Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 1934

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

QUESTION.

ALLEGED MISLEADING REPORT OF COMMISSIONER OF PRICES.

Mr. LARCOMBE (*Rockhampton*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. Has his attention been drawn to a statement made by the hon. member for Logan on 2nd November to the effect that a statement contained in the report of the Commissioner of Prices is absolutely misleading and that the report is untrue and misleading from beginning to end?

"2. If so, will he reply to the statement made by the hon. member for Logan?"

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. M. P. Hynes, *Townsville*) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. The figures quoted by the Commissioner of Prices (Mr. T. A. Ferry) in his annual report, which were furnished to him by the Commonwealth Statistician in a letter dated the 27th August, 1934, are absolutely correct. These figures refer to the cost of food and groceries as for March quarter, 1920 (the year the Profiteering Prevention Act came into operation), as compared with the cost as on the 30th June, 1934. The base used was that taken by the Commonwealth Statistician—namely, the amount necessary on the average to purchase in each capital city what would have cost on the average £1 in 1911 in the six capitals regarded as a whole. The table does not deal with the increases since 1911. Mr. King's figures evidently refer to the equivalent of £1 on the average in each capital taken separately as in 1911 compared with June, 1934, and have no bearing on the figures in the Commissioner's report. Mr. King refers to the very fine work performed by the Registrar-General and the valuable statistics prepared by that official. That department now advises that the figures in Mr. Ferry's report are quite correct, and that the report did not set out to show the increases in each capital since 1911 at all, as suggested by Mr. King, but merely made a comparison of the costs in each capital in 1934 as compared with 1920."

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*): I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend 'The Sugar Experiment Stations Acts, 1900 to 1934,' in certain particulars."

Question put and passed.

RURAL ASSISTANCE BOARD AND AGRICULTURAL BANK ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) I move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to provide for the appointment of a Rural Assistance Board, and to amend 'The Agricultural Bank Acts, 1923 to 1931,' in certain particulars; and for other purposes."

Question put and passed.

LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) [10.35 a.m.]: I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend 'The Land Acts, 1910 to 1932,' and other Acts by providing further measures of relief to certain Crown tenants: to amend such Acts in certain particulars; and for other purposes."

I expect a speedy passage for this Bill. It is practically a "Relief to Settlers Bill." It gives a good deal of relief to settlers, as I shall show during my remarks, and it also removes some anomalies that have been discovered in the land laws. During the last session of Parliament the Government did not amend the Land Acts in any way, although there were a few anomalies that they desired to have removed. In this Bill we are taking the opportunity of doing so in addition to giving the relief to settlers, that is the main purpose of the measure.

In the first place it gives statutory powers to construct what are known as Public Estate Improvement roads. It is necessary to give to the Government power to control the traffic using such roads prior to their being handed over to the local authorities concerned. At the present time the land laws contain no provision to deal with these "P.E.I." roads, the only such provision being found in the Upper Burnett and Callide Land Settlement Act. This Bill gives power to the Department of Public Lands to construct such roads and to exercise control over them while they are being constructed.

Mr. MOORE: To deal with the traffic?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We find traffic using the roads a good deal and causing a good deal of damage, but neither the Government nor the local authorities have any power at present to control such traffic. After construction these roads are handed over to the local authorities, but until that point is reached there is no power to exercise control. This Bill makes provision that the traffic can be regulated whilst the roads are under construction.

The next provision in the Bill, I think, will also have the approval of the members of the Committee. As they are aware, no power exists at present to grant grazing leases in respect of State forests, timber reserves, or national parks, and the Bill proposes to confer power to grant such

leases, on the recommendation of the Forestry Board, of any land comprised in State forests or timber reserves. At the present time, there is some power to lease what are known as banana farms, but there is no power to give grazing leases. There is no intention that this shall be done arbitrarily by the Land Administration Board. In that connection I desire to point out that members of the Land Administration Board at present are appointed by Parliament, and consist of Messrs. Payne, Melville, and Grenning, the Director of Forests. The last-named, therefore, is a full member of the Land Administration Board, and consequently in any decision of that board the head of the Forestry Department has equal rights with Messrs. Payne and Melville. In any case I want to make it quite clear that in connection with these grazing leases over forest country it is not intended to over-ride the wishes of the Forestry Department. The power to lease will only be exercised when there is absolute accord between the Forestry Department and the Land Administration Board.

Another matter dealt with in the measure is the determination of the capital value of bores on the Mount Abundance estate. The Bill makes provision for the Land Court to review the values of certain bores fixed by the Land Administration Board. This deals with a difficulty of long standing. It is six or seven years old. It appears that when the Mount Abundance estate was resumed the Land Administration Board valued the bores that the settlers had to take over. The board desired to send these valuations to the Land Court for review, and I think actually did refer the matter to the court, but the court decided it had no jurisdiction. Quite recently certain selected settlers on that estate took the Crown to court and called upon it to show cause why they should not be allowed to go to the Land Court to have these values reviewed. They cited me as the nominal defendant, as the head of the Department of Public Lands. In this measure we are making provision that the Land Court shall review the decision of the Land Administration Board in this connection.

Mr. MOORE: Whether it be applied for or not?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will be applied for because we informed the settlers that I have already mentioned that this would be done. If a review is not applied for, the Bill provides that the decision of the board shall stand.

The Bill also provides that land may be opened under such conditions that the provisions of the principal Act, whereby priority is given to a person offering to perform the condition of personal service, will not apply. This amendment is designed to meet the case of a piece of Crown land that becomes available for selection but in itself is less than a living area, and therefore only suitable for use in conjunction with property already held. In many cases the land that reverts to the Crown does not constitute a living area and it would be absurd to carry out the existing law, which lays it down that this land shall be made available in priority to a person who is prepared to carry out personal residence on the land. Where the area is less than a living area such a provision cannot be claimed to be of benefit either to the Crown or to the applicant. It is the policy of this Government to make land available in what can be regarded as reasonable living areas.

Section 13 (*a*) of the principal Act will be amended. This section provides that a person shall be allowed sixty days in which to comply with a notice calling upon him to destroy noxious plants. It is now considered that a maximum period of sixty days is far too long to allow for the destruction of noogoora burr in particular, which seeds within a much shorter period of time. The chairman of the Land Administration Board, Mr. Payne, is now in conference with other representatives in the South for the purpose of considering the policy that should be adopted in connection with the destruction of noxious plants in the various States, and considerable attention will be given to the best means of combating the noogoora burr. This provision, which aims at the prevention of the spread of noogoora burr and other noxious plants, lays it down that thirty days shall be the maximum time in which to comply with a notice to destroy noxious plants.

Power is also given in the Bill to issue a perpetual town, suburban, or country lease without competition to a manufacturing or industrial concern that undertakes to carry out substantial improvements calculated to give employment. There are cases where persons are prepared to commence manufacturing or industrial concerns that would provide considerable employment, but at the present time the department cannot issue a perpetual lease for the land without competition. The Bill provides that where substantial improvements are to be carried out and employment is to be given a lease may be granted without competition.

Section 185 of the Act is to be amended to allow trustees to give a mortage with the consent of the Governor in Council for purposes other than permanent improvements. We have had deputations from the Rockhampton, Maryborough, Bundaberg and other show associations seeking the consent of the Government to mortgages other than for permanent improvements. The Rockhampton Show Association found itself in a very serious financial position; in fact, it was unable to finance its last show. At the present time there is no power to consent to a mortgage by a show society except for permanent improvements. The Rockhampton Show Association sought permission to change its banking account, or in other words to borrow from another bank for the purpose of paying off its existing overdraft and obtaining a sufficient balance to carry on.

Doubt has arisen in connection with the dedication to public use of a thoroughfare or laneway in the case of certain subdivisions of private land. There have been cases where disputes have arisen where laneways have been dedicated to public use. Under this Bill provision is made to refer to the Land Court for decision all dedications for public use of thoroughfares or laneways where certain subdivisions of private lands are made.

Mr. MOORE: Those are laneways dedicated for the use of certain persons?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes. There is a case in point of a company that agreed with the Brisbane

City Council to carry out a considerable amount of work, provided the Government consented to the dedication of a certain laneway. The Government gave their consent but it was afterwards discovered that there was no power to compel the company to carry out what it had actually undertaken to perform, and it repudiated the whole arrangement. We are now seeking power to send these matters to the Land Court for decision.

The Land Act Amendment Act of 1927 is to be amended to allow of additional areas being granted to holders of less than living areas where the additional holdings are not exactly contiguous with or adjacent to the original holdings. At the present time the law provides that the original area shall be either actually contiguous with or adjacent to the land that falls into the possession of the Crown. We have considered the matter very carefully and we have decided to amend the law by omitting the words "contiguous or adjacent" with a view to substituting the word "neighbouring." At the present time, of course, the law gives power to any settler in a district where we resume land for settlement purposes, who it is considered advisable should have an additional area, to make application for such an area, but such an additional area can only be granted to a settler occupying land adjacent to or contiguous with the land resumed.

Mr. KENNY: A settler now will be able to hold two portions of land not contiguous?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If he likes. The idea of making provision in the original Act that the land should be contiguous or adjacent was for the purpose of enabling the settler to work his holding profitably. No doubt, the nearer any additional land is to the existing selection the better use the selector can make of it, but there are many instances where a settler a few removes from the resumed land has a far better case for an additional area than a contiguous selector. At the present time the Act does not allow us to deal with such applications. I have a file of letters from selectors containing bitter complaints that some other settlers have received additional areas whereas their position was a great deal worse, but as they happened to be two or three removes away from the resumed land their applications could not be considered. The Land Administration Board, in administering the present formula, has dealt with applications for additional areas one remove from the resumed land but can go no further.

Mr. MOORE: One remove is considered adjacent?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is a definition of "adjacent or contiguous" that debars even settlers one remove from the resumed land from consideration, but there has been so much discontent that it has been decided to substitute the word "neighbouring" for the words "contiguous or adjacent."

Mr. SPARKES: The interpretation of "neighbouring" would be left to the Land Administration Board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is so; naturally the board would deal with each application on its merits. I shall develop my argument on that step at the second reading stage. Provision is also made to allow of ballots in cases where there are more approved applicants for additional areas than there is available land. That is to say, where there are eight or ten applications for three or four additional areas, we have decided that those areas should be available for ballot to those settlers who are considered to be absolutely entitled to them.

This Bill will also extend for one year the provisions of the wool relief scheme as regards rentals. These relief provisions expire on the 31st December, 1934, but insofar as the rental concessions are concerned, they are to be extended to 31st December, 1935.

Another amendment with which hon. members will be pleased, especially the hon. member for Cook, is the provision for a reduction in the rate of interest under the provisions of the Upper Burnett and Callide Land Settlement Act, relating to water facilities from 5 per cent. to 4 per cent. as from the 1st January next.

This Bill also seeks to amend section 39 of "The Closer Settlement Acts, 1906-32," regarding the report in detail with respect to repurchased lands. Under these Acts as they are to-day it is absolutely compulsory that the Land Administration Board should report on repurchased lands. That is not necessary now, because practically the whole of these lands are under settlement. Although henceforth that report will not be compulsory, statistics in this respect are published in the annual report of the Department of Public Lands.

This Bill also makes provision to transfer the judicial powers of the Prickly-pear Land Commission in connection with prickly-pear holdings to the Land Court. Its administrative powers will be retained by the Land Administration Board, but all judicial powers will be transferred to the Land Court. Of course, the Prickly-pear Land Commission is practically going out of existence because its job has been so well done, thanks to that marvellous insect—the cactoblastis.

This Bill also seeks to extend to perpetual lease selections within the Theodore area the concession that ordinary selections now enjoy. When the Theodore area was brought within the ambit of the Land Acts a few small matters were not attended to. This amendment will seek to make it quite clear that selectors in the Theodore area will enjoy the concessions open to ordinary selections.

This Bill seeks to amend existing legislation to hand over to the Agricultural Bank full administration of the provisions relating to loans to settlers under the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Acts. The present position is that the Minister is only nominally in charge of soldier settlements, and the whole question of finance and other matters are handled by the Department of Agriculture. It has now been decided that full authority in connection with these settlements shall devolve on the Agricultural Bank, and, naturally, the Secretary for Agriculture rather than the Secretary for Public Lands.

Mr. MOORE: Does that mean that the Chief Secretary will not be liable for the losses thereon?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No. It is a question of administration.

The position was all right when a War Council was in operation; but that council has been dissolved, and the idea is that all matters regarding debts on soldier settlements, which are entirely matters concerning the Agricultural Bank, shall be controlled by that department. On several occasions the position has arisen that certain settlers desired relief, and although the Department of Public Lands had no control over the matter it had to initiate the proceedings. An officer of the Department of Public Lands, together with an officer from the Department of Agriculture, inquired into the matters, and finally the Department of Public Lands authorised certain writing-down. Considering that the whole matter is administered by the Department of Agriculture, the Government have decided that such department shall have full control.

The Bill amends "The Rabbit Acts, 1913 to 1930," by giving power to amend a rabbit district by excluding part of it therefrom. The hon. member for Maranoa brought up a matter in connection with the Leichhardt Rabbit Board, which had a considerable amount of trouble with regard to rabbits, and whose buffer area is now over-run. It is no use having that area still included in the Leichhardt Rabbit Board district, and no power exists in the existing legislation to amend a rabbit district by excluding any part of it. In this Bill we are taking power that any part of an area such as this buffer area, which is over-run, may be excluded from a rabbit board district.

Those are, shortly, the details of the Bill. Of course, provision is made for Orders in Council.

It was intended in this Bill to provide relief to the Upper Burnett, Callide Valley, and other settlers. As is known, an inquiry was initiated early this year and has developed throughout the year, and at first it was intended to take power under this Bill to deal with the position. However, it has been found advisable to deal with the matter in a separate Bill; and if the Committee are reasonable this morning, I shall introduce a measure to deal specifically with relief to the Upper Burnett, Callide Valley, and other settlers.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [10.57 a.m.]: If the Minister has told us the full contents of this measure, there is not much to complain about; but, as in other cases, the Bill may be all right, whereas the methods of applying it may be all wrong. We may, when we actually study the Bill, find that some aspect of it has been carefully glossed over by the Minister. Certainly a need always exists to amend the Land Acts, for matters crop up yearly in the working of the department that the existing legislation does not seem to cover. That is why, for some years past, we have had constant amendments of the Land Acts.

In this Bill we are dealing with a number of matters. The Minister has stated that the Bill gives statutory power to construct what are known as public estate improvement roads. The Public Estate Improvement Branch of the department has done good work; but the Minister might consider handing over the work to the local authority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No.

Mr. DEACON: It would be easy for the Department of Public Lands and the local authorities to work in harmony.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We are working in harmony with the Main Roads Commission, but I would not devolve these duties on a local authority.

Mr. DEACON: This much can be said: Local authorities frequently discover errors of omission on the part of the Public Estate Improvement Branch. They have roads handed over to them without being consulted by the Department of Public Lands as to where roads should be built or as to how they should be built. Local authorities are more experienced in local authority affairs than the Public Estate Improvement Branch.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have reorganised the Public Estate Improvement Branch.

Mr. DEACON: Reorganise it as he will, the Minister cannot get away from the fact that the local authorities are on the spot dealing with these matters year after year. Local authorities have to pay for their experience. The Public Estate Improvement Branch goes into a new area and builds roads that the local authorities have to keep in order.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We do consult them.

Mr. DEACON: It may be just as well. After all, the local authorities are, on the average, capable bodies—just as capable as the Public Estate Improvement Branch—and they have controlled their areas in a manner that has reflected credit on them. The department may save money and obtain better results for the settler by doing this construction work in conjunction with the local authorities. Later on the Minister may change his mind on this matter and agree with me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have built up a very efficient plant.

Mr. DEACON: The Minister has a very efficient plant, and the local authorities have another very efficient plant, and one is lying idle while the other is working, which means there must be some waste of plant.

Mr. G. C. TAYLOR: Does the hon. member mean to say the plants of local authorities ever lie idle in Queensland?

Mr. DEACON: They often lie idle for want of money. Every shire council in Queensland experiences a period during the year when it has to cease operations owing to the lack of money. The Public Estate Improvement Branch is in the same position when its plant is not working. Is it not possible for the two bodies to work in harmony? It would probably result in a saving in money and plant, and possibly an improvement in the condition of the area, if the local authority had more say in this matter than it has at the present time.

I did not quite follow the Minister when he said that up to a certain time there were no grazing rights over forests. As long as I can remember forest areas have been leased for grazing purposes, although not in the best form of tenure, and I quite agree with the Minister that he could give lessees a much better tenure without encroaching on the interests of the Forestry Department. If the provisions of the Bill are sound they may be productive of good in that direction.

Provision is made for a reduction in values to Crown land tenants. I quite agree that

a reduction of value is essential; but I would point out that it is made necessary because the burden upon the man on the land is constantly increasing, owing to the effects of other measures. This State, more than any other, constantly imposes fresh burdens on the man on the land in an indirect way, and as a result the State loses money by having to reduce values. The people who are tenants can get relief, and it is absolutely necessary to provide such relief; but the people who are freeholders are not able to get any relief. This cannot continue indefinitely. The freeholders have to bear the cost of any burden imposed on them by the State. That aspect of the matter will have to be faced by the Government later on, because it is obvious that those people cannot continue as they are at present. There is one provision on which I am quite in accord with the Minister—that is, the amendment that provides for increased areas. I know of several places where holdings are insufficient. In many cases—and not those of old settlers—the areas are absolutely too small, and a mile away land is available which they cannot acquire. These men will never be able to make a livelihood from the portions they are on at present. There is a need for adjustment here, and I trust that the Minister has made full provision for all possibilities that may occur.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have tried to.

Mr. DEACON: Up to the present the law governing this matter has been too narrow. I always considered it should be considerably wider than it is. I was of the opinion that a settler could acquire a further portion of land which was situated at some distance from the area he already held, but apparently that has not been the case. I trust that this measure will give the Land Administration Board power to meet these cases when it is doubtful whether the area already held is too small to provide a livelihood.

In connection with the noxious weeds provision, I consider that sixty days is too long and that there should be a shorter term. It may be found that even thirty days is too long, unless the notice is given in time to prevent seeding within that period. Thirty days will allow certain weeds to flower, and throw their seeds. In any case it is desirable that the term of the notice be reduced from sixty days to at most thirty days. It may be necessary that the period be reduced still further where it is found that there is a deliberate evasion of the obligation to destroy weeds. It must also be borne in mind that there should be power to spread the clearing over a number of years. In some cases it is not possible, considering the state of the land, to have it cleared of noxious weeds in sixty days, thirty days, or even a year. Certainly portions of it can be cleared each year. Some shire councils, when starting out to clear their areas, have laid down a policy, which has proved successful in many instances, that the watershed shall be cleared first. They commence at the watershed and each year clear areas lower down the stream. This could be done generally, but we should see to it that such a provision did not operate harshly. In some cases it would be found an absolute impossibility to clean the land in a short period. The Minister would do well to take note of the experience local authorities have gained under actual working conditions.

There are a number of other provisions in the Bill to which I shall not allude at this stage. If the measure is everything that the Minister says it is, or contains those things mentioned by the Minister, and those things only, then it should be assured of a friendly passage; but in every Bill in the past there has been something that has not been mentioned during the initiation stage. It has included something it should not contain or something that required drastic amendment. However, when we receive the Bill and have the opportunity of going through it it will then be time enough for me to make further comments. For the present I leave the matter in suspense and trust that the intentions of the Minister are all good and that he has not been misled by members of this Parliament who have had absolutely no experience of rural matters and who know nothing about the land. Apparently they are not anxious to learn or become interested in the welfare of the people on the land.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have a wonderful lot of farmers over here.

Mr. DEACON: I have met a wonderful lot of book farmers in my time—wonderful men who made it evident that if they had been on the land they would have been a shining example to their neighbours. There may still be time enough for them to show it. I hope that I shall live long enough to see some of them working on farms and to hear what they have to say after they have had some experience. It will be time enough for me to pass judgment on the Bill at another stage.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [11.14 a.m.]: For once I am able to congratulate the Secretary for Public Lands upon having supplied the Chamber with full information concerning a Bill. Evidently the Minister is benefiting by his experience as a Minister of the Crown, and is prepared to allow hon. members on this side to profit by reason of his education. I express to him my appreciation for the information he has given, and I only hope that his description of the Bill is a fair description. I am in entire accord with him in connection with many of the provisions that he outlined.

I am especially pleased that Public Estate Improvement roads are to be constructed into certain areas that are to be made available for settlement. In many parts of the State the local authorities have neglected their duty in the matter of road construction. The Department of Public Lands has made available sums of money for the purpose of constructing roads into new farming areas, although in many cases the farms were not improved but were merely held for their timber resources. After the farms had changed hands and the personnel of the local authorities had been altered, no money was available to construct roads into these areas, but the Minister has now indicated, I take it, that the roads will be constructed, that the land will then be made available for settlement, and the control of the roads will be handed over to the local authorities concerned. There is much to be said in favour of that proposal. I am satisfied that if this work is carried out properly it will be in the best interests of the local authorities and the settlers themselves.

I desire to utter a word of caution in connection with the proposal by the Minister to

give a preferential perpetual town or suburban lease to a person who is prepared to commence a manufacturing or industrial concern and thereby provide employment. There may be a nigger in the woodpile in that proposal, and I propose to reserve my comment on that part of the Bill until a later stage. The Minister will be adopting a very dangerous precedent if he is prepared to give priority to every mushroom concern that merely states that it is prepared to commence a manufacturing business. I should like some more information on this point.

I am very pleased that it is proposed that the administration of soldier settlements shall be transferred to the Agricultural Bank. It is very difficult to obtain a finalisation of all the matters relative to this subject when one is compelled to move from department to department for the purpose.

I understood from the Minister that the Bill has been introduced mainly to rectify existing anomalies from the point of view of administration; but I feel that the Minister should go a little further, and, in particular, should reduce the 10 per cent. penalty rate charged in respect of arrears of rent at least to 5 per cent. He has not given us any indication that he is prepared to do that. I am prepared to move an amendment to that effect, but I feel that the Minister might be more prepared to accept the idea if he were to move it himself. This proposal would be of benefit to the whole State.

Another matter in which I am vitally interested is the question of rents charged for pastoral leaseholds in the Cape York Peninsula. I have referred to this matter in this Chamber on more than one occasion —in fact, I have advocated a complete review of all the rentals charged in that locality. If this Bill is to enable a complete review of land administration to be made with a view to reducing rents charged on the pastoral areas in the Peninsula, it will have my blessing. With the present prices of cattle and the knowledge that the pastoralists in that area have no opportunity of getting their cattle to market in a fat condition and are therefore dependent on the store market, some relief in rents is required. If such a provision is not to be made, then I ask the Minister to let us have an explanation in his second reading speech as to what relief these pastoralists can hope to receive in their rents. If no relief is intended, then I am quite prepared to move an amendment with that object in view.

I am very pleased with many of the provisions of the Bill, and if an examination of its clauses bears out the remarks of the Minister at this stage of the Bill, then I can predict its speedy passage through all stages.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*) [11.19 a.m.]: I was very interested in the introductory speech of the Minister, but I am very doubtful whether I shall be so pleased when we get the Bill and are able to analyse its provisions.

The concessions that the Government are now making to landowners are on a par with many of the concessions made by the Moore Government. We saw the necessity of taking steps to relieve the position of the man on the land. The constructive criticism that has come from this side of the Committee has been followed closely by the Minister, and his interest in it has resulted in the introduction of this Bill. The Moore Government gave extensive consideration to the man on the land. When continuous low prices for primary products induced the Moore Government to give concessions to the producer, much criticism of their action was indulged in by the Opposition, now the Government. It will be remembered that when the concessions were made to the woolgrowers, chiefly by the extension of leases—which has proved to be so beneficial to Queensland—we were told that we were working in the interests of the big financial institutions. The same type of criticism was indulged in when we acted similarly in respect to the extension of pastoral leases devoted to cattle raising, and other excellent land legislation. The present Government are not only benefiting by what we did; they are also imitating our legislation.

I was very interested in the statement of the Minister that grazing leases were to be issued in respect of forestry lands. Such leases exist now. I have for a long time pressed the Forestry Department to allow special grazing leases in respect of the large forest reserve No. 435 in my district, or, alternatively, to allow it to be opened up for the use of settlers in the Bauple area. The Forestry Department has acted very wisely in dividing the grazing rights of this huge reserve into ten portions, and allowing selectors who have small holdings to use them for grazing purposes. That is a move in the right direction. We should have welcomed it long since.

The statement of the Minister respecting living areas is also interesting. It shows that his Government have been utterly incompetent when opening Crown lands to settlers. I have only to refer to the Upper Burnett, Dawson, and Callide Valley settlements, where land was opened up in too small areas. When I first entered this Chamber I found that the then Government had settled men at the soldier settlement at Elimbah on 110 to 200 acres of grazing land. It was only after the return of the Moore Government and as a result of a visit paid to the settlement by the then Secretary for Public Lands, the hon. member for Cunningham—who, by the way, was amazed at the condition of affairs prevailing—that some of the settlers were removed, and additional areas granted by converting two or three blocks into one as required. It is pleasing to know that the Government now see the necessity of giving these people a living area. But consider for a moment the plight of these settlers who for years have been settled on insufficient areas! Now that the settlers are practically down and out the Government awake to the necessity of giving additional land! Although that additional land may not be adjacent to the present holdings it will nevertheless be of enormous assistance to the settlers.

The Minister has also mentioned that the Bill will amend the principal Act by altering from sixty days to thirty days the time within which action must be commenced to destroy noxious plants, particularly noogoora burr. He is prepared to call upon Government officials or local authorities to compel people to eradicate noxious weeds, but what does he intend to do with regard

to noxious weeds growing on Crown lands and reserves, particularly when noxious weeds thereon prove a menace to settlers whose holdings are on the lower banks of a river or creek? What is the use of introducing legislation to force a settler to clear his land of noxious weeds when on Crown land upstream noxious weeds are allowed to go to seed and prove a source of constant irritation to the private landholder downstream? I trust the Minister will do something definite to deal with that alarming state of affairs. Certainly private holdings should be kept clean, but in the circumstances I have mentioned, to compel a settler to keep his property clear of noxious weeds that are, to a great extent, the result of inattention on the part of the Crown is to impose on him a lifetime job.

I think the provision in this Bill to permit trustees of show societies to mortgage for other purposes than permanent improvements, with, of course, the consent of the Governor in Council, will be of great advantage to many organisations throughout Queensland that are doing excellent work in pastoral and agricultural matters. The financial position of many of these societies has been a serious one since the Government discontinued the grants previously made, but I trust this provision will afford some measure of relief.

I have not seen the Bill, but from the introductory remarks of the Minister I think it will receive a good deal of consideration from the Opposition

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [11.28 a.m.]: I see nothing objectionable in the Bill according to the remarks of the Minister, but I shall reserve further comment until I have had an opportunity of perusing it.

I am disappointed that the Minister has not seen fit to provide for a simpler method of balloting for land. At every opportunity I have stressed the necessity for that, and if the Minister would make a survey of the position through his country land agents he would find that a great deal of dissatisfaction exists among applicants.

I am rather disappointed, too, that the Bill does not specifically declare the right of landless men to secure land in preference to people who already hold living areas. I have the assurance of the Minister that in future small areas of land will be made available to these men, but I should have liked a definite provision in this Bill.

The power to open up national parks that have become useless is another matter that should have been dealt with in this measure. I have in mind portions of national parks that have become useless, have no scenic value, from which the timber has been removed, and are now nothing more than a breeding ground for pests that affect holders on adjacent clean country. I understand that legislation is necessary to open for settlement national parks that have become useless.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [11.30 a.m.]: Judging by the introductory remarks of the Minister, the Bill seems to be satisfactory; but I can see the likelihood of difficulty in one or two instances. There has always been some difficulty between the Public Estate Improvement Branch and the shire councils. I think that branch should work in conjunction with the local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We do consult them.

Mr. MOORE: I know the department consults them, but that is as far as the negotiation gets. The Public Estate Improvement Branch is not so much concerned with the general traffic of the local authority as it is concerned with the roads to the land it is opening up. Sometimes those roads are not in conformity with the ordinary traffic road, and the local authority is put to considerable expense afterwards when it takes them over. I agree with the provision that the Public Estate Improvement Branch should have the control of the traffic on those roads. Shire councils have sometimes found it necessary in the past to have tracks for light traffic as well as for heavy traffic, because in some of the areas where these roads are built the whole of the work might be lost if heavy traffic were allowed on them. It is not much use spending a lot of money on a road with the object of giving access to settlers if the settlers are to be debarred from using it afterwards because of the heavy traffic that has gone over it and destroyed it.

The matter of noxious weeds presents tremendous difficulties. When Mr. McCormack was Secretary for Public Lands he brought in a most stringent provision—I think it was in the 1927 Act—in regard to the destruction of noogoora burr and other noxious weeds. It provided if a grazier did not eradicate all noxious weeds after notice was given to him he was liable to forfeiture of his leasehold. Anyone who has had experience of noxious weeds like noogoora burr knows that in large areas it is practically impossible to deal effectively with it. It can be combated to a certain extent by poison more cheaply than it could some time ago. The difficulty of dealing with noogoora burr is increased by the fact that heavy rains wash the seeds over a large area and later thousands of acres may be actually smothered with it. The local authorities experience the same difficulty as the individual. The Local Authorities Acts provide that thirty days' notice be given to the landholder, which means that thirty days may elapse before he commences to eradicate it, and it is a well-known fact that both Bathurst and noogoora burr will show tremendous growth in that period. There should be some means of compelling a person to commence destroying the pest forthwith after the notice is given. If it is allowed a considerable time in which to thrive it is more difficult to combat; and it is bordering on the ridiculous to provide for sixty days' notice, because the plant goes to seed within that period. Many settlers could not afford the expenditure that would be necessary to remove this pest from their holdings. They would say, "Take the land, it is not worth it." I have seen Bathurst burr grow so thickly and fast in a good season that the council could not get sufficient men to clear it.

Mr. GLEDSON: That applies to their own roads and reserves.

Mr. MOORE: Time after time councils have let contracts for the clearing of noxious weeds from their roads and reserves, and the contractor has not been able to carry out that work and they have had to engage day labour to try to cope with it, and then found they could not do so. It is a most difficult problem. I do not care what drastic

provisions are placed in the Bill, in certain times and places—unless you can get some biological means, as in the case of prickly-pear—it is impossible completely to eradicate noxious weeds. The cost at such a time is too great. The land owner has not sufficient money to put on sufficient men, even if they are available. As the hon. member for Wide Bay has stated, in very many cases these weeds have been washed down from another area. A man may keep his area clean and a very heavy rainfall may bring down the seeds from a reserve or Crown land, or from the holding of some person who has not made an effort to keep his property clear, and these are washed over the whole of his property. Noogoora burr seeds will remain fertile for from fifteen to twenty years, and at some suitable time a tremendous crop will come up suddenly. Even under the same conditions one noogoora burr seed will germinate this year and another lie dormant and come up another year. The Minister is confronted with a very difficult problem. It has become a serious menace.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It may be necessary to make it a national concern the same as prickly-pear. That is now under consideration.

Mr. MOORE: That is what it will have to be. The people who have endeavoured to keep their areas clean sometimes see the whole of their work nullified because somebody else has not done what he should. In flood time the seed is washed down on to the clean areas. In years gone by there was the similar experience in relation to prickly-pear. Clean properties were inundated, and the water overflowing the banks of the creeks carried prickly-pear seeds and leaves on to clean properties. This involved the holders of such property in an enormous expense. Unless some basis can be arrived at whereby the noxious weeds question is made a national one, as has been done in the case of prickly-pear, a great hardship will be inflicted on those people who, for a long period of years, have endeavoured to keep their properties clean. A palliative would be to insist that Crown lands and reserves be kept clear. The noogoora burr is one of the greatest difficulties we have to overcome at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It might be made a Commonwealth matter.

Mr. MOORE: I do not know that it is altogether a Commonwealth matter. My experience has been that there has not been much trouble in Victoria and South Australia.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are having a good deal now.

Mr. MOORE: In the West of New South Wales there has been a good deal of trouble, but the State that has the most suitable climatic conditions for the propagation of the burr is certainly Queensland. It is a very difficult question, and I understand that the Prickly-pear Land Commission or the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has been studying the question to see whether there is not some biological means of coping with the pest. The provisions placed in the Act of 1927 were ample if they could have been administered, but it was found that they could not be administered without inflicting an injustice on people who were doing their best. No matter how earnest the Minister may be in his efforts to cope with the question, he will not be able to do so because people holding land subject to the noogoora burr pest have not sufficient money to enable them to cope with it. Either their areas are too large or the cost of clearing is too great in comparison with the value of the land.

I am pleased to see that the Minister is continuing the wool relief scheme for the grazing leaseholds, preferential pastoral holdings, and others for another year. The Government of the day were subjected to the most stringent criticism by members of the Opposition in this matter, but the present Government evidently recognise that the scheme was justified. If it is justifiable now, how much more so was it when it was originated? I recognise that the Minister is doing one of the things that are absolutely necessary if the wool industry is to be preserved. He is making provision for the scheme to be continued for another year, but probably it will have to be continued from year to year until the improvement in the industry becomes permanent, and not an improvement of a few months like a flash in the pan. Under prevailing conditions and until there is a review of the whole position, it will have to be recognised that this relief will have to be forthcoming. In very many cases the rents for pastoral holdings and grazing selections were fixed when the price of wool was at a high level. Rents were raised in conformity with the price of the commodity, and now when the price has fallen as it has there must be a readjustment. And the scheme cannot really be designated a relief scheme. It is a recognition of the fact that the prices of wool and stock have come down in such a way that rents will have to be reduced in conformity with the selling prices of the products of the land.

With regard to the leasing of forestry areas for grazing, I do not know what the Minister really means. I understand that grazing rights have been given for such lands.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is a better tenure.

Mr. MOORE: I suppose if there is going to be a better tenure considerably more responsibilities will be placed upon the lessee.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is so.

Mr. MOORE: In forestry lands there is always the risk of fire. Of course, when the land is used for grazing purposes the risk of fire in the grass is minimised to a great extent. However, I presume there will probably be fairly stringent conditions so far as the lessee is concerned. The question of fire and similar matters will have to receive consideration. The poaching of timber also comes into the matter. It is necessary to have a provision covering that. There has always been a provision that men carting timber could have grazing rights over lands classed as forestry areas, and certain grazing rights have also been granted, although I do not know for what periods. I understand they have special leases. I have no objection to that so long as the forestry areas are properly administered.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The holders of existing tenures will be given an opportunity to convert.

Mr. MOORE: That is very satisfactory. I recollect the occasion when a large area of land was held in the Kirrama district, and it does seem a pity if forestry land cannot be utilised for revenue purposes by being leased as grazing land.

I agree with the reasonable proposal that the tenants of the Prickly-pear Land Commission shall now be brought under the jurisdiction of the Land Court. It is much better that the Land Court should exercise its jurisdiction over the whole of the areas of the State rather than that there should be dual control, which inevitably leads to dissatisfaction. There must be dissatisfaction if one class of Crown tenants is given different treatment from another class.

I am quite in accord with the proposal to transfer the administration of soldier settlements to the Agricultural Bank, but there is just one point on which I am not quite clear. There are cases where the Agricultural Bank has refused to make advances on certain securities, but the Land Administration Board has furnished the necessary financial accommodation. The loss incurred is then charged to the Chief Secretary's Department, but this department has no say whatever as to the wisdom or otherwise of making the advance in the first instance. The Chief Secretary's Department is called upon to bear what the Agricultural Bank considers to be the loss on these transactions, and it appears to be anomalous that it should have no control over the matter and that it should simply be called upon to pay the account at the end of the year. That appears to me to be a very unsatisfactory way of conducting the business, and the whole system should be placed upon a much better footing. One department should be called upon to accept the whole responsibility instead of being able to push some of that responsibility on to the Chief Secretary's Department.

The proposal to allow the Land Court to decide valuations in connection with certain bores on Mount Abundance is quite a reasonable one. I know that there have been quite a number of complaints regarding the matter, but the Bill might have gone a little further and dealt with trust bores, which in some cases are taken over by the Irrigation and Water Supply Department whilst others are not. It always seemed to me to be a wise procedure to allow local people to conduct trust bores so long as they provided the necessary service and collected sufficient fees to pay interest and redemption. The local people thoroughly understand the position and are better able to attend to the matter than the department. When local people are carrying out their duties in an efficient way it is a mistake for the department to take the control out of their hands and to conduct the bores according to their own ideas. The local people are in a much better position to settle disputes than can the department by sending out an inspector. Disputes will arise when there is an undue amount of evaporation from the drains during the summer months and the volume of water available to settlers is much less than during cooler periods of the year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They would not collect the fees.

Mr. MOORE: In some cases the bores have been taken over by the department where the trustees were not indebted to the Treasury at all. I do not know the reason.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Solely because of overdue accounts.

Mr. MOORE: I can quite understand the department taking over control where the trustees have refused to meet their obligations. I understand that an officer of the department attends a meeting of the trustees annually for the purpose of seeng that an adequate rate is fixed to enable interest and redemption payments to be made, but that does not necessarily mean that the trustees will be able to collect the fees. It seems to me to be reasonable and in the best interests of the settlers that the bores should be controlled by the trustees where they are providing the service and collecting sufficient fees to meet their obligation to the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will get a full return prepared for you.

Mr. MOORE: I shall be very interested to see that return, because complaints have been made that in some cases bores have not been taken over, although they were behind in their financial commitments, whilst other bores have been taken over notwithstanding that their financial responsibilities had been met. If there is to be discrimination, then that discrimination should be exercised in favour of those trustees who have met their liabilities rather than those who have failed. That is not in the Bill, but the point should have been cleared up when a Bill like this is introduced.

I see nothing in the speech of the Minister concerning the Bill that will be disadvantageous to the settler. It appears to be one that the Opposition can support, unless there is something in it which the Minister has failed to mention.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [11.49 a.m.]: This Bill is probably the result of the experience the Minister has gained in his department. The difficulties that beset settlers have, no doubt, been brought home to him. I am pleased that after many years of agitation and representations to the department the Minister has now seen fit to introduce this Bill, which we hope will be of great advantage to settlers and assist them out of their present difficulties.

One provision that must appeal to every representative of a country constituency is that which makes provision that settlers who have not living areas may receive additional areas. I have spoken on that subject on many occasions, and it is unfortunate that their plight in this respect should have continued over such a period of time without any attempt to rectify it. These settlers work their areas year after year, and after becoming encumbered in respect of advances from the Agricultural Bank discover that they are too small to obtain a living from. It is unfortunate that those conditions should have been continued until many of those settlers have been ruined and driven off the land. That shows the need for first-hand information and consideration of every phase of land settlement before land is subdivided for settlement. Even the introduction of the provisions in the Bill will not extricate many settlers from this difficulty, because it is quite impossible for the Government to grant them an additional area of Crown land, as all the Crown land in their

locality has been selected. Their only hope is to purchase additional land.

This Bill also seeks to reduce the period of notice for the eradication of noxious weeds from sixty to thirty days. The subject of noxious weeds is an acute one, and it is so detrimental and far-reaching that a full inquiry should be made into the whole question. It is becoming a dangerous problem in many districts. The ex-Secretary for Public Lands has given instances where Crown lands have been the breeding grounds for noxious weeds, which have been carried to creek flats that were previously clean. No matter what notice is given, the fact remains that in many cases it is impossible for settlers to cope with the position. A great deal depends on the situation of the country. For example, where land is liable to flooding and becomes infested with noogoora burr seed from Crown lands at the head of a river, it may be impossible for eradication to be effected in one year.

Mr. SPARKES: The position should be tackled at the head of the river.

Mr. EDWARDS: As the hon. member for Dalby reminds me, the Crown land at the head of the river is probably the distributing agency for much of the noogoora burr. In some cases it is not merely a question of cutting the burr once; so thickly infested does the land become that the work is a continuous job. Other factors, too, accentuate the difficulty. I have seen instances on the Downs and in the Burnett district where local authorities have sent men to cut burr on reserves and roads before the burr has seeded. The burr so cut has been burnt, but frequently on the site of the former fire a beautiful crop of burr has grown in the following year. I mention these instances to show the difficult and far-reaching nature of this question, and I suggest that the Minister have a report furnished to him showing the extent to which farm lands are infested with noxious weeds as a result of Crown lands and local authority roads and reserves being the distributing agencies for the seed.

No opposition will be raised to the relief that is being extended to show societies to mortgage for other than permanent improvements. It was most unfortunate that the Government saw fit to discontinue the grants previously made to those societies, for they have done and are doing a magnificent work in the development of this country. Frequently a visit to a local show, by means of which the potentialities of a district can be appreciated, has resulted in people from other States selecting land in Queensland. It is pleasing to know that the Minister recognises the good work of show societies.

No doubt, at the second reading stage, a further opportunity will be afforded to discuss this measure, on which the Minister will possibly enlarge. I am pleased that the Bill will provide "further measures of relief to certain Crown tenants." I hope that relief will be extensive, because I have always held that if the people on the land are properly cared for, so that they can establish themselves solidly and develop the country, all the people will benefit.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) [12 noon]: I listened carefully to the statements of the Minister regarding the provisions contained in the Bill, the object of which appears to be to remove the anomalies that now exist in many cases. In a State like Queensland, covering a vast area, with a great diversity in climate and soils, it naturally follows that land settlement questions should be investigated from time to time. On the information supplied by the Minister it seems to me this Bill will be helpful to the people on the land.

One important matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Minister concerns national parks. It appears that two or three other Land Acts are involved, and I consider it would be advisable for the Minister to provide power under this Bill for the Forestry Board to deal with matured timbers in national parks. In the vicinity of Brisbane we have a national park containing about 60,000 acres. It is a wonderful park, with views equal to any in Australia and probably the world. Anyone who visits that area cannot but feel proud that Queensland possesses such a beautiful park; unfortunately, comparatively few people have an opportunity of visiting it owing to the fact that there are no good roads to that area. I am not advocating the destruction of our forests, but I consider there is waste timber on the National Park that could be removed. The money obtained from it could be utilised to provide proper road access to the park. When the local authority in that area made a suggestion to the Government on those lines, it was told that that could not be done because the national parks were under a special Act of Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are under the control of the Forestry Department. We are considering another control.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I understand that even the Forestry Department has no right to touch them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, we have done so. We have allowed trustees to remove the timber and sell it and use the money for the purpose of improving the park. We are considering another control for national parks.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I am pleased to learn that. At the present time the National Park is isolated. This area should be made accessible to the people, because it is a heritage we ought to feel proud of. In view of the fact that power already exists to deal with the timber in the area, I suggest that a survey should be made to see if something cannot be done along those lines. This is a national matter, and deserves sympathetic consideration by the department.

Question—"That the resolution (*Mr. Pease's motion*) be agreed to"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

LAND ACTS (CROWN DUES) RELIEF BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) [12.8 p.m.]: I move—

> "That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to provide a measure of relief to certain Crown tenants under the Land Acts and for other purposes."

This Bill is really a corollary to the previous measure, and as indicated on that Bill, deals practically with the relief to the settlers of the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley. The Bill sets out the machinery whereby the Crown can grant a measure of relief to Crown tenants engaged in agricultural, dairying, and mixed farming when their dues are in arrears for two years or over. Selectors of grazing selections and lessees of pastoral leases are excluded, because relief has been already provided for these classes of tenant. Town and suburban lands are also excluded.

Crown dues and the other terms used in the Bill are defined so that it will be seen exactly what classes of relief can be taken into consideration. Crown dues cover all payments that may be made to the Department of Public Lands by selectors, a term which is also defined in the Bill. Mortgages for rural loans and mortgages to the Agricultural Bank are not covered by the terms of the Bill. Crown dues are defined as—

> "Annual rents or instalments or of survey fees due to the Crown under the Land Acts or amounts due to the Crown under any mortgage or charge relating to wire, wire netting, water facilities, or under agreement relating to purchase of improvements from the Crown."

By these definitions the whole system of granting some method of relief to the settlers of the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley is covered.

Mr. EDWARDS: All the settlers are covered?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Anyone who is two years in arrears. That is the qualification.

Mr. KENNY: It only applies to the Burnett lands?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No, it does not apply only to the Burnett. Any settler in Queensland, under the definition that I have given, will have the right to apply if he is two years in arrears. Any selector or lessee, other than a selector or grazing selection lessee, or pastoral holding lessee, or lessee of town and suburban lands, whose dues are in arrears for two years or more at the date of the passing of this Bill, may apply for relief.

Mr. KENNY: What would you say was relief—wiping off the dues?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will develop my argument. The time for making the application must be within six months of the passing of the Bill, the idea being to restrict the operations of the Bill to a specified time. We must have some finality in order that we may understand what revenue the Crown will receive. The principle adopted in giving relief is that first the Bill applies for a period of six months, and if it then is found that that period is not sufficient an extension of time may be allowed not exceeding twelve months. If anything beyond that period is necessary, of course it would mean the passage of another Bill and the obtaining of the sanction of Parliament.

Mr. SPARKES: Take the case of two settlers, one behind and the other not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The one not behind does not come under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. SPARKES: He would have a hardship.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He may have better land. We are making the method of application as easy as possible for the settler. Each settler will fill in a printed application form, together with a statutory declaration, which will be referred to the Land Administration Board, which is empowered to refer the matter to any land commissioner or departmental officer to hear evidence, or to deal with it itself. Any officer so appointed is afforded full powers under the Official Inquiries Evidence Act. The object of the Bill is to make it as easy as possible for the selector to submit his application. He merely fills in a form, sends it to the office in Brisbane, and if after inquiry it is considered that he is in need of relief his case can be dealt with. It may be necessary to have officers appointed to deal with applications on the spot in such cases as the Upper Burnett and Callide districts, where an investigation was carried out some time ago, and the Bill gives full power to do so. The application for relief must contain the following information:—

> The holdings held.
>
> Amount in arrears and nature thereof.
>
> The reasons that they have not been paid.
>
> The use to which the holdings have been put during each of the five years preceding the application.
>
> Income derived during such years.
>
> Present use of the holding.
>
> Any other prescribed matter.

It will be seen that the application form covers the whole of the matters to be considered.

Anticipating the speedy passage of this Bill, we have already established the necessary machinery to carry out certain investigations. A committee of three members operating under the jurisdiction of the Land Administration Board is sitting in Brisbane, and at the present time is examining all the claims that were submitted to the Committee of Inquiry that carried out the investigations into the Upper Burnett and Callide lands earlier in the year. The committee did its work thoroughly, it examined some hundreds of witnesses and dealt with their claims in detail, and it is not desirable that all this ground should be covered again. It has been decided to take the report of the Committee of Inquiry and hand it over to the investigating committee, together with all the material placed before the Committee of Inquiry. The Committee of Inquiry came to certain findings, and the investigating committee now sitting in Brisbane will say whether the findings were correct or not, according to the evidence. The matter will then go on to the Land Administration

Board, which will report to me, and I will submit the matter to Cabinet for consideration.

The Committee of Inquiry recommended that the Land Court should investigate these cases, but hon. members can understand that it would take months, and probably a year at the very earliest, before the Land Court could finalise all the claims. It would be unsatisfactory if the Land Court were to deal with the matter piecemeal, and of little benefit to the settler who is in dire straits at the present time. The procedure will be for the investigating committee now sitting to submit its report to the Land Administration Board, the board to report to the Minister and the Minister to Cabinet, where the matter will be finalised and full relief will be given.

Mr. KENNY: What will happen to those people who have already taken action to forfeit their selections? Will they have an opportunity to take advantage of this Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have no tenants like that. No such action has been taken in the Burnett district.

Mr. KENNY: It has occurred elsewhere. If I can quote you a case, will you allow this person to take advantage of the Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, provided he is not out of court. He cannot take advantage of the Bill if he has walked off his property.

Mr. KENNY: He is still on it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The matter will be investigated, but he must be two years in arrears.

Mr. KENNY: He is eight years behind.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The matter will receive attention. The nature of the relief may be all or any of the following:—

1. Suspension of payment of arrears for a specified time, and payment thereof in instalments.
2. Capitalisation of arrears and adjustment of repayment of capital debt, plus arrears.
3. Remission of penalties.
4. Extension of mortgage repayment periods.
5. Adjustment or writing down of Crown dues which are likely to be beyond the selector or lessee's capacity to pay, having regard to the productive capacity of his land.
6. Any other prescribed relief.

Hon. members will see that provision is made for extending the utmost amount of relief.

The Minister may either approve, refuse, or refer the matter back for further inquiry. If he approves of the recommendation it is submitted to the Governor in Council for confirmation. This procedure follows in the main the provisions for relief under "The Land Acts Amendment Act of 1930," which was introduced by the Moore Government to give relief to holders of certain cattle lands.

The decision of the Minister is final and without appeal. Nothing in this Bill confers on any selector or lessee the right to relief. This follows the principle which was enacted in both the 1927 and 1929 Acts. Upon the approval and confirmation of relief the necessary adjustments can be made, and the securities are construed accordingly. There are also saving clauses.

It is also provided that, notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the Governor in Council may, by Order in Council, extend the operations of the Bill to cover a selector of a grazing selection who, pursuant to the Land Acts, is entitled to use the whole or any part of his selection for agricultural, dairying, orchard, or general farming purposes. That is intended for the purpose of bringing within the scope of this Bill certain settlers of the Upper Burnett and Callide settlement schemes, who also are carrying on grazing pursuits. The whole object is really to clean up the position regarding the Crown settlements.

The matter has exercised the serious attention of the Government. In my second reading speech I purpose outlining the position that has arisen in the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley settlements, as it does not appear to be generally understood. All Governments have done a good deal in connection with these settlements. There is a tremendous burden on the Crown in regard to them. Not only has the Government resumed land in those areas for closer settlement purposes, but they have built railways and roads. There was a previous inquiry into the condition of these settlers. The Government of the day some years ago caused the position to be investigated by a very efficient board. That board travelled a good deal, and took a great volume of evidence. The late Government gave effect to a good many of the recommendations of the board, particularly as to water facilities. That was in 1930, yet within two years we found the settlers in most distressing circumstances, and that they are committed to the Government in a sum of approximately £50,000. Hon. members will see how quickly settlers can get into a bad position, for in 1930 the Government of the day thought that satisfactory adjustments had been made. I am told that the main cause of their difficulty was two years of continuous drought, during which their arrears accumulated so quickly that to-day they amount to £50,000 to the Department of Public Lands alone. There is practically no hope for these settlers under present conditions. The position has agitated the mind of the Government. We have given a good deal of relief already. Not only have Crown dues fallen in arrears, but the Department of Labour and Industry has made advances to keep the settlers on the land and enable them to carry on their work of dairying and cotton growing. I travelled through the area in company with the hon. members for Normanby and Port Curtis, and can honestly say that in all my experience I never witnessed more distressing conditions. I give credit to these settlers and their wives for battling on and endeavouring to carry out their purpose in spite of their difficulties. The job of remedying their position is a very big one, and that is why this Bill seeks to confer certain powers on the Minister rather than the Land Court. Relief must be given quickly. It may be said that as the settlers are not paying their Crown dues it really does not matter if action is not accelerated—why worry about it? But I find that a considerable number of these settlers are very much worried with this debt staring them in the

face. This measure will have a psychological effect upon them, and will encourage them to go ahead with their tasks. If a certain portion of their debt is written off, they will know just what liabilities they must carry for the rest of their term. The position will therefore be very much better for them than if they were faced with an outlook of these accumulated debts, which it is impossible for them to meet.

Mr. KENNY: Will they still have to pay the same rent?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is power to reduce the rent. We shall have full power to do anything to meet the situation. The situation is much more difficult than most people imagine. For some months past the hon. members for Port Curtis and Normanby, together with other hon. members, have been forwarding me letters from local producers' associations and others complaining of the delay of the Government, more particularly of the neglect of myself and my department for not doing something. They say that their position was investigated early in the year, and ask what has been done. Anyone who knows anything about the area realises that in order to do the job properly full information must be available.

The Committee of Inquiry travelled extensively and made an interim report and subsequently a final report. The Land Administration Board carefully considered the matter. Naturally some aspects required further consideration, because the Government desired to finalise the matter once and for all. A nasty situation has had to be faced. We want to keep these 1,200 or 1,500 settlers on the land. That, I take it, is the desire of all hon. members. Something effective must therefore be done so that the settlers may have a chance of making a living. The actual charges are in some instances too high. That is not general, but in some instances the rent and charges for water facilities have amounted to 30s. a week, and the return of the settler concerned has not been as high as that. Half the settlers have been self-supporting and able to maintain their payments; it is with the other portion that we are attempting to deal. At the second reading stage I shall give particulars of the arrears of rent, etc., and deal particularly with the settlers in the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley district.

Mr. KENNY: Those farmers who have paid up their dues may be in debt to other people.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: All those questions will be taken into consideration. The Government have decided it is better to deal with the arrears first. Hon. members should appreciate my position. It is my duty to the State not to allow a considerable amount of arrears to accumulate, and until this Bill is passed I have no power to do anything in regard thereto. It will be apparent to hon. members that those people who have been able to maintain their payments have had better land, better conditions, or better marketing methods than the other settlers. At all events, the idea is to finalise the position in regard to the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley settlers, but provision will be made for other settlers who desire to make application in accordance with this Bill, which will give to agricultural, dairying, and mixed farming producers what we have been able to extend to pastoral lessees and grazing selectors. Hon. members will realise that it is not easy to deal with these people, whose circumstances are entirely different from those of the pastoral lessee and grazing selector, but it is the desire of the Government to clean up the matter once and for all. We hope that some other relief may perhaps be provided in connection with the rural relief scheme so that the settler may be retained on the land. Our aim is so to deal with the matter that after a measure of relief is given these settlers will stay on the land and be able to meet their dues. It is hoped that the action taken will serve to emancipate 1,200 to 1,500 settlers.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [12.28 p.m.]: I welcome the Bill so far as its relief provisions are concerned. I know a good deal about the country referred to, for the Upper Burnett portion is in my own electorate, and I am acquainted with conditions in the other portion. I quite agree with the Minister's views in regard to the settlers in that area, for these people have been and still are "up against it." One point I would emphasise: the Minister from his investigation that the settlers who deserve consideration are not defined by the mere possession of any particular land. I mean that one settler who has struggled and worked hard, probably with the aid of his women folk, may have been able to meet his dues, whilst alongside him a settler with equal facilities may not have worked as hard and allowed his arrears to accumulate. I take it a review of rents and water charges must be made if permanent benefit is to be conferred. If not, then the measure fails. At the same time, we do not want to give the impression that any relief granted will not be final. Unfortunately, a growing feeling exists in Queensland that if you do not pay anything you may later get the debt wiped off by the Government. No one has advocated more strongly than I have that relief should be given from the hardships endured by many settlers, but at the same time it would be serious for the Department of Public Lands if the impression were allowed to go unchallenged that "You need not go on paying; the whole thing will be wiped off." I feel sure no member of this House desires to support anything like that.

In reviewing these rents and water charges I hope the Minister will give the same reduction to those men who have worked very hard and denied themselves many pleasures, and have paid all they owe, as will be given to those who are in arrears. Hon. members know that it is a very nightmare to some people to owe money, whereas other people appear to thrive in such circumstances. I desire fair and equitable treatment for the man who has struggled, and probably sacrificed many of life's pleasures in order to meet his dues to the Crown. He should get the same consideration as the man who probably has not been as careful and self-denying. The practice appears to be that the individual who gets behind in payments has the debt wiped off and the person who has paid up gets no concession at all. I have in mind the big Jimbour settlement. It is admitted that that land was too dear in the first place, and our thanks are due to the members of the commission that put the settlement in the satisfactory position that appears to exist there to-day. The conditions under

which the settlers went on to that land were such that it meant failure from the start. There were men on Jimbour who paid up all their dues and went so far as freeholding their land, and they did not receive any benefit as the result of that commission's work.

I do not desire to give this matter a political complexion. My sole desire is to assist the settlers. I want the Minister to give some consideration to those who have paid their dues, and thus bring them into line with those settlers who have received concessions.

Mr. FOLEY (*Normanby*) [12.33 p.m.]: The measure outlined by the Minister is very welcome indeed, particularly to a big section of farmers in the Callide and Upper Burnett area. It is one thing to introduce legislation and have it passed by this Chamber with the object of giving a measure of relief to the settlers concerned—and they are really in a deplorable position principally as a result of drought conditions and heavy charges for water facilities—and it is another thing to see that legislation is administered justly and sympathetically. I think the Minister will find that will be the problem with which he will be faced after this legislation has been passed. My reason for raising this point is that the Land Administration Board, which will be the body directly concerned in the administration of this legislation, consists of men who have for some time been administering this area and have not given—I say that deliberately—as sympathetic consideration as they could have done to the settlers in that area.

At 12.34 p.m.,

Mr. W. T. KING (*Mareeba*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. FOLEY: First, members of the board were members of a commission in 1930 that inquired into the conditions of these settlers. They made their report to the Moore Government, and legislation was passed by this Chamber giving a measure of relief to the settlers along the lines recommended by it. Those members of the Land Administration Board should have been at least in a position after careful investigation to see that a greater measure of relief was required at that time to place those settlers on a stable and secure basis; but instead of that a sort of compromise recommendation was made to which effect was given by the Moore Government. And now, as the Minister says, within a few years we find the position has developed into a worse state than it was previously. Then an independent Committee of Inquiry was appointed, the personnel of which did not include any person who had had anything to do with the previous administration of the area. This body made its report, and what do we find? The position is as has been pointed out by the Minister to-day. The Land Administration Board which in the first place made an extensive inquiry into the conditions of the settlement is now, as it were, to check up on the recommendations of this more recent Committee of Inquiry. I am afraid that if the Minister does not keep his eye very carefully on practically every individual case that comes before this board, he will find that there will be just as much dissatisfaction after these decisions are given as before the Committee of Inquiry commenced. That is the position as I see it. Unless the matter is carefully and sympathetically administered and some policy laid down for the guidance of the board—some policy as to how it shall act, what relief it shall give—we shall find a greater mess after the operations have finished than before they commenced. I make these few remarks in the hope of inducing the Minister to realise the necessity of keeping a careful eye upon every case that comes before the board in order to see that the Bill is sympathetically administered. There are many men on that settlement to-day who are not paying and cannot pay their dues to the Crown. I consider the wisest method, now that the Government are taking the necessary powers, is to wipe off the dues altogether, and make the first loss the last loss. This would give the settlers a little more heart to face the future. They are not receiving it now, and it is only slow torture, prolonging the agony, to wipe off a small portion of the debt and provide a longer period for its repayment. If the attitude I suggest is adopted the mess will be cleaned up, and, as the Minister stated, it is the desire of the Government to clean up the position once and for all.

The question of water facilities is a tremendously big one for many settlers in the area concerned. We had the spectacle of legislation being passed a few years ago to enable the Government to settle that area and provide for the establishment of water facilities thereon. A water facilities branch was set up to attend to that matter by the Land Administration Board. We find the Land Administration Board has apparently closed its eyes to what was going on in that branch under its control. We also find water facilities being established on some of those selections at a cost greater than the value of the land itelf, making it an utter impossibility for the selector ever to meet his obligations to the department. The Land Administration Board—and this is the body that is now going to review the whole position—has enabled that to go on year after year. The result has been pointed out by the Minister. Men have been saddled with dues to the Crown averaging, in some cases, up to 30s. per week, when they were not making that amount a week from the selections in question. Had the Land Administration Board been watching that branch carefully it would have seen to it that water facilities were not established on certain blocks at such a cost as was eventually imposed on the holder. This question will have to be carefully surveyed, and, in my opinion, a wiping off of all arrears is the only possible way in which the problem can be solved. If there is not a wiping off now and for ever, it will constantly recur.

An hon. member has raised the question of the man who has met his dues. I recognise that that is rather a ticklish problem and one that will require deep consideration by the Minister, but I think the Minister will find that in most cases where a man has been able to meet his dues it has been the result of the fact that in the early stages of the settlement some farmers went in for cotton growing and dairying immediately. He was better able to meet his liabilities than the farmer who pinned his faith to cotton growing alone. The cotton grower who experienced two successive bad years and a partial failure in the third year found

himself in deep water, whereas the settler who commenced dairying and cotton growing combined had at least some income from dairying to enable him to meet his liabilities to the Crown. I think the Minister will find that it is the settler who commenced as a mixed farmer—dairying and cotton growing—and not the farmer who commenced as a cotton grower alone, who has been able to meet his obligations; and naturally it will be difficult to class him as a needy case. However, there may be other cases on all fours with those that will need relief, and I feel sure that the Minister will give them every consideration.

I shall have more to say on this matter at the second reading of the Bill, but I should like to emphasise that it will be welcomed by those settlers in the districts where the greatest amount of relief is required, and it is to be hoped that these men will be placed on a much more stable footing for the future.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [12.45 p.m.]: The Minister appears to think that all the concessions that are to be extended by this Bill will make for a solution of the trouble, particularly in the Burnett area. The hon. member for Normanby omitted to mention one material particular and contented himself with blaming the Land Administration Board for everything that was wrong in the Burnett settlement. The Burnett settlement was a political blunder, not a departmental blunder. The land was resumed and, contrary to the advice of the department, it was made available in areas that were far too small. The cost of settling this area per settler was enormous, far in excess of any cost per settler ever experienced in Queensland before. There was no possible chance of the settler making a success, work as he might, and enjoying a profitable market. It was pointed out during the debate on the Bill relating to the settlement of the Upper Burnett and Callide lands that a blunder was being made in that the areas were not made available in an adequate size. It was not possible, even for capable settlers, to succeed, and some of the settlers at present in the area would never succeed anywhere. That type of settler is to be found in every area, men with no aptitude for the job who suddenly resolve to go on the land, and go there, and of course fail. But that is no reason why there should be tremendous writings off everywhere. Some of these men would fail even if the land were given to them for nothing. What is to be gained by making any writing off on their behalf? They would still be a failure. The conditions were deliberately weighted against the settler. How is it possible at this stage to remedy that error?

Investigations were carried out in connection with this settlement before, and those inquiries were supposed to settle the question for good. The recommendations were carried out so far as they could be carried out, and relief was given so far as it was possible to provide relief to the settlers in their existing circumstances. The settlers had a voice in the matter as to whether they would go off their land and take another portion elsewhere or whether they would not. We are now going to make enormous concessions. The rest of the country is going to carry the burden whether the settler was to blame or not. It is quite true, as the hon. member for Normanby pointed out, that some of the water facilities provided cost more per acre than the land was worth. The mistake was made in the first instance by making areas that were too small available. That can happen at any time. The Department of Public Lands was not responsible for that. The Secretary for Public Lands may have been, because the work was done by the Irrigation and Water Supply Sub-Department. We all know that at that time the latter had any amount of money to spend in order to get water on a selection. That was its job, irrespective of whether the cost was too much for the place to carry. That water had to be provided, and it was provided. The whole difficulty arose because the work was not so much official as political. The blame for the whole thing must be taken by the politicians in the first place—the Labour Government. The Government are now going to make enormous concessions all over Queensland in the matter of back rents, but the poor beggar that paid his rent is to get no concession. He struggled with his job and worked and met his commitments. Some of the men who got behind never worked, and never tried, yet they are going to get all the concessions, while the man who put his money and his time into his property will not be entitled to any concession. Some of these settlers put the whole of their earnings into their selection. They did their best to make good, notwithstanding that the area was not big enough and that there was no possibility of their making a living out of it. They still struggled along to meet their liabilities. For all this they will get nothing, but the chap who sat down and said that "the job was no good" will get all the concessions.

Mr. CLAYTON: Some of them went out to work in order to keep their farms going and meet their commitments.

Mr. DEACON: I am quite sure they did. The Minister cannot give all the concessions to those who are behind in their Crown dues, irrespective of whether they tried or did not, or whether they could have done better than they did, and leave the men who struggled to make a partial success of the job and paid their way to carry on in the same old way. It is scandalous if the men who worked and tried are to be treated worse than the men who did not.

When we get the Bill we can study its provisions and suggest to the Minister how he can meet those cases. Suppose a man foresaw that his area was too small, and that it was not worth while to work it, yet hung on in the hope of receiving concessions. He is no more deserving of concessions than his neighbour who worked his land and made every endeavour to meet his commitments.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What are you going to do with the outstanding dues? I have either to put those men off or make concessions.

Mr. DEACON: If the Minister is to make concessions to Crown tenants, whether they are deserving or not, well and good, but what about the man who struggled harder than the other man and succeeded? What will the Minister do with him? He had similar country, and similar conditions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No, not the same, because the other man owes the Crown some money and cannot pay.

Mr. DEACON: You propose to let him off scot free?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have either to do that or put him off the land.

Mr. DEACON: What are you going to do with the man who worked his land? The Minister must see the position.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I see the position all right.

Mr. DEACON: The hon. gentleman must see that it is quite unfair. He is going to give a concession throughout the State to those who have not attempted to pay or work their land and no concessions to the other man who has made an attempt. If a man is undeserving, put him off, and give somebody else a chance. What is the use of keeping a man on the land who is not going to be a success? At any rate, if you do keep him on, you must extend the concession to others, for it would be totally unfair to give concessions to those who have been successful in scoring off the Government, and so extend the same treatment to others. In some cases the person may not have paid anything, perhaps deliberately did not try——

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not think that.

Mr. DEACON: I bet there are instances where a man did not try.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not think so.

Mr. DEACON: There is no settlement that I know of where there are not instances of that kind. The first settlement was deliberately made political. The man of the right political colour could get a selection; the man who was not, could not. Some not of the right political colour, are the ones who tried to work. When I inspected the place I saw different cases on similar land; I saw what one man had done and what his neighbour had omitted to do. The Minister is going to the help of the men who had done nothing and who have not tried. I quite understand that cases of hardship exist. In the Burnett district members of the Labour Government of the day made a mistake and because of that mistake some settlers had no chance of succeeding. It is all right for this Government to acknowledge the mistake and to do the best possible to put the matter right; but the Government will not settle the Burnett lands—or indeed any other lands in Queensland—if they encourage men not to pay. Is it not putting other settlers into the position of saying, "If those in the Burnett area did nothing and did not pay, why should I?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We are trusting to their honesty.

Mr. DEACON: The hon. gentleman can always trust the honest man, but in actual fact he is here rewarding the dishonest man.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is not dishonest if a man cannot pay.

Mr. DEACON: The Minister cannot tell me how he will try to distingush between those who could not and those who did not. They will all get the same treatment, the same reward. Both are rewarded more than the man who tried and did. The man who worked long hours and did his utmost and succeeded, and in doing so perhaps denied himself and his family, will get no concession at all. The Minister cannot single out for punishment the best men, the most deserving men, the triers—and that is what it amounts to. The Minister will single out these men to be laughed at by the other fellows. We cannot carry on land settlement in Queensland on such terms.

This measure of relief is intended for those on perpetual leasehold land, but those who acquired agricultural farms at a high figure will get no relief. The Minister cannot leave the position in that condition.

At 2 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. WILLIAMS (*Port Curtis*): I feel sure that this measure will be appreciated by hon. members on both sides of the House, and will be passed with as little delay as possible, because the relief that will be afforded by this measure is urgently needed by the settlers. I understand this measure is designed and destined to afford a measure of relief to those settlers who, as a result of the hard times brought about by droughts and low prices, have not been able to meet their dues to the Crown. They have made a gallant struggle against adversity, and I am happy to think that a Government of which I am a supporter has taken a step to do something for them.

In the Upper Burnett area the following factors have predominated: Small areas and heavy commitments to the Crown, including payments for water facilities. These people have no hope of meeting their commitments under the present conditions. I welcome the Bill for the reason that it will afford the necessary and desired measure of relief to these people.

The Minister dealt with the principles of the measure, which are clear and convincing, and there does not appear to be any necessity for a prolonged discussion on this matter at this stage. I am pleased to know that the matter is not to be left to the Land Court. In my opinion that would have been too cumbersome a procedure and would have led to further delays.

I was interested in the remarks of the hon. member for Dalby, who represents an electorate in which there are a number of settlers who have met with a period of adversity. The hon. member for Normanby and myself also have settlers in our respective districts who are concerned. The hon. member for Dalby made a special plea on behalf of those settlers who have met their obligations. The hon. member for Normanby and myself represent districts in which there are settlers who have met their commitments.

Mr. SPARKES: And probably borrowed money to do it.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Many of them, as the hon. member interjects, probably borrowed money for that purpose. One or two of them may have been fortunate enough to win something in the "Golden Casket" which enabled them to pay up their Crown dues, and others probably had to be accommodated with money by their families.

Mr. SPARKES: Or from the storekeeper.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Others have probably got loans from the storekeepers. In many

instances, particularly in the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley, the storekeepers have stood to those settlers to an extent that is deserving of the highest commendation. If it is possible for the Minister to grant some concession to those deserving settlers who have met their commitments during hard times he will be administering the measure in a very sympathetic manner. The hon. member for Normanby enlarged on that aspect of the question, and there is no need for me to add to what he said. Unless the administration of this Bill is sympathetic, it will lose a good deal of its value.

I regret the "cold water" attitude of the hon. member for Cunningham. He did not think the settlers in the Upper Burnett area should be receiving such consideration, or indeed settlers in any other part of the State. He said he had little faith in the Upper Burnett settlement. I know those settlers probably more intimately than the hon. member does, and with all respect to the ex-Secretary for Public Lands I know they are good fellows. As I pointed out earlier, they and their families have struggled along in times of adversity, and I regret the attitude of the hon. member.

Mr. DEACON: I did not say they were all wrong. I claimed that the other good ones were not rewarded.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The hon. member has forgotten what he said before lunch, but "Hansard" will show that he stated that he regretted what the Minister was going to do for the dishonest fellow. He referred to them as being dishonest. He stated that a number of them should not have gone on to the settlement at all. He expressed the hope that the dishonest fellow would not be considered. In reply to an interjection from the Secretary for Public Lands, the hon. member stated that he would put them off, and would not give them any redress in the direction we intend. I regret that very much. I am sure that the settlers will not forget what has been said by the ex-Secretary for Public Lands. The settlers are a fine lot of fellows, and with their wives and children have struggled to meet their commitments to the Crown. Because they have struck a period of adversity when prices were low and seasons against them, I think it is only right and proper that assistance be given them. The Government and the Minister are to be congratulated upon bringing forward a measure that will afford some relief to people who are so much in need of it.

Question—"That the resolution (*Mr. Pease's motion*) be agreed to"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Carpentaria*) [2.10 p.m.]: I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend 'The Jury Act of 1929' in certain particulars."

The object of the Bill is to abolish special juries. In future, criminal trials will be held before twelve jurors, and civil actions before four jurors. There will be no alteration, whatever, in the qualifications or disqualifications of jurors. The one and only object of the measure is to abolish special juries. At this stage I do not think it necessary or possible to give any further information. If any questions require elucidation, I shall be pleased to give the requisite information at a later stage.

Mr. DANIEL (*Keppel*) [2.12 p.m.]: I desire to obtain information from the Attorney-General as to exactly what is meant by this alteration to the Jury Act. Is it the intention to abolish special juries, or is it the intention to alter the qualifications of special jurymen?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The only object of the Bill is the abolition of special juries.

Mr. DANIEL: Instead of having to have certain qualifications the whole of the public will be eligible for appointment to a special jury? Any person?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The only persons who will be qualified to be jurors in the future are the persons who are now qualified to be common or special jurors.

Mr. DANIEL: I think it is a farce even to have a jury. Everything else is changing in the world with the exception of trial by jury, and I think it is about time that we did away with juries, and that a trial of any person should be conducted by three judges.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: By the consent of the parties now a case can be heard by a judge sitting alone.

Mr. DANIEL: To-day a special jury is constituted by commission agents, auditors, bookkeepers, and certain other people. Let us suppose that an accountant is brought before a judge, and there are four accountants on the jury, to whom do you think they are going to give the verdict?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The accountant?

Mr. DANIEL: Of course they are. That was done in a recent case, although I do not want to bring the case in if I can possibly help it. I might tell hon. members that one of the jurymen on that special case was an auditor of the council, and he was called every year as a witness at the Land Valuation Court, for which he received a certain remuneration from that council. Whom do you think he would give the verdict to, unless he was a man who had the courage of his convictions? He would simply give it to the plaintiff—to the man who had employed him before. Another man on that jury had also been an auditor for that council, and he admitted to one person in Rockhampton that while he was auditing the clerk had drawn £20 of petty cash at a time when he had a credit of £15. Yet he sat on that very

case and gave the verdict to that very man. One of the men who were on that jury was nursed from the day that the case started to the day that the case finished. He met him in the morning before going into court, when he came out at lunch time, and he met him again in the evening. I consider that when jurymen go on a case they should be locked up until the case is over, otherwise there is great danger of somebody using his influence. I might also say that even the judge—I mean Mr. Justice Brennan—spoke to the jury during this trial on the very Tuesday—I do not remember the exact date, but the day that we adjourned at 1 o'clock. He met the jury outside the court, and he spoke to them for nearly five minutes. I drew the attention of three witnesses to it at that time. If that is a fair thing, well, I do not know what justice is.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I hope that the hon. member does not suggest any ulterior motive in the judge.

Mr. DANIEL: I consider that a judge should keep aloof and not speak to the jury during a case of this kind or any other kind. I do not care what anybody says, I consider that this Bill should go even further. It should do away with special juries, and bring in common juries to try all cases.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The Bill will abolish special juries.

Mr. DANIEL: The hon. gentleman said just now that it was not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There will be no special juries in the future.

Mr. DANIEL: Will there be any special jury for civil sittings?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Special juries are abolished for both civil and criminal sittings.

Mr. DANIEL: I could say a good deal on this question, but I do not think it is wise at the moment. It is about time, however, that people are appointed on juries who can take an interest in the matter they are called upon to decide, particularly in dealing with a litigant who has been attempting to do his duty in the interests of public funds, especially when his efforts in that direction have cost him £3,000. What have I got for doing my duty to the people? Nothing at all, except a lot of trouble and expense. The other day one of the judges said that the matter was sufficient in itself to go to a jury. Even the judges who sat on the appeal were not in agreement on certain matters. His Honour Mr. Justice Henchman made a statement, which was not published in the press, that if the report was published it was not published by Daniel but by Griffiths as the result of a motion passed by the council asking Griffiths to come in to read the report and answer questions; therefore, there could not have been anything published by Daniel. When the judgment of the court was given not a word was said about that. Mr. Acting Justice Hart said he could not understand how the jury assessed damages at £400 for my saying to another councillor, "Have some consideration for someone else as well as yourself. With due deference to the clerk I wish this matter to be dealt with in committee." He could not see how the jury assessed damages at £400 for that statement, together with another £400 for publishing the report of the investigator, as the two things dovetailed into one another. The jury also found damages at £400 for reading the report in committee, yet they could not sustain the letter on which the two things hinged. That letter was delivered to the ex-clerk advising him that Mr. Griffiths was to make an investigation. Yet they found for £400 on this very point and £400 on the report! Although the court could not agree on these two matters it did find that there was sufficient evidence before the court to go to a jury to be analysed and a verdict given upon it. It is about time that this Government took such matters into their own hands and when they are appointing a judge——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given the hon. member a good deal of latitude, but I must remind him that the only question we are discussing is the class of jury, or constitution of the jury. He must not deal with any matter outside that question.

Mr. DANIEL: I am aware that we are only dealing with that question, but I am pointing out that we should also deal with the question whether certain men are sufficiently qualified to deal with the subject before them. That is the point. I recognise that you can have any sort of a jury, but are they qualified to determine the case before them? Are they qualified to determine the issues and give a verdict against a man like myself who has done his duty to his country? That is the position, and it is about time that the Government took such action as they might deem necessary to remedy the whole system.

Question—"That the resolution (*Mr. Mullan's motion*) be agreed to"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Carpentaria*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

EUNGELLA STATE FOREST AMENDMENT OF BOUNDARIES BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"*Short title*"—

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [2.25 p.m.]: During the second reading the question arose as to the disposal of the timber on this area, and I expected that the Minister would have given me the information that I sought. In the report of the Committee of Inquiry—I have only glanced at the report, which has not been circulated amongst members—I notice that the Forestry Department's estimate of the marketable timber on the area is set down at 7,000 feet per acre, and, as approximately 16,000 acres are concerned in this Bill, hon. members will see that a large amount of marketable timber, estimated at

about 100,000,000 feet, is involved. We have no right to throw that timber away or have it destroyed——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Clause 1 deals with the short title of this Bill, and the remarks of the hon. member are not pertinent to it.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—"*Certain parts of the Eungella State Forest made available for selection—Schedule*"—

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [2.27 p.m.]: I do not propose to repeat what I have already said and shall continue from where I left off. (Laughter.) Approximately 100,000,000 feet of timber is on that area, and we have no right to throw it away.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will not be thrown away.

Mr. DEACON: That is what I want to know.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Haven't you read the Bill?

Mr. DEACON: Nothing is said in the Bill as to what will become of the timber except that the clause says that the land shall be dealt with as Crown land that is thrown open for selection. As a general rule, when Crown land is thrown open for selection the timber goes to the selector.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Under certain conditions!

Mr. DEACON: What are the conditions? Nothing is shown in the Bill as to what the conditions are. It is really difficult to get information from the Minister. I ask the Minister to take us into his confidence regarding the Eungella gum, tulip wood, and other useful timbers that cannot be treated as a flea-bite and of no account. The Minister could have explained on the second reading what he intended to do in this regard. If he can give us the information now I will allow him to do so and reserve the rest of the time allowed me under the Standing Orders till I hear from him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) [2.31 p.m.]: Action is being taken to market cedar and beech, which are being removed from positions previously alienated under special lease tenure. The department proposes to grant perpetual leases next year over these blocks and the Forestry Department is now removing this timber as early as possible. The whole trouble is the lack of proper roads. There is only one team working at present and it is removing timber at the rate of 8,000 super. feet per month. It has not been possible to operate on the blocks to be excised from the State forest under the Bill for the following reasons:—A road has not been constructed to allow for removals and it is doubtful if haulage is yet possible: the timber could not be cut and left pending haulage, owing to the risk of deterioration: the market is limited and is required for that timber from portions 45, 46 50, 51, 59, 60, and 62. Those are the special lease portions. It has taken the Forestry Department all its time to get the prices for the timber that it is getting from these leases, commensurate with the expenditure. After the settlement is opened and the roads are constructed by the Public Estate Improvement Branch and the Main Roads Commission, it will be able to deal with the timber in that area. It is not only the timber in this area that we are dealing with now.

In the settlement of all the blocks the usual protection of timber will take place. That is being done wherever we are opening up land. A settler can remove timber, but only after paying a royalty to the Crown. It may be possible, when this area is developed with roads, for the Forestry Department to take charge of the marketing of the timber from the settler. The settler may get a good revenue from the timber but the Crown will still exercise the sole right to deal with that timber. For five years the selectors cannot deal with the timber according to the conditions under which the lease is granted, except by the consent of the Forestry Department, which will probably market it for them. The whole of that area is of no use as a timber area to the Crown. The whole area, both timber reserve and State forest is no good to the Crown because it has no road access. By opening up this settlement we shall no doubt develop the timber reserve, because the roads we put in will be used to convey the timber to the nearest station, Netherdale.

Another factor is that this development goes hand in hand with the Mackay Harbour scheme. That timber cannot be economically marketed under existing conditions. If the timber was hauled to Netherdale and then railed it would not pay, but when the shipping facilities are provided after the establishment of the Mackay harbour it will be handled economically. The timber will be hauled out and the settler will get a reasonable price for it. It will be sent to Mackay and reshipped to the markets. As a result of that cheap handling it will be able to compete with timbers from other areas. We have only to consider what is happening in regard to Cooktown. Because of the cheaper steamer freight from that town, we are able to go 30 miles away from the coast and cut timber, and have it put on the steamer at Cooktown and taken to Brisbane and Sydney, where it commands a fair market. The same will happen when this area is developed and when the Mackay harbour scheme comes to fruition. It will be necessary to have roads into the area and shipping facilities before a payable price can be commanded for the timber. I want to assure this House that the Forestry Department is not surrendering its rights to the timber. The Director of Forests is now a member of the Land Administration Board and he has an equal voice where forestry matters are concerned with each of the other members.

Mr. KENNY: One in three.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is not treated as a political question by these officers. The board is out to do the best in the interests of the State and I am pleased to say it is doing its job very well. The members of that board are working harmoniously. If the timber from that area could have been successfully marketed it would have been. The fact that we are only able to keep one team going in cleaning the timber off these special leases is an indication of the position there. The whole matter is entirely in the control of the Forestry Department. When the settlement is opened and linked up with the main roads then the whole job will become co-ordinated and the Crown will benefit. I look for a very fine return from timber from that area

in the near future. At the present time, owing to the heavy overhead costs, it is impossible to market timber from that area successfully. The settlers themselves will have the right to market the timber on their lands through the Forestry Department. Of course, if they can find a better market outside they will have liberty to do so, but they have to pay the Crown royalties and they have to obtain permission from the Forestry Department to cut forest land timbers during their first five years of occupation. I can assure this Committee that the Director of Forests is a very capable officer and is competent to see that the timbers of the State are properly protected.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [2.36 p.m.]: The reason put forward for the opening up of this land is that they will provide an additional area for dairymen. It is very difficult to understand how an area that contains a quantity of timber can be made suitable for dairy farming unless the timber is destroyed. I understand now that the Minister is going to sell all the timber when the roads make it available, and that the land will be available for settlement only as the timber is sold. There will be no objection to that in itself, if the Crown receives a royalty, as is the practice in other timber districts, but my objection to the general scheme is not one whit lessened. Certainly I am pleased to hear that the timber will not be wasted, because in almost every instance when timbered areas were settled in Queensland the timber was thrown away. Immense quantities of timber of great value were thus wasted. That has been most unfortunate. The use of this area as a timber-producing district will certainly provide an immense amount of work for a considerable time—perhaps, ten years—and what is more to the point, for a very long time timber will be the most valuable commodity that can be taken off this land. It will be a considerable time before the settlers will be in a position to get a return equal in value to that of the standing crop that nature has already provided. I hope the Minister will not give permission to people in certain areas——

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That will be controlled by the Forestry Department.

Mr. DEACON: I am very glad to hear that.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [2.40 p.m.]: In regard to the clause that we are now dealing with, I was very pleased to have the information from the Minister that he has given. The whole future of this land settlement scheme is tied up in this clause. The Minister has stated quite definitely that it is not the intention of the Government to allow this timber to be destroyed. At the same time, it must be recognised that we are opening up these lands for dairying purposes. As the Minister has told us, it is an impossibility to get the timber off these blocks or sell such timber until road facilities are provided. I am then quite satisfied that it will be a few years before this land is ever opened for settlement. The first thing that must be done in any land settlement scheme that is established when dairy products are at the prices they are to-day, is to provide access. The people can then carry on and improve their property in order that they may receive a reasonable return from it. The Minister, in reply to the hon. member for Cunningham, has stated that the timber will be taken off these blocks by the individual men who select them. I consider that is a good idea, but at the same time, if the market for the timber does not exist—and the Minister assures us the market does not—we arrive at the stage where a number of these farmers, in endeavouring to improve their blocks, will seek assistance from the department. If no market is available, then they will not be in a position to obtain a small income whilst improving their blocks. The department and the Government will experience a considerable amount of trouble as soon as they commence to make these blocks available, and if the policy to be adopted is that of removing the timber before the land is made available for settlement, then the settlers will eventually have to be financed by the Agricultural Bank. The operations of the Agricultural Bank have been limited to such an extent that settlers have not been able to work their blocks and make a decent living. If a settler is permitted to market the timber cut from his own block, he has a reasonable opportunity of earning at least a small income during the period of development, pending the time when the price of dairy products may rise and eventually assist him to place his undertaking on a sound economic basis.

If the statement by the Minister is correct that the country is so rough that only 8,000 feet of timber can be marketed monthly from these blocks, how will it be possible for the Forestry Board to market the 100,000,000 feet at its disposal? If the selector is to be restricted to the amount of timber that the Forestry Board determines he shall remove from his block then development will be very slow indeed, and the selector will be unable to earn a reasonable income during the process. At the outset the settler would have to depend upon the income that he could receive from the timber to be marketed from his block, and I am satisfied from the remarks of the Minister that if roads are to be constructed first a considerable time will elapse before the land is available for settlement. Of course, the Bill will be passed to-day, but I urge the Minister again to be very careful to see that the new settlers are given a reasonable opportunity to make a decent living. I ask him to assist the settler in every way to market his timber and to assist him to sell sufficient timber to provide him with a proper income pending the time when a return can be secured from the farm as a dairying proposition.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) [2.45 p.m.]: The department is fully aware of the quantity of timber on the land that it is proposed to open up. Arrangements are being made for the marketing of the timber, and for the first time for many years an application is before the Forestry Department in connection with the establishment of a sawmill to deal with the timber from the land. It has been definitely laid down by the Government that settlers shall be given every opportunity of making a decent living. That is the policy that is being carried out by the board to-day. Negotiations are in train for the erection of a sawmill to deal with timber from the land as soon as it is made available for settlement.

Mr. CLAYTON: Will it be a private sawmill or a State sawmill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A private sawmill. No more State sawmills under present conditions!

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The State cannot be both a retailer and a wholesaler of timber at the same time. If we are going to sell logs then we cannot reasonably compete with the people who purchase the logs from us. It would not be a sound commercial practice to be a wholesaler and a retailer at the one time. At the present time the Government are wholesale sellers of logs, and we are selling more logs now than ever before in the history of Queensland. It is our intention to protect the people who purchase those logs, and that is why a private sawmill is to be erected.

Mr. KENNY: How much do you anticipate will be marketed annually?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That all depends. There is a considerable market for timber from Crown areas, but it will be our first duty to market the timber from the blocks. There is not a great deal of timber on them. I am sure that if the hon. member for Mirani were here he could tell us that much of the country was not forestry country at all, that it comprises alluvial flats. The department, in the opening up of these blocks, is fully alive to all the phases of land settlement. We are not content merely to place people on the land and leave it at that; the settlement as a whole is being wisely considered. This scheme is a natural corollary to the Mackay Harbour scheme.

Mr. KENNY: How long do you think it will be before the land is opened to selection?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We shall be opening these lands for selection within the next six months. The Public Estate Improvement Branch has been constructing roads in the area for the past year. Road access is necessary before land is opened to selection, but so soon as the Public Estates Improvement Branch has completed the roads and they are connected up with the roads to the various centres the land will be thrown open to selection.

The formula in regard to the disposal of timber when forestry lands are designated for settlement, which has been drawn up by the Land Administration Board and approved of by the Government, is as follows:—

"(*a*) When lands are designated for settlement the Forestry Sub-department will be duly advised in order that every effort may be made to effect Crown sales of timber on the lands concerned prior to selection.

"(*b*) After selection, the selector may dispose of the timber on the land during the first five years of the term on obtaining a permit from the Land Commissioner on the following conditions:—

(i.) Full royalty to be paid in respect of all timber to be removed. A refund of the full royalty will, however, be made on the application of the selector in respect of all timber which has been removed from lands which have been felled and grassed or cultivated within a period of twelve months from the date of the removal of the timber."

It will be seen that we are endeavouring to help the settler in every possible way. The remaining condition is—

"No royalty refund will be allowed in respect of timber removed from any other part of the selection."

This is a ruling that has been approved by the Government. These conditions apply to every form of land settlement that has taken place since. It has been applied to the Rise and Shine lands, the O'Connell River and the Eungella lands; and when the Clump Point and Palmerston lands are opened to selection the same formula will be adopted.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [2.50 p.m.]: There is just one matter, and it is an important one, on which I desire information from the Minister. It affects this and the other land measures we have been discussing to-day. The Minister has disclosed that a very serious state of affairs has arisen in some settlements, and in order to prevent a repetition of those happenings I hope he will see to it that he will not cut up these areas in blocks that are too small for the settlers to make a living from.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WIENHOLT: That appears to be the basic difficulty and fundamental trouble at the root of all these settlement failures. If the area is a little too large no harm will be done, and it will eventually right itself, but if the area is too small we shall be landed with great trouble in the future.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [2.51 p.m.]: I welcome the idea of cutting up these lands for settlement if the forestry interests are conserved, but I am not quite satisfied that there is not going to be a destruction of the timber that is now growing on the land. I ask the Minister to pay more attention to the advisability of making more land available nearer Brisbane than this land, which is situated in the North.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have not got any.

Mr. NIMMO: This land is situated in the Mackay district. Everything seems to be happening around Mackay. Is there no land about Brisbane that we can throw open for selection? We have land in the Yarraman area which can be made available. The Minister should adopt a more vigorous land policy that will settle more of our lands about Brisbane. He is now merely following in the footsteps of the Moore Government in opening up land for settlement, and in opening that land in reasonable areas. I congratulate him on doing so. We have many unemployed people in Brisbane, who are anxious to settle on the land. Why send them away up to North Queensland when we have good lands available nearer Brisbane? The Minister said that he has no land available near Brisbane. Any Minister who makes that statement shows a great weakness.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: My board told me that.

Mr. NIMMO: We can secure land that has been already alienated and has not been put to any use. Much of that land is alongside railways. It should be acquired and made available for people who desire to go on the land, because it is in close proximity to a good market. I do not intend to delay the Committee, but I would again emphasise that a more vigorous policy of land settlement, especially in the Brisbane district,

should be put into operation. When this land in the Mackay district is thrown open there will be eight or nine hundred applications for each block. The whole position is absurd.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*) [2.54 p.m.]: I intend to support the clause before the Committee and after listening to the Minister and knowing that the Land Administration Board, on which the Forestry Department has representation, has gone thoroughly into the matter, I do not think we should delay the opening up of this land by reason of the fact that a certain amount of timber is on it. We could very well have co-operation between the settler and the Land Administration Board, so that the timber could be removed as settlement proceeded.

A matter touched upon by the hon. member for Fassifern is one that I again stress to the Government. I urge that the Land Administration Board should not err on the side of opening up this land in too small areas. A statement issued by the Minister's office and over the Minister's signature, shows that in this area there are 11,225 acres, which are to be divided into forty-six portions. Thus, the average area of the holdings will be 244 acres. I urge the Minister to give serious consideration to the advice given him by men who have had long experience in land settlement, especially the hon. member for Fassifern and other primary producers on this side of the Committee. I want to ensure that the areas allotted will be sufficient to give a living to a man, his wife and family. I am doubtful whether the Minister has given sufficient consideration to this matter when I recollect the happenings associated with the opening of the Dawson Valley and Upper Burnett lands. The Labour Government erred miserably in the opening up of those lands, as the result of which the settlers have been put to enormous expense and inconvenience and great cost has been incurred by the Government. In the interests of the incoming settlers, I urge the Minister to accept the advice offered to him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) [2.58 p.m.]: In a previous debate the hon. member for Wynnum suggested that instead of opening up this land we should secure land closer to Mackay. In a desire to secure the most complete information I telegraphed to the land commissioner at Mackay, and have received the following reply from Ranger Bergin:—

> "Your wire. Commissioner absent. Apart from land selected for dairying or used for cane growing there are isolated areas only, mostly second-class dairying country on coast, being from about two thousand to five thousand acres. Eungella and Blue Mountain lands constitute two-thirds cream supply Mackay factory present time. Manager states coast supply always poor last half of year."

Further, the following is copy of telegram received from Mr. Rollison, the manager of the Mackay butter factory, regarding cream supplies from the present Eungella settlement:—

> "From first to twenty-seventh October amount of cream received from Eungella 6,000 lb. Number suppliers 13. Cream supplies increasing rapidly. All past monthly records are kept at head office, Gladstone."

In response to a communication with Gladstone, the directors of the Port Curtis Co-operative Dairy Association, Limited, advise through their deputy chairman that they still consider that the Eungella lands should be opened for settlement in the best interests of the Mackay district. Moreover, Mr. Hill, managing director of the Port Curtis Co-operative Dairying Association, Limited; Mr. Gallety, director of the association; Mr. H. A. Webster, director of the Mackay butter factory; and Mr. S. E. Wilson, superintendent manager of the association, have all recently inspected the Eungella lands and have returned to their association with glowing reports. All steps have been taken by the Government to confirm the belief that this land is suitable for dairying.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*) [2.59 p.m.]: May I ask the Minister a question? Does the Minister consider the average area of 244 acres sufficient on which to make a living?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It all depends.

Mr. CLAYTON: That is the trouble.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [3 p.m.]: The cream supply for the whole area at Eungella was about 6,000 gallons, and it has been stated that cream supplied from the Eungella area comprises two-thirds of the factory's supply. If 6,000 gallons represents two-thirds of the supply, it appears there is some error somewhere. Even supposing you doubled the amount, it seems it would be a losing proposition from a dairy factory point of view. I hope the Minister will stick to the timber proposition. The timber is there, and it will return something. If the Minister sticks to his first idea of selling the timber he will be on sound ground; but if he is going to give way to representations from this dairy company, which wants more cream, he will not be on the right track. It will be much better for the scheme, his own sake, and the reputation of the country, if the Minister sticks to his first idea.

Mr. O'KEEFE (*Cairns*) [3.2 p.m.]: I am very much surprised at the attitude adopted by some hon. members opposite in objecting to this land settlement scheme.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Who is objecting?

Mr. O'KEEFE: The ex-Secretary for Public Lands. He wants to preserve this as a forest reserve. One hon. member opposite suggested that we should forgo this proposition and purchase land nearer to some railway line in the south. Have hon. members some friends who have land to sell? This is good land. Officers of the Department of Public Lands have made a thorough examination of this land and reported favourably on its potentialities. It was only yesterday that a bank manager from New South Wales called at Parliament House, and in conversation informed me that he had just returned after viewing these particular lands. I asked him his view, and he said that he had a very high opinion of the fertility of the soil in this area, he considered the timber was

excellent, and from a scenic point of view the area was magnificent and would prove an asset to the State in the future. There should be no fear amongst members opposite in regard to the capacity of this land. It is essential that this portion of the country should be populated. This Crown land is being made available at a cheap rate, and the Minister is giving the settlers a fair deal by giving them the timber on the land. What is wrong with this scheme? Hon. members opposite, who claim to be the friends of the man on the land, and who want people to go on the land——

Mr. KENNY: We do not want you to make a mistake.

Mr. O'KEEFE: Imagine hon. members opposite talking about not making a mistake! Hon. members opposite, who have not seen this land, and who have no idea of its value, and who have not investigated this matter, had the temerity to get up in this Chamber and criticise the scheme and ask the Government to forgo it and purchase land already owned by other people.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [3.5 p.m.]: I made no statement to the effect that the Government should forgo this proposal and buy land near Brisbane. I said that that settlement could be gone on with as well as the settlement of other lands near Brisbane. I know we have thousands of acres in the Yarraman area where the timber has been cut which would be suitable for closer settlement.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Yanango*) [3.6 p.m.]: The Minister is cutting it a bit fine in making the average areas 244 acres. I think the Minister admitted that this land was not what is called dense scrub land. Country that is half box and half scrub is much more difficult and expensive to clear than scrub land; and very often in a locality of that description great difficulty is experienced in burning. That is the great difficulty. Therefore, we should be very careful indeed in cutting up the area into blocks of too small a size. The Bill introduced by the Secretary for Public Lands earlier in the day proves the necessity of providing settlers with sufficient areas of land, and years of experience have indicated a similar result. Practical men, who know land and cattle conditions, consider it necessary to have some surplus land, because in times such as we have been passing through for some little time it is possible to be cornered. A farmer has an increase in stock. He may be breeding up a good herd of cattle, or may have a surplus which is unmarketable, and it is necessary for him to provide agistment for these extra beasts. It may be that he bred surplus stock with the view of making a few pounds to assist him in developmental work. If he has not the necessary area he must make provision for his surplus stock to be agisted in some other district where he will not be able to give them the necessary personal attention. The extra area also enables the farmer to resist the drought periods with greater success. These instances prove how very careful we must be as regards the areas in which we open this land.

I am quite in accord with the views as to the advisability of allowing a settler to have some small portion of timber. In my opinion it is wrong, and always has been wrong, that every stick of timber should be taken off an area before the farmer is settled on the land. The retention of the timber gives him an opportunity of carrying out his building operations. It also enables the settler to sell some of the timber during the difficult early stages of settlement. I realise, of course, that the Minister would have to have inspectors to keep a careful watch over the matter. In some instances it has been known that settlers have gone on to the land, cleared the timber, and then gone off and left the country.

Mr. O'KEEFE: It was done very extensively on the Atherton Tableland.

Mr. EDWARDS: I know it was done in the early days, but there is no reason why that should happen at the present time. In my opinion nothing is more discouraging than for a settler to take up a block of land in rough scrub country, such as is the area under discussion, only to find that there is hardly a stick of timber left. All he finds is the stump with the trees removed. I hope the Minister will take that into consideration when he is allotting the sizes of the blocks in this settlement.

Rather than make the areas too small it would be preferable to place fewer settlers on the land and give them a larger area, resuming some of the land in the Nanango district to settle the others. That land is in close proximity to the railway, and the timber has been practically taken from it. As I mentioned the other day, it would be better to have one prosperous settler than half a dozen settlers in a struggling condition, unable to make a decent living for themselves. Such unfortunate persons are not of the same advantage to the State as a smaller number in a prosperous condition. I trust the Minister will act on my suggestion, because after the mistake is made it is too late—the damage is done. At times it becomes almost impossible to undo the damage, because the settler continues to struggle for a number of years and eventually has to succumb, either because the area is too small or the difficulties are insurmountable. This is not beneficial either to the settler or to the State.

Clause 2, as read, agreed to.

Schedule and preamble agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): I move—

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

Question put and passed.

TRADES AND LABOUR HALL MANAGEMENT BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"*Short title*"—agreed to.

Clause 2—"*Interpretation—Trustees*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): Since this Bill was drafted, one of the trustees, Mr. Charles Williams, died, and it has been decided that the vacancy shall be filled by the nomination

of Alfred Charles Milton. Therefore, I move the following amendment:—

"On page 5, line 24, omit the words—
'Charles Williams.'"

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) [3.15 p.m.]: I quite understand that the Bill is being passed to place the control of the Brisbane Trades Hall under the political wing of the Labour Party, but the Government are adopting a very dangerous precedent in arbitrarily appointing trustees who are political unionists. I advise the Government to proceed very carefully, because in the event of a change of Government at the next election the new Government will have an opportunity of appointing trustees with political aspirations similar to those of the Government then in power. I am merely warning the Government that they are running a great risk in passing the Bill in this form.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 5, line 26, omit the word—
'and,'
where it first occurs."

Amendment agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 5, line 26, after the word—
'Bryan,'
insert the words—
'and Alfred Charles Milton.'"

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 7, both inclusive, agreed to.

Preamble—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 5, after line 5, insert the following new paragraph:—

'And whereas on the fifteenth day of November, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-four, Alfred Charles Milton was appointed by His Excellency the Governor, and with the advice of the Executive Council, in pursuance of Nomination of Trustees as aforesaid numbered 748124 and 805241, to be a trustee of all those pieces of land, being the land described in Deeds of Grant Nos. 107618 and 109069A, in the place of Charles Williams, deceased.'"

Amendment agreed to.

Preamble, as amended, agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): I move—

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

Question put and passed.

FRUIT MARKETING ORGANISATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [3.23 p.m.]: I move—

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

This Bill merely re-enacts "The Fruit Marketing Organisation Act of 1923." The period for which it operates expires at the end of this year. It is desired to continue this particular form of organisation, which is a growers' organisation, and it therefore becomes necessary to extend the life of the organisation created under this Act. It is not necessary for me at this juncture to embark on a discussion of the principles and merits of such a measure. The hon. member for Murrumba made a very excellent contribution to the debate on the initiatory stage of the Bill, and stated all the salient principles associated with fruit marketing. It is merely a formal Bill.

Question—"That the Bill be now read a second time" (*Mr. Bulcock's motion*)—put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. O'Keefe, Cairns, in the chair.*)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*): I move—

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

Question put and passed.

STALLIONS REGISTRATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [3.28 p.m.]: I move—

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

Although there appears to be some diversity of opinion as to how a properly regulated system of stallion control, more particularly on the disease side, should be implemented, I cannot believe there is very much doubt in the minds of people who have given any attention to this subject that there should be some form of properly regulated and co-ordinated control for the purpose of maintaining our horse population at the highest possible point of efficiency. For some considerable time legislation dealing with this question has appeared on our statute-book, but unfortunately the application of that legislation fell into abeyance during a period, particularly because the cost of administration was too great. It was never argued that the whole system should be abandoned, but it was successfully argued that the cost of administration prohibited the efficient administration of that legislation, and with the exception of horse parades that were held in Brisbane, no inspections took place

over a period of some three or four years. The fact that horse inspections were maintained at Brisbane, which was the most convenient place in which to hold them, indicated quite clearly that it was not a question of desirability, but a question of finance, that prevented the more complete working of that legislation.

Two years ago we introduced a Bill, which subsequently became law, providing for the constitution of district boards, and although I was assured by hon. members opposite that it would not be possible to get people to act on those district boards, I am happy to say that no difficulty in that direction was encountered. As a matter of fact, the cost of administration and inspection has been reduced to a minimum, and as a consequence we have been able to embark upon a very wide survey of the stallions of the State. This survey has disclosed the necessity for such action. The proportion of horses disallowed by these boards has been particularly high—high, of course, because of the fact that many stallions were paraded that perhaps had not been foaled when the original legislation ceased to operate. As a consequence, we can say to-day that a material elimination has taken place of those stallions that are unfit for service. I think we can also claim that the actions taken have not been arbitrary, and that wherever a border-line case has presented itself, the desire has been evident on the part of the board and of myself not to inflict any undue hardship on the owner of the stallion.

I recognise that a successful policy of stallion control on the pathogenic side can only be established step by step, and if we were to utilise the full forces at our disposal the whole scheme would break down. It is evident that a greater number of people associated with this question are to-day very urgently in favour of some regulation of this description.

The question has very frequently been raised that this is a tax on the farmer. I have heard the hon. member for Fassifern and other hon. members include this in the category of such taxes.

Mr. SPARKES: Why not?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. gentleman says "Why not?" which discloses a lamentable want of knowledge on his part as far as the incidence of taxation is concerned. This is not a tax. It cannot be construed as a tax. It is quite obviously to those who do not view this question with a biased mind a fee for a service that is provided on behalf of the individual by the State. There is a vast difference between taxation and the collection of a fee for a service. If this service had to be paid for without the instrumentality of the State and without the organisation of the State it would be infinitely more expensive to the stallion owner than it is at present. Of course, hon. members appreciate that—the question has been so frequently raised in this connection.

Some hon. members argued in this connection that the farmer is penalised. Does the man who has a stallion for stud purposes penalise anybody who may utilise the services of that stallion by sending mares to it? On the contrary is he not penalised if the stallion is inefficient? Should not the State provide some safeguard to the farmer who, quite obviously, is deserving of that safeguard?

Then there is a broader question at stake. I have received from time to time, especially during the last twelve months, inquiries from overseas sources as to the possibility of supplying suitable horses, more particularly, I am afraid, for remount purposes, to various companies overseas.

Mr. SPARKES: You could not do it from Rewan.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not interested in Rewan. This fact does emerge that if we are to build up an export trade the basis of that building must obviously be the quality of the horses of Queensland. The consequences are that if we do not give close attention to the questions involved in stallion control and freedom from disease, even if we do build up an overseas market we shall not be able to sustain it.

Mr. SPARKES: Don't you think the people in the industry will look after that?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The answer to that is the records of the Stallion Board which show a very high percentage of rejections from time to time and in each season, which proves conclusively that there are factors not associated with conformation, and it is on that point the department must discharge a State duty rather than an individual duty.

The Bill before the House at the present time is, I believe, not very contentious inasmuch as it really makes some machinery alterations for the better administration of the Act. It determines how age shall be reckoned on a legal basis. The Act makes provision for the elimination of donkeys from the Act, and very clearly specifies that an application for registration made on the 1st April of any year shall be in respect of the registration for the following year, as from the 1st August. Incidentally that has been the practice, but there appears to be some doubt about the legal sanction for the continuation of that practice. The other provision is that racehorses in training shall be exempt from the Act. Those are all the principles of the Bill.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [3.36 p.m.]: I make no apology for opposing the imposition of this stallion tax. The hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill calls it by another name; but the people who pay it pay it as a tax pure and simple. The Minister also has the best of intentions in regard to the production of horses suitable for export, and he says that in order to bring about that production an army of inspectors must be sent round to tell each individual the class of entire that he must keep. I should like the Secretary for Agriculture to note what has been done in Australia in regard to our sheep industry. It is admitted throughout the world that Australia produces the finest merino wool in the world.

Mr. O'KEEFE: That is correct, the ram.

Mr. SPARKES: I did not think the hon. member knew that one. He has a lot more brains than I gave him credit for. The Minister will find that the sheep industry was brought to its present high pitch without any interference or assistance from any Government in Australia. You yourself, Mr Speaker, represent a very big pastoral

area, and will know the high state that has been reached in Australia in the production of wool. As you are aware, that was done without any Government interference or any regulation as to the class of ram that the hon. member for Cairns tells me is used. That breed of ram was not the result of any board or regulation. If that be the case regarding sheep, why cannot we produce horses of like quality by similar means. I should like to tell the Minister also that we have produced a breed of cattle, the Illawarra Milking Shorthorn—a very highly bred cattle—without any assistance from any Government. Surely the same class of people can produce horses of equally high quality! The Secretary for Agriculture is aware of the recent disposal of a Government horse-breeding station, a stud farm at which no expense was spared. When that stud was disposed of 230 odd horses brought only a miserable £700. In spite of this, the hon. gentleman tells this House that he will proceed upon such lines to breed a horse suitable for export. He, or officers of his department, versed in theory, will instruct the practical man. As I have said on previous occasions, the hon. gentleman and I have gained our knowledge in different schools, he in the theoretical and I in the practical; nevertheless, he is endeavouring to tell the practical man what stallion must be used. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the man who is breeding will breed animals of the best class, not only for himself, but also for export?

A very important matter that the Secretary for Agriculture appears to have overlooked is that when a stallion is examined it is usually out of condition. Nine men out of ten will then condemn him. Any practical man will give one the information that if the stallion is out of condition and ragged looking at the end of winter probably that beast will be condemned and the breeder will be told to take an over-fed brute, not worth "two bob." because he is in condition. That is an actual fact. Anyone in the business knows it. I say in this House that there is no man born who can judge an animal out of condition. Place the best bull that can be bred, but out of condition, in a show ring, and alongside him place an animal in condition, but not half as well bred, and the ordinary person will "plump" every time for the bull in condition. What will happen? The inspector of the hon. gentleman's department will come along. A horse is led out to him, which has probably been working in the team. Probably his feet have got locked, trampled upon. There are side bones, and all that sort of thing. He will be condemned by the official. He is condemned although he might be producing some of the best horses in the country, whilst a well-fed stallion just out of the show ring is passed.

The Minister has agreed to omit racehorses and donkeys from the operations of the Bill—and in that connection I understand that he is going in for a donkey himself. I say that with all due respect to him, feeling sure that he will tell us if I am wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have absolutely no knowledge of it.

Mr. SPARKES: Then I have been badly informed in that respect. I appeal to the Minister in all seriousness to allow us to breed our own horses for our own personal use. He may be able to adduce an argument, weak no doubt, in support of his contention respecting a horse placed in a field to which mares are sent, but should anyone be permitted to say what class of horse I should breed for my own particular work? Surely the Minister will not tell me that I do not know the class of stallion that I should have to breed my own stock horses? Is an inspector from his department to come to my property to say, "Sparkes, that horse is no good, we do not want him"? The owner of a stallion may have to bring his horse in a distance of 70 miles for examination at considerable trouble and expense, and in 99 cases out of 100 he will be condemned if he is out of condition. I make that statement definitely and emphatically, and I appeal to the Minister to include a provision in the Bill permitting persons to breed their own type of horse for their own particular requirements. There is a great use for stock horses on the big cattle properties in the North and North-West, and the men who fatten bullocks will tell you that these beasts are never worked in the yard. They are drafted on the camp, and all the work is carried out by the use of good stock horses. Surely we know the class of horse that we require! I again appeal to the Minister for the right to keep the stallions we desire for ourselves. Is he going to tell us what type we should keep? We will keep the horse that suits us best. We want to breed the type that meets with our requirements; we know the type, and we know the entire that we should have. I appeal to the Minister to give us this right.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [3.45 p.m.]: I have always regarded the condition prescribed by agricultural societies that they will not permit a horse to enter the ring until it has received a Government certificate of soundness as being eminently wise. That arrangement is fair to owners, and it has considerable merit from the point of view of the State, but that does not mean that I entirely agree with the views that have been expressed by the Minister.

His proposal to amend the law to remove all donkeys is a fundamentally sound principle. The proposal to omit racehorses is included to meet the objection of trainers put forward mainly by the hon. member for Murilla, who unhappily is away to-day.

Dealing with the age of a horse, I am reminded that there is the old saying that every horse has a birthday on 1st August. Perhaps, on reconsideration, the Minister may be prepared to allow that date to stand in connection with the ages of horses.

A very much more formidable part of the Bill, and one which the Minister overlooked explaining, unintentionally no doubt, is clause 4. The new principle which he is enacting there is going to interfere with owners using a stallion condemned only for type for his own mares and not otherwise. It is on that principle particularly that I wish to address my remarks to the Minister, for this is another twist of the screw on the unfortunate horse breeder and primary producer. There is a difference between soundness and standard. Soundness at least seems to me to be a question of fact that can be decided by a veterinary umpire or judge in much the same way as a race

is decided when the judge decides that the horse first past the post is the winner. When, however, you bring into question the standard or type of the sire, then you bring in a matter purely of opinion. No one knows better than you do Mr. Speaker, how opinions differ as regards horses. You will hear various different comments when horses are being judged at the Royal National Show, and an extraordinary diversity of opinion that prevails around the ring. I remember one very celebrated winner who won the blue ribbon for blood horses in Queensland for several years and eventually went South and won the blue ribbon championship in Sydney that many, myself included, disliked immensely and would not have on any place of their own. But that was purely a matter of opinion. That horse may have been a magnificent thoroughbred, as the judges thought, but that horse never got any stock in the way of racehorses. There was a very famous racehorse years ago, called "David," a beautiful type of horse that won a number of high-class races and was known all over Australia. That horse was sold at the annual yearling sales, at which there was a big circle of bidders, for 45 guineas. Many of those persons one would have thought would have given more for him as a station sire. Good judges tell me that a more beautiful type of horse could not be viewed than "David" when he grew up. I remember a very well known auctioneer of blood stock in the South saying that if he had "Carbine" dog-poor, with his hair turned the wrong way, and in a westerly wind in his saleyard, without people knowing who he was, he would have had difficulty in getting £10 for him. That is the difficulty of judging horses. When out of condition they are amongst the most deceptive things I know of. I have had a certain amount of experience in breeding horses and cattle. I am not a very good judge of stud stock, but so far as I am concerned condition beats me entirely in both cattle and horses. I perhaps shall not be out of order in giving an instance of how deceptive condition in cattle and horses is. Many years ago, when I was a comparatively young man, I went down to New South Wales to buy some Hereford bulls. There was a drought in New South Wales at the time. The bulls I inspected were young animals about 14 months old. They were very poor indeed. The breeder from whom I bought them had no feed and no money to buy feed with. The bulls were as yellow as a guinea, and they looked like poor rams—all head and horns. We had to feed these bulls to get them on to the Downs. One person said to me "Why did you buy such cattle?" The reason we bought was that I saw the mothers and the two splendid imported English bulls that were their sires. I saw the younger crop of calves and their mothers. I was laughed at by people when the bulls arrived on the Downs. Perhaps some five or six months afterwards I went down and bought the next crop of bulls out of the same cows and by the same two bulls, but fat. They were bought off their mothers as yearling weaners, nice and fat, dark in colour, and in splendid condition. When they were brought up to the Downs the same people said to me, "Now you have bought a nice lot of bulls this time."

Something else that the board does not know and cannot know is a horse's progeny. The board does not ask to see what stock the stallion is getting. The board does not see the mare, his dam, nor does it probably know the sire the stallion is by. As regards horse-breeding, we have been brought up in what may be called the school of hard knocks, which is the best school for anyone to learn anything in. I do not know to whom to appeal on the other side of the House for assistance in this matter in asking the Minister to allow horsebreeders to keep for their own use the stallion that they believe is the best for their own purposes. We have not only to breed the horses we require; we have a better test. We have to ride them, and that is the best test of all for a horseowner in regard to the horses he breeds. It is very arbitrary for a Government to say to any horsebreeder, "You shall not use that horse for your own mares." In fact, it is almost insulting to him. When they come round and choose your horse for you I think that to the ordinary Australian is very nearly the biggest insult he can have. I think in some way the Australian would almost rather have his wife chosen for him, than his horse. (Laughter.)

The Minister stated that every man is a specialist in his own line. That is true. People who have been breeding horses all their lives surely know best what they desire. I have very great sympathy with the present Secretary for Agriculture. He is an enthusiast and I admire the way he immediately went up personally and took hold of the measures directed to deal with the grasshopper plague threatening the south-western district of Queensland; but I fear he is a little bit too much guided by veranda bushmen and armchair stockmen. It is their advice that is pushing him along to harass us in this way. I wish to read a letter which has been sent me regarding this particular matter, which is a very important one. My correspondent says—

> "I've been following the parliamentary debate regarding the Stallion Board decision and I would like you to do your best in the interest of the horsebreeder. I have a four-year old Clydesdale colt sire (Gay Hope), numbered in A.C.A. book. Dam by Square Dale imported. This colt was condemned as he was out of condition—"

There we have the very point raised by the hon. member for Dalby—

> "working on the farm—"

The point raised by the hon. member for Cunningham—

> "I have some very fine foals by him—"

The board could have no knowledge of that—

> "I asked the police to try to get permission for me to use my colt for my own private use this season—"

Surely not unreasonable!

> "and I received the reply from the Stock Department forbidding me to use the colt for breeding purposes either privately or publicly, otherwise a fine of £50 would be imposed. This seems beyond all reason—to fine me for using the colt for private use, as that is my own business. I've been a horsebreeder for over forty years, with success. I've sold Clydesdale geldings from £20 to £35. There is no draught stallion in

> Kalbar district this season; hence if this law is carried through Parliament this week I shall have about twenty mares idle this year, which will mean a great loss to me financially."

I should like to ask the Minister: If this Bill is carried, will the provisions of section 4 come into use? I take it the Bill will come into force at once. I do raise the question that the Minister has been badly advised by what I call veranda bushmen and armchair stockmen. I can prove it in this way: Anyone accustomed to and understanding horse-breeding knows what an impossible state of affairs would be brought about if a stallion were to be condemned if he had to be taken out from the mares at this time of the year, above all others. This is just the middle of the season. No horse could possibly be replaced, and his owner would be left with perhaps twenty or more mares without a horse. The man would not even know whether the mares were in foal, and he would have little or no chance of procuring another stallion in time. I appeal to the Minister in this regard, whatever his intentions may be—and I know they are good intentions—to allow these people to keep the horses that they believe to be suitable for their purposes—and they ought to know their purposes—for the use of such horses for their own mares.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Yanango*) [4.2 p.m.]: There is no doubt the hon. member for Fassifern is a man who has had an experience extending over his lifetime in horse-breeding. You, Mr. Speaker, as well as hon. members of this House who have taken any interest in stock-breeding in Queensland are aware that the name of Wienholt is a household word in this State so far as horse-breeding is concerned. It is therefore interesting to hear that hon. member stating his views on this matter in his usual practical and thorough manner. Whilst I admit that I have not had the same measure of experience as that hon. member has, I claim I have had considerable experience in horse-breeding. I was reared amongst horses, and I have bred them myself for quite a number of years; and as a result of that experience, I realise that by this Bill—as well as the Bill which was passed two years ago—the Minister is overstepping all reasonable bounds in reference to the inspection of stallions.

I wish to quote two outstanding cases that have come under my notice during recent years in regard to the very question that the hon. member for Fassifern has raised—horses out of condition. When I was visiting Victoria some eighteen months ago, I saw a stallion in the stable of a noted breeder. I asked the breeder why he kept him, because the horse was not only out of condition but looked to me to be slabsided and presented the appearance of a horse which I would not have taken away at a very low figure. The owner explained the reason he kept him was because he was bred from the best of stock, and as a breeder he was amongst the best. Before I left that place I was astonished to see the foals this stallion had sired come up to the trough to drink. They were fine specimens. The condition of that stallion at that time was such that I would be game to bet that, if the Minister's board or his veterinary inspected him, he would have been condemned.

Some years ago a man purchased a horse at the Toowoomba saleyards for 17s 6d., when there were good judges of horses sitting round the ring. This man did not purchase the horse because he thought it possessed quality. It was out of condition at the time, and he took it home. He brought that horse back to the next Toowoomba Show and won the weight-carrying hack contest with him, and sold him for £22. That is an illustration and a definite proof of how impossible it is for a Stallion Board—I do not care what experience the members thereof may have—to pick a horse that may just be out of condition at the time. I say definitely that there has been many a good horse condemned during the last tour of the Stallion Board that should be breeding stock at the present time in Queensland. There are any amount of instances of this nature.

Despite the fact that the breeding of draught horses is at one of its peak periods—£25 to £30 is being obtained for a two-year-old draught filly or colt at the present time—the Minister, with his legislation and his Stallion Board, has put many horses out of action. Some of the districts have been left without a horse at all. That is not in the best interests of the State, and I trust that the hon. gentleman will give consideration to the suggestions that have been made by the hon. members for Dalby and Fassifern—that a man shall be allowed to use his own horse. I, perhaps, would go a little further than that, and say that it is completely wrong for persons, known as the Stallion Board, who are supposed to be judges of horses, going round and condemning the horses of other people, which may happen to be out of condition or may have had a certain difficulty in regard to seasons and that sort of thing. If a qualified veterinary surgeon, a man of absolutely definitely proved skill, so far as diseases in horses are concerned, was prepared to condemn a horse I would say that that might be an argument for destroying him. We should only need to call the Minister's attention to the breeding of sheep and cattle in Australia and to the breeding of those horses that were shipped overseas by the hundreds and thousands some years ago. These latter animals brought a vast amount of money into Australia, and were not bred under the regulation of a Bill of this description. They were bred by horse-breeders who knew their business to such an extent that their animals were bought up and sent overseas. The reason why the horse-breeding business went out of existence was not because the beasts were not bred on the right lines, but simply because of the advent of the motor car, which displaced horses as a means of transport for the time being. I am satisfied that were breeders left alone and allowed to work out their own destiny they would not only breed the right class of horse for their own use, but also animals that they could dispose of at a good figure.

There is one other matter I should like to discuss—that is, the question of determining the age of the horse. Clause 3 proposes to insert a new subclause (1A) in section 6 of the principal Act, reading—

> "For the purpose of computing the age of any entire horse or stallion, every entire horse or stallion foaled in

any year as defined in this Act shall be deemed to have been foaled on the first day of such year."

I desire to ask the Minister what is meant by that? Does it mean that foals that are being foaled during the present and the succeeding months of the year are to be declared as being foaled from the 1st January last?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not at liberty to ask questions during the second reading stage of a Bill.

Mr. EDWARDS: If that is what the Minister intends, then it is entirely wrong. As a matter of fact, all foals are foaled during October, November, and December. Draught horses, particularly in the farming areas, are mostly late foals—in December, some of them admittedly in January. My interpretation of this subsection would mean that the age of a foal foaled next month would be taken as from the 1st January. The foal would be twelve months old when he was born, as it were.

Mr. WATERS: Twelve months old when he is born?

Mr. EDWARDS: The hon. member may laugh at the Bill, but that is what it means.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are not reading it rightly.

Mr. EDWARDS: The Bill definitely says that the age shall be calculated as from the first day in such year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the hon. member would turn to the definition of "year" in the principal Act he would then see exactly what the Bill meant.

Mr. EDWARDS: The Bill says that no matter in what month a horse may be foaled its age shall be taken as from the first day of that year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You should read the Bill in conjunction with the principal Act.

Mr. EDWARDS: Every stud book recognises that the year shall commence at 1st August, and that is the date from which the age of a horse is reckoned. I hope the Minister will give the matter further consideration.

I do not wish to quote my own experience with Government veterinary officers, but it has been a pretty sorry one from the point of view of the department. I appreciate what is being done, but after all we should consider the interests of all the people vitally concerned. Whilst I agree that the Minister is endeavouring to do something that may eventually help the horse breeders of this State, still he is going the wrong way about it by adopting measures that are far too drastic. If the Government are determined that these horses shall be examined by a board, then the veterinary officers who are paid large salaries by the Government should at least be qualified to decide whether a horse is fit to breed from or not. I admit that it is necessary to examine a horse to ascertain its soundness and whether it is free from disease, but we should stop at that. The people engaged in the breeding of horses of all kinds will conduct their business in a proper way, and they will do it far better without the guidance of the board, the Minister, or the Government.

Mr. BELL (*Stanley*) [4.15 p.m.]: I realise that the intentions of this Bill are to extend a certain measure of protection to the people, and I agree that there should be some assurance that stallions for public use are up to the required standard of efficiency, but the Bill goes a little too far. The horse-breeding industry can only be developed after a more or less close study of its requirements over a period of years. I understand the object of the Minister is to encourage the breeding of horses for export, and whilst I appreciate his ambition I must warn him that there are many aspects of the horse-breeding industry in Australia that must be considered. When a blood stallion is placed on a draught mare one is lifting the standard of horse breeding to a certain extent, but in placing a draught stallion on a blood mare one is really going backwards in the matter of horse breeding. The Minister will have to go to considerable lengths to achieve the purpose that he has in mind and to remember that the trotter or pacer is the greatest menace to the breeding of horses for export from Australia. He is not going to achieve his laudable purpose if he is going to allow trotters or pacers to be used for the breeding of horses for export.

If that is done the usefulness of the Bill must be destroyed. It is not always the horse that catches the eye of the judge in the show ring that we set out to buy for the purpose we have in view. We buy a horse for a particular use, or to produce horses of the type we intend to develop. The Minister must give private owners credit for knowing their job. The private owner is entitled to breed a type of horse that he considers best suited for his purposes, provided those interests do not conflict with public interests. This Bill does not achieve the object of the Minister, because owners of stallions rejected by the Stallion Board are allowed to return them to their paddocks and then continue to use them to serve their purposes. Every one knows that in our large areas an arrangement usually exists between neighbours, and that arrangement might in this case mean the production of horses by stallions contrary to this legislation. There is also the stallion that is to be found roaming at large on public roads. I have seen them running among horses in my own district. They apparently have no owners, or if they have they are not known. The stock inspector certainly does not know the owner, and he does not see that they are destroyed. Therefore, the provisions of this Bill, in interfering with the rights of private owners, are a little too ambitious. I appeal to the Minister to consider favourably the suggestions made by the hon. members for Dalby and Fassifern, and allow private owners to have stallions for their own private use without being affected by the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [4.21 p.m.]: There is no necessity for the examination and registration of stallions. This legislation has been in force since 1923. It has never at any time done any good, because it has not been enforced. Therefore, it has not interfered very much with the breeding of horses. It has had no bad in it, because it has not been enforced. That is its actual results to-day. The Minister now wants to go further by introducing an amendment forbidding for any purpose whatsoever the use of stallions that are not sound. Any

legislation which does that is going to impose another hardship on all the smaller men who have to get the best stallion they can; that is, the best one available. They cannot buy a high priced animal. The quality of the stallion they purchase is determined by its price. They cannot get a stallion any other way. They must either breed or buy one. The Minister now proposes to forbid anybody from using a stallion that does not suit either the board or himself. That in itself is an outrageous principle to enact in a free country like this. A man should not be forbidden to use a stallion for his own purposes, a stallion that suits him, and gets stock that suits his work. In no free country in the world is there legislation such as this. The people in this country are struggling and have to get along the best they can.

We have also to remember that the usefulness of a horse does not always depend on his good looks or on his conformation. It depends on what work he can do.

At 4.23 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Hanson, *Buranda*) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. DEACON: We can all show instances of stallions that were condemned by the Stallion Board, yet were good stock-getters just as capable as stock got by the best. It seems to me that the Minister in this case is following the opinions of the owners of show stallions and is not paying any regard to the case of a man who has to have horses to do his work—horses that apart from good looks must have the main qualification of ability to do the work. The Minister will take away the stallion of an ordinary farmer because the stallion is not good looking enough to suit the people with show stallions, sometimes because he interferes with their profit, and because they cannot sell so many of their stallions as they would like. Take the case of that farmer whose stallion is taken away from him. The stallion is to be castrated or destroyed. What is the farmer to do? It is not always possible to buy another. In the first place funds will not stand it in many cases, and in the second place stallions are not always available. There may be a stallion which suits the Stallion Board—a show stallion travelling in the district—but my experience and the experience of every breeder is that travelling stallions get a bad average. Any man who has had to pay for their services knows that the average "get" is small in comparison with the number of mares served.

At 4.27 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. DEACON: The Minister, misguided by some men who know better, is putting a handicap on the primary producer, the small farmer, the main man in the country, for he is the man who will suffer. It is neither fair nor just to do that, and it will not do the horse-breeding industry any good. Of course, I know that many farmers can ignore the whole matter. They can say that they have no stallion. The man who does not care whether he tells the truth or not can put his stallion in the paddock and tell the board that he does not own one, or let him run out and go "bush." Does the Minister think that station owners will allow their stallions to be brought up for condemnation? This Bill will not and does not deal with them, but deals with the man who can be easily got at—the very man who should be encouraged and left alone to get his work done in the best way he can. I have been in the position of wanting horses—and of wanting cheap horses. They had to be cheap because I had to have a certain number of them. Other farmers have been in that position; they have not had sufficient money. At one time I bought a horse for 30s. It was a half-bred brumby, and I knew he was a half-bred brumby; but I never yoked a better horse. He took some quietening, but I worked him in the plough till he was twenty-nine years old—and he was sound then! The sire of that half-bred brumby would never have passed the board; yet his progeny did good work. Look at the teams anywhere and you will see any number of light horses and horses will not pass the conformation; but these horses do their work. The Minister wants stallions all of a certain type.

We have no export trade in horses, and we could not work up an export trade in draught horses. It is not possible to do it because the cost of transporting them would amount to more than they would be sold for. Why not let us alone? If you go on to the farms in any district you will notice that the breed, size, and appearance of horses have improved. Any man with years of experience in farming districts knows that. The farmers are getting on. Each man endeavours to get the best horse he can. Every man who is working horses would prefer to work good horses and good-looking horses—the best he can get. The main question he has to consider is whether his pocket will stand it. I hope the Minister will omit the main obnoxious provision in this Bill—namely, the one that forbids the use of a horse that does not pass the Stallion Board. I can give the Minister the case of a stallion that I had. He was a well-bred horse. I sold before he was used, and he was condemned by the Stallion Board at twenty-five years of age after working in the plough for twenty years! They said he had sidebone. His stock will stand up against the stock of any other stallion in the district now. Colts by him have passed the Stallion Board, yet they condemned him as unsound. At twenty-five years of age he serves and is doing well, and is getting a good average of foals. Anybody who is acquainted with the conditions under which a farm stallion lives knows the work he has to do. He is not kept for show. He is put in the plough and worked hard. I could quote any amount of other instances. They often have to work in a team of six abreast. You know, Mr. Speaker, what turning at the end means with six horses turning abreast; they tread on one another's feet. Not one horse escapes, except with a very careful driver. When turning at the ends, if there is a pull on—they have to pull the plough round—you can imagine what that means. You can go to any team on any farm and you will see the bumps on the horses feet where they have been trodden on in the turn. If you took the Stallion Board round to examine the ordinary horses on the farm they would find their feet all bumped up, and they may condemn them for sidebone. They examined this horse, "Duke of Argyle," and they condemned him at twenty-three years. Yet that horse can work at the age of twenty-five, and is still

able to trot round the country and serve mares; so, surely, he is not so very unsound! He can do it still, and he is two years older now than when he was condemned.

All the experience of practical farmers and men on the land is against the Minister on this point. Surely he cannot be the only one who is right—or he and a few owners of show stallions! That is what this Bill is for—to help the owners of show stallions regardless of the interests of the working farmer. The interests of the working farmers should have more consideration than the interests of any others. I leave it to hon. members on the Government side of the House. They say they represent the interests of the labouring man—the man who works. Are they with the Minister on this matter? Here is a working farmer who, on the average, is not a wealthy man, and not able to buy high-class stallions. Why should he have to bear a burden such as will be imposed by this Bill? Suppose the labouring man was singled out in the same way, and condemned to put up with the hardships that the farmer will have to put up with if this Bill goes through. What would hon. members on the other side say then?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER interjected.

Mr. DEACON: I believe in workers. The main thing is work; and the interests of the men who work are more to be regarded than the interests of anybody else. I hope hon. members on that side of the House will be with us when we move the amendment to cut out that provision, which should never have been inserted. In the first place it is an insult to the farmers. They know what they want, and do their best to get it, and this will be doing them an injury in the carrying on of their business. I sincerely hope the Minister will omit that provision.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) [4.37 p.m.]: I am sorry in connection with that question asked by the hon. member for Nanango that a reply could not be given at this stage. It will have to be discussed at a later stage of the Bill, but this would have been an opportune time to furnish us with the information. The Secretary for Agriculture, no doubt, has but one object in view. He has stated there is an obligation on the Government to protect the breeders of horses. From that point of view, he sets out to decide what kind of horse they shall have the opportunity of using for service. There is a difference, however, between the man breeding and offering his horse for service and the person who is breeding for himself. There may be some necessity—I do not agree that there is—to protect the individual who has to obtain the service of a stallion, as compared with the man who breeds his own horse. There is a vast difference between the two. I could understand the Minister using that argument in order to protect breeders who have to buy the services of stallions by seeing that the horses offered are sound and conform with the particular breeds, but I cannot understand any Government coming along and saying to me, "You must not breed from this horse." I say that with all due deference to the objective the Minister has in view, because it is not going to work out in practice.

The argument put forward has been that the creation of a Stallion Board, and the inspection of stallions by members of that board, are designed to uplift the breed of horse, and thus create an export trade. That is the fundamental basis for the creation of this board and the payment of this stallion tax—that a horse will be bred in Queensland fit for export. There are many viewpoints to be taken into consideration. It must be remembered that breeding for export must be done on very large areas, and the difficulty will be the examining of the horses on these vast runs. Another aspect of the question is that in closely settled farming areas a different type of horse is needed. In my district we do not want the Clydesdale breed of horse at all. The most serviceable horse that I have to-day on the farm is a blood horse out of a draught mare, and he is the type required by hundreds of others. He is the type of horse that can be worked anywhere. In fact, he could be used as a saddle horse. We do not want draught horses to put in our wagons to cart stuff 8 or 10 miles to the market every fortnight, but this Bill is going to compel us to have the services of that class of horse only offered to us. One must realise all the circumstances surrounding the breeding of horses. Although a horse may be sound, and his conformation all right, his conformation and type may not suit the man that may be appointed to the board, and he may be condemned. The animal may be condemned because he does not suit the eye of the inspector, without the person condemning him knowing anything concerning the horse's ability for work, or any other circumstances. The inspector has no knowledge of that.

This Bill is forcing people to use colts not three years old, because it provides that an animal is not due for examination until he is three years old. I know of several people who are using colts up to three years of age. They are doing this so that they will not have to submit their stallions for the approval of a board in which they have no faith. The small mixed farmer wants a light active horse, one that he can use in the wagon, the plough or the slide, whereas the horse required for export is probably the heavier type to be found on the Darling Downs. The Bill says in effect that these mixed farmers cannot have the light horse that they require and that they shall have to be content with the service of a draught horse approved by the board, but up to date the board has approved only of horses of the Clydesdale type. In the Beaudesert district there is a horse that is eagerly sought by the farmers but the board has held that it does not possess the proper conformation and type and cannot be used. The farmers want the use of this horse because he has been providing them with the lighter type of horse that they can put in a wagon and can trot away with a load. If they want to utilise their mares now they must use the heavier type of horse.

We are placing a very big responsibility on two or three men when we ask them to decide the type of horse that should be bred. We have not yet reached the stage in the breeding of stock, whether horses, cattle, or pigs, when we can say definitely that the offspring will be of a certain type. Consider for a moment the progeny of the bull "Gus of Hill View" which begot wonderful milkers yet looked like a buffalo, and would have been condemned by any

bull board had it been in existence. I can name hundreds of bulls of the same description, the offspring of which were really champions. The only reason, I suppose, why they were allowed to beget champions was because there was no bull board in existence to condemn them. I could name several horses that would not have passed the examination when they were young. I am not a racing man but I remember that when "Windbag" was sold as a colt he had to be taken to five different trainers before one condescended to give him a chance. He eventually became one of our greatest racehorses and in addition he has produced some of our champions. But if the Stallion Board had been in existence and had examined him as a three-year old he would probably have been condemned because he did not have the necessary conformation. Hon. members will realise what a dangerous procedure is being adopted by the establishment of the Stallion Board. The Minister must know that a pig cannot be judged on its appearance with a view to deciding the type of its offspring.

I think that we are going too far in this Bill, and I express the hope that the Bill will allow mixed farmers to breed the lighter type of horse for use in their wagons. I can quite understand why the breeders of Clydesdales welcome the Bill, but it must not be forgotten that in continuing the Stallion Board the mixed farmers who require the light type of horse are being penalised. I hope that this type will be maintained for their requirements, otherwise the operations of these people will be hampered considerably.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [4.48 p.m.], in reply: It has been interesting to listen to the views of hon. members opposite to-day and to compare them with the views that they expressed when a similar measure was introduced about two years ago, which they condemned in very unreserved terms. It is pleasing to notice that even the hon. member for Cunningham is beginning to see the light of day and is recognising that there is a great deal of merit in a system of stallion inspection and registration.

Mr. DEACON: I condemned it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member did not condemn it as ardently on this occasion as on previous occasions. Let me give him some of the results of this work. The first stallion parade was held after the passage of "The Stallions Registration Act of 1923." The Boards examined 873 stallions, passed 502 for certificates, and rejected 42.5 per cent. of the total number. What would have happened if that 42.5 per cent. of unsound stallions had continued to perpetuate their unsoundness. In the following year in the settled districts 292 stallions were examined, and 37.33 per cent. were rejected. Then we pass on to the following year, when in the Southern Division there were 62.4 per cent. of rejections, and in the Central Division 62 per cent. of rejections. In the intervening years, during which the Moore Government were in power, parades were only held at the Royal National Exhibition in Brisbane, but even a percentage of condemnations took place there. Then this Government resuscitated the Act. In the first year that the board went out 627 stallions were examined, 455 approved, and 172 rejected. The proportions were—

	Approved. Per cent.	Rejected. Per cent.
Bloods ...	77.6 ...	22.4
Draughts ...	65.7 ...	34.3
Trotters ...	84 ...	16
Ponies ...	89.3 ...	10.7
Total ...	72.3 ...	27.7

Last year we completed another parade and found that our percentage of approvals was 82, and our percentage of rejections 18. Can any hon. member argue that that does not make for a progressive and satisfactory advance in the horse-breeding industry?

It is desired to eliminate unsoundness and disease in this industry. Disease and hereditary conditions have been the subject of controversy for many years, and we all know how they can be passed on from generation to generation with cumulative violence, and grow in incidence with each generation. The object of this measure must obviously be the elimination of disease. The average breeder is anxious to eliminate disease amongst his horses, but the cost of that elimination to the individual would be altogether too great for him to bear. Quite recently a case was brought under my notice where an individual on the Downs desired to submit a horse for the opinion of a referee. This horse had been rejected by the board. It cost that man £10 and transport costs for the veterinary surgeon to go along and inspect that horse. That would be the average cost of such an opinion if he were not able to do this work under the group system.

Hon. members opposite have said that they know all about this question, and that no body outside this Chamber is capable of expressing a satisfactory opinion on this matter. I have discussed these matters with the members of the Stallion Board, who are not, in the main, associated with the Clydesdale and stud classes as suggested by the hon. member for Cunningham. They have asked me to go a good deal further than I have done. The hon. member for Nanango suggested that we should rely in the examination on the services of one man, the veterinary surgeon. I personally could not agree to that suggestion, and would not agree to it for the reasons advanced by the hon. member for Fassifern in another direction—that it would be one man's opinion, and one man's opinion in this regard would be unreliable. One man's opinion is unreliable, yet the hon. member for Nanango is asking me to subject the entire horse population of this State to the opinion of one man. I believe that would be eminently unsatisfactory and would lead to a far greater number of appeals than we get at the present time.

Mr. EDWARDS: You are doing it now so far as disease is concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So far as disease is concerned, that is a professional aspect; as far as conformation is concerned, that is an aspect on which the ordinary competent horseman is quite capable of expressing an opinion.

Hon. members opposite have misinterpreted the clause that has raised such a furore of protest this afternoon. They have suggested that this Bill provides for the

entire elimination of a horse that is regarded as being unsound or lacking in conformation, insomuch as it applies to its private use as well as public service. The facts are not those, nor have I interpreted the Act to mean that. One purpose of this amendment that hon. members opposite seem to think represents a tightening up and the application of more rigidity is in reality and in effect a loosening up to give more power so that we can meet the requirements that have been laid before the House by hon. members who have spoken from the other side of the Chamber. Hon. members opposite have said that we propose to eliminate a horse that is unsatisfactory from the point of view of the board that is appointed. We have not done that unless there has been very excellent reason for doing it. Before it went out last year, the Stallion Board was instructed by the chief clerk of the department, Mr. Short, to make for the consideration of the office an individual report on every horse that was rejected. A number of horses that were rejected—and honestly rejected—were not forbidden service, but I think it will be obvious to hon. members that the line of demarcation is very difficult to draw. I am not prepared to say, as hon. members opposite would suggest, that if a person is going to use a horse entirely for his own purpose and not for stud purposes, then no matter what type of horse he may be or how diseased he may be, no prohibition should be placed on the horse.

Mr. SPARKES: That is not what we ask.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am glad hon. members opposite do not ask that, because I interpreted their request in that way. What I believed they were really saying was that it was an inequity to interfere with the individual who owned a stallion and who used that stallion merely for his own use.

Mr. WIENHOLT: We were discussing the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: But unfortunately the hon. member was not reading the Bill in conjunction with the previous administration of the legislation and of the principal Act itself, as I shall show.

The clause that hon. members opposite have discussed at such great length is a more liberal clause and gives the Minister and the department more liberal power than was accorded under the original Act; in other words, this new clause gives us power to determine and improve type. I do not think hon. members opposite desire that any horse anywhere in the State should be used for stud purposes if he were gravely diseased. Breeding does not end on the farm. A man may breed for his own requirements, but under certain conditions —favourable conditions generally—he will have some stock available for sale, and if he is going to breed from diseased stock——

Mr. SPARKES: Why do you think he will breed from diseased stock?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The figures I have quoted this afternoon show that a great number of them were breeding from diseased stock. I do not believe they were doing it with knowledge, but I do know that many of them were breeding from this type of horse because they did not know. When they had been acquainted with the fact that they have been breeding with a diseased animal, many owners have readily expressed their desire to get rid of that animal. As I was saying, you cannot confine the offspring of a horse to the farm on which it was bred. Sooner or later some of that stock is sold and falls into the possession of other people. It may be an entire, and you then perpetuate this vicious chain of destruction that is in the worst interests of the horse industry of this State.

I want to take this opportunity of assuring hon. members that a conference will take place next year before the Stallion Board goes out, and a uniform standard of approval will be laid down.

Mr. WIENHOLT: There is no such thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but it is my intention when the board goes out next year to impress on it the necessity for realising that the type of horse that is required in the various districts shall not be subject to condemnation if he possesses that physical robustness that is essential. I think along those lines we can make satisfactory progress.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: It is certainly an improvement.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is a material improvement and arises out of the result of experience in administration. I do not desire to administer this Act in an arbitrary way. Many members on the opposite side have brought cases concerning their constituents before me and I do not think one member would say that we, as a department, have been arbitrary in our condemnation. On the other hand, we have exercised every possible power we can in order to meet the requirements of the horse-owner without inflicting any hardship; always bearing in mind the public interests involved.

The hon. member for Dalby attempted to compare horse breeding with sheep breeding.

Mr. SPARKES: No, I didn't. You twisted it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not my practice to twist the statements of any hon. member; but if I remember rightly—and I am open to be corrected if I am not quoting the hon. member correctly—the hon member said "No assistance was required for the sheep industry, yet we bred sheep which produced the best wool in the world."

Mr. SPARKES: Quite right.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member will stand on that?

Mr. SPARKES: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then the hon. member proceeded to make a comparison between the fact that we are breeding the best wools in the world and our horse breeding activities. There is really no comparison between those two. I shall endeavour to show the hon. member why. In order to make this contrast we will turn to the regulations under "The Stallions Registration Acts, 1923 to 1932," and take the class of disease associated with horses that are not associated, except in one case

only, with sheep. The diseases to which horses are subject are as follows:—

> Bog spavin, bone spavin, cataract, chorea ("shivering" or "nervy"), curb, navicular disease, nasal disease (Osteo porosis), ring bone, roaring, sidebone, stringhalt, thoroughpin, whistling.

Sheep are subject only to Osteo porosis amongst those diseases. A consideration of that list will show the vast difference there is between sheep breeding, on the one hand, and horse breeding, on the other hand; and the equations that come into the question so far as wool production is concerned are not disease equations that enter into consideration so far as the production of satisfactory horses are concerned.

The hon. member committed another grave error of judgment when he said we had splendid types of cattle without a bull tax. Does the hon. member overlook the fact the utilitarian value of the two is entirely different? You import the best bulls you can get in order to produce the best killers, in the last analysis, that you can produce. On the other hand, the destiny of horses is entirely different. Everybody knows without me telling him that they are bred for a long working life; consequently there is again not the comparison the hon. member would have us believe.

I can assure the hon. member it is the desire of the board and the department to interpret this Bill in the easiest possible way and to progress to the reforms that are desired by graduated steps, achieving our objective over a number of years rather than attempting to achieve our objective within twelve months. Although there has been some criticism in this House I want to say that I believe that criticism has been confined to this House, and the people who are most concerned and most affected by this measure have welcomed it or at least acquiesced in it. I believe we do serve the best interests of the State by conserving the quality of the production of the State and by promoting it.

Mr. SPARKES: Will you explain in regard to the horseowner who uses a stallion only for his own purposes?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have explained it to the hon. member. Where a horse is not diseased and where there is an opportunity of allowing that horse to be used that horse will be used; but I very definitely desire to exclude the diseased horse from use under any circumstances, and if it comes to a question of conformation or type on this point then I am prepared to meet the owner in the most liberal way possible. I am not very much concerned, and expect to be less concerned in the ensuing twelve months, because during the last two years the cleaning up took place. Now it is a question, having established a policy, of protecting and continuing that policy in the best interests of everybody concerned.

I can give the hon. member this assurance—that in the future the policy of the board will be directed more and more towards the elimination of disease, and where a horse is satisfactorily discharging the duties required of that animal, then, I believe, we should not proceed to the rigorous exclusion of that horse from stud purposes.

Mr. PLUNKETT: That is common sense.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is common sense, and I believe that is the desire of this House. I can assure hon. members that the clause will be interpreted in that way.

Any visitor to this House this afternoon listening to the discussion on the proposed legislation would have come to the conclusion that attention was being directed to new legislation, legislation peculiar to Queensland, and having no counterpart on the statute-books of the other States of the Commonwealth, or the other countries of the world. Hon. members, of course, are aware that that is not so. I want to assure the House that our legislation is treading the road of progress, but at a much lesser speed than the various other Acts in operation, not only in Australia but, more particularly, in other parts of the world. We cannot dissociate ourselves from the general practice of other parts of the world. Hon. members may point out that the cost of export is too great, but it was not too great in the past, and, owing to the scarcity of horses that exists in other parts of the world, I can assure hon. members that buyers overseas are directing their attention to Queensland. I have received numerous communications from various countries asking if we could help them in the purchase of horses, and costs have not been raised as a major factor in such purchases. Only recently, and this is in reference, of course, to the little jest of the hon. member for Dalby, I had an opportunity of having in my hand a certificate issued by the French authorities in regard to the certification of a stallion. I think I showed it to one or two hon. members opposite. This was a donkey stallion, in which our friend was interested and which I required for my department. Unfortunately, the donkey became acclimatised, and was not for sale when negotiations proceeded. The point is this: Although this was a jack donkey, the requirements as disclosed by that certificate were the most rigid requirements that I had ever seen. I asked myself what the viewpoint of the Opposition would have been had I brought down legislation that provided for the requirements indicated by that certificate? Probably, in fifty years' time, this State will have legislation of that type, but as matters stand at the present time it is wise to take each step at a time and be sure of our ground, and endeavour to build on a safe plane without any disaffection and without any heart burnings. I consider that is being achieved in a very considerable measure by the amending Bill we are discussing. Its passage will erect another milestone along the road of progress.

The hon. member for Nanango raised the question why we took the first of the year as being the time at which the age of the horse should be determined? I should like to say to the hon. member that he must read that in conjunction with the principal Act, which defines the year. The year, of course, is in accordance with the usual orthodox age determination—that is, 1st August. No departure is being made. I informed the hon. member that it became necessary for the sake of the uniform administration of the Act to define that rather more clearly in our amending Bill. That is being done, but there is no departure from the general principle.

Question—"That the Bill be now read a second time" (*Mr. Bulcock's motion*)—put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3—"*Amendment of section 6—Application for registration of stallion*"—

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [5.12 p.m.]: I move the following amendment:—

> "On page 2, line 8, omit the words—'entire blood or trotting horse or any blood or trotting.'"

The clause will then read—

> "Provided that it shall not be necessary for any owner to make any such application in respect of any stallion . . . which is not used or offered for stud purposes . . ."

This clause exempts owners of entire blood or trotting horses not used for stud purposes from the necessity to make application for registration. I see no reason why draught horses should not be excluded as well. Why should this privilege be enjoyed only by the owners of trotting or blood horses? Why should not draught horses be placed in the same position? There are some studs that breed stallions for sale, and a man may have one horse left on his hands. Why should it be necessary for him to make application for the registration of that horse if it is not used for stud purposes any more than it is not necessary in the case of blood or trotting horses not so used? I want the same treatment to be meted out in connection with all stallions, provided they are not used for stud purposes. I know that blood and trotting horses are used very often for stud purposes, although it will be claimed that they are not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We had better eliminate the clause. How would that suit you?

Mr. DEACON: I do not want to eliminate the clause. I do not want to have a row with the hon. member for Murilla. I want to keep on friendly terms with him and with the Minister, too, but I also want to improve his Bill. He knows that in this city there are draught stallions used in harness work for two or three years that are not used for stud purposes at all. Why should it be necessary to make application for the registration of such a stallion? I admit that not many stallions would be affected, but they are all entitled to the same treatment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [5.17 p.m.]: I am not quite sure that the hon. member is serious in moving this amendment. I think, perhaps, that he has carried out a promise made to certain interests, and having moved the amendment, I feel quite sure that he will accept my desire for the retention of the good feeling that he expressed a moment ago when I tell him that I cannot accept the amendment. I would rather eliminate the clause altogether than accept the amendment. The amendment would completely destroy the working of the Bill. I am quite sure that, notwithstanding the hon. member's hostility to this Bill, he does not want too great a handicap to be placed on its operations. It is quite obvious that the amendment would have that effect.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [5.19 p.m.]: The Minister desires to be friendly, but it is very hard to keep on friently terms with a man who rejects a little amendment like this. I have given him very good reasons why he should accept it. Is there any reason why one class of horse should be singled out for exemption? All horses should be subjected to the same conditions. I hope that the Minister in not accepting this amendment and at the same time exempting another class of horse does not mean that he intends following racing. I hope for the sake of his pocket and political career that he is not more interested in racing horses than draughts. It is much better for him to stick to his interest in draught horses.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Will we eliminate the clause?

Mr. DEACON: I do not want to eliminate anything. This is an exemption I want. I want the exemption to apply all round. There is no reason why it should not. The Minister certainly did not give any reason why it should not. If he had a reason to give I should not argue the matter. He must admit that both cases are similar. That being so, why does he not accept this amendment? It will not alter the Bill. All applications must be approved by his officers.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) negatived.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [5.21 p.m.]: I move the following amendment:—

> "On page 2, line 21, after the word—'of'
>
> insert the words—
>
> 'August in.'"

The effect of this amendment will be to bring all the dates on to August. This clause provides that the age of any animal shall be taken as the first day of the year in which it is foaled.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no need for the amendment.

Mr. DEACON: The amendment will make it clearer and put all the horses on the one date. I know that it applies to the application for the date of registration. It does not matter whether the date of foaling be January or August, when August is already provided for in other respects, we should have uniformity. The effect is just the same as if you say the first day of August. By putting it in order it is more easily understood by the stallion owners. If the Minister considers the matter, he will see that what I say is correct.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [5.25 p.m.]: The definition in the Act specifies the year as the period of time from the 1st August in one year to 31st July in the following year, so that what the hon. member for Cunningham seeks to achieve is already in the Act. The hon. member knows that a definition section is not transposed and put in the body of an Act. In view of these circumstances, the amendment is not warranted.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): Mr. Hanson——

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

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [5.26 p.m.]: The Minister would not be out of place in accepting this amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why put it in again?

Mr. EDWARDS: Why not make the position perfectly clear? A person reading this clause without the principal Act would not know the exact position.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) negatived.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 4—"*Amendment of section 8—Board to inspect stallions*"—

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [5.28 p.m.]: One would be rash indeed to suggest that the Secretary for Agriculture of all people was not clear on his own Bill, and I shall not make such a suggestion; but I do think that the hon. member has somewhat confused us by his speech. I took it from what the Minister said that the amending Bill now being put through this Parliament was making it easier for the horse-breeder whose horse had been condemned, not for any disease, but for lack of type in the opinion of the board. That I find difficult to understand, and I would draw the Committee's attention to section 8 (4) of the principal Act, which reads—

> "Where, pursuant to the provisions of subsection two of this section, the report of the Stallion Board or, on appeal, the decision of the Appeal Board, shows that a stallion is not of approved standard, the owner thereof shall be required to restrict the use for stud purposes of such stallion to the mares which are his own property and not otherwise."

As the Acts stand at present, a horse-owner may have his stallion condemned for lack of type, and may still use him for his own mares. We must keep out altogether the question of unsoundness, and I do not quite understand how the matter of unsoundness comes into this amending Bill. We are only concerned at the present minute with this question of the horse-owner being able to use only for his own mares a horse that has been condemned for lack of type, and for that only. Apparently, the principal Act does give the horse-owner power to use the horse for his own mares, but let us look at the amending Bill. Clause 4 says—

> "Subsection four of section eight of the principal Act is repealed."

Having repealed that clause, the Bill must be read in conjunction with line 37, where it says—

> "The owner shall not use or offer for stud purposes any such stallion."

Having removed the apparent safeguard of subsection (4) of clause 8 in the principal Act, then I take it clause 5 would definitely remove from the owner that power to use his own horses for the use of his own mares. The Minister was good enough to say he would meet any case where he could. I personally have great faith in the Minister's common sense in that matter, but what I should like to ascertain is: Does the Act give the Minister power to do it?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. WIENHOLT: If the Minister has the power to say to the owner, "You may use your horse," that still leaves an opening and a chance for him. Boiled down, the main point is this: are these people who are using horses for the use of their own mares going to be told they cannot use that horse? The people are anxious to know if they are acting legally or not. I think that is the vital point in the amending Bill.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [5.32 p.m.]: The point that has been raised by the hon. member for Fassifern is a very important one. I have listened carefully to the Minister, and I thank him for the assurance that he will not trouble the private owner except in the case of disease. We take no exception to the clause relating to disease. I feel sure the hon. member for Fassifern would not take exception to any horse being condemned because it was diseased; but what we object to is the right of experts to decide what is a suitable horse for myself and other people in similar circumstances to use. The hon. gentleman says he has the power to say "We will not condemn your horse unless he has a disease"—no one takes any exception to a horse being condemned if he has a disease—but although the Minister is young and looks well he may not be Secretary for Agriculture for a much longer period, and we may get another Minister who is not so lenient in his views on this matter. If the Minister desires to have a clause relating to disease, I have no objection, but I ask the Minister to remove the clause relating to conformity to type.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [5.34 p.m.]: I admit the question raised by the hon. members for Fassifern and Dalby is a very vital one. I can only reiterate what I said on a previous occasion: this Bill, in the final analysis, does make the Act easier of application and it gets us to that point where we desire to get to without the hardship that might have been inflicted under the present Acts. This may be interpreted and should be interpreted in this way: so far as disease is concerned, if it is of a malignant nature and an hereditary disease I should have no hesitation—and under this Bill the Minister is the final court of appeal—in condemning that horse. I believe and I will consistently shape a policy whereby the approved type will be considered as a utilitarian type and not a stud type. That is the object of the amending clause and that is the reason we have put in here "or is not of approved standard." That gives us an opportunity of laying down approved standards. I am not prepared to say that only a pure breed such as Suffolk shall be the approved horse within the meaning of this Bill; but I am prepared and I am proposing to instruct the Stallion Board next year that the utilitarian value of a horse shall be the determining value of the horse, and the purpose for which that horse is required shall be the test of whether that horse conforms to this purpose and therefore should be certified. I consider it will meet the requirement.

Mr. EDWARDS: What do you mean by the utilitarian value?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I mean that the horse would be of a type to do the work that that horse will be

designed for—i.e., if a man is breeding a plough horse or any type of farm horse, does it matter very much, if the horse is sound, whether it is bred from a Clydesdale or bred from a Clydesdale-Shire or Clydesdale-Suffolk? That does not matter very much. It is the offspring that counts. It is the utility of that offspring that should be the factor that determines whether that stallion should be put out of business or not. That will be the course established by me for the guidance of the Stallion Board.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [5.37 p.m.]: I regret to say that I still cannot follow the Minister. Under the Acts if a person had a sire he could use him for his own purposes, although he could not put him out at a fee and use him with the mares of other people. I understand that is so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was the original section 4 of the Act.

Mr. SPARKES: That is the point. Now we have the Minister telling me that he is making things easier for me.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. SPARKES: Although I am supposed to be getting something made easier for me I fail to see where it has been made less difficult. I consider that the Minister is making it harder for me, when he has the right to tell me that I cannot use that horse for myself. It must be understood that we have now got right away from disease. As I stated before we realise that nobody desires to use a diseased horse, but under this Bill, in the final analysis, the inspectors of the Minister will determine whether I can use that horse or not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: All sorts of appeals apply, and finally there is the appeal to the Minister. I have had quite a number of these.

Mr. SPARKES: As I mentioned before, it is a case of having one Minister and then another. We may have a Minister who will say, "My inspectors condemn this horse, and out he must go." The hon. gentleman is, I believe, quite sincere when he states that he will be very lenient, but we desire something more concrete. Could not the Minister say that he will allow us to use that horse excepting when he is a diseased animal?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [5.39 p.m.]: That would be quite admirable if we could say that only horses free from the diseases specified in the schedule should be used, but the hon. member cannot argue that some sires could not possibly be of a disapproved type. I have seen horses that have been all head, legs, and ears, and they have been in good condition. But let me put this illustration. The hon. member no doubt is aware that in the north-west there are brumbies.

Mr. SPARKES: Very good brumbies, too.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There are bad brumbies, too. Suppose the case of an entire brumby that has been inbred for four generations and is all head, legs, and ears, practically no chest, no bones—the hon. member has seen the type very frequently. That horse might be free from disease, but certainly he could not be regarded as a horse of approved standard.

Mr. EDWARDS: Who would use him?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Unfortunately, I have seen horses used in the farming areas that have been almost as bad as the horse I have described. So, in meeting one objection we shall probably create another. I have given great consideration to the framing of this clause, and I prefer to stand on it and allow it to take its administrative chance with sympathetic intelligent consideration, rather than say that the board shall have no power to deal with malformation apart from disease.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [5.40 p.m.]: I am very glad that the atmosphere has been somewhat cleared. We now know where we stand. I find that the attitude of the hon. member for Dalby and myself has been perfectly right and sound right through. What we surmised and feared would be done is, in fact, to be done. We made no mistake whatever about the matter. Although the Minister may give it some consideration later, it is the Bill that we as legislators are dealing with. If subsection 4 of section 8 of the principal Act goes by the board, or in other words, if clause 4 of this amending Bill is passed, it will be taking from horseowners the only safeguard that they have left. Boiled down, that is what it means. So far as I am concerned I will fight with everything within my power, however vainly the fight may be, for the retention of subsection 4 of section 8 of the principal Act. Everything the Minister has said, except his own personal assurance, is no help whatsoever.

The decision will still lie with the board, and I for one have no faith, no hope, and no confidence in these boards, nor do I desire any other people to tell me what horse I shall use for my own purpose. We all know that there are different ideas about what we want to breed. The Minister knows that there are many classes of horse—the Shire, the Clydesdale, trotters, blood horses, and ponies—but the horses that I am now interested in are not exactly in those classes at all. Like most cattlemen, I am interested in breeding stock horses; our stock horses are part of the plant to work our cattle. They are not bred primarily for sale; they are bred for use. You may have sometimes two or three colts that you may sell and with the proceeds buy a new horse, but primarily the horses are bred for use. First of all, it is our desire to breed a safe horse, because there is nothing more unfortunate for any one who has a cattle run than to have an accident on the place. After a safe horse, one wants a nice bright horse, one that will work cattle naturally. In breeding this type of horse one selects a nice looking camp mare, one that has proved herself, to obtain a colt by a decent high-class stallion. Of course, some people would not hear of that and would utterly disagree with it, believing that you should breed only from a pure-bred horse. It is a matter of opinion again. The Minister, who represents a Western electorate, and has spoken to sheep drovers, knows that a sheep drover in passing another man does not say, "That is a very pretty looking slut that you have there. I should like a pup out of her when you have one to spare." He says, "That is a splendid working slut, I should like you to keep a pup out of her for me some day." So with a horse. You want a safe, bright horse, with a good constitution, one that will work nicely, brightly,

and safely for your men. I am quite prepared to agree on the question of unsoundness, but I appeal to the Minister to leave us the safeguard in the Act and to allow us to breed the horses that we require for our work.

The provision for an appeal is of very little use to us once the board has condemned the horse. The section says—

> "In addition to the payment of £5 as above prescribed, the owner shall, in the event of the decision of the board being upheld, be liable for all the costs, charges, and expenses incurred in or in connection with an appeal under this section."

Surely the Minister knows that the men in the country reading that section and not knowing about the cost of railway fares or fees would say, "I dare not run the risk of running into a case like that." So far as I am concerned this principle is the vital one. I am going to vote against the clause and I am sorry that the Minister is determined to force it on us. The section is the only protection that we have, and I cannot see that much harm can come from the leaving of it. It certainly removes a considerable amount of harassing restriction imposed on many horse breeders, and it will enable us to make an amendment later that will allow of the strict conditions relating to unsoundness in horses and will also prevent any person offering for service fees a horse that is not of the approved type. But it will protect persons who desire to use mares to breed horses for their own particular requirement.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [5.47 p.m.]: Just one more word! I feel sure that the Minister is anxious to assist persons who desire to breed horses for their own use. I hope that the Premier can throw a little oil on these troubled waters and that he will agree that a person should have the right to have a sire to breed horses for his own particular purpose. Queensland sent a contingent of horses to a camp draft at the last Easter Show in Sydney, and those horses were much admired by every horse lover on the ground. I knew practically every person in the team and I knew where practically every horse was bred. I know that in most cases they were bred on stations, and as the hon. member for Fassifern has pointed out, they were out of picked camp mares. These men did not buy those horses themselves. They bred them. What we want is a sure-footed horse. That is the first consideration. That is more important than our political seat, so the Minister knows how important it is.

The PREMIER: He must be sound in wind and limb.

Mr. SPARKES: The hon. gentleman is right. A horse for station work must be safe and sound in wind and limb. Is it not only right to suppose that we should keep on only breeding that class of horse. For the safety of our men we want a horse which will be a good worker. One might go to the Royal National Show and buy a dog that has gained the first prize of his class, and yet he might be the most useless brute to take into the country. The same thing applies to a horse. It might be handsome in every possible way but once he was mounted he would probably fall head over heels. It would be useless for camp work and a stockman may break his neck. I am sure that the Minister does not desire either the hon. member for Fassifern or myself to create a vacancy in this Chamber by riding such a horse? The Minister by acceding to our request will not be giving anything away. Let us get away from any sense of party politics on this matter and act reasonably so that it might be possible for us to keep our own sires.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) [5.51 p.m.]: We are all at one with the Minister in his efforts to stamp out disease, whether hereditary or otherwise, in horses, and will support his efforts in that direction. The question we are discussing is the right of a person to use a stallion on his own property for his own purpose. The aspect I want to mention is the man who desires to keep his own stallion must have a number of mares of his own. You can rely on that man having a decent stallion. It is his desire to breed a class of horse for a particular purpose. There is not much likelihood of the department having to interfere with this man. As long as the department is protected in so far as disease is concerned there is very little risk in allowing him to use his own stallion for his own purpose.

Mr. BELL (*Stanley*) [5.52 p.m.]: All that we are asking for is that if a selector desires to use a stallion for his own particular purposes he should be allowed to do so. I am whole heartedly behind the Minister in his desire to stamp out disease in horses. No breeder would for one minute tolerate a diseased stallion on his own property, but where a stallion is lacking in conformation only he should be allowed its services if he desires to put that animal to his own mares.

Question—"That clause 4, as read, stand part of the Bill"—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. King, W. T.
,, Bulcock	,, Larcombe
,, Conroy	,, Mullan
,, Cooper	,, O'Keefe
,, Copley, P. K.	,, Smith
,, Copley, W. J.	,, Stopford
,, Dash	,, Wellington
,, Foley	,, Williams
,, Funnell	
,, Gledson	*Tellers:*
,, Hanlon	,, Gair
,, Keogh	,, Waters

NOES, 14.

Mr. Annand	Mr. Nicklin
,, Bayley	,, Nimmo
,, Bell	,, Plunkett
,, Clayton	,, Russell
,, Deacon	
,, Edwards	*Tellers:*
,, Kenny	,, Sparkes
,, Moore	,, Wienholt

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Hayes	Mr. Walker
,, Hynes	,, Daniel
,, Taylor, G. C.	,, Fadden
,, Llewelyn	,, Maxwell
,, Collins	,, Swayne
,, Bedford	,, Maher
,, Brassington	,, Tozer
,, Bruce	,, Barnes

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 5—"*New section 9D; Penalty for using or offering for stud purposes a stallion unsound or that is not of approved standard*"—

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [5.28 p.m.]: Having been defeated on the previous clause, we are now entirely in the hands of the Minister. The hon. gentleman states he will be generous in reviewing these horses. Does that mean that in the last resort he will inspect the horse himself? Otherwise it will be very difficult to know on what evidence he will actually review. Surely personal inspection is a main factor, and if the Minister would give an assurance that no horse would be condemned until he had given his own opinion of it, it would help a good deal.

A further important point is as to when this legislation will come into force. It is obvious that in the middle of the season it will be highly awkward and actually disastrous.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*) [7 p.m.]: I move the following amendment:—

"On page 2, line 37, omit the words—'use or'."

As the clause would then read, it would mean that the owner cannot use these stallions for public stud purposes, but will be free to use them for his own purposes. I have already argued this matter on another clause. I think it desirable that those words should be struck out so as to make it quite clear that the owner can use the stallions for his own purposes.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [7.2 p.m.]: I cannot understand the Minister being obdurate on a question of this sort. After all, there is no occasion for him to interfere with an individual who wants to breed a class of horse that suits him. He is the best judge of that. It is nonsense to say that because a horse has been condemned he cannot sire good stock. One of the best sires of stock on the Downs was a horse from South Australia that was condemned in that State, and condemned when it came to the Downs, and one of the colts sired by him won the championship of the Brisbane Exhibition and the championship of the Toowoomba show two years in succession. Under this Bill he would have been condemned! I cannot see that the Minister has any justification for this continual interference with a man in the carrying on of his own business. It is not a national matter. If an individual were utilising the animal for stud purposes other than his own it would be a different proposition. This continual interference with the individual who is endeavouring to run his business in his own way to suit himself is a most exasperating thing to the person concerned. What is the object of this continual interference? It seems to me that it is abrogating the freedom to which an individual is entitled. One of the chief attractions of living in the country is the right to be your own boss and carry on your business in your own way; and it is most exasperating to have somebody else interfering on every possible occasion, and saying he knows better than you do, although he has no personal interest or monetary obligation in the matter. This method of interference is a departure from the principle that should be adopted in a country like this. Queensland has developed to what it is to-day without this continual interference. We have some of the best horses in the Commonwealth in this State, and some of the best horses that have gone to India have been bred in Queensland without this continual interference by somebody who has no personal obligation in the matter, and who has no right, in my opinion, to interfere.

The PREMIER: There has been a considerable deterioration in the quality of horses.

Mr. MOORE: There has been for a number of years because the price of horses fell to such a level that they were not worth breeding, and consequently people would not buy expensive stallions.

The PREMIER: Not so very long ago the late Mr. Love told me of 250 horses that were yarded in one place in the North, and out of that number only two were suitable.

Mr. MOORE: There is no doubt about that. People did not bother to breed horses because it was not worth while. There came a craze for tractors, motor cars, motor cycles, and motor traction generally. Horses went down to such a value that they were not worth breeding. It paid one better to feed calves or keep pigs. Conditions to-day are totally different. People are going back to the horse. They have found that tractors on farms, unless those on a very big area, are too expensive. The depreciation is too great and the cost of repairs too high. Consequently, the market for horses has improved considerably. However, the people I am speaking of are those who breed horses for their own use. I can see no justification for the Minister's taking the matter entirely into his own hands. He should not interfere with the individual who is carrying out his own work and on whom the obligation falls. Men run their own businesses for their own profit. If they fail, either through bad management or other causes, that is their own concern; but they should not be asked to put up with the continual interference of somebody who has no financial obligations in the concern at all, and is actuated merely by a desire for interference. The principle is altogether wrong. We are being asked to pass too many Bills by which the Minister is stepping in and interfering with purely private concerns. A man desiring to breed stock for his own use knows the purpose for which he is breeding and understands what he is doing. If he finds that he has a horse that does not give him the something that he desires, he does not require the Minister to tell him not to use it. The individual has more to lose by the continued use of such an animal than anybody else. If he finds he possesses a horse that begets him the breed of stock he desires, even though it may not come up to the standard set by the Minister, why should the Minister step in and say that the individual should not be allowed to use that beast. The whole principle is wrong. Stock breeding in this State will not be developed by Ministerial interference. The best dairy herds have not been developed by Ministerial interference, and if the Minister considers that he will bring about the millennium in stock breeding by this continual interference with people when carrying on their own business he is entirely wrong. Such interference will have a deteriorating effect. I strongly protest against this continual endeavour to interfere with a man who is carrying out his own business. The financial obligation is entirely his and he takes full

responsibility. Already the Minister has introduced many measures that have caused antagonism and a feeling throughout a large section of the community that the hon. gentleman cannot mind his own business, but must interfere with somebody else who is carrying out his own business.

I do not object so much to the Minister's having the power to say to an individual, "You cannot offer that horse for sale," but to say that a man cannot breed stock of the kind he desires to use on his own property is absolutely wrong. Nothing good can come of it, and it is only the means of causing a feeling that a man is worried and harried when there is no need. He has enough to contend with already as regards climatic conditions and other things.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Do you say he should be allowed to get bunchy-top on his farm?

Mr. MOORE: Bunchy-top is a communicable disease and may extend to the adjacent farms. I am not suggesting that this is at all a question of disease. Nobody desires to breed from a diseased horse. It is not a question of a man breeding stock for his own purposes from his own stallion and spreading disease to his next door neighbour. If it were, there would be an argument for the Bill. At the present time there is no earthly argument in support of this clause, excepting an insane desire for interference in the business of other people.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [7.11 p.m.]: The Secretary for Agriculture in replying to-night to my statement regarding the breeding of sheep rather ridiculed the idea that there was an analogy between the breeding of sheep and that of horses. I consider that the principle is exactly the same. In nearly every case the principles underlying the breeding of sheep and of horses are the same. The breeder should be allowed to follow up his own ideas without interference. That is the point. There has been no interference in the sheep industry. The Premier has interjected regarding the price of horses.

The PREMIER: I did not refer to the price. I referred to the quality.

Mr. SPARKES: Of course the hon. gentleman is aware that if the quality is lower the price also is lower. The horses bred for the export trade are in the majority of cases bred in areas where the Bill of the Minister will not apply. They are mostly bred in the far distant areas of the north-west.

The Secretary for Labour and Industry asked if we would allow bunchy-top to grow on our property, and my reply to him is that we would no more permit bunchy-top to grow on the property than we would breed from a tubercular bull. We do not want to breed diseased animals, and I have no objection to their being condemned, but I do object to the Minister or his servant dictating to us as to the class of horse we should use on our property. There is some argument in favour of the Minister's case where a man charges a service fee for the use of his horse, but there is no argument in favour of a contention that private individuals should not be allowed to breed the horses that meet their particular requirements. The private individual knows just what he requires, and in most cases the man who uses a stallion entirely for his own use is a man who breeds a fair number of horses, and he breeds them solely for use on his stations. A man may breed horses for the Indian remount market, but the Premier has sufficient Scotch in him to know that he will not continue to breed for that market unless it is a payable one. Prices fell to such a level that there was no inducement to breed horses for this market. On the other hand, as you know, Mr. Speaker, a number of high-class draught stallions have been imported into this State from the South and from overseas during the past few years because the demand for draught horses has revived. Hon. members may rest assured that if a man wishes to breed a particular animal, that animal will be bred, and he will be bred by specialists born, bred, and educated to their work in Australia without any assistance by political parties or Governments. I have already told the Minister that an inspector who examines a horse out of condition will condemn him in nine cases out of ten.

The hon. member for Fassifern will confirm what I am about to say. A few years ago I imported two bulls from England, one at a cost of three thousand guineas, and the other at a cost of one thousand guineas. They had a very bad trip coming through the tropics, and the carpenter on the boat, whose job it was to feed the bulls, nearly lost one of them. Immediately these bulls were landed in Sydney and placed in quarantine one was condemned by good, sound judges of stock as being of no use, and they all wondered why I had gone to the trouble to bring him 12,000 miles to Australia. I made a special trip to Sydney to see these bulls, and I cabled to the man who had sent them out—Captain Hinks, Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire—stating that I was very pleased with one of them, and very disappointed with the other. I mention this matter because I know how impossible it is to judge a beast out of condition. When the bulls were brought to Queensland the bull in good condition was kept in feed for the Brisbane Show, and he won the championship. The other bull was turned out, but he developed what is known as pink eye in sheep, or eye disease in cattle, and had to be brought in and fed. He gradually improved, and eventually became the champion bull of Queensland, and as a sire secured some of the highest-priced bulls that were ever sold. He proved to be a wonderful sire, and the man who had previously condemned him was the very man who judged him and gave him the championship award. I am stating definite facts, although some hon. members may think that I am exaggerating. Honest though you may be, it is impossible to judge a beast out of condition.

The Minister told me that he wanted to give us something more than we already had, but it was just because of my dullness that I could not really see it. I am sure that he must concede the right to any individual to breed a horse for his own particular requirements. He will probably send a veterinary officer to look at a horse, and the latter will declare, "That horse is not suitable." The officer may be anxious to encourage the breeding of a type required for the export trade, and he may condemn the horse, although it may be an admirable type for the reproduction of the type required by his owner. Surely the Government are not going to interfere with what is an important business in this State!

The other day the Premier stressed the importance of the cattle industry, and expressed alarm lest an irreparable injury be done to it by the imposition of restriction proposals. He stressed the importance of that industry as well as the chilled meat industry. One of the most important phases of the chilled meat industry is the lessening of bruising.

The PREMIER: Quite right.

Mr. SPARKES: I am glad the Premier realises that.

The PREMIER: It is also an important matter to improve the breeding of stock, too. You cannot get over that.

Mr. SPARKES: I quite agree with the hon. gentleman again. When the hon. gentleman asked this Chamber to consider a motion regarding the restriction of frozen meat exports I could have informed him that after the publication in the press of that proposal I sold a line of bullocks to the meatworks in Brisbane at 25s. per 100 lb., which is easily 2s. in advance of prices I realised two months ago. The hon. gentleman must admit that they were good bullocks. They were bred by me without any interference at all from the Government.

The PREMIER: If you had a look at some of the meat going from the Argentina to Britain, some of which had been in the refrigerators for eighteen or twenty months, you would admit that the breeders there are building up quality meat.

Mr. SPARKES: I quite agree with the hon. gentleman, but he must admit that they bred those beasts without any interference such as we are asked to undergo. I bred my cattle up to their present high standard without any interference on the part of this or any other Government.

The PREMIER: The Argentine breeders have built up their herds by importing the best blood stock from England, and in doing so are subsidised by the Argentine Government. They pay as high as £1,000 for a yearling bull.

Mr. SPARKES: I have seen them pay £4,000 and over for a yearling bull. There are some very wealthy concerns in the Argentina, and if their Government subsidised them to acquire such blood stock there is nothing wrong in it. Getting back to chilled meat. I was asking the Premier about bruised meat.

The PREMIER: You must admit that there are many bulls with herds here that ought to be shot on sight.

Mr. SPARKES: That might be so, but again the price is a governing factor. The Minister for Transport might be able to tell his Leader that the reason why better bulls are not introduced into the far western area is because the freight in getting them there is a very serious factor. Bruising is an important factor in the chilled meat trade.

The PREMIER: Branding is another factor, too.

Mr. SPARKES: You cannot get me away from the point. (Laughter.) I know exactly where I am now.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! No doubt the hon. member has got away from the question before the Committee. He must admit that the bulls on his station are far removed from the question that is before this Committee.

Mr. SPARKES: That is so. I was about to point out the importance of breeding a good type of horse to prevent the bruising of cattle. Surely that is of importance to this State! To prevent bruising, the cattle must be kept out of the yards as much as possible. Now we are coming to the horse, and I am right back on to the Bill! We want to breed that class of horse which will be able to draft a bullock in the bush without putting him into the yard. I turn off about 2,000 head of cattle each year, and not one of those beasts enters a yard from the time it is branded until it enters a yard to be trucked to its destination. All the work is done with the aid of horses. I appeal to the Premier, who wants to help this industry to give us the right to breed that camp horse which we desire in our industry.

Mr. BELL (*Stanley*) [7.22 p.m.]: I support the amendment. To my mind this is the most repulsive clause of the whole Bill. It is, as the Leader of the Opposition stated, another instance of interference with private enterprise. We know perfectly well that the horse-breeding industry would come back very quickly if it paid the breeder to breed a horse for a special purpose. The owner of the horse is the best judge of the class of horse to breed, and I appeal to the Minister to accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [7.23 p.m.]: Hon. members have not given any attention to the framing of this amendment. Before dinner they supported any policy that aimed at the elimination of diseases.

Mr. SPARKES: We still do so.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am glad to hear that. When we returned after dinner we find that the Opposition has somersaulted, intentionally or otherwise, on the argument advanced by them before dinner, for they have now moved an amendment designed to permit and encourage the breeding of diseased stock.

Mr. SPARKES: We will accept it without the disease.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member who moved the amendment is asking for the elimination of the words "use or," which means that any individual can use an unsound stallion or one that is not of approved standard for his own purpose.

Mr. BELL: Not diseased.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: "Unsound" is "diseased" within the terms of the schedule.

Mr. KENNY: Why not amend it to deal with diseased?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not prepared to accept an amendment that asks me to permit the use of unsound horses.

Another phase has to be considered: Do hon. members suggest that these horses are paddocked on the holding on which they are bred for the rest of their lives? The hon. member for Fassifern admitted frankly this afternoon that the excess is sold, and that in a season he himself would probably sell two or three colts. In those circumstances those two or three colts would immediately cease to be the property of the individual who bred them, and if they are used

for stud purposes outside is it not obvious they perpetuate their own disabilities?

Mr. SPARKES: They come under the Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The old saying about locking the door after the horse is stolen would aptly describe the position in this regard.

Hon. members opposite are taking the short view in this regard; I prefer to take the long view. If hon. members opposite were consistent, and desired to support their arguments by actual practical achievement, they would move an amendment prohibiting the sale of stock from holdings where a stallion was used that was unsound or not of approved standard. That would be the possible action they could take in view of their statements. I do not, therefore, propose to accept the amendment.

When speaking on this matter the Leader of the Opposition said that no public question was involved. Obviously a public question is involved—the sale of unsuitable, unsound, or diseased stock to an unsuspecting public. (Opposition laughter.) I do not think that even the Leader of the Opposition desires to associate himself with a policy of that description.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [7.23 p.m.]: This is the first time I have ever heard a horse buyer described as an unsuspecting public. (Laughter.) If ever there was an astute person on this earth it is the horse buyer! The Minister appears to think that when you have an approved horse you must necessarily have something that is good, but the hon. gentleman should realise that an unsound horse can be produced by a sound stallion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You get a much bigger proportion of unsound stock bred from unsound stock.

Mr. MOORE: Does the hon. gentleman mean to suggest that a person who keeps a stallion with which to breed stock will keep it if it breeds bad stock? The hon. gentleman must know that if it does not breed good stock the owner will promptly castrate it or get rid of it. It is only because he knows it is producing the stock he wants that the owner keeps that stallion.

If it is a question of disease—and the schedule classes unsoundness as disease—the Minister has ample power under the Diseases and Stock Act to get rid of any such diseased stock.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is by infection or contagion.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister has ample power. In this Bill, however, what business is it of the Minister's to interfere with an individual who is carrying on his own work in his own way? The Minister has no financial responsibility.

The PREMIER: Your argument would be a sound one if you applied a provision to the effect that you did not propose to sell the progeny.

Mr. MOORE: I am quite willing to agree to a proviso that no stallions shall be sold. No one wants to sell them. The man is not breeding stud horses; he is breeding horses for his own use. I should not object to a proviso that the person shall not sell any stallions for any purpose at all. If he put stock into the saleyard, the horse buyer will quickly say whether it is good or not, and if the stock does not fetch a good price the breeder will not continue to breed. The person who is desirous of buying a stallion generally gets one that is suitable for his purposes. It may be well bred and may be a good one, but it may not have the conformation the Minister thinks it ought to have, and it may not come up to the standard laid down by the inspector. Some of the ugliest horses have produced beautiful stock, and some of the ugliest cattle have thrown beautiful stock. Much depends on the question of heredity.

The PREMIER: That does not apply only to horses.

Mr. MOORE: No. That is why the Minister, to my mind, is entering a sphere of action where he has no right to enter. If the Minister had a financial responsibility—if these people were financed by the Agricultural Bank—it would be a different matter; but in the case of the ordinary individual breeding horses for his own use I cannot see why the Minister should interfere at all. I do not object to a provision that would preclude the individual from selling any entires bred from his stallion. What I am suggesting is the Minister is going too far in interfering when there is no reason for it, and when it is only causing antagonism and difficulties for people who are trying to carry on their business in their own way.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) [7.32 p.m.]: If this Bill becomes law it will mean, as time goes on, that the sale of stallions will be subject to the Stallion Board certificates, and people will not be able to buy a stallion that has not been passed by the board. I cannot see that the efficiency of the Bill would be hampered in any way by accepting the amendment. I go so far as to say that the Minister could so amend the clause as to provide that entires bred by a stallion kept by an individual for his own use could not be sold. People who have a large number of mares and who desire to breed a particular type of horse choose a stallion with great care to mate with those mares, and can afford to pay a big price when they have a large number of mares to breed from. If the individual is allowed to use a stallion for his own breeding purposes, it would not in any way interfere with the object of this Bill, and it would relieve these people of the thought that they are subject to Government inspection.

I agree with the Minister that this Bill may be of assistance in the stamping out of disease. I am at a loss to understand why the Minister will not accept the suggestion to allow these people to use their own horses for their own breeding purposes. The Minister could make provision to prevent the sale of entires from such stallions. That would encourage the breeding of a better class of stallion and would tend to stimulate the horse-breeding industry in Queensland.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [7.34 p.m.]: The Minister may have misunderstood me when I spoke about selling two or three colts. By using that term, "That is a nice colt," one does not necessarily mean an entire colt. I had no idea of conveying that meaning when I spoke. I realise the flaw in the amendment. I do not wish it to apply to unsound horses.

The Premier mentioned that the quality of our horses had deteriorated. That is quite true. But if he is logical in his argument he should realise that there certainly was a better quality horse formerly, but also there were no boards. I think the Minister should consider the idea of the Premier, which was not to allow any entire colt sired by a condemned stallion to be kept for breeding purposes. We should not have any objection to that provision. But provision should be made that we are able to breed working horses for ourselves. That liberty has been interfered with. Provided a horse is sound I consider that is a fair, reasonable, and logical point for consideration by the Minister.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) [7.36 p.m.]: Surely the Minister will reply to some of the arguments raised by the hon. members for Dalby and Fassifern so far as the breeding of stock horses on grazing properties in the State is concerned. I consider that their argument has been particularly sound, inasmuch as they desire to breed a particular type of horse for their own use—that is, in the drafting of cattle. It seems to me that the Minister will find it impossible to place on the proposed board any person with sufficient knowledge in comparison with that of the two hon. members who have spoken or in comparison with other men who are breeding this particular type of horse for their own particular use. It would be indeed very hard to obtain in the personnel of a board even one man with sufficient knowledge to decide the type or class of horse that should be bred for that particular work. I do not refer to type alone, because that does not quite fit the case. The horse has to be sound legged, sure-footed, and smart. That is the type of horse these men are breeding. The hon. members for Dalby and Fassifern have put forward their case very well indeed, and we look to the Minister for some explanation as to whether he can secure any representatives for the board who will be able to give better guidance to these people in the running of their own businesses than they themselves can give.

I desire to put before the Committee the case of the farmer. Before the Act was made so drastic, it was a common occurrence for most up-to-date farmers to keep their own stud horses. Such a horse was not used for service purposes outside the particular farmer's business. The horse worked in the team every day, and when the team was not working was generally working in a dray or a wagon about the place doing odd jobs. It will be seen, therefore, that he was indeed a very handy horse. It would be most difficult for the representatives of the Minister to say that that horse is not suitable for breeding horses for that particular farm. Generally, that horse was doing hard work, and during the season would be working with the team in the plough, and at the end of it would be out of condition. He certainly would not be in the condition for show purposes, in which we usually see stallions. Another thing that must be taken into consideration is that that horse would be tramped above the hoofs from turning at the end of the furrow. This is almost unavoidable, particularly in big ploughing teams. I can give another illustration to the Committee of how the Bill can operate. A veterinary surgeon from the Department of Agriculture, who was a member of the board, inspected a horse of mine at eight years of age, and gave him a life certificate. That was the second time that horse had been inspected, when working in the team, and two years afterwards my lad, who had been working the horse, took it over, and he was again inspected by the board, and that same veterinary surgeon who had given that horse a certificate when he was eight years of age—which is the age looked upon as being the age for a life certificate—rejected that horse as unsound because of ringbone and bad conformation. That veterinary surgeon was from the Department of Agriculture. That shows the Committee the mistakes that can be made. The beast did not have ringbone, but had been working in the lead of the plough on the inner side, and the remainder of the team when coming round came on top of him as he was turning. The consequence was he developed an enlargement above the hoof. I have no desire to plead my own case, but I do desire to point out to the Minister the dangerous ground he is on if he wants to do the fair thing in the interests of the people vitally affected.

Mr. SPARKES (*Dalby*) [7.43 p.m.]: I am now going to deal with horses that are required in the fruitgrowing districts. The big horses that are used on the Darling Downs are not required in the citrus orchards. I have been on one of the biggest citrus-growing orchards in Australia and probably in the world at Benyenda, where they have upward of fifty acres of citrus trees and I was there told that they required the little type of horse, one that could be used in ploughing without damaging the trees. That type of horse would be utterly useless on the Darling Downs. I have no idea of what is required in the Granite Belt, but probably the same type of horse is required there, and the hon. member for Murrumba informs me that that is the type required in his district. Probably this type of horse would be condemned by an officer of the department, and the stock horses bred on the station would be described as half-bred, but they are bred out of stock mares from blood horses, and that gives us the best horses that we require. Our stock horses are very valuable, being valued as high as £40 to £50 each, but the Minister knows that if these horses were offered for sale in the yards they probably would not realise more than £5 or £10.

I ask the Minister to reconsider the matter, and I appeal to him and to the other Ministers of the Crown to be reasonable in this respect—give us the right to have our own horses. I am thoroughly in accord with the proposals that stallions bred for sale shall conform to a certain standard and that they shall be free from disease, but give us the right to breed the type of horse that we require to carry out the special work on our properties so that our business can be conducted in the way that we consider best.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [7.45 p.m.]: I can assure the hon. member for Dalby that it is not my intention to stop the breeding of purebred stock. If we require to have a short blocky horse for the purpose of cultivation in orchards and it is desirable that that type of horse shall be employed the determining factor will be the utilitarian type that is required. That being the case,

no disability would be placed in the way of people who desired to breed that type of horse.

Mr. SPARKES: The matter would be left to the decision of the board.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In all future parades the basis that will be laid down will be the utilitarian type required to perform a certain work.

I should like to tell the rest of the story touched upon by the hon. member for Nanango. The hon. member knows that it is possible to grant a certificate of soundness in respect of a stallion eight years old, and at a later period it may be necessary to condemn it. You and I, Mr. Hanson, may be in perfect health to-night, and in two years' time we may be suffering from some disability, and the same applies to stock. The hon. member does know that when this case was brought under my notice I immediately took steps——

Mr. EDWARDS: It was never brought under your notice; it was not in your time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Has the hon. member had a lot of horses condemned?

Mr. EDWARDS: It was a different one altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member has had two horses condemned?

Mr. EDWARDS: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am confusing the two cases. When that case was brought under my notice I sent a senior officer of my department to check up on what had happened.

Mr. EDWARDS: You sent two officers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Two officers were sent up. My point is that that is not an isolated case. Whenever there has been any doubt about a question I have endeavoured to have it fully investigated, and the horse has always been given the benefit of the doubt. It would be fair to say about this horse in question that there was no doubt from the final examination that the horse might be as sound a horse as there is in Queensland. This point arises, however, that the amendment does permit the use of an unsound horse. Hon. members opposite recognise that. It also permits of the use of a horse that does not possess the required conformation. Suppose I were to add a further clause to this Bill prohibiting the sale of that stock. That would not overcome the evil, because stock would still be bred from unsound stock. Hon. members will agree with me that the most desirable course to adopt would be to prevent the breeding of that stock and leave the question to one of administration, to a satisfactory decision of what is an "approved type." That will meet all the reasonable requirements of people who desire to breed stock.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) negatived.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [7.50 p.m.]: Although we have been beaten all along the line I still have one small amendment to move, in an effort to get one crumb from the half loaf. It refers to the point that the Minister made, that it would be very hard indeed to prevent any stallion condemned only on account of type and not on account of unsoundness from continuing during the present season. The present season is about half way through. The Minister understands that?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I move the following amendment:—

"On page 2, after line 38, insert the following proviso:—

'Provided that where a stallion is not of approved standard the owner thereof shall still be entitled up to the first day of March, 1935, to use such stallion for stud purposes for the mares which are his own property and not otherwise.'"

That will, roughly speaking, allow a reasonable period to mark the end of the present season.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*) [7.52 p.m.]: Might I suggest to the hon. member for Fassifern that instead of the "1st March" he substitute the "30th June." That would bring the clause in conformity with our financial year and give the individual an opportunity after the season satisfactorily to dispose of the stallion as such. The period the hon. member allows after the termination of the season is too short.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I shall be very glad to do that. I will seek the permission of the Committee later to alter my amendment. I must point out to the Minister that the owner is prevented under this Bill from selling that stallion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When I used the word "dispose" I meant to convey that it would give him an opportunity to have the stallion castrated.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) [7.53 p.m.]: If the Committee will permit me, I desire to alter my amendment by deleting the words "first day of March" and substituting "thirtieth day of June."

Amendment, by leave, amended accordingly.

Amendment (*Mr. Wienholt*) agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 6, 7, and 8 agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*): I move—

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

Question put and passed.

RAILWAYS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J. Dash, *Mundingburra*) [7.56 p.m.]: I move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend 'The Railways Acts, 1914 to 1929,' in certain particulars."

This is a very small Bill. It does not deal with the question of railway fares and freights, but only with the employees of the

department. I shall give a good outline of the measure, so that all hon. members will realise what it contains.

The Bill provides that an appeal board shall be created, consisting of—

(1) A police magistrate, who shall be chairman of the board;

(2) Five employees' representatives in the three divisions of the State—namely, Southern, Central, and Northern divisions—one from each of the following branches:—

(i.) Maintenance branch;

(ii.) Locomotive branch (running staff);

(iii.) Locomotive branch (workshops staff);

(iv.) Traffic branch;

(v.) Clerical staff; and

(3) A representative of the Commissioner for Railways.

Mr. MOORE: Of course, only one employees' representative will sit on the board at any one time?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Yes, as I shall explain. The board, when sitting, will be constituted as follows:—

(1) A police magistrate, who shall be chairman;

(2) A representative of the Commissioner; and

(3) One of the elected representatives of the employees concerned.

The employees' representative on the board will be elected by ballot of the employees concerned. If two or more employees in any branch receive an equal number of votes, the matter will be decided by lot. The board may hear appeals in the Southern division in Brisbane, in the Northern division in Townsville, in the Central division at Rockhampton, or elsewhere as decided by the Commissioner. It is provided that the secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a record of all proceedings and the decisions arrived at. Should it be desirable, owing to the urgency of the work, the Governor in Council may appoint another police magistrate or police magistrates to hear appeals, and any police magistrate so appointed will have the same powers as the chairman under this Bill.

The Bill provides that when a vacancy occurs in any branch of the service it shall be filled by the promotion of the most suitable employee next in rank, position, or grade if he applies. If an applicant is passed over he will have the right of appeal to the appeal board.

Every appeal must be in writing, clearly set forth the grounds of appeal, and be despatched to the secretary within fourteen days after the appellant receives the decision which is appealed against, or in the case of an appeal by an employee pursuant to his right under section 21 of the Acts, within fourteen days after the date of the "Weekly Notice" in which the appointment appealed against is published. The secretary will set down the date of hearing as early as possible and not later than thirty days after the notice of appeal is received. The board may extend the date to not later than forty days after the date when the notice of appeal was received. The secretary will give the appellant seven clear days' notice of the date when the appeal will be heard. All powers of the board may be exercised by a majority of the board. The parties to an appeal may subpoena witnesses and may be represented by a barrister, solicitor, or agent, who will be at liberty to examine witnesses and address the board.

An appeal will lie by an employee in one division against an appointment or promotion of any employee in another division.

Every appeal will be investigated in open court. The board may confirm or modify the decision appealed against, or may suspend the employee concerned for a further term not exceeding six months without pay, or may inflict a fine, or may dismiss him or make such order as it thinks fit. The decision of the board will be final except in the case of dismissal, when the person aggrieved shall have the right of appeal to the Commissioner, whose decision will be final. The employee in that case can appeal to the Commissioner for re-employment.

Mr. KENNY: If he appealed to the board and the board did not uphold that appeal and the Commissioner re-employed him, would he lose his status?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: It would depend on how long he had been out of employment. If the board upholds the appeal it must grant such reasonable expenses to the appellant as the board thinks fit. The board may also grant the Commissioner expenses against an appellant in what are known as frivolous appeals, but such expenses shall not exceed £10. Expenses so granted by the board and ordered to be paid to the Commissioner shall constitute a debt due to the Commissioner, and shall be a charge against salary or wages, or may be recovered under "The Magistrates Courts Act of 1921." When an appellant, who has been suspended or dismissed, appeals to the board and the board dismisses such appeal, the appellant will not be entitled to be paid any salary or wages or other emoluments, or to claim expenses in respect of the time involved in respect of his attendance before the board. Where an appellant who has not been dismissed or suspended appeals to the board and the board dismisses such appeal, such appellant will not be entitled to claim any expenses or emoluments other than his salary or wages in respect of time involved in attendance before the board.

Where any employees' representative on an appeal board is unable to sit, the employee who at the ballot received the next greatest number of votes at the election of representatives will act as deputy of such employees' representative. In the event of the employees' representative being the only person nominated at the ballot, and an inquiry being necessary in his absence, the union of which the appellant is a member will nominate another member to act. Upon the failure of such union to nominate another member within three days the charged employee may nominate such member, and failing such nomination by such employee such board may proceed to hold such inquiry in the absence of the employees' representative.

The Bill also provides that the railway refreshment-room employees shall be brought within the scope of the Railways Acts.

That is an outline of the Bill that I intend to introduce. I have given a full description of the Bill in order that hon. members may know what it contains. I have no doubt that it will receive the support of hon. members.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) [8.5 p.m.]: I am prepared to accept that part of the Bill dealing with persons who steal tarpaulins. I think it is high time action was taken to protect the Commissioner's property; because there have been many cases where tarpaulins have been misused.

There is only one portion of the Bill that is of importance, and that deals with the constitution of an appeal board in regard to promotions. The rest of the Bill is purely machinery and provides for contingencies that may arise. For instance, if an employees' representative gets sick somebody else may be appointed, and if a nominated representative is absent the union may nominate another member to act. We know perfectly well that a representative will be there, and that it is not in the least likely that the appeal will be heard in the presence only of the police magistrate and a representative of the Commissioner.

The main point of the Bill is the question of the appeal board being established to hear appeals in the Southern, Central, and Northern divisions of the State, and the appointment of a permanent police magistrate as chairman of the board. It really means that the position will be as it was before the abolition of the previous board. In fact, the position will be exactly the same. If I remember rightly, Mr. W. Harris, P.M., was the permanent chairman of the appeal board. The whole question is what is best in the interests of the discipline and everything else of the service, and whether the appeal board should be constituted to hear appeals regarding promotion.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: There is an appeal board for the public service.

Mr. MOORE: I know that, but will anyone say that these boards are of any great value? I rather doubt that they are. I do not think there is very much to be gained by the establishment of this board, although I recognise the reason for the Bill being brought forward. The Minister stated that the person who was the most suitable in priority in the department should be appointed to a specified position. Everybody is aware, or at least anybody who has had much to do with bodies of men, that it is a most difficult thing to be able to prove who is the most suitable out of a number. One man in a department might be very excellent in many ways, but if it came to the question of being placed in charge of other officers he might not be at all competent. So far as his work and efficiency in a particular branch of the service goes, the individual might be an excellent man, but he might not be at all suitable for a position involving the control and handling of other officers. It is most difficult to prove suitability in a court. It means that the department does not get the most efficient service. The Commissioner or whoever is in charge of a branch probably knows the man most suitable for a position, but it is doubtful whether he would be able to prove it.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: The Commissioner would have to act on the recommendation of other officers.

Mr. MOORE: The position is the same. Such an officer would have to prove who was the most suitable man, which is an extremely difficult thing to do.

Mr. W. T. KING: He should be able to prove it.

Mr. MOORE: I dare say that he should be able to do so, but the hon. member knows perfectly well how difficult it is. Temperament and almost everything come into the matter when it is a question of promotion. I am not referring to promotions in the lower branches of the services, but those in the higher branches where there are most likly to be the greatest number of appeals. The suitability, the temperament, the capacity of the man generally, his mechanical efficiency in the work of his branch may be infinitely better than another officer, but when it comes to the control of men he may not be able to get the best out of those under him, as would another whose work perhaps may be not quite so good in other respects. We are aware that some men may not be efficient industrially, but they may be a great deal more effiicent when it comes to the question of carrying out work in the best interests of the community and of the department. This appeal board was not abolished by my Government capriciously, arbitrarily, without thought, or because another Government had been responsible for its institution. Its abolition was considered to be in the best interests of the community, because it was considered advisable that the Commissioner should have a free hand and be able to make such promotions as he considered were in the best interests of the service and likely to conduce to carrying on the work of the department efficiently and economically.

Mr. W. T. KING: The Commissioner may make a mistake.

Mr. MOORE: Possibly, and possibly the appeal board can make a mistake. I suppose nobody is entirely infallible. After all, the Commissioner and the heads of the various departments should know the officer most capable of filling a particular job, but it might be a very difficult thing to prove that officer's suitability.

We also had the experience when the appeal board functioned previously that it was continually travelling and large expenses were incurred, sometimes over trivial matters. In some instances the expense to the department and to the country was far greater than the matter warranted, taking into consideration the loss of time of the departmental representatives of the board. Generally, the whole position was unsatisfactory, and that was the reason for its abolition.

I quite understand that pressure has been brought to bear on the Minister to introduce the Bill because the belief is held in some quarters that there is a great virtue in having an appeal board. Personally, I cannot see that there is. The one thing that we should aim for, and the thing that the Minister, I am sure, wishes to see is efficiency in the service, and that can be secured by appointing the man most suitable for the position. I do not necessarily mean most suitable industrially or technically but most suitable temperamentally and otherwise for the position, so that the Government may obtain the best return from the railways. In my opinion the appeal board will not make this task any easier, in fact

I think it will be a detriment and that it will be very unsatisfactory. It will mean a waste of time with very little gain. I believe that it will mean a considerable loss. If that is all that is in the Bill, it is quite a simple one and we know exactly the part that we object to and the part that we can support. I do not think it is desirable that the old appeal system should be revived, because I feel that the practice that has been in vogue since its abolition has been infinitely better and less costly, and has given greater efficiency in the Railway Department.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*) [8.13 p.m.]: I listened very attentively to the Minister and I have to thank him——

Mr. NIMMO: This is the first time that you have heard about the Bill?

Mr. GLEDSON: I am thanking him for giving us the information and I thank him on behalf of a large number of railway men who have been asking for this Bill for some time. I disagree with the assertion of the Leader of the Opposition that the Bill has been introduced because pressure has been brought to bear on the Minister. The policy of the Labour Party is truth and justice and we are reminded of truth and justice every day before this Parliament opens. The railway men did not get that when the Moore Government were in power. An Appeal Board was originally instituted so that a railway employee who considered he had been unfairly treated could obtain justice, but the Moore Government said, "We will wipe it out. We will not allow you to appeal against an injustice. We will take away the right that you have had for years to appeal against an injustice." The Bill provides that the appeal board shall hear appeal cases in the South, Centre, and North. A railway employee in Cairns or Townsville who has been employed in the Railway Department for many years may be overlooked in promotion to a position he is quite competent to fill. Perhaps the appointee is favoured by the immediate head of his branch, or is a friend of his.

Mr. MOORE: Perhaps the member for the district may exercise a little influence.

Mr. GLEDSON: Perhaps that. The person who is overlooked may be a loyal servant quite capable of carrying out the work and fully entitled to promotion, but during the regime of the Moore Government he had no right of appeal against this injustice. He had to sit down and be content to see the position filled by a man who was his junior by years. There was no check on what was done because the Commissioner must of necessity accept the advice of his officers in the different parts of the State. We cannot expect the Commissioner to know the work performed by every individual officer throughout the State. What opportunity would he have of knowing the capability of officers of the running staff employed on the Great Northern Railway? What opportunity would the Commissioner personally have to decide whether an officer in that part of the State was capable of filling the position of inspector or officer in charge despite the fact that he had given faithful service to the department for years? The Commissioner must rely upon the reports of his senior officers. During the regime of the Moore Government the applicants who were overlooked were not given the right of an appeal, but it is now proposed to restore to them an opportunity to obtain the justice to which they are entitled.

There may be something in the statement by the Leader of the Opposition that travelling expenses had to be incurred by the men associated with the Appeal Board, and that it was costly to determine certain appeal cases, but there were other cases that did not incur a great amount of expense because the appeals were heard expeditiously. Taking the question by and large the few pounds that it would cost is infinitesimal compared with the justice that it confers on the railway employees and they are entitled to get. The appeal board that is being reconstituted will enable an appeal to be heard before a police magistrate, a representative of the Commissioner of Railways, and a representative of the employee who is appealing, or charged, as the case may be. The board will proceed to hear the evidence and arrive at a determination on that evidence. The deprivation of this right has been the cause of much dissatisfaction in the railway service during the Moore Government's administration and practically up to the present time.

Mr. KENNY: Why did you not restore the Appeal Board two years ago?

Mr. GLEDSON: The right is being restored now. The Government could not do everything at once. They have been endeavouring during the last two years to undo the mischief that was done by the Moore Government. The railway employees, as well as the people of Queensland, will recognise that this Government have been proceeding by progressive stages in wiping out and adjusting all the anomalies that arose during the previous Administration. These disabilities have been wiped out one by one, and to-night we are removing this disability from the railway service and restoring to them the measure of justice they previously possessed.

Mr. KENNY: Does this come into operation on the 1st January next year, too.

Mr. GLEDSON: The Minister will doubtless give the hon. member that information in his second reading speech. I am very pleased to see also that the Government are recognising that the employees of the railway refreshment-rooms are entitled to the right of appeal against any injustice from which they consider they may suffer. These employees asked that they should be brought under the control of the Commissioner. They were brought under the control of the Commissioner by the Moore Government, and at the same, together with the rest of the employees of the Railway Department, were deprived of the right of appeal.

In this matter they were deprived of certain rights and privileges that existed during the regime of the previous Labour Government. On behalf of the railway employees, particularly the large number of employees in my electorate, I thank the Minister for having introduced this Bill.

Question—"That the resolution (*Mr. Dash's motion*) be agreed to"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J. Dash, *Mundingburra*) presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at 8.25 p.m.