply because a farmer in the district with a numerous family shifted into another locality, which reduced the number of pupils attending the school. It has been

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suggested that the remaining pupils should be taught through the correspondence school. That might be all right if one of the parents had been a school teacher; but the ordinary miner in the district has had no chance of an education such as the younger generation get, and so is not qualified to help his children through the correspondence school. Some of them have explained to me that they would be only too willing to help if they had the qualifications; but they say they did not have the advantage of an education. Some of the miners came from the old country, and some of them cannot even read or write. They have educated themselves to the extent that they can sign their names, and some of them can read print, but that is all. It is a hardship if the school, which has been in existence for some time, is closed down simply because the average attendance has been reduced. When members of the present Government were in opposition, we know how bitterly they attacked us if we reduced any of these Estimates. It seems strange to find that the Estimates presented by hon. members opposite show a reduction on ours. When they went to the country, they said we had done some awful things and had cut down these votes; and they told the people what they would do if they were returned to power; but now, owing to the same circumstances as those which operated in our time, they have cut down our Estimates. It seems to me, therefore, that they practically obtained their seats by false pretences. Ultimately, no doubt, they will ask the electors to recognise that, owing to the financial position, they could not carry out their promises.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [5.7 p.m.]: I did not quite understand what the Minister said in regard to home project clubs. Is there to be a reduction in the expenditure in that direction?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: An ordinary school teacher will do some of the work, but his salary does not appear in this vote.

Mr. SPARKES: There is no reduction in the money to be spent on the clubs?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No.

Mr. SPARKES: I am very glad indeed, because they do a wonderful amount of good. Had there been any reduction, I would have suggested that one or two of the forty-three men who are working on the 3,000 acre. at Gatton College might be cut out in preference. It is ridiculous to say that forty-three men are needed to work such an area. I have not half that amount of labour on my place. It does not leave much room for the boys to work.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [5.9 p.m.]: It is wonderful to notice how hon. members on the other side have altered their point of view. When on this side of the Chamber in the last Parliament and during the election campaign they raised Cain because members of the Government had cut down expenditure. Now they say, "You must take into account the economic position we are in." We say that they knew the position before the election, but they had nothing to say about it then. They still blame us, but say that we should sympathise with them. It is about time they recognised the diffi-

culties the Moore Government had to face when they were in office.

Mr. O'KEEFE: How do you suggest we should meet the difficulty?

Mr. R. M. KING: The hon. member for Cairns might go to school and learn these things from the children. Very often "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings cometh wisdom," and the hon. member might learn a little if his mind were plastic enough to absorb it.

During an earlier discussion the hon. member for Ipswich complained that many of the 1,865 scholarship winners who obtained approved passes were not able to take out their scholarships. I pointed out that there were high schools, and he said that very few of the children were able to take advantage of their scholarships there. Let me tell him that 95 per cent. of them were able to take advantage of their scholarships at the high schools. There are thirteen high schools in Queensland in addition to six other approved schools. That is an effective reply to the hon. member. It is absurd to contend that the children were deprived of the advantages of their approved passes, or that they suffered by the reduction in the number of scholarships.

I want to add my testimony to the splendid work carried out by the home project clubs. Anyone who has seen the good work carried out by the pig clubs, the poultry clubs, and other clubs, will be very much impressed with what is being done. The children are, in effect, teaching the old man how to walk. Many of them are able to obtain a knowledge that will be of the utmost assistance to them in after life, and be of considerable benefit to their parents in their present occupations. The fathers are beginning to sit up and to take notice of what the children know. I have appreciated the businesslike way in which the work is carried out. When meetings are conducted, one of the young members occupies the chair, and the business is transacted in a way that does credit to them all. They are able to carry out milk and cream tests and to perform their duties in an efficient manner. I do not know much about the subject, but I am convinced that the children know what they are doing, and I dare say that their knowledge is of considerable benefit to their parents.

Very valuable assistance is given to the home project clubs and to their members by the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association. The farm lads are cared for in camp at the Exhibition grounds at the annual exhibition, and to some extent they take part in the show. They are invited to meals with leading citizens, and benefit considerably by the discussions that ensue at the meals. The boys thoroughly enjoy the experience, and go home much enriched in knowledge.

The hon. member for Port Curtis knows a good deal about this business, because he has been closely associated with the home project clubs. Probably he would have been much better engaged in continuing that association than in entering the new and precarious sphere of a politician. However, that is his lookout.

I regret exceedingly that the appropriation for rural schools has also been reduced.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The amount appropriated this year is the same as the amount expended last year.

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Mr. R. M. KING: I very much regret that the appropriation has not been increased. I regret that some of the money devoted for scholarships has not been utilised to provide additional rural education. It has been emphasised time and time again that more extensive rural education is very badly required. The Director of Education has expressed the opinion that boys attending country schools must be given every opportunity to develop their manual dexterity and become fitted for the environment that they are to enter later in life. At the rural schools they are able to obtain a knowledge of carpentry, sheet metal work, leather work, etc., and the girls are able to obtain a training in domestic science. This is very useful work, and assists to fit them for their after life.

After my experience of the primary correspondence classes during my term as Minister in charge of the department, I am more than ever convinced that the system is a very fine one indeed. The pupils of the primary correspondence classes have been successful in scholarship examinations and, indeed, have obtained meritorious marks. That is all the more remarkable when it is realised that many of the children have never seen the inside of a school. It is pleasing to know that many of the pupils propose to sit at the scholarship examinations during the ensuing year.

I regret that the report of the department is not yet to hand. I am sure that we should have been able to obtain information from it about the primary correspondence classes and the other activities of the department which would have enlightened us a good deal. We do know what a fine system the correspondence course is.

I want to express my sympathy with the Minister at being compelled to close up some country schools. I know that the position is difficult. I know as much as he does about it. The only difference between our viewpoints is that the Minister did not recognise the difficulty when he was sitting in opposition. I know that there are certain schools which, if kept open, would cost the department £25 per pupil per year. The children attending these schools can be educated at a cost of £5 per head per year under the correspondence system. It has been argued on many occasions that the great drawback to that system is the lack of the personal touch, but that, to a great extent, is maintained by the friendly and encouraging remarks which the examiner writes on the work submitted by the pupils. The pupil and the parent look for those personal remarks, and they make up to a large extent for the lack of personal touch. The correspondence system is fulfilling a want, and is a very good substitute for a local school. We know that it is not all that can be desired. It cannot be claimed that the pupils receive a maximum benefit under the system, nevertheless it has met with a tremendous amount of success. A good deal of the success of the system depends on the parent. A few parents, unfortunately, are not educated sufficiently to give the necessary assistance to their children, while some others are too occupied in their daily tasks to give that supervision which is necessary. When we weigh all these disadvantages with the many advantages, it must be admitted that the system is working remarkably well, and excellent results are being obtained. At one

time I was a strong supporter of the itinerant teacher; but experience has taught me that there is no comparison between the two systems. I am glad to know that this splendid system of educating our children in the sparsely settled districts is being continued and developed, and that the aim of the department is to improve it by experience.

I do not wish to deal with the subject of schools for aboriginals particularly, but I refer to it because of recent articles in the press. We have two schools for aboriginals. The question which the press has raised is the matter of aboriginal children mixing with white children in our State schools. I commend that matter to the Minister for his serious consideration.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [5.24 p.m.]: I personally appreciate the assistance rendered by the departmental heads to hon. members in connection with the school requirements of their electorates. I am sorry that the vote has been reduced. Advantage has been taken of every reduction made by the Moore Government. I am sure that, had the Moore Government been returned to office, at least the young teachers would have been given a salary increase, because they are on a very low salary now.

Mr. WATERS: It is a wonder you did not hold that opinion when you supported the Moore Government.

Mr. NIMMO: I notice that there are thirty-one fewer teachers this year, showing that the present Government are employing a reduced staff.

The Department of Public Instruction is one of which nothing wrong can be said. It is not the fault of the department that some of the product is not too good. No finer primary educational system exists in the world. That system produced a number of brilliant men prior to 1914, bearing eloquent testimony to the excellent foundations on which the system was built.

I desire to impress upon the Minister the necessity for carrying out some improvements at the Yeronga State school. Yeronga is one of the most up-to-date and progressive districts in the metropolis, and there are over 1,100 pupils attending the school. The accommodation is far from satisfactory, and, as a result, some children are suffering a great disability. I urge the Minister to provide accommodation in conformity with the number of pupils attending the school.

I also ask the Minister to take into consideration the building of a school at Tennyson, which is a suburb that has been sadly overlooked. Situated between Yeerongpilly and Corinda, it is a delightful place, but is a long distance from the nearest school. Children living in the district usually attend the Yeronga State school, and I am told that to get there they have to leave home at half-past seven in the morning.

Mr. WATERS: Do you believe that?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. NIMMO: We can imagine the position of a mother who has to cut up lunches to get the children away to school at that hour. In addition, if the child becomes ill during attendance at school, it is a long way to get a message to the mother. Further, quite a number of definite cases are

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known where children have been molested on the long journey to the school.

Mr. WATERS: Why didn't you fix it up when you were in the Government?

Mr. NIMMO: The hon. member is continually making interjections, and butting in where he has no right to.

Mr. WATERS: You're an old woman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Kelvin Grove to withdraw that expression. I will not allow interjections of that kind in the Chamber.

Mr. WATERS: I withdraw.

Mr. NIMMO: I do not think anyone takes very much notice of the hon. member.

Mr. WATERS: No one takes any notice of you.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. W. J. COPLEY interjected.

Mr. NIMMO: I would advise the hon. member to read the "Courier" and see what it has to say on the product of a secondary school.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. NIMMO: The Moore Government acquired land for the erection of a school at Tennyson, and the residents there, as a result of various functions held, have collected sufficient money to buy all the requisite school furniture. Plans were prepared for the school. I would urge the Minister to consider the matter, because this school is urgently needed. One point I might stress is that the children in the district have to cross the Fairfield road and another main road on their journey to the Yeronga State school, and we know that quite a number of accidents have occurred on that road. It is said that we value the life of every child in the State at £2,000. Surely the expenditure of the money required for this school is justified in the circumstances! If the school is erected, I am sure that the population of the district will considerably increase. I make a very strong appeal to the Minister to go on with the erection of this school. A good deal of discussion took place in regard to the way in which the Moore Government cut down the vote for school requisites, books, etc.; but, not only have the present Government taken advantage of the economy effected by the Moore Government in that direction, but a further £2,000 is being taken off that vote. I am sure that economies are necessary; but a Government which was returned on account of criticising the Moore Government for making economies which were absolutely necessary for the wellbeing of the State should not take advantage of those economies and make still further economies.

I notice that last year £56,260 was voted for "Sanitation, wages award cleaners, and allowances for cleaning of schools, training pupil teachers, railway fares for scholars and students, etc.," while this year the amount asked for is £51,240.

Fortunately or unfortunately, I had to battle very early in life, and did not have any secondary education; but I have given my children the advantage of the education provided; and I would like to say that more attention should be paid in our secondary education to the art of speaking and articulation. We have hon. members in this Chamber who seem to think that the right way

of speaking the English language is to put on what is commonly called "dog" and a lot of "swank." We have learned in this Chamber how necessary it is to teach our children to articulate words properly. Only last year one boy who passed the junior examination was asked by the board of examiners where he came from but he could not pronounce the name of the suburb in which he lived.

Mr. WATERS interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Kelvin Grove must obey my call to order. He will not be permitted to indulge in a running fire of interjections. I shall not call him to order again.

Mr. NIMMO: The question of articulation should receive more attention in our secondary schools. I do not know whether it will be an improvement if lessons on elocution were introduced, but something should be done in this direction. On the whole, everything in connection with the Department of Public Instruction is satisfactory. I consider that our system of primary education will compare more than favourably with any system of primary education in the whole world.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [5.35 p.m.]: I was very interested in the reply given by the Minister this morning in regard to State schools on the vote for "Chief Office." I was particularly interested in his reply to the hon. member for Ipswich, when he said that it was the intention to erect an intermediate school at Ipswich.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I did not say that.

Mr. KENNY: I accept the hon. gentleman's denial, but he definitely said that he was going into the question, and the request would more than likely be granted, and, realising that the hon. member for Ipswich is a Government supporter, I am inclined to think that the request will be granted. I am taking time by the forelock, and wish to suggest that the Minister should also investigate the position in the tobacco areas. If money is available for an intermediate school at Ipswich, it should be diverted from that object and priority given to schools in the tobacco areas. In Ipswich there is a girls' grammar school which is not half full, and, whilst facilities of that character are available in a large centre of population, the needs of the country children should receive preference if any further expenditure is possible. I merely sound a warning, and make this request in the interests of the outlying portions of the State.

I said this morning that the country schools were penalised, and the vote we are discussing bears out my argument. There has been a reduction in the amount set apart for organising the farm project clubs, and no itinerant teacher has been provided for. It may be argued that there is no necessity for these items, and that a teacher may be transferred to this work. Anticipating that that will be the argument of the Minister, I proceed further, and find that the amount set down for "Equipment, travelling expenses, allowances, etc., of itinerant teacher" is cut out this year, that the amount set down for travelling expenses generally is reduced from £5,000 to £3,400, and that "Incidental expenses, railway fares of pupils attending high schools, etc.," are reduced by £1,570. I am not objecting to

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that altogether. I am supporting my argument that the country districts and country children are being penalised, because all these things I have mentioned apply particularly to the country schools. The itinerant teacher and home project clubs have been of great advantage. I do not think the Minister realises it to the fullest extent. If he were to attend some schools where they are carrying out this work, he would be surprised at the interest taken in the work by the children. I think that we could go even further in this direction than we have.

I do not take this stand in order to score off the Minister. I ask for an explanation. We cannot afford to sacrifice country children in the interests of those in the city who have every facility for education, both primary and secondary, right to the university. In the country we have the one-teacher school, where the teacher suffers a great disability as well as the children, for the reason that the former has to teach all the classes. I agree that the Director of Education considers very seriously the adaptability of the teacher he sends to such a school; and in some of them we have teachers who would be a credit to any department; but one man cannot teach six or seven classes as efficiently as he can one class.

Mr. WATERS: Where are there six or seven classes?

Mr. KENNY: In every one-teacher school. You have children of the same range of ages as in the city, and they have all to be taught by one teacher.

Every encouragement should be given to the teachers and to the children. The department should provide the most efficient teachers for the one-teacher schools, and the remuneration should be a sufficient inducement for teachers to express a desire to go to these schools. In the larger schools the teacher who has passed certain examinations is paid a higher salary. The teachers at the one-teacher schools should have their salaries fixed at a higher grade because of the fact that they are performing much more difficult duties.

In my electorate we have schools where black children and white children are intermingled. I am one of those who do not believe in that. I consider that in Queensland it is desirable to draw the line in this matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [5.43 p.m.]: I shall immediately look into the matters raised by the hon. member for Gympie in connection with the Monkland and the One Mile schools. Very often the petitioners who seek a new school state that so many children are available for enrolment, but the real question is: How many children are available for that school when the schools in the neighbourhood absorb all the children within a reasonable distance? The question is: What is the average enrolment, and what is the average attendance? I believe that schools should be established wherever possible. Perhaps it would be a good thing to provide a teacher for each child, but that is not possible.

Mr. NIMMO: It would not be a good thing for the child.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member for Cook

complained that the children who attended the schools where the attendance is small did not have the same opportunities as the children who attended the larger schools, but that is not so. In the smaller schools, with efficient teachers, there are better opportunities to give individual attention than in schools where the attendance is very much larger. It is an established fact that in the arithmetic test instituted by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research the children in the country schools showed up as well as the children in the city schools.

The hon. member for Oxley has stated that the people of Tennyson desire a school in their locality; but these children are within reasonable distance of the Yeronga schools, and to my mind it would be better to save the expenditure upon a new school at Tennyson and spend it upon some of the schools that are so urgently required in country districts. Attention will be given to the requirements of the Tennyson district at some later date.

I could reply to the remarks of the hon. member for Cook in connection with the home project club organiser, but I refer him to the report of "Hansard" for to-day. I went over the whole of the ground when he was out of the Chamber, and there is no reason why I should go over it again.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [5.47 p.m.]: I desire to make some comment upon the attitude of certain teachers as regarding the presentation of school prizes and exhibition at local shows as unprofessional conduct. I am rather surprised that some of the teachers take up that attitude. I always commended the teachers who encouraged their children to take part in the local shows. It creates that little bit of rivalry that must be so good for all the children and for the school. I can see no harm whatever in encouraging children to exhibit in the local show. This should be encouraged as much as possible, and teachers should not regard activities in this direction as constituting unprofessional conduct. Some teachers are of the opinion that scholarship classes should not be held. If pupils in a school desire to enter for the scholarship examination, every encouragement should be given to them to sit, and, if necessary, for the teacher to hold special classes. Those special classes can, and ought to, be held in ordinary school hours. Some teachers look upon that as unprofessional conduct, and consider that such a viewpoint should not be encouraged.

In many localities where rural schools are established exhibits of the work of the pupils are organised for the local show. Sir Matthew Nathan, Sir John Goodwin, and the present Governor have all taken particular interest in those exhibits. It is advisable that they should be displayed. A few years ago I opened the annual show at Beenleigh, where a very fine rural school exists. I was greatly disappointed that no exhibits from that school were displayed, although Beenleigh was the centre of a rural district. I knew the school was an excellent one, and that it was staffed by excellent teachers. I learned that no exhibit was made from the school because of circumstances over which the master had no control. In the following year a marvellous exhibit was displayed by the school. It reflected the greatest credit on those responsible for it, and I did not hesitate to give credit to those responsible. I am sorry, indeed, that some teachers look

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upon such exhibits as unprofessional conduct. I do not know whether they consider their organisation to be beneath their dignity. I hope that state of affairs will not exist much longer, and that where pupils desire to exhibit they will be encouraged to do so.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [5.52 p.m.]: Though I have no desire to see the State school at Tennyson constructed at the expense of the education of the people in the country, nevertheless I am disappointed at the reply of the Minister. The Government are to-day looking for avenues whereby unemployed artisans may be given suitable work. There is no question about the necessity for a school at Tennyson. Mr. Bebbington, one of the departmental inspectors, who inquired into the application, told me that his inquiries revealed the fact that no district in the metropolitan area required educational facilities as urgently as the Tennyson district. The whole of the material required for the school building, with the exception of the iron for the roof and glass for the windows, would provide work for our unemployed. I press the Minister to reconsider his decision in this matter.

Item (State Schools) agreed to.

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [5.53 p.m.]: I move—

“That £4,885 be granted for ‘School for the Blind and Deaf.’”

This institution was previously under the control of the Home Department jointly with the industrial side of the Queensland Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Institution, but in January, 1931, it was assigned to the administration of the Department of Public Instruction. The appropriation required is for the purpose of the school only. It provides for the salaries of the instructional and domestic staff and the general maintenance of the institution. It shows a total reduction of £637 in comparison with last year's appropriation, of which amount £600 is due to economies effected in the item “Contingencies.”

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [5.54 p.m.]: I do not know whether hon. members have availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting and inspecting the school for the blind and deaf. It is a splendid institution, as you know, Mr. Hanson. At first thought one would regard the work of imparting instruction to these afflicted children as being almost impossible; yet the patience, sympathy, and affection of the teachers have produced wonderfully good results. It would appear that in their afflicted state the unimpaired senses of these children become more highly developed. I simply marvelled at the manner in which blind children could conduct sports—blind children recognising others simply by their voices. One could not credit that these children, lacking the ability to see, could guide the visitor along the various paths at the institution and remind him that this or that obstacle was to be avoided. All these actions bespoke the thoroughness of the training which was given; and it speaks volumes for the extraordinary patience of the teachers who have undertaken the education of these children, because they have achieved marvellous results although labouring under tremendous difficulties. I strongly recommend any hon.

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member who has not yet done so to see these children at work and at play. It will be an object lesson to him.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [5.56 p.m.]: I have pleasure in expressing my appreciation of the wonderful work that is being done at this institution. I consider Mr. Holle a wonderful teacher. I had only to see these children at work and play to realise the wonderful benefits that the institution is conferring on them. Nor are the benefits confined to children from the metropolis, because the institution has pupils from all parts of the State, including two from my own electorate. Several visits have brought forcibly to my mind the great work which is being done—work that will be of incalculable benefit in later life.

One feature which particularly attracted my attention was the instruction in lip reading which was given to some of these children. I call to mind the case of an ex-soldier, who was blinded at the war, and who is now running his own station in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Resolutely facing the future, that man, on his return from the war, decided to learn to use his hands without the use of his eyes. So much progress has he shown that he can mend barbed wire fences. He accompanies the stockmen on horseback, and although his services are not in demand, yet he manages to run his own property.

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

Mr. W. J. COPLEY interjected.

Mr. KENNY: I would point out to the hon. member and his colleagues on the back bench the importance of taking to heart that Japanese motto of the three little monkeys who “Hear no evil; see no evil; speak no evil!”

Mr. W. J. COPLEY: It is a Chinese motto, anyway.

Mr. KENNY: Then go to China! (Laughter.)

The training of these children to use their hands, even though the children are unfortunately blind, enables them to do useful work in the community.

Item (School for the Blind and Deaf) agreed to.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEES.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [7 p.m.]: I move—

“That £84,432 be granted for ‘Technical Education and Apprenticeship Committees.’”

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) [7.1 p.m.]: I wish to pay a tribute to the late Mr. Wearne. During his occupancy of the position of Principal of the Central Technical College, Mr. Wearne did excellent work. He was a very capable man, and I do not know whether a successor has been appointed. I know that Mr. McGillivray was appointed Acting Principal, and I should like to know what is intended in regard to the appointment of a successor to the late Mr. Wearne.

I desire also to say a word in connection with the excellent services rendered by Mrs. Young as head of the Domestic Science Class at the Central Technical College. She did

excellent work while occupying that position, and I regret very much that her services are to be dispensed with. It is rather a pity that that is so, but I recognise that she has reached the age when the Government's policy of retiring public servants after a certain age comes into effect. She did very excellent work, and it will be difficult to fill her place.

I should also like to refer to the services of Mrs. Brydon, but, as Mrs. Brydon was not connected with the Central Technical College, I am afraid that I shall not be in order in referring to her very excellent services.

Generally speaking, the work of the technical colleges is being well done. The different instructors are doing their jobs to the best of their ability. Mr. Morris is an excellent man, and does his work with credit to himself and to the department.

There is one side to our technical colleges which should not be lost sight of, and that is the sporting side and the rivalry that exists in that connection between the different sections. It is a pleasure to visit the sports gatherings of the pupils of the technical college and see the healthy manner in which they conduct their sports meetings.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [7.6 p.m.]: We all recognise that many of our children derive very great benefit from technical education, and I am sorry to see that the vote has been reduced again, after all that was said by hon. members opposite during the election campaign about the way in which the late Government had cut down expenditure.

I notice that at the central technical college, the number of instructors and employees generally was 197 last year and is only 178 this year, a reduction of nineteen. The number of instructors at the country technical colleges and vocational centres has been reduced from 225 to 220, and in other technical colleges there is a further reduction in the staff. I recognise the need for economy in the present circumstances, and I am just drawing attention to what was said by hon. members opposite during the election campaign about the economies practised by the Moore Government. Advantage is being taken of every one of those economies by the present Government. No vote has been reinstated, but further economies are being made in every direction; and I record my protest against the insincerity of hon. members opposite, who led the electors to believe that everything was to be changed and that there was to be no deflation.

Mr. FOLEY: If you had left a few bob in the Treasury, things would have been different.

Mr. NIMMO: Over £1,000,000 was left in the Treasury, and we had the promise of the Premier that £2,500,000 would be raised from the citizens of Queensland. Had the late Government squandered money as the present Government have done, they would have left nothing for hon. members opposite; but by conserving the resources of the country, a fair amount was left.

I hope that technical education will be continued. I join with the ex-Secretary for Public Instruction in referring to the loss by the retirement of Mrs. Brydon, who was associated with technical education in the domestic science classes. Many of the girls of this State owe a great deal to her instruction,

and it is gratifying to be able to let it be known through "Hansard" that she has done wonderful work.

Mr. TOZER (*Gympie*) [7.10 p.m.]: This vote is reduced by £5,867—a fairly large amount. Railway fares and freights, printing, stationery, etc., have been reduced by £490 in the case of the central administration alone. There is also a reduction of £1,186 under the heading of "Contingencies" in connection with country technical colleges and vocational centres. That also seems to be a very big reduction. Presumably the pupils who enjoy the privilege of railway fares are going to suffer, which will certainly be a hardship on them. The members of the party opposite always contended that the late Government cut down expenditure in every way, but they are doing considerably more in that way themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. A. Cooper, *Bremer*) [7.12 p.m.]: I join with other hon. members who have expressed regret at the death of Mr. Wearne, and pay a tribute to his work. We also regret the death of Mr. Saunders, of the Ipswich Technical College, and the departure of Mrs. Young, of the Central Technical College, who recently reached the age of retirement from the public service. Although there is a reduction in this vote, the services have not been impaired. There is a big reduction in "Contingencies," due to the fact that equipment purchased last year will not have to be purchased this year. A big reduction has been made possible by reorganisation of the staff, of the classes, and of the work generally.

Item (Technical Education and Apprenticeship Committees) agreed to.

HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT. CHIEF OFFICE.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [7.13 p.m.]: I move—

"That £7,482 be granted for 'Home Secretary's Department, Chief Office.'"

The appropriation has been reduced this year by £481. There is a reduction of £125 in the salary of the supervising mechanical engineer, he having reached the age limit and has reverted to the minimum salary of his classification. There is one typist less in the office, due to a change of Ministers. The previous Minister had a typist to assist his private secretary, but this typist is not required by me. The item "Gratuity and Retiring Allowance, £253," does not appear this year. The salary of the Assistant Under Secretary has been restored to £800. One junior clerk reached the age of twenty-one years, and is now entitled to the basic wage of £221 per annum.

Item agreed to.

RELIEF OF ABORIGINALS.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*): I move—

"That £39,878 be granted for 'Relief of Aborigines.'"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [7.15 p.m.]: I have not had an opportunity of reading the report of the Chief Protector. There is a small reduction in the appropriation required for this sub-department this year. During the past two years efforts have been made to make aboriginal stations self-supporting.

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Equipment has been provided, and an endeavour has been made to train the aborigines to grow various crops and to provide their timber requirements. This is being done with the object of reducing the cost of maintenance of these institutions. I know that in some cases it is very difficult because the quality of the land is very poor; but in other cases dairy herds have been built up, and to some extent the aborigines are providing a portion of their food requirements under proper supervision. I should like to know how far this system has been extended, and what progress has been made. The Woorabinda settlement embraces a fairly large area, and it is only reasonable to expect the aborigines to provide some of their food requirements. A little while ago I read that the aborigines at the Yarrabah mission station were performing a good deal of valuable work at the settlement. That would probably be the means of effecting considerable saving in the upkeep of these stations. I know that on a number of the settlements that the aborigines are hired out. There is always a large number of them on the various settlements; and the idea should be to inculcate among those in charge the idea of making the settlements as self-supporting as possible. The Minister might give the Committee some information as to how far this result has been achieved, or whether efforts are being continued to make the settlements a lesser charge on revenue.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN (*Murilla*) [7.20 p.m.]: I notice that the proportion payable from the standing account in connection with the Palm Island Settlement has increased from £175 in 1931-32 to £1,596 in 1932-33—an enormous difference—while in the case of the Woorabinda Settlement the proportion payable from the standing account for the current financial year is £1,204, no amount being credited against the previous financial year. These two items would more than account for any decrease in expenditure. I would like to know just what those amounts mean.

According to the appropriation asked for, there is very little reduction in the vote under this heading compared with last year. The cost of living has come down considerably, and the cost of maintenance on the stations should show a reduction during the last three years. As the Leader of the Opposition stated, we want to know what effort is being made to make these settlements self-supporting. Every effort made by the Government to reduce taxation will be welcomed. Industry is suffering greatly from taxation, both State and Federal. Any reduction in expenditure and taxation will benefit the wage earner just as much as the business men or, as some hon. members term him, the capitalist. Taxes are paid by the masses, not by business men. An increasing effort should therefore be made by the Government to reduce expenditure by making all aboriginal settlements more self-supporting. We have no desire to force the aborigines to suffer any hardship, but it makes for the greater contentment if they are assigned tasks or given work to do. Such a policy not only benefits the aborigine but the general taxpayer.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [7.23 p.m.]: I anticipated an increase in the appropriation under this heading. I have had the opportunity of visiting most of the mission stations in the Gulf and also other native settle-

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ments. A great deal of venereal disease, as well as leprosy, exists among the aborigines, and these two diseases require tackling. The Government should make a definite drive to have an inspection made of our natives. It is not a matter to be treated lightly. The only reason why it has not been tackled before is on account of the lack of finance. The various Government medical officers have not been given power to compel aborigines to report for inspection. The Government should make it compulsory for every employer of aboriginal labour to compel his employees to report on a given date for medical inspection. Any aboriginal suffering from disease should be isolated. I was surprised at the large number who were being treated at Fantome Island, the accommodation being taxed to the limit when I was there last. Money should be provided for greater facilities to cope with the position which is being allowed to go on unchecked for years, because with the passage of the years disease is not decreasing. The Government have no excuse for not tackling the position. Money spent in that direction will be a wise expenditure, and the white race as well as the aborigines in the outlying portions of the State will be protected. I urge the Minister to discuss the matter with the Chief Protector, and have an investigation made by his officers. I am sure that the Chief Protector will verify my statements.

The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the advisability of making the aboriginal settlements self-supporting. I am convinced that that can be done. In many directions the aborigines could extend their activities. For example, we are importing a considerable quantity of tea; yet on the Atherton Tableland we have land that is suitable for the cultivation of tea, the only drawback being the impossibility of growing it where the work of picking is done by white labour, the cost being prohibitive. To-day the aborigines are drinking tea grown by black labour in Ceylon and other parts of the world. We, too, are drinking tea from the same source. My contention is that the department should set aside a portion of suitable land in North Queensland and experiment with the growing of tea with aboriginal labour. At least sufficient locally grown tea would be available for the aborigines. I think the result would prove that the industry could be established in North Queensland.

Coffee and cocoa might also be grown there. Coffee grown in North Queensland years ago proved that we could produce coffee second to none in the world. The cultivation of tea has not so far been attempted because of the white labour difficulty. I know that, if I were to suggest that we should develop the industry in Queensland by aboriginal labour, I would be condemned by hon. members opposite, but I cannot see any difference between drinking tea grown by black labour in Ceylon and drinking tea grown by our own aborigines in Queensland. I commend the suggestion to the Minister.

Thursday Island, which has one of the hottest climates in Australia, and is the outpost of my electorate, is debarred from the assistance of Torres Strait natives for domestic service in the township. White labour is unavailable, and it is a burning question with the residents there that the Home Department should refuse to allow

native women under a certain age to be employed in domestic service there. I object to the slur which is inferentially cast on the Thursday Island people, who are no worse than any other people in the State. In every other town in Queensland aborigines can be used for domestic and other service in the home; yet Thursday Island is singled out for this unfair treatment. I have discussed the matter with the Chief Protector on many occasions, and, although I agree with him on many points, I disagree with his attitude on this matter. Surely it cannot be suggested that Thursday Island residents are more immoral than other people! If that is the argument, then the difficulty could be overcome by control. I appeal to the Minister to rectify this anomaly. The control of the Chief Protector is proving very satisfactory to the aborigines themselves, and the time has arrived when the department should take full control of the whole of the aborigines in Queensland and take control away from the police. The Chief Protector should exercise control through his own department apart altogether from the Police Department. That is one reason why I anticipated that an extra amount of money would be asked for on this vote. The Aboriginal Department requires an inspector of its own altogether outside the police to inspect the activities of the aborigines throughout the State. I say definitely that an inspector should be provided and the Chief Protector should be given the power to send him to any part of the State. If that were done, we should soon see the benefit of giving this department control of the whole of the aborigines of the State. Even at this late stage, although the money does not appear in this vote, the Minister should try to make an extra amount available so that complete control will be given to the Aboriginal Department, and a medical inspection should be made of every aboriginal at large to-day. If it costs £10,000, the necessary money should be provided for a hospital to treat the disease which I say definitely exists amongst the aborigines to-day.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [7.32 p.m.]: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that something should be done to make the aboriginal settlements self-supporting. I have advocated that that be done quite a number of times in this Chamber; and I believe in later years a special effort has been made along those lines. I know more about the Cherbourg Aboriginal Settlement in my own electorate, formerly known as the Barambah settlement. I think that reserve contains about 13,000 acres, and it is quite close to a thickly settled part, and quite close to the railway; and I think the time has arrived when the Home Secretary might take into consideration the advisability of cutting up a portion of that area for settlement purposes and bringing it under cultivation. The land may not be as rich as other areas in that district; nevertheless, with fertilisers and up-to-date farming methods, a good deal more could be done in that direction than is done at the present time. The Chief Protector, the superintendent of that station, and also the ex-Home Secretary, deserve a great deal of credit for the way the settlement has been built up. There are wonderful buildings there, and the whole of the timber necessary was drawn and sawn by the help of the aborigines, and much of the labour

required for the building was also performed by them. Of course, that is quite right. As the Home Secretary probably knows, the settlement is situated on Barambah Creek, and a certain amount of cultivation is done in the little pockets along the creek. The hon. gentleman might take into consideration the question of irrigating the small flats by the sprinkler method. It is wonderful what even 5 acres can produce when properly irrigated under that system. The area could be extended as time goes on, but there is not a great deal of good land on the creek.

There is another matter that will have to be taken into consideration before very long, and that is the question of the growing town of Murgon, which is within $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles of this aboriginal reserve. I believe that some of the later buildings are within 3 miles of the settlement. Eventually the Government will have to consider the removal of the settlement in view of the fact that a large white population is growing up in the district and there is a growing town within 3 miles of it. I realise that it will be a big job, because, as the Home Secretary will find when he visits the place in the near future, very large buildings have been erected which will cost a good deal to remove. At the same time it will readily be understood that an aboriginal settlement of that description so near to a large and growing white population is undesirable in the interests both of the settlement and the white people, and its removal will have to be considered, if not in the near future, at any rate when funds are available. The superintendent has made wonderful strides, but it is possible to bring more land under cultivation, and perhaps to ringbark all the timber that is not marketable and cannot be used by the settlement. Any land that cannot be used should be cut up for settlement by people who want land in that district. As I say, it is close to the railway.

A request was made to the Department of Public Instruction some time ago for furniture and a teacher for the white children on the settlement, and the department came to the rescue immediately, which is another step in the right direction. I hope the Home Secretary will visit the settlement soon, but, before he goes, I hope he will find out exactly how the population has increased in the locality.

Mr. PETERSON (*Fitzroy*) [7.39 p.m.]: I desire to pay a compliment to the Chief Protector and his staff for the very able manner in which they discharge their duties. As Home Secretary, I had the opportunity of seeing the administration at its best, and perhaps even at its worst. When the present Home Secretary visits the places I visited last year, he will realise that, if every other department did the same good work and got the same results, we would be very fortunate indeed. If the hon. gentleman takes the opportunity of seeing all the stations that I saw, it will be an eye-opener to him, and the experience gained will help him to administer the department perhaps even better than I administered it.

We cannot complain about the reduction in the vote. There is no reason why we should. Owing to the unfortunate financial circumstances, the Moore Government were compelled to reduce even the appropriations for the aborigines, and this year I notice a reduction has been made to the extent of about £1,830; but there is always a

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breaking point beyond which we cannot go. In many cases the aborigines on the islands in Torres Strait are usefully employed. You have the very old men and women who are maintained by those who are looking for pearl and trochus shell, and you have also the children. Only a limited number are picked for the occupations I have mentioned, and can therefore go out and earn money, but if ever Socialism in the true sense existed anywhere, it is to be found in these islands. There the true communal spirit holds sway. The older blacks are maintained by the younger ones, who regard it as their duty to their community. If the Minister visits the lonely islands away to the north of Torres Strait, near New Guinea, he will find that wonderful work is being done by the attendants living under very isolated conditions, quite out of the ordinary track of steamers. I have to pay a tribute to the work they have performed. I believe that the Queensland aborigines have an aggregate amount of £250,000 standing to their credit in the Queensland Treasury. The State of Queensland has had, and still has, the use of that money at a certain rate of interest. The biggest part of it will never be claimed by its owners, and we should give the aborigines credit for having assisted the State in allowing it the use of this large sum of money. One of the aborigines in the islands informed me that he had about £2,000 to his credit in the bank. The aborigines of the islands are men of excellent physique, and are a better type than the mainland natives. In the main, they are able to reproduce a species of an improved type, and the half-caste element is not so prevalent as it is on the mainland.

The auxiliary ketch "Melbidir" is utilised to convey officials, stores, and provisions to the various settlements in Torres Strait. When I was Home Secretary, I decided that I would replace this boat by a vessel that was seaworthy, as the "Melbidir" is not a seaworthy vessel.

Mr. KENNY: It is not a ship at all.

Mr. PETERSON: The hon. member knows, because he was sick all the time. The boat is badly designed, and should now be scrapped. It is unfair to ask the Government officials in those far-removed places to man a boat of this type. It is imperative that she should be replaced, even if it be necessary to resort to "Golden Casket" funds for the purpose. The Home Secretary should see this boat for himself, when he will realise that what I say is perfectly correct. A newer and bigger boat would make for economy in that only two trips would be necessary where three trips are now required.

Much has been said to-day on the question of education. The aboriginal children throughout the islands are receiving an excellent standard of education, quite comparable with the primary education provided on the mainland. When I sailed into Saibai just off the New Guinea coast at dusk one evening I met a dusky native who inquired if Jack Lang had yet been kicked out of New South Wales; and he asked me how Mr. Theodore was getting on in the Dalley seat. (Laughter.) These natives had obtained certain information from their children, who had read the newspapers to them. The Chief Protector has stated that it is not wise to give the black aboriginal the same standard of education as is imparted to the whites. I do not wish to criticise the various missions adversely.

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The Roman Catholic Church of England, Presbyterian, and other missions are doing excellent work, but there is a tendency to over-educate the aboriginal children.

Mr. COSTELLO: I am afraid so.

Mr. PETERSON: The result will be disaster in the future, and I feel that the matter should be inquired into immediately.

Splendid efforts are being made to make the aboriginal stations self-supporting. At Palm Island and other islands the natives not only engage in the pearl and trochus shell industries, but they have also cultivated the Mauritius bean to provide a fertiliser for the sugar fields. Owing to the dry weather, the crops were not so successful as was anticipated, but a great deal of money has been expended and very useful work is being done. There is a very large market for this bean in our sugar districts. It might be a good suggestion to experiment with tea growing on some of the settlements, but I do not know whether our climate or the soil on the settlements is suitable for the purpose.

Mr. KENNY: Tea has been grown successfully at Lake Barrine for fourteen years.

Mr. PETERSON: It would not be difficult to make the experiment. We do know, however, that the Mauritius bean can be grown successfully given reasonable weather conditions.

One of the grave problems which I observed while in charge of the Home Department was that of our half-caste aborigines. It rather hurts one's feelings in visiting various places in the Gulf of Carpentaria to see the number of half-caste aboriginal children. In fact, it is a sad sight. I have often wondered whether it could not be made a punishable offence for white men particularly to consort with aboriginal women. I recognise the difficulties, but the number of half-castes is increasing rapidly, and it makes one apprehensive lest ultimately we shall be called upon to deal with a quadron problem. Any action the Home Secretary can take to retard the increase in the number of half-castes will meet with the approbation of all concerned.

I hope the Minister will have as happy a tenure of office as I had, and that his relations with the officials, particularly with the Chief Protector and his staff, will be as cordial. I feel sure that these gentlemen will do everything in their power to help the Minister to conduct the affairs of the aboriginal settlements with the least possible expense to the community.

We must all realise that Australia was the black man's country, and that we took it from him, not by conquest, but by commandeering. We owe a duty to the aboriginal, and, as the years go by, I hope that Queensland will always do her duty to the fullest extent possible by the native race, and at the same time see that they get adequate service in return. No exception can be taken to the vote. Everything seems to be quite in order, and I offer these few observations merely with a view to assisting the Minister.

Mr. C. TAYLOR (Windsor) [7.50 p.m.]: A fair quantity of Mauritius beans is being imported into Queensland at the present time from Fiji. It has struck me that they can be grown successfully on our aboriginal settlements. No experimentation is required before a crop is secured. They can be grown just in the same manner as the cow pea or ordinary

bean, and a splendid market exists for them in our sugar districts. They are ploughed into the ground by the sugar-grower, and are considered to be a very good fertiliser. They fetch a high price. Evidently they are not grown in large quantities in Fiji. If their growth is embarked on on these settlements, it might help to make them self-supporting.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) [7.52 p.m.]: The Leader of the Opposition said that it should be the endeavour of the Government to make the aboriginal settlements as nearly as possible self-supporting. I do not believe that any hon. member thinks that these settlements can be made self-supporting at present or even in the near future; but no doubt considerable improvement can be made by continued organisation, and continuing the endeavours that are being made to get the natives to do something for themselves and thus make the settlements more self-supporting. The department is quite satisfied that the Mauritius bean mentioned by the hon. member for Fitzroy and the hon. member for Windsor can be successfully grown on Palm Island. The first attempt to grow this bean did not meet with a great deal of success, but results since obtained justify the belief that the Mauritius bean can be grown and marketed successfully at Palm Island.

There is certainly room for a little extension in the cattle industry on the settlements in Central and Southern Queensland. An officer of the public service who investigated the position reported that the Woorabinda settlement could certainly carry more cattle than at present. The production of cattle will be one means of reducing the cost of this settlement. Everyone realises the importance of making these settlements produce whatever they can. It is desirable that the cost of upkeep should be reduced as low as possible in order to lighten the load upon the taxpayer; but the more important aspect of the question is that the natives on these settlements should be encouraged to grow larger crops and produce more cattle, not only with a view to making the settlements more self-supporting but also to make a better race of them. Some people hold that it is impossible to do much good; still we are not justified in passing it by without making the attempt. I have not had an opportunity of visiting the settlements; but I will take the first opportunity of visiting the nearer ones in the coming recess. I certainly will not be able to get up to the Torres Strait Islands next year, because there is too much work nearer to hand to prevent my going there; but I shall endeavour to visit each settlement as I get the opportunity and obtain that very desirable knowledge of the conduct of the settlements which I think every Minister should have.

With regard to the votes mentioned by the hon. member for Murilla, who drew attention to the fact that portion of the amount is spent from standing account, I would point out that this is in accordance with the desire of the department to put the affairs of the settlements on a business footing. That account consists of money obtained from the sale of goods and from profits from the store, etc., on the settlement. The practice has been pursued of charging a fair proportion of the cost of running these various con-

cerns against the standing account, which receives the proceeds of anything sold.

The hon. member for Cook mentioned the prevalence of venereal and other diseases among the North Queensland aborigines. The position of the aborigines in South and Central Queensland is fairly well known, but it is not so easy to keep track of those in North Queensland, where many of the natives are not living in compounds or settlements or engaged on station properties. A good number of the aborigines wander about. An endeavour has already been made to have a survey made of the prevalence of disease among the aborigines in the northern parts of the State. Dr. Cilento, who was lately engaged in the Commonwealth service, has already embarked on a survey of disease among the aborigines, and will work from Palm Island northwards to the Gulf.

Mr. KENNY: They will go bush when they hear it.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member should have known that before he made the suggestion. It is all very well for the hon. member to ask for something to be done and then when I tell him that the matter has already been taken in hand, to suggest that it is impossible for it to be done. However, if the aborigines go bush, they will take the diseases to the bush with them. Dr. Cilento has been engaged by the department, and has undertaken the survey to which I have referred.

The Fantome Island lock hospital is being extended, and the development of the institution is being pushed on as rapidly as possible. The department realises that, if there is to be any attempt to isolate diseased natives, accommodation must be provided for them; and instead of waiting until the aborigines are at the door, we are having extensions made. At present there are 140 patients on Fantome Island, but additional accommodation is being provided in anticipation of the increased number of patients who will come along as the result of Dr. Cilento's work. We know that the aborigines may endeavour to escape their responsibility, and that, if they know the doctor is after them, they will bolt. I suppose the aborigines are not the only people who have done that; we expect to miss a few. Every attempt has been made by the department to deal with this serious problem.

With regard to the question of the employment of female native labour at Thursday Island, to which the hon. member for Cook also made reference, this matter came before me some time ago. I have no hesitation in saying that I quite agree with the stand taken by the Chief Protector with regard to the engagement of females for Thursday Island. The good people of Thursday Island want to secure native girls for their house work, and the department refuses to allow girls under a certain age to be engaged. The department allows married couples or middle-aged women to be employed. The department also allows the engagement of labour from the mainland, but the Thursday Island people say that that labour is not satisfactory, and that they want girls from the Torres Strait islands. The Torres Strait island native is slightly different in class from the mainland native; he has a fair sense of his responsibility. When this matter was brought before me, the Chief Protector gave me as his reasons for refusing to allow these girls to be

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sent to Thursday Island—first, that there was an objection on the part of the parents of the girls to their being sent to Thursday Island. These parents may be black people, but I think they have an undeniable right to object to their daughters being taken into service at Thursday Island if they so desire. On that ground alone we are justified in refusing to permit these girls to be taken to Thursday Island. Further, the councillors on the islands, who form their own little local governments, strongly object to these girls being taken to Thursday Island, and I think every consideration should be given to their objection. Last, but not least, we have a unanimous objection from the various churches doing work in the Torres Strait islands. In view of these objections, I do not think there is any hope of me disagreeing with the Chief Protector in his attitude. When the parents, the councillors of the islands, and the churches are unanimous in their objection to young girls being taken to Thursday Island for service, I think some attention should be paid to their objections.

The hon. member for Nanango suggested that some of the Cherbourg area should be taken for settlement purposes. That might be worthy of some consideration if we were in a position to consider the second proposition—namely, the shifting of the settlement altogether. If the settlement could be shifted to a more desirable position, it would be of advantage to the State and to the aborigines themselves. No doubt Cherbourg is not ideal country for cultivation. I do not think that the hon. member would suggest that one acre of that settlement area should be taken from these people unless we are prepared to give them another area in its place. These people were the original occupants of the land, and they are entitled to a sufficient area to enable them to eke out some sort of an existence.

The half-caste problem mentioned by the hon. member for Normanby is a serious one, and I think it is the outstanding problem of the Aboriginal Department. The officers who have been going through the department call attention to the fact that half-castes intermarry, and they increase at a far greater rate than do the full-blooded aborigines. Just under 50 per cent. of the people on the aboriginal settlements now are half-castes, and the ratio is growing each year. The half-caste does create a problem, and it is a problem to which the Chief Protector and his staff are giving every attention. I can assure hon. members that I am doing my best to assist the Chief Protector and his staff to improve the conditions of the settlement as much as possible in the endeavour to educate these people in some form of production, and thus make the settlements as small a burden on the people as possible.

Mr. FUNNELL (*Brisbane*) [8.5 p.m.]: I believe that if a full and special inquiry were conducted into the aboriginal settlements much good would come of it. I am perfectly satisfied that the department would receive more favourable reports than those that are being received at the present time. There is a considerable amount of room for improvement in order to bring about peace and satisfaction in the interest of the aborigines in each of these settlements, and I am sure that an inquiry would disclose that certain officials are mainly responsible for the discontent and unhappiness that exists at the present time. These officials should be replaced by Australians who have had considerable experience amongst the aborigines of this State.

[*Hon. E. M. Hanlon.*]

I wish to reply to the suggestion of the hon. member for Cook—that tea, coffee, and other products in North Queensland should be grown by the labour of the aborigines. That is quite all right, provided the aboriginal is not exploited and is allowed to take the whole of the profits of his labour.

Mr. KENNY: That is what I suggested.

Mr. FUNNELL: The aborigines of Australia cannot be classed with the Asiatics. The aboriginal races on what we may term the left-hand side of the globe—the American negro, the New Zealand Maori, and the Australian black—are classified as Europeans and are not Asiatics. The black races on the right-hand side are Asiatics. The aborigines of Australia can be employed in various industries, and some of our awards prescribe the rates of pay and conditions of labour, and there is no objection to that on this side of the Chamber provided those conditions are observed. The opportunity for Queenslanders and other Australians to give employment to these people still exists.

I would like the Minister to investigate a matter in which I have been taking some interest. I for one am not satisfied that the settlement brought about after the Palm Island tragedy was fair. Something should be done by this Parliament. The former deputy superintendent should get at least a fair and reasonable measure of justice. This unfortunate public servant devoted a considerable period of his earlier life to his work amongst the aborigines and put his whole heart and soul into his duties at Palm Island. From an investigation which I have personally made, I know something of what I am talking about. Hoffman, in addition to losing his employment, unfortunately lost the whole of his life's savings and personal belongings, including the money which it cost him in legal expenses to clear himself of the murder charge on which he was tried. I sincerely hope that the Home Secretary will take up his case, and that he will be compensated for the sum that it cost him to clear himself of a charge on which he should never have been arraigned, and that, in addition, he will be placed in suitable employment either at Palm Island or at some other aboriginal settlement. I am satisfied that he compares more than favourably with any other employee at any aboriginal settlement in the State.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [8.10 p.m.]: I made the suggestion that the Government should institute a drive to clean up the lepers throughout the far North. The Minister took exception to my suggestion, and said that, if it were known that Dr. Cilento was going there the niggers would go bush. He said that I asked for a thing and that, when I was told it was granted, I took exception to it. It is useless for the Minister to try to put that sort of thing over me. I said that the drive should take place on the one day, and every employer should be compelled to see that his natives were brought in for examination on that day. That is the only way in which the job can be done. It is recognised that aborigines have ways of sending messages that are unknown to the white races. For instance, when we were in the Torres Strait last year, the late Home Secretary, the hon. member for Fitzroy, sprained his ankle on one island, and before we got to another island the inhabitants there knew of it and met him with a chair, so that news might easily be

spread that a doctor was looking for them, and they certainly might go bush. The only way is to put the responsibility on the employer, otherwise Dr. Cilento may as well stay at home. We cannot regard this problem lightly. If the Minister visits Fantome Island and does not come away sick, I shall be surprised. I remember that during the election campaign I was passing through Cooktown, and ten aborigines were brought in from the bush. Some of them had never had a shirt on their backs, and four of them were in such a bad condition that they could not be put on the boat that day. This is a very serious position, and one that must be faced immediately. Sufficient funds should be provided to enable it to be done, and the employers of this labour should be compelled to bring in their aborigines for examination. We should not let up on the job at all. If these diseases were so prevalent amongst the white race, action would be taken immediately, and every organisation throughout the State would have something to say; but because it is aborigines who are afflicted little or nothing is done. I do not regard this matter lightly, because the position is not one to be played with. It has been played with for years. I do not care whether I stand alone in this Parliament on this subject.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS interjected.

Mr. KENNY: I do not expect the Deputy Leader of the Government to have sufficient brains to know what I am talking about. Why, the aborigines have a greater amount of intelligence. I do not care if I am alone in my opinions on this subject. The question will have to be tackled sooner or later.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Your Government did not tackle it.

Mr. KENNY: That is not my fault; I brought the matter up. The Deputy Leader of the Government should cease his interjections, and realise that he is now a responsible Minister of the Crown. At least he should try to be sensible, and to realise that a Minister of the Crown is expected to recognise the tragedy of the individuals to whom I refer.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the vote before the Committee.

Mr. KENNY: I am asking that action be taken; and I am appealing to the Deputy Leader of the Government, who is a responsible Minister of the Crown, to treat the matter seriously, and not make inane interjections. The Home Secretary has stated that there are 140 inmates at Fantome Island. I was at Fantome Island, and I was of the opinion that a patient afflicted with venereal disease was mingling with leper patients. I asked the doctor about one particular case, and he expressed the opinion that the native was suffering from leprosy. Here we have patients afflicted with venereal disease and leprosy mingling together in the one hospital. Before the hon. member for Fitzroy and I visited Darnley Island lepers had been shifted. I ask the Government to consider the matter very seriously. I am not going to allow this question to be treated lightly whilst I am in Parliament.

The Home Secretary also referred to the difficulty of bringing the natives from the Torres Strait islands. He is right up to a

point. I appreciate the fact that the islands are controlled by native councillors in the same way as Queensland is controlled by a Parliament. I do not suggest that the native councillors should be ignored. We are educating the natives throughout Torres Strait in a way that will not be to their benefit. We are educating them to the standard of the whites, and they are losing their native ability to hunt for their own food and game. We are educating them to the ways of the world. When the pearling luggers go out, they come in contact with the white race, and the boys on the luggers tell their women folk on their return what they have seen. There are womenfolk on the islands who are over twenty-one years of age. Are they to be compelled to remain in gaol on the islands for the rest of their lives if they wish to get away? Are they to be prevented from going to Thursday Island to engage in employment? Should the native councillors be allowed to stop them if they can get a job? This matter will have to be considered. I have spoken to these womenfolk, and I know that they are desirous of going to Thursday Island to work.

The Minister has also referred to the half-caste problem—one that will have to be tackled by the Government sooner or later. The number of half-caste natives on the west coast of the peninsula is surprising. I saw one little girl about ten years of age with blue eyes and white curly hair. She would not be taken for a native at all, and, if she were brought to this city, it would not be thought that there was any black blood in her. (Laughter.) Of course, I cannot expect too much sympathy from the occupants of the front Government bench. They are too wrapped up in their own importance to realise the position. Because I have dared to talk of the native position, they have tried to belittle it. Encouragement is being given to the half-caste population to inter-marry. In my opinion, the best thing that could happen would be for the department to encourage the half-castes to marry into the black race. The intermingling of the half-castes with the worst type of the white race can only produce a mongrel race in this State.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [8.20 p.m.]: I thank the Minister for his speech on the aboriginal question. The black race requires the attention which the Minister proposes to give them. I have had a fair amount of experience with blacks west of the Darling River in New South Wales. I have found that the black derives most of his bad traits chiefly from his contact with the whites. If one gets the pure black man, he will find in every instance that he is faithful in every possible way. If he is treated well, he will reciprocate the kindness shown him. I feel sure that the Home Secretary will give that attention to the black race which they deserve, especially to the young black women who are in hired service. Some employers do not understand their black servants, and ill treat them in every possible way, even beating and kicking them. That should not be allowed. I was very pleased to hear the hon. member for Brisbane say that he had no objection to the young black woman being employed in domestic work. That is a fine spirit, because the blacks have just as much right to live here as the white race.

Mr. FUNNELL: At award rates.

Mr. Sparkes.]

Mr. SPARKES: In the outback country the black, especially in work amongst cattle, stands out on his own. I have no black men in my employ. I employ a black girl whom I have had for ten years as a nurse girl. I would rather trust her with my children than most white girls. I speak with some feeling with regard to the aborigines, and I feel sure that the Minister will accord them that just and fair treatment which they honestly deserve.

Item (Relief of Aborigines) agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

Resumption of Committee made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 8.25 p.m.
