

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 1942**

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**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK** (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, Barcoo) replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. The information contained in the article in “Truth” newspaper was based upon incorrect premises. In addition to the 4s. 7½d. per case mentioned as the amount received by the grower, he is also paid 2s. 3d. per case for presentation costs, and is relieved of the payment of freight and cartage to agents’ floors, totalling 11½d. per case, and of selling commission upon realisation. Only isolated consignments realise 26s. per case, and the average is much below that figure. Repeated representations have been made by myself and those associated with the industry for Queensland to be exempted from the operations of the scheme or, as an alternative, that higher compensation be awarded to Queensland growers. This latter suggestion is before the Commonwealth authorities at present.

“3. The Australian Apple and Pear Marketing Board, together with the State Advisory Committees, were appointed by the Commonwealth Government, and the functions of the board and committees are to market the apple and pear crops of Australia, as acquired under National Security regulations.”

**THURSDAY, 12 NOVEMBER, 1942.**

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. E. J. Hanson, Buranda) took the chair at 11 a.m.

MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. L. J. BARNES.

Mr. Louis Joseph Barnes, having taken the oath of allegiance and subscribed the roll, took his seat as member for the electoral district of Cairns.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL ACCOUNTS.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his sixth annual report on the books and accounts of the Brisbane City Council, being for the year 1941-42.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

PRICE OF APPLES.

Mr. MANN (Brisbane) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to an article published in “Truth” newspaper, dated 8 November, 1942, headed “Fruit Scandal: Public Slugged Outrageously—Growers on the Breadline”?

“2. If so, can he enlighten the House as to what becomes of the difference between the 4s. 7½d. received by the grower for each case of apples and the 26s. per case paid at the Brisbane Markets?

“3. Is the Apple and Pear Board a State or a Federal instrumentality, and what are its functions?”

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES, 1941-42.

Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba), without notice, asked the Premier—

“When will the return showing the expenses of Ministers for 1941-42, as ordered on my motion on 26 August last, and as asked for on 5 November last, be presented?”

The PREMIER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) replied—

“I refer the hon. member to my answer to his previous question without notice upon this subject.”

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for the year 1941-1942.

Report of the Director of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for the year 1941-1942.

Report of Commissioner of Prices under the Profiteering Prevention Acts, 1920 to 1938, for the year 1941-1942.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Order in Council, dated 5 November, 1942, under the Employment Exchanges Acts, 1915 to 1941.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

The **ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich): 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 Friendly Societies Acts, 1913 to 1940, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

INCOME TAX AND SUCCESSION AND PROBATE DUTIES (SAILORS, SOLDIERS, AND MEMBERS OF THE AIR FORCE) EXEMPTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a third time.

STOCK RETURNS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a third time.

CONSTITUTION OF QUEENSLAND AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Gledson, read a third time.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH ALLOTTED DAYS.

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Brassington, Fortitude Valley, in the chair.)

ESTIMATES IN CHIEF, 1942-1943.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

CHIEF OFFICE.

Debate resumed from 10 November (see p. 1046) on Mr. Jones's motion—

“That £40,619 be granted for ‘Department of Public Instruction—Chief Office.’ ”

**Mr. TURNER** (Kelvin Grove) (11.11 a.m.): Evidently the hon. member for Aubigny thinks that because I was elected to represent a metropolitan seat I know nothing about the educational requirements of the rest of the State, but I want to impress upon him that although I was elected for a metropolitan seat I was also elected to represent the interests of the entire State and so I have paid attention to matters outside the metropolitan area, too, particularly to the educational requirements of the State. I do know the important part that education has

played in educating children in country electorates, and the need for our educational facilities to be made available to them. I was not condemning one-teacher schools in the passage to which the hon. member referred.

**Mr. Sparkes:** You said that the children in the country would be better off under the correspondence system of education than if they were taught in one-teacher schools.

**Mr. TURNER:** I repeat that statement. The correspondence system has a distinct advantage over one-teacher schools in educating children in sparsely populated centres. The hon. member for Aubigny is a cattle-grower. Would he be a successful farmer, or a sheep-raiser, or a pig-raiser, or poultry-farmer? I say emphatically “No.” He could not make a success of every branch of work associated with the land. Yet a teacher in the Department of Public Instruction is expected to be successful in teaching every grade that is taught in our public schools. Under our correspondence system each teacher is in charge of a separate grade. It is only natural, then, that children taught under such methods should be better educated than if they were in a one-teacher school. A one-teacher school is better than no school at all, because the average farmer has not the means to engage a governess to educate his children like the wealthy landowner. The advantage of the correspondence system over the one-teacher school is that children, particularly children of dairy farmers, to whom I referred the other day, have an opportunity of getting their education between the period they are working on the farms and the time set aside for study. As the hon. member mentioned, some children travel upwards of five miles to a school. Such a child travels at least two hours a day—one hour going to school and another hour returning home. That time could be more profitably employed at home in being educated under the correspondence system. The hon. member said that parents had no time to help their children in their education, but all a parent requires to do under the correspondence system is to insist that the children spend a certain time at their study.

**Mr. Nimmo:** There is more in it than that.

**Mr. TURNER:** Under the correspondence system, the work for the pupils is set out in a sound and understandable way. The children can follow the instructions just as easily as they could the oral lessons of a teacher, and at times better. They are set down in black and white and in simple language. After the parent gives the children training in the rudiments of education, such as the kindergarten and infant classes, it is not difficult for them to follow the instructions under the correspondence system. That is a great advantage of that system over the one-teacher schools. My principal objection to the one-teacher school, however, is that the teacher is under a considerable handicap in having to board with a parent of pupils, which is a danger to his disciplining of the child. If the child is not disciplined at home, and

is disciplined in school, the task of the teacher is very difficult indeed.

The hon. member for Hamilton dwelt on the need of building character in the child. To me the building of character is more important than academic education. Education without character is very dangerous, but education with character is the greatest asset one could possess. I would rather have a good character and a mediocre education than a good education and no character. With character one can get somewhere in the world, but without character it is not possible to get anywhere, because you are ostracised in every way. I am fully in accord with that remark of the hon. member for Hamilton, and it is impossible to build up character in a child if that process ceases immediately the child returns home.

The hon. member for Aubigny pleaded that parents in the country had no time to help their children under the correspondence system. I doubt that, but in any case the teachers of the correspondence school give all the help a child requires to study under the system. They are chosen because of their special qualifications for this particular department. I have the greatest admiration for this system. My eldest child was educated under it. The teachers who took her through her various grades were understanding in the highest degree. I was amazed at the remarks they wrote on her work. If they had associated with the child at a State school they could not have understood her better. I say that rather than draft teachers into one-teacher schools where there are fewer than nine children, I think the children would be better served and better educated under the correspondence system. The teacher at a one-teacher school has to spend a certain part of the time on infants and all the other grades up to the scholarship grade. Is it common sense that a teacher can give the same amount of attention to children in each of those grades as the teacher who has to concentrate on only one grade? I leave it to hon. members to draw their own conclusions. I say unhesitatingly that wherever the schools are closed because the attendance falls below the required minimum the parents should seriously consider enrolling their children in the correspondence classes, which would cater particularly well for the children on the dairy farms that the hon. member for Aubigny mentioned. We realise their work is in the early hours of the morning and in the evening, and there is the time between 9 or 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. during which the children could concentrate on their education. If they have to travel backwards and forwards to school they may waste a couple of hours a day that could be better employed doing their lessons at home.

The hon. member for Aubigny also mentioned that the children should go to the school for amusement. Can hon. members visualise children in the infants' class being amused by the children in the scholarship class? Children are always looking for a bigger environment.

**Mr. Massey:** Are there children of nine years of age working on the dairy farm?

**Mr. TURNER:** Younger than that.

**Mr. Massey:** Do you believe in that?

**Mr. TURNER:** I do not believe in it; I do not support it at all. It has to be remembered that the Department of Public Instruction made these one-teacher schools and correspondence classes available where they worked on the farms.

**Mr. Massey:** Under nine?

**Mr. TURNER:** Much under nine. It is going on too much to-day, but what redress have you?

**Mr. Massey:** You are in the Government Party.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. TURNER:** I know I am, and I know the times we are going through. I know the hon. member for Toowong would not support the Government in their effort to do anything to help the dairy farmer. He would not care whether the child was four or nine, so he is as much to blame as any other hon. member.

I think I have made myself clear to the hon. member for Aubigny—that I am as much interested in the welfare and education of our children in the country districts as in those of the metropolitan area.

**Mr. THEODORE (Herbert) (11.23 a.m.):** I desire to congratulate the Minister for the success of his administration during the short time he has held this very important portfolio. I realise that education is one of the most important matters that concern the State. I can speak feelingly of the correspondence school and one-teacher schools, because I have lived in isolated parts of the State. I must say that the one-teacher schools have done remarkably well. They are certainly at a great disadvantage, because so much is expected of one teacher, but from my knowledge and experience of one-teacher schools—and we have a number of them in the Herbert electorate—they are doing splendid work. I know it is the intention of the department to endeavour to reduce the number of small schools and centralise the schools and make available at least two or more teachers for each school wherever possible.

In the early days of the Tully district we had to resort to all sorts of means to give our children education. Our home was 10 miles from the nearest school, with the river between, and the children had to cross this river, which was a wide river, and frequently was in flood. Whenever possible they crossed the river in a boat. They then rode ponies to the school or got there as best they could. Of course, that was a great disadvantage to young children, but many children in the district had to get to school in that way. This was so bad for our children, especially in that hot climate, that my wife decided to try the correspondence method of teaching. She discovered that the children, because of the horror and dread of having to cross the

river in a boat and travel such a long way, told her little stories. Frequently when I returned to the house my wife would tell me that they had not gone to school that day because they said there were alligator tracks in the mud of the river. I made an inspection and, sure enough, I found them. But those children would do anything to avoid having to travel that long distance, and consequently often told some tale in order to avoid attending school. My wife found it very difficult to teach the children, especially the younger ones, by the correspondence method. I do not suggest that this would be so everywhere, but in our case it was so. There was so much for my wife to do in addition to housework that it was impossible for her to give the attention necessary to a child taught by the correspondence method, but I must say that the efficiency of the teachers of the correspondence school was all that could be desired. My experience is that it is a valuable system of education to those people who have no other facilities, but it does not compare with the teaching of children even at one-teacher schools. It is preferable to have children attending a school at which they can receive attention by a trained teacher whose duty it is to impart education to children.

**Mr. Plunkett:** It was never meant to take the place of school.

**Mr. THEODORE:** I agree that it is a very good method if schools are not available. The correspondence method is all that can be said of it in those circumstances, but it cannot be favourably compared with attendance at a school, even though it be a one-teacher school. In the Innisfail district and others in which there is a great deal of rain, children lose much valuable school time. Moreover, owing to the result of war and the evacuation of women and children, it was found necessary to close schools and endeavour to combine two schools in one, under the control of a head teacher and an assistant. That was a very satisfactory method for those children who could attend that school. The department is to be congratulated on the excellent work that is being done. I come in contact with the inspector for North Queensland, and he is to be highly commended for the recommendations he makes to assist the department, the people, and the teachers, who are doing very good work.

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, Barcoo) (11.29 a.m.):** It is unusual for one Minister to intrude on the Estimates of another, but in this vote there is involved a matter that I desire to discuss briefly, the question of agricultural education. Hon. members opposite, from time to time, raised the point that the Gatton Agricultural High School and College should be under the control of the Department of Agriculture and Stock.

**Mr. Sparkes:** So it should be.

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK:** That would mean a complete recasting of the curriculum. That

department could not possibly undertake the education, for instance, of boys who take academic subjects after passing the junior examination. Of course, when the academic side of the curriculum was over to a degree and the student came to legitimate agriculture, there would necessarily be a closer contact with the Department of Agriculture and Stock, but fundamentally no Department of Agriculture and Stock could undertake the functions of the Department of Public Instruction, i.e., the academic phase of agricultural education.

I hold the opinion, and I hold it strongly, that academic education and cultural education—not utilitarian education—is just as essential to the man on the land as it is to the man in the city. Actually, the man on the land who develops a taste for literature has an infinite advantage, probably, over the man in the city who does not develop that taste. We must have culture in our farming communities, otherwise we sink to the level of the peasantry of Central Europe, and that is something which we all abhor. I think most of us dislike the term "peasantry," with all its implications.

My principal reason for rising was to pay a tribute to the work the Gatton college has done. I knew the college when it was not a real factor in the agricultural education of our ruralists. Many years ago that institution was not eminently successful, but with the advent of Professor Murray agricultural education in Queensland became not only established but an integral part of our educational system.

I do not know much about the academic phases of education, but I can modestly claim that I do know just a little about rural education, and I am constrained to say, in justice to my State, that the standard of rural education at both Gatton and the University is equal to that of any institution I have had the opportunity of seeing, and I have seen rural educational institutions in many countries of the world.

I am proud of the technique of our own Department of Public Instruction. I am proud of the curriculum that has been devised, and I am proud of many of the boys who have come into my department from Gatton. The cadets who come into my department from Gatton are, in the main, boys of personality. The stamp of a good school is placed upon them at Gatton, and that is an essential thing. I could name half a dozen cadets in my department, products of Gatton, who are destined to become executive officers in the Department of Agriculture in the process of time. If we can turn out boys like that, boys to whom we can entrust much of the agricultural destiny of our Commonwealth, we have every reason to be proud of the institution.

So we were building up to an excellent system of well-balanced agricultural and academic education under the guidance of the Department of Agriculture and Stock and under the jurisdiction of Professor Keith Murray. I regret, of course, that Professor

Murray joined another service. I still believe that he might have served a better purpose had he remained in the agricultural field.

**Mr. Sparkes:** He is occupying a very high position now.

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK:** I know he is, but with all due respect to Professor Keith Murray—and every man is entitled to and must follow the dictates of his conscience, and I honour and respect him for embracing a strenuous and hard life in preference to the comparatively cloistered life he previously led—I often wonder whether, in the final analysis, he is serving his country more faithfully as a soldier than he could have as an agriculturist.

**Mr. Sparkes:** He is serving it according to his conscience, though.

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK:** And I applaud him for doing so, but I am entitled to speculate on the general principle that is involved. Under Professor Keith Murray we built up a very fine and attractive system of agricultural education in this State.

**Mr. Dart:** On a good foundation.

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK:** On a very sound foundation. Rural production is the fount of our wealth, and since it is the fount of our wealth rural education is the most important phase of education in our State. It would amaze hon. members to know the colossal volume of avoidable economic loss, loss that should not but does occur in our agriculture because our technical knowledge, or the technical knowledge of many of the producers, is not equal to dealing with the emergencies that arise.

We must not discount scientific training in rural pursuits. Had scientists not been working in agriculture, quite obviously agriculture would still be the handmaiden of everything else. The amazing progress that has been made in this, the oldest of the arts and the newest of the sciences, is a revelation; but nature is always working against man and nature is always trying to regain the equilibrium. Let me give an example in passing. Over the years we have built up what we regard as a useful arsenical compound for the dipping of stock, but lately nature has apparently developed a tick that has become tolerant to arsenic and so a new difficulty is arising. We must keep abreast of these things. That brings me to the crux of the matter that I want to mention. The future of this State is so closely related to agriculture that it will have no real future unless agriculture is both solvent and satisfactory, and the worst thing that could happen would be to suspend agricultural education. It is very difficult to attract people to agriculture. Take the father who has a boy to educate and has the choice between medicine or veterinary science, or between science and agricultural science. The earning capacity of a doctor is determined mainly by his abilities. The

veterinary science student requires only another year of study to become a medical man, but the income of the veterinary surgeon may run into only hundreds of pounds a year, but he is just as important to the economy of the State as a medical man. The avenues for the pure scientists are wide, while the avenues for the agricultural scientist are restricted, and if an extra few hundred pounds makes no difference to the father with a boy to educate he may choose the more lucrative and what may be regarded as perhaps the more dignified profession of medicine. Therefore, Gatton has provided a system whereby our boys may obtain an agricultural education which, with the more liberalised scheme of scholarships, carries them to the university. I know most of the eminent agricultural technicians in Australia, and they have come to believe, like myself, that the men who have acquired a knowledge of agriculture in the first place have done so because it was probably the only education that was available. I think we shall have to liberalise our system of agricultural education and we shall have to make agriculture and the appurtenances of agriculture much more attractive to the cream of our intelligence. If we do that we shall succeed in establishing a firm foundation that will attract the worth-while youngsters to serve what is the noblest science I know, the science of agriculture.

Knowing these things and recognising them, we come face to face with the tragedy of the eclipse of Gatton. It is a real tragedy. The other States are conducting their agricultural colleges. What is going to be the position in Queensland if when the Department of Agriculture and Stock goes on its annual pilgrimage for recruits it has to turn to the diploma-holders from the southern agricultural colleges because our own agricultural college did not turn out the men required? I think that would be a tragedy.

**Mr. Luckins:** That is not the position in Queensland?

**The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK:** It could very well be the position in Queensland. Gatton College to all intents and purposes is closed down. It is true that the Secretary for Public Instruction has succeeded in retaining the boys who were to go up for their diploma examination this year, and I understand that in the majority of cases they will take their diplomas.

I rose particularly to ask publicly that the Secretary for Public Instruction should do everything he can to develop practical and academic agricultural education in this State, because so much depends upon the agricultural education of our youngsters. We have to recognise that the time is rapidly coming when the world's markets will be efficient and there is going to be no room in this post-war period for the inefficient. If the Atlantic Charter means anything, it means that different countries with different costs of production are going to have a common marketing basis. I hope it does not mean that, but that is the only interpretation I can place on the various speeches that I

have read. It strongly suggests to me that agricultural Australia must have greater efficiency in the future than it has had in the past. The old haphazard method of production will have to go. We shall, whether we like it or not, be compelled to direct our agricultural production along those channels that will give the most efficient results. Under those circumstances I again suggest the absolute necessity of reinstating in full tempo agricultural education in Queensland by the medium of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College, and, as a tertiary phase, the University.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. SPARKES** (Aubigny) (11.45 a.m.): I congratulate the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat on his appointment as Federal Director of Agriculture. Although I am speaking personally, I believe I am expressing the views of many people engaged in agriculture and stock work when I say that Queensland will be the poorer through his decision. Queensland, however, will have the benefit of his knowledge and experience in the wider sphere he is entering. The hon. gentleman's knowledge of Queensland conditions will enable Queensland to benefit considerably from his appointment.

It is rather amusing that the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, in one of his last debates in this Chamber, should have adopted the technique of the Premier; his main purpose in speaking was to draw me off the trail, as it were, to divert me from the subject of one-teacher schools as against the correspondence system of education to the subject of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College. In effect, the hon. gentleman said, "Here is a chance to catch the hon. member for Aubigny; he will come in on this Gatton bait." His technique was remarkable. He thought it to be his duty to keep me away from my subject. I could almost hear him say, "Let me in on this debate and I will take him right off that other trail and bring him along the trail to Gatton College." His mission was so obvious that even the Attorney-General, with his austere demeanour, appeared to anticipate the hon. gentleman's move and the Secretary for Public Lands almost fell off his seat while indulging in some little by-play to bring in the hon. member for Aubigny.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** You remember what the late Mr. Stopford said about you?

**Mr. SPARKES:** My time is too limited for me to reply to stupid interjections.

**The Attorney-General:** Your natural ability is now being wasted.

**Mr. SPARKES:** That is a matter of opinion.

I listened very carefully to the remarks of the hon. member for Kelvin Grove, who endeavoured to make his position quite plain to me. He certainly did. He distinctly said that he favoured the correspondence system of education as against one-teacher

schools. Now, Mr. Brassington, with your knowledge of the country, you know only too well that 99 per cent.—or I might say, nearly 100 per cent.—of country schools situated away from country towns are one-teacher schools. Does the hon. member advocate the closure of all those schools and the substitution of the correspondence system for them? That is practically what he said. The hon. member for Herbert administered a very mild corrective.

**Mr. Theodore:** I gave the Committee my knowledge from practical experience.

**Mr. SPARKES:** The hon. member for Herbert possessed the practical experience that the hon. member for Kelvin Grove lacks. I admit he was sincere, but as I said he is not conversant with country conditions. I admit quite frankly that where it is impossible to establish a one-teacher school the correspondence system certainly helps to fill the gap. But I, and all other hon. members representing country electorates, know that the people are 100 per cent. in favour of the little one-teacher school. I am surprised that an hon. member should get up and suggest that they should be closed.

The hon. member for Kelvin Grove quoted the remark of the hon. member for Hamilton that character was important and agreed that it was. I should like the hon. member to tell me how character can be instilled into a child by letter. Is not character more likely to be developed by a teacher, even though the children are all in different grades at one school? Even if there is a bit of drift while the children are at home, the teacher can develop their characters when they are at school. I venture to say that even the greatest supporter of the correspondence school would admit that. In this city we have schools where the teachers are specially prepared for work in one-teacher schools, and I am given to understand by a very high authority—one whose word is not to be impeached—that those schools are very highly regarded. The hon. member for Hamilton has informed me to that effect, and I do not doubt his veracity for one moment. I feel the Minister, who is a country man, and the officers of the Department of Public Instruction will, while recognising the sincerity of the hon. member for Kelvin Grove, decide that he is out of step with country conditions.

One hon. member—I think it was the Secretary for Public Lands—made an interjection about my opposition to Gatton. I point out that during the course of his speech the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock said, in reply to an interjection, that Gatton was not always the success that it is to-day. It has improved. For the information of the Attorney-General and the Secretary for Public Lands, I might point out that right up to the closing of Gatton the boys from that institution came to my place every year and had a practical demonstration of different classes of cattle work on my property. I appreciated being able to have those boys there and give them the practical experience of the work the theory of which they were learning at the school. It was

a pleasure to me, and it will be a pleasure to have them again when the school is reorganised.

As to the principal of the school, I think, as I said before, that Professor Murray's conscience told him that he should fight, and I think everyone will applaud him for the action he has taken. I think this Committee should have been told by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock that this school is not now available. We cannot avoid these things under war conditions. The agricultural schools are at work in the South because war conditions there are not as acute as in Queensland.

**Mr. DEVRIES (Gregory) (11.52 a.m.):** I am pleased to have the opportunity of making a contribution to the debate on this vote. I listened attentively to the hon. member for Oxley and the hon. member for Maree, who paid a tribute to the Minister. It was surprising, in view of the unkind and nasty reflections they have made upon the A.W.U. from time to time that these same gentlemen should pay tribute to a man who has given a life-long service in the industrial movement. My association with the Minister in the industrial field extends over 17 years. I have worked in the sheds and travelled on the road with him. The portfolio he holds is a very important one. It is filled by a man who graduated not from a university but from adversity, and the basis of success in the school of adversity is the application of common sense. I am indeed happy to be able to pay tribute to the Minister to-day in view of his humble beginning and his industrial activity, and to express the satisfaction of the organisation to which I belong at seeing one of its members filling such an important post. I am pleased the Opposition have taken that view into consideration. They admitted in essence that men who have graduated from the industrial field are usually imbued with practical knowledge and a tremendous amount of common understanding.

Much has been said of correspondence schools. For my part I am sorry that it was necessary to start correspondence classes, but we must realise that in a vast and sparsely-populated State such as Queensland there are people who live in areas in which the facilities of the closely-settled districts cannot be provided. It is true that there are people in these areas who are in a financial position to provide education for their children, but that is not so in the case of the worker in the western districts employed in a navy or local-authority camp, or working on a station far removed from a town and the amenities we enjoy here.

Much has been said to the effect that education breeds character. I differ from that view, but if it is so the present system of education does not bring out the essential characteristics that man should have. It is often said that no matter how often you lead a mule into a thoroughbred's stable it will

always emerge a mule, and the boy who enters a university will not always emerge a scholar and a gentleman.

I wish to deal fairly and without political bias with correspondence classes. It is necessary to travel the outback parts of the State to realise the difficulties that confront not only the children but the people charged with the responsibility of imparting knowledge to the children. The living conditions of a man working in a navvies' camp or on a station are perhaps not all that may be desired. It must not be forgotten also that eye diseases affect the residents of the West, such as trachoma and blight. The mother in the West has often been herself denied the right of education merely because she was born, worked, and suffered in the bush. It is obvious that the children who must necessarily get their education by correspondence should receive the greatest consideration by the Government.

**Mr. Luckins:** That is why they should be given a great deal of attention.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Unfortunately, this system has to be continued. It has been contended that one-teacher schools should be abolished. I hold a contrary opinion, inasmuch as I contend that it is preferable to have a small number of children gathered together under the supervision of a qualified teacher. I would remind hon. members of the beautiful young children to be found in the camps of railway workers and others, who are condemned to life imprisonment, as it were, because there is nobody with the rudiments of education handy, able to impart to them the things that should be taught to them to give them character and knowledge. I have no quarrel with the education received by the residents of closer-settled areas, for I realise that someone must be educated in order to give service to mankind. I realise, too, just as you do, Mr. Brassington, that those people who reside in the bush and who have never graduated from a university are as strong of character as one could wish to find anywhere, and no-one contributes more than they do to the cause of humanity.

I suggest that the Minister give serious consideration to some arrangement under which the postmaster or stationmaster at some of the bush towns in the outback areas might be able to help the young children living round about. I believe that such an arrangement could be made.

**Mr. Sparkes:** Do you mean by way of teaching them?

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Yes. In these bush towns the postmaster, stationmaster, or even the governess on a station property could help. There may be a station 8 or 10 miles from a bush town and I feel sure that if that grazier has been fortunate enough to be able to engage a governess to teach his children up to a certain age, he will have no objection to allowing her to give a small measure of education to the kiddies from round about.

**Mr. Sparkes:** It would be a good thing in that it would provide some competition for his own children.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** I wonder at times whether we are advancing as we should under our present system of education. I ask hon. members why I and other members of the community are having our children educated? The answer is obvious. We are educating them in order to avoid their having to do hard work, in order to give them work that might be more agreeable, and in order that they might achieve a social standing above that of the ordinary, or, as he is often referred to as, the common person.

**Mr. Pie:** We must always have that.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** Unfortunately that is so. But it would seem that under our present system we are building up an army of collar-and-tie workers, and the tendency too often is to slight or overlook the people in the bush. We often take up the attitude that as they are in the bush they are not of much consequence. Under the present system, everybody who can educate his child thinks of drifting to the city when he is able to do so. The Department of Public Instruction has done much good work by establishing what are known as "top schools" in the various country towns. There is one in Longreach, and the children are educated there up to a certain standard, but after they reach that standard, the drift to the city takes place. I suggest that instead of allowing that to happen, there is no reason why we should not establish universities away from the closer-settled areas. What is wrong with a scheme under which the children of the outback centres would have the same opportunities as are provided for the children in the cities? It is wrong to say that all children have the same capacity to absorb knowledge, and it is not much use endeavouring to educate a child who is not able to absorb knowledge, but before any child can be expected to absorb knowledge it must have a sound foundation. If children are started off with a bad educational foundation, it is impossible for them to advance very far.

I know that the ranks of teachers have been depleted by enlistments and call-ups, and the effects of the war have been felt severely in the bush towns. In places like Aramac teachers have been called up or have enlisted, and young teachers sent out to take their places. Only the other day hon. members complained in this Chamber about sending young teachers to bush towns, their main objection being that the accommodation offered to these teachers was not all that it should be. I agree that it is not all that it might be, but I remind hon. members that when a young teacher goes to a town like Aramac or Muttaborra and is given a room with only a curtain across the front, it does not follow that that home is not a good one, or that the environment is not desirable. The character of the people in those homes is certainly all that could be desired. These young people will never go wrong in a bush town if their breeding is right.

It is said that we are short of school teachers, which reminds me that in the western

areas teachers have to serve for five to six years before they are transferred. That is the big complaint by school teachers in the West, that that is too long to stay in those remote places, but I want to point out that most of the people in Western towns are doomed to a lifelong imprisonment there because their economic circumstances will not permit them to travel further afield. I should like the teaching fraternity to pay due regard to that fact and not to blame the Government unduly because they cannot get a transfer. Perhaps the Minister will give some consideration to the matter, too.

At 12.8 p.m.,

**Mr. DUNSTAN** (Gympie) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

**Mr. DEVRIES:** If it is the policy of the Government that the teachers should remain about five years in the West, well and good, but there are many instances in which teachers enjoy everything in the cities and very seldom find their way into the bush. All I ask is that a fair deal be given to these people. I am not asking for something they are not entitled to. God knows they are entitled to everything that the Government can give them.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. EDWARDS** (Nanango) (12.9 p.m.): Ever since I have been in this Chamber I have noticed that no matter what electorate a hon. member represented and no matter whether it was in the city or the country, we were all as one in connection with the education of the children. We may differ as to methods, but that is all. Every Secretary for Public Instruction seems to be imbued with the one ideal, which is to give the best system of education to the children. They are to be applauded for it. No matter what we build it must be on a sound foundation; unless we have a sound foundation it is useless to build a splendid upper structure. I know that our purpose in education is to develop the children on sound lines; whether they reach the top in education or only make half the distance, there is only one purpose in view.

I was interested to hear the remarks by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock concerning agricultural education in relation to Gatton College. For some years after I first entered Parliament I criticised the methods adopted at Gatton College, but in recent years I have found on my visits there that considerable improvement has taken place, especially on the practical side of agriculture, and so the college has been improved out of sight. I always argued that the Government should buy stock of high quality for use at the college because I knew that in the old days when the stock at the college competed with stock from outside at the various shows, the outside stock always won. There has been a change in this respect of recent years and there has been a very favourable change in agriculture, too. All these improvements have been to the advantage of the college and its students.

The Secretary for Agriculture and Stock went on to say that science would play a very

important part in agriculture when the war was over. I hope that will be to our advantage, but I, like the hon. member for Gregory, believe there is a gap in our educational system that has to be bridged. As he pointed out, the youths educated at Gatton College invariably become inspectors or directors, or fill similar positions, and so tell the other chap what to do. That is the whole trend of our education. It is the fond hope of many parents of smart girls or boys attending country schools that they will be able to give them a secondary education to fit them for positions in the city. That tends to disrupt country life, especially as the tendency of some parents—is to accompany the child to the city when he completes its education and obtains a position. If, however, that child does not gravitate to the city, he gets a prominent position in the country, sometimes associated with the land. What I want to know is: if our education continues to encourage this trend, who will be left to do the work on the land?

**Mr. Devries:** We shall have all generals and no workers.

**Mr. EDWARDS:** These persons are not likely to undertake the hard and dirty work associated with the land. In normal times many applications can be got for sedentary positions, such as positions in an office or jobs as directors and inspectors, but reliable men cannot be obtained to carry on the ordinary work on the farm from day to day. That is what the Minister requires to pay some attention to, because the position is becoming very serious to Australia. An enormous amount of hard work is required to develop our primary industries efficiently. I agree to a great extent with the remarks of the hon. member who preceded me. Every State should see to it that its educational directors adopt methods that will develop initiative in our children. It is in that direction that the comparatively uneducated country boy can "put it over" the well-educated city boy. Our country boys are often called upon to use their initiative. They may be out in a paddock when something unexpected happens, such as a storm that destroys the fencing and allows the cattle to wander. Initiative enables them to grapple with such problems immediately.

I should not be doing my duty if I did not refer to the practical side of education, which is receiving attention in our country schools at our project clubs. These clubs develop the latent ability of the pupil in such matters as reforestation, handling of stock, silviculture, and the care of poultry. The largest wheat-growers in Queensland are men who in the main had no education. I do not know whether the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock would call them scientists. Farrer was a man who brought millions of pounds' worth of wealth to Australia, but he had very little education. I have had some dreadful experiences of the mistakes made by veterinary surgeons which hon. members would be shocked to hear. On the other hand, I have known men who never passed an examination—they could not have written down the

answers if they were dictated to them—but they were outstanding men in the treatment of stock. Nevertheless, I do not wish it to be thought I am against education in any shape or form, but let us be aware of the nature of the work that has to be done. No-one will make a success of a farm if every time he meets with a problem he runs up to the house to look at the book. We have all heard the story of the fellow whose real intelligence was such that he let his whiskers grow because he thought he had to have them to be a successful farmer.

I saw a project club prepare a calf for exhibition last year, and it was up to the standard of an exhibit at the Brisbane Show. I was sorry I could not get to the annual show at Kingaroy this year. At such shows as that the boys and girls exhibit poultry, have cream tests, and have displays on the growing of timber. The one who is the best is picked out to give an object lesson on how the work is done. By these means you discover each child's interest in these matters and if he has an idea of going on to a farm the early training is very beneficial.

The reforestation plots are developing very well at our country schools. The headway they have made during recent years is remarkable. These plots will be a wonderful advantage not only to the education of the children but for the timber they will produce. Some of the schools have acres of trees. The new Minister who was chosen last night taught at a school in my district where they have a number of beautiful reforestation plots, and the timber has grown to quite a height. They did not have enough land attached to the school, so they took over a corner from a farmer whose land was adjacent. That is the class of work that may help to fill up the gap I have mentioned in the work that must be done if we are going to make agriculture the success we should like it to be.

I think it is a tragedy that a country school should be closed. I believe that the department gives all the consideration it reasonably can to keep schools going. Often the school is the centre of a country community. It may be the place where the mail is dropped, and the place where they hold their dances and other gatherings. For that reason the school in the country district is a remarkable advantage, and that is one reason why it should be kept open as long as possible.

We have to get the people back to the country. That can be done in only one way—a complete turning over of methods of the past. Instead of expending the money that is to spare in large centres of population throughout Australia, let us do what was suggested by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock this morning—recognise that the wealth of Australia, and particularly of Queensland, comes from the country districts. We must realise that we must do nothing at any time to induce people to leave country areas. In the first place, we must discover what is in the best interests of a particular district—such as an irrigation scheme, the possibilities

of certain products, whether factories to deal with those products should be erected there, and so on. That is the only way the drift to the cities can be stopped. If we continue to expend money to the benefit of the cities, the population of the cities will increase and this, in turn, will draw additional people from country areas to the large cities, with their big schools, hospitals, and other institutions. Of course, I am not saying that the cities should not have these institutions, but the policy that has been adopted has encouraged people to go into the cities. For instance, a family in a country district discussing possibilities and probabilities draws attention to the fact that, say, a neighbour, Bill Jones, and his family have gone down to Brisbane. "The family are getting a good education there," they say; "Bill Jones has got a good job, and what is there here for us?" That sort of thing has been going on for years, and we must solve the problem somehow or other. Nobody can deny that the wealth of a State comes mainly from primary production. Whatever may be said of secondary industries, they are only secondary. There must be primary production to begin with, and this primary production must be under conditions agreeable to those who produce. If they receive for their product a value comparable with the prices paid for other products, they will remain on the land and continue to produce, but if, particularly at times such as the present, and since the beginning of the war, prices for everything except their products are raised, what can one expect?

I point this out to the Minister, whom I must congratulate on the fine speech he made the other day. It is splendid to have a young man in that position and I sincerely hope he will take note of some of the remarks made by hon. members this morning on this very important subject.

**Mr. KEYATTA** (Townsville) (12.28 p.m.): It was with a great deal of interest that I heard the speeches made by various hon. members this morning. The hon. member for Nanango referred to the necessity for inducing people to remain on the land. If all facilities for education and other things are centred in the cities, naturally there will be a centralisation of the people. This sets us a problem that must be investigated by the department with sympathy and understanding. Queensland has an excellent educational system. It is second to none in Australia. Every provision is made to enable the child to pass from the kindergarten to the university. This, indeed, is the inherent right of every child for we must have an enlightened population, but we must hold out inducements to the graduates from our schools, universities, and other institutions to remain in country districts and thereby bring about a decentralisation of population. Experience is the master of all teaching. Practical experience plays a very important role in our lives. As I have said, I listened with interest to the speech of the hon. member for Nanango. With little or no schooling many a boy has made good because of his practical knowledge and application to his calling. He has the natural intelligence that enables him to absorb and

retain knowledge gained in the school of hard knocks and experience. Our educational system adds the finishing touches, or the polish, that is essential.

It must be remembered that the area of Queensland is 670,500 square miles, with a population of only 1,030,000, and that it is difficult to absorb the graduates from our universities and other branches of the educational system. We should feel proud that our educational system is ahead of that of any other State in Australia, but Queensland has certain economic rights that as yet do not seem to have been recognised, and until those rights are recognised we shall have difficulty in absorbing into industry and commerce the products of our educational system. One very important point to remember is that until we have thorough decentralisation of industry we can never hope to hold the products of our educational system in the country districts. The solution of the whole problem is a question of economics, and this department is not to be blamed for the drift to the city. In this Minister we have a capable administrator who is backed up by as efficient a set of officers as one could find in the whole of the public service.

I congratulate the Minister upon his elevation to the office of Secretary for Public Instruction. He is eminently suited to fill it. He has the right temperament, the proper degree of tolerance, human understanding, and the common sense that is essential to a Minister of the Crown who is administering a department such as this. I pay tribute to him for the excellent work he has done during the short time for which he has held this office.

Self-reliance is important to success, and that seems to be lacking in many members of the community. A brilliant scholar is not necessarily a successful business or commercial man. I have seen the dullest pupil in the class become a very successful man, and I have seen the brilliant scholar, the one who was always head of the class, finish up on the bottom rung of the industrial ladder. The reason for his failure is lack of stability and lack of capacity to benefit by the teaching of the school of hard knocks and experience.

**Mr. Luckins:** Lack of character in most cases.

**Mr. KEYATTA:** I am speaking now of principles in schools. Every man is born equal, every man has an equal chance. The pressure of economics is an important factor, but the main factor in success is opportunity.

Reference has been made to the fact that pupil teachers have been transferred to country centres, and complaints have been made about the accommodation provided for them. I have seen a girl of tender years transferred to a country centre where the accommodation offered was by no means what it should have been for a young teacher who had arduous duties to perform. The only accommodation she could obtain was on the veranda of the home of a miner who had

seven children. That was not the right type of accommodation for a young girl. I made representations about the matter, and I am pleased to be able to tell hon. members that the department is adopting a policy of inquiring whether the accommodation offered is suitable for a female teacher. If not, a male teacher is sent to that centre, and that policy is to be commended.

When the war threat to Australia became serious the State Government were approached to close the schools in certain areas that were regarded as vulnerable, although protests were made by both the civilian population and soldiers who were interested in the education of their children. The Minister was subjected to a considerable amount of abuse because of the action taken to close the schools, but when I made representations to him he showed me certain information that explained what had happened. He had no desire to escape responsibility by shifting the blame to someone else, but the fault was not his. He went to no end of trouble to explain the real position to me confidentially, but later on the attacks upon him became intensified, and of course, as self-preservation is the first law of nature, the Minister was compelled to reveal the circumstances that led to the closing of the schools. As early as April last the department submitted a request to certain authorities seeking the reopening of schools, but the request was not granted, and the department naturally, not knowing our military disposition, felt obliged to accept the advice tendered to it by the military authorities. The schools were not reopened. As time went on, more pressure was applied to the Federal authorities to induce them to reopen the schools, and they sought to evade responsibility for the closure by shifting the blame to the State Government. The State Government were not to blame, any more than the parents who were protesting against the failure to reopen the schools. The Federal authorities or the Defence Department was to blame.

In the early days of the war, when the department was controlled by the hon. member for the Tableland, the Secretary for Public Works, there was a very acute shortage of artisans, and so a scheme was inaugurated to train them quickly for war purposes. It was launched successfully, but unfortunately the Commonwealth authorities decided to move the machinery from the Townsville Technical College, the only place in North Queensland where the young tradesmen could be taught in a practical way, to Rockhampton, and thus the engineering students at Townsville were deprived of the opportunity of getting practical training. They were given theoretical training, but they could not get sound practical training once the machinery was moved. I brought the matter under the notice of the Minister, and many strong protests were made against this action, which deprived the pupils of the training that was to fit them to become citizens who were to guide the destinies of this great State. They were deprived of vital training. Why should the military authorities occupy all the important

schools for military purposes? We should regard as sacred the right to retain the schools for the training of children, because to them nothing can make up for lost time. How can children be expected to regain education lost over a period of 12 to 18 months? I recommend that the Minister make strong representations to the proper Federal authority to replace this machinery, as the students play an important part in the defence of this country. They cannot afford to go to Rockhampton for practical tuition, which is of vital importance. Every hon. member has been through the school of bitter experience, but there is no greater school than the school of hard knocks, which is the master of all teachers.

Two Townsville schools have been taken over as auxiliary hospitals, two others as minor auxiliary hospitals, and others are being used for other military purposes. Why on earth could not some building other than a school be obtained for these purposes? Why should the Townsville children be deprived of such a rich heritage as education? This is a burning question with the people. It is no use the authorities saying that the Defence Department has prior right to these buildings, because if that is so some other provision should have been made for educational purposes. The State authority has been the victim of bitter criticism. It is unfortunate that the Minister should have taken over this portfolio and had to bear the bitter repercussions on this matter. One of the schools taken over by the defence authorities in Townsville was the domestic science school, whose students are destined to play an important part in the future of our State. They will be our future mothers, and that means a great deal. We know that the training of a good mother is necessary to build up good citizenship, which is the backbone of a State. The domestic science school in Townsville has been virtually discontinued and the unfortunate students deprived of this essential training. The Minister must make forceful representations on the subject to the proper authority in order to restore the inherent rights of our children.

The correspondence education system has been extended to Townsville. It is all right as an alternative, but it is very difficult for a mother with a family of young children to devote the requisite time to the supervision of the children's study. In fact, it is a physical impossibility in most cases for the mother to give the time necessary to it. The consequence is that the children do not receive the maximum benefit of this alternative. If the department permitted the teachers to visit the children in their homes to supervise and help them, instead of engaging in other activities, some of the difficulties would be overcome. Many mothers are wives of industrialists in essential war industries. Can we visualise a mother of a family of six children, two of whom are grown up and in essential industry, preparing meals for them, attending to her other domestic work, and supervising the correspondence educational course of her younger children? It is physically impossible.

I commend these vital matters to the Minister for his consideration.

I take this opportunity of congratulating the Minister on his elevation to the high office he occupies. I think his kindly nature, tolerance, and abundance of common sense fit him for the position. I compliment the department on its efficiency and repeat that it is one of the most efficient departments in the whole of the public service.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (12.49 p.m.): I do not think many points have been raised since I replied. Many complimentary remarks have been made, however, regarding myself and officers of the department, and of these I express my appreciation. It is interesting to listen to the views of hon. members on the many problems affecting education, and it is often possible to learn something—to get information “right from the horse’s mouth,” as the saying is.

I could not quite follow the hon. member for Aubigny, but he made some reference the other evening to the desirability of giving more sympathetic consideration to children attending one-teacher schools in the country. I appreciate the fact that the hon. member knows what he is talking about when he speaks on country matters—possibly no man in this Chamber has a better knowledge of country conditions than the hon. member—nevertheless, I want to assure him that the Department of Public Instruction has done a wonderful job over the past three years in its one-teacher schools. New South Wales last year—I looked the figures up after the debate the other evening—closed 150 one-teacher schools on account of lack of staff. That has never happened in Queensland. I stated the other night that not in one instance have we closed a school because we were not able to provide a teacher. We admit a school may have been closed for a week or ten days, until a teacher was sent from the South—and in some instances the teacher had to travel 1,000 miles.

It is interesting to note the difficulties under which the department has worked since the beginning of the year. As I mentioned the other evening, about 1,028 male teachers have enlisted or have been called up for service, and 50 females have joined the different war services. Since the outbreak of war there have been 544 resignations from the staff and that is accounted for to a large extent because there has been an epidemic of marriages. All these things have helped to make the position more difficult for the Department of Public Instruction. It means that since the outbreak of the war 1,622 teachers have been withdrawn from the service or resigned for one reason or another, and so we are working with an effective reduction in the staff of 740. Hon. members will see the difficulties with which we are confronted in a sparsely-populated State like this in servicing our ordinary school facilities, yet we are able to say that we have not closed

one school through a shortage of staff. I admit we have had some difficulty in these matters, nevertheless we have done a very good job in the circumstances.

We have readmitted approximately 100 married female teachers. There is a difficulty, as I pointed out on a former occasion, in these readmissions to the service. A number of women will come back if they can nominate the schools to which they will be sent. That can be readily understood. Often the applicant is a woman with a kiddy or two, and naturally she wants to have a home and be at a school near it. We cannot always arrange that, but we are often able to do so. Often a teacher has been required for a western town and we have been able to appoint one who has been living in that centre.

All kinds of people apply who have not the qualifications for the job. Some think anyone should be admitted to the teaching service at present, merely because they believe they have some knowledge of teaching, but there is a certain standard to be maintained and the department has insisted that it shall be maintained, otherwise it would be possible to reach a position that would not be desirable from the point of view of the education of the children or the standard of education that has been set up in the State. However, we have taken back approximately 100 teachers who were previously in the service.

I think it was the hon. member for Oxley who made some reference to the School for the Blind and the Deaf in South Brisbane and the reduction in the appropriation as compared with last year. That institution, or the main part of it, I regret to say, has been taken over for an auxiliary hospital by the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board. The majority of the domestic staff of the institution are in the employ of the board at the present moment and consequently are being paid by the board. There is no need for them, because the residential section is not being carried on. Since the mid-summer vacation we have taken in only local deaf and blind children. Previously a number of children from country districts were in residence there, but after Japan’s entry into the war and the crisis that developed shortly afterwards we thought it was not in the best interests of the children to bring them from the country to Brisbane. An attempt was made to provide suitable accommodation in country districts so that this phase of training could continue but we found great difficulty in finding accommodation for children afflicted as these are. However, it is the intention of the department after the vacation to restore full facilities at the school to enable them to resume their training. We regret very much that it was found necessary to close the school because we appreciate what it means to the parents of these children. We have received letters from many parents who have children thus afflicted, and we can appreciate their anxiety. We shall be very pleased to get back to something approaching normal conditions at that institution.

**Mr. Luckins:** Is there any chance of getting wireless in the schools at some future date?

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Wireless is installed in many schools at present, not only in Brisbane, but in country centres. Recently I had an invitation from a school in my own electorate of Charters Towers to switch on the wireless installed there, and it was not a very large school.

**Mr. Luckins:** School committees could help in the finance.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** School committees generally have been very helpful. One finds invariably that they have taken an interest in the matter by organising various amusements to raise money for wireless sets in the schools. I agree with the remark of the hon. member for Maree. It is very desirable that wireless should be installed wherever possible. It is one of the modern instruments of education. It enables realities to be put before the children. As matter of fact, I have frequently speculated on what it would mean to the average child of to-day if radio was suddenly withdrawn and he could not listen to sessions of "Dad and Dave" or something similar to it. I have often thought of the possibility in connection with my own kiddies, and I suppose the kiddies of other people are just like mine.

Last year the Director-General of Education forcefully outlined the effects of radio and the cinema on education.

At 2.15 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** I notice, on reading a report of the Director-General of Education for last year, that he says—

"What of the cinema and the radio? I have said that a book may be read by hundreds of thousands of people, but a film is seen probably by millions before it exhausts its commercial value, and millions, too, listen at the one moment to a broadcast by the Prime Minister of Great Britain or the President of the United States. Without doubt, here are two forces that will play their parts—and very big parts—in the development of society, whether we like it or not. The machinery they use is effective; no one can question that. It is for society to see that this machinery is used to the greatest advantage.

"In the schools both the cinema and the radio are proving to be a useful aid to instruction. Here, in Queensland, the teachers in more than 200 schools avail themselves of the help offered by the special programme of school broadcasts, while 130 schools in the past two years have installed equipment for the screening of films and now draw regularly from a departmental collection of more than 300 subjects. Especially significant is the fact that those schools are scattered over the whole State

and the film library serves schools as far apart as Normanton and Beaudesert, or Goondiwindi and Mount Mulligan. Here, again, we have made a start, and I think it is safe to forecast that there will be a rapid advancement after the war."

We have been active in furthering the use of the radio and cinema in the schools, and it is our intention to extend those activities.

Some years ago, in fact before wireless was used to any considerable extent even in the city, I was astounded to see a radio set installed at the Normanton school. A teacher had been sent there from Brisbane, and immediately he arrived there he installed a wireless. I think it was the first radio receiving set to be operated in Normanton. The department is fully alive to the value of both the cinema and the radio as aids to education.

**Mr. Nimmo:** You want to be careful about the matter that is received over the radio.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** The Director-General is careful to see that all material used is suitable for educational purposes.

During this debate much has been said about the primary correspondence classes. Some hon. members have pointed out the benefits of this system to the children in the outback parts of the State, and others have criticised it, contending that wherever it is possible to do so, the correspondence system should be superseded by a one-teacher school. That is the policy of the department. Where the required daily attendance can be kept up we have never resorted to the correspondence system, but it must be obvious to anyone who stops to think, that in a State of the size of Queensland, with its vast sparsely populated areas, it is necessary to have some system other than the ordinary school method of education. Experts on educational matters who have visited Queensland from time to time and investigated our primary correspondence system have spoken of it at all times in terms of the highest praise, and I am doubtful if there is any correspondence system in the world that excels ours. This contention has been upheld from time to time by those who are in a position to give an opinion on the matter.

Last year, 39 students of the primary correspondence classes won scholarships. One boy out Richmond way obtained 78 per cent. last year, I think, and was awarded a medal for the highest aggregate pass among the children educated under this system. It was never intended that the correspondence classes should be used where it was possible to have the ordinary school. I think every one of us would prefer that our children receive their education at the hands of teachers in the ordinary schools. Some years ago, before the redistribution of seats, I represented the Burke electorate in this Parliament, and I know the country fairly well. There is a station here, another one 50 miles away, and 50 miles out from the homestead a stockman or boundary-rider is living. These

people appreciate the correspondence classes because it is the only means whereby their children can be educated. When travelling through the Gulf country I have called at such homes and on seeing children one knew at once that they were taking correspondence lessons, because that was their only means of education. It was a natural question to ask how they were getting on with their lessons.

A couple of weeks ago I visited the correspondence school in Brisbane and there I happened to meet some people from the West who had called to see the principal of the school. Their children had received lessons through the correspondence classes for a number of years and they and their children were interested to see the teachers who had sent the lessons and had corresponded with their children. When I spoke to one of the teachers she said, 'I have been writing to this little fellow for upwards of two years and I always visualised him as a tall lean sort of a lad, but he is in fact a nuggetty little fellow.' The teachers take a very keen interest in the children. The correspondence classes are something of which we can feel justly proud, but I should like hon. members to understand that they are not regarded as a substitute for the normal school when it can be conducted.

Some hon. members have mentioned that the accommodation for teachers in country districts has been unsuitable in some instances, but I should like to explain that before a teacher is directed to report to a country school the department has full knowledge of the accommodation available. Sometimes the information is contained in an inspector's report. Early this year, because of the international situation, it was found that in some instances, in North Queensland in particular, suitable accommodation for teachers could not be found with British families or persons sympathetic towards the cause of the Allies, and so instructions were given that unless the teacher could get accommodation with such persons the schools would have to be closed. We did not think it was right that teachers should be placed in an environment that was unsuitable or would make conditions difficult for them. Because of those circumstances it may have been necessary to close one or two small schools, but it was necessary in the interests of the teachers. However, where complaints have been received that the accommodation was not suitable an investigation was carried out. Again, there are places in Queensland where it would not be desirable to send a female teacher. For instance, we could not send a female teacher to Kelsey Creek, a mining field, where there is a little room just off the school suitable for a man who could sleep there and have his meals with one of the miners. That is all right for a male teacher, but we could not send a female teacher to such a place. No teacher is sent to a school unless it is known that suitable accommodation can be obtained. The department makes very careful inquiries into the matter. I do not want hon. members to get the impression that when a teacher is

required in a country school he is sent off with the idea that he must make his own arrangements when he arrives.

I was pleased to hear the remarks by the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock about the activities at the Agricultural High School and College. The department deeply regrets that it has been found necessary to curtail the activities of the college. That is one of the inevitable happenings of war, and I regret very sincerely that it was necessary for some of the students to leave because we had not suitable accommodation there.

However, we were able to arrange for the continuation of the study of the diploma students. It is intended in the coming year to pay special attention to the sub-diploma students. We are doing all it is humanly possible to do to keep the college working during these very difficult days. We appreciate the fact that the disturbance in study has been somewhat upsetting to the students' parents, who had decided on a career in agriculture for their boys. They attended the college in the usual way last year, but were compelled, through the exigencies of the war, to return to their homes. No-one regretted their having to do so more than the Government, but I can assure the Committee that the utmost of our physical powers will be exerted to carry on the activities of the college as in the past.

Vote (Department of Public Instruction—Chief Office) agreed to.

#### INSPECTION.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.28 p.m.): I move—

“That £21,987 be granted for ‘Inspection.’”

This vote provides for salaries, travelling expenses, sustenance allowance, text books, &c., for the inspectorial staff. The increase in the salary vote is due to increased salaries payable as a result of basic-wage variations. Automatic increases where payable have also been provided for. Pay-roll tax of £458 will be met from this vote.

Vote agreed to.

#### QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.29 p.m.): I move—

“That £13,300 be granted for ‘Queensland University.’”

The usual number of 20 open scholarships to the University has again been provided for this year.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (2.30 p.m.): More scholarships should be made available to the University. The annual report of the department states—

“Twenty scholarships to the University were granted as from 1 January, 1941. Two of the scholarships were for students of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College. The scholarships are tenable

for three years, and entitle the holders to free tuition; an allowance not exceeding £52 per annum is paid to each scholarship holder who must live away from home to attend the University, or £26 per annum if the holder can live at home and attend."

Many brilliant students are matriculating who have no opportunity of proceeding further. If the number of scholarships were extended, many of these brilliant students who cannot afford the fees and expenses attached to a university course would benefit. The number has remained at 20 for a number of years, and notwithstanding the war, we should increase this by at least 50 per cent. This would induce students to make a special effort to obtain a scholarship. We must realise that of the 20 scholarships granted last year two were obtained by students of the Queensland Agricultural High School and College.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.32 p.m.): Hon. members will recollect that in the National Education Co-ordination and the University of Queensland Acts Amendment Bill, passed by this Chamber last year, provision was made for an average minimum number of 20 scholarships, and power was vested in the board to be set up under the Act to make recommendations for their increase. It will be possible to increase the number of scholarships by this means. As hon. members are aware, this Act has not been proclaimed yet owing to the international crisis. It is intended to proclaim the Act on the return of normal conditions. Consideration will then be given to increasing the number of scholarships.

Vote (Queensland University) agreed to.

#### TRAINING COLLEGE.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.33 p.m.): I move—

"That £30,086 be granted for 'Training College.'"

This vote provides for the general maintenance of the Training College, including the salaries of principal and of the instructional and clerical staffs, wages of cleaners, &c., and the necessary equipment and requisites. The amount of £17,738 provided for scholarships is to meet the cost of the annual allowances payable to the junior and senior trainees who have already entered, or who will enter the college next year.

Pay-roll tax amounting to £288 will be met from this vote.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (2.34 p.m.): This is another vote that should be reviewed. I do not think sufficient is paid to students who go through the two years' course at the Training College. There is no hardship if the parents are in good positions financially, but for the average student the amount provided is not sufficient, and it is very hard

on many homes to make up the deficiency. This was of much concern to the people three or four years ago, but the increased cost of living has accentuated the position. I understand a greater sum is paid to the students in the domestic science section. I should like to see the amount materially increased; in fact, if it was doubled it would not be too much.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.35 p.m.): The present allowance to trainees at the Teacher' Training College is £1 a week if they are living away from home and £14 a year if they are living at home. I discussed this matter with the Director-General some few weeks ago, and at present we are looking into the question with a view to increasing the rate. I am inclined to agree with the hon. gentleman that it is a little low, especially in these times with the increasing cost of living, which must be taken into consideration.

Vote (Training College) agreed to.

#### QUEENSLAND AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.36 p.m.): I move—

"That £24,653 be granted for 'Queensland Agricultural High School and College.'"

This vote provides for the continuance of the various services at this institution, together with the development of new activities or new phases of college work. Pay-roll tax of £435 will be met from this vote.

**Mr. LUCKINS** (Maree) (2.37 p.m.): I understood from the debate that the college is not now available for training. In view of that I should like to know why there has been a reduction of only £4,000 in the annual expenditure. Whether the college has been wholly taken over by the military authorities, or only in part, and whether the students have facilities there now?

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.38 p.m.): The same inquiry was made by the hon. member for Fassifern the other evening and I replied to him. For the information of the hon. member, I repeat that the diploma students are still at Gatton, and it is intended after the vacation is over that they will continue there. There is very little reduction in the staff. The school and plant are all there, as previously. In addition to that, this year there has been certain expenditure—fairly heavy expenditure—that has been responsible for keeping the appropriation in the vicinity of the sum for the previous year.

**Mr. Nimmo:** How many students are there now?

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Twenty-eight. Certain new

equipment for the farm has been provided, as follows:—

	£
Tractor, urgently required ..	550
A rotary hoe, ordered last year but not delivered .. ..	123
Massey Harris mower .. ..	45
Irrigation plant .. ..	555
Irrigation pipes .. ..	200
New motor pump and accessories	290
Dairy cattle and bail, and other incidentals .. ..	550
Fodder .. ..	575

An extra amount is required on account of the bad season last year. There are a number of other items similar to those that account for a considerably sum, and this is largely responsible for the appropriation for this year. Of course, it is an institution as to which we are not very sure about the future, and it is necessary to make a reasonable appropriation. Of course, if the money is not required it will not be expended, but I can assure hon. members that this expenditure is considered necessary for the upkeep of the college.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (2.40 p.m.):** I am glad that we have had that information from the Minister. When we discussed this institution on the Chief Office vote I endeavoured to ascertain from him what was the intention as regards the college so that the point raised by the hon. member for Maree interested me also. We were told that the greater part of the college had been temporarily closed until the buildings are vacated by the military authorities, and as there was a reduction in the vote of only £4,000, it appeared to me that some explanation was necessary. I appreciate the point raised by the Minister that although the department is not in the position to cater for the full number of students it is providing for the diploma students. I can also see the Minister's point that it is necessary to keep up the organisation in case it may be required in the immediate future. It is also necessary to keep up plant and stock and give stock necessary attention.

As I mentioned a few days ago, it may be advisable to transfer the practical side of agricultural training to another department. Scientific and technical training are given to students at the college. This is very desirable, as in the days to come there must be a greater knowledge of the scientific side of agriculture, and we can never be oversupplied with technicians. Science will play a great part in the future of agriculture.

I did not have the pleasure of hearing the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock speak this morning, but I understand he informed the Committee that he was somewhat concerned as to our future supply of technicians. That certainly is a big problem, but the fact remains that the college is ceasing to be a practical agricultural college and becoming a school of academics. It is necessary to extend the practical side of the teaching. When visiting the institution one cannot help feeling that the greater part of the work being done at the moment is done by the staff,

because so much of the time, virtually all the time, of the students is taken up in the scientific end of the business. I should not like to see the practical side totally neglected. I remember the institution when it was not nearly as successful as it is to-day, at the time when its activities were mainly directed to the practical side. When I was attached to the college, there were beautiful studs of Clydesdale horses and dairy cattle, and I cannot help feeling that the lesser interest in this sort of thing is largely due to the fact that the institution was placed under the administration of the Department of Public Instruction. Of course, one cannot blame the officers of the department. After all, they are more interested in the academic than in the practical side of education.

I notice that some slight improvements have been made in the last year or so, but I do wish to congratulate whoever was responsible for purchasing that beautiful Clydesdale horse they got last year. Whoever it was is certainly a sound judge, for he has placed a very fine horse at that institution. Not only will that animal help to build up the breed of the stock they have there, but the Government have been big enough and wise enough to make his services available to breeders throughout the State, and I believe that breeders are certainly wise to take advantage of the opportunity offered them. I urge the department to go further in this direction and take similar action to build up the breeding of our cattle, pigs, sheep, or any other animal that is essential to primary production.

I think it was the hon. member for Nanango who said he thought we might have many scientists and technicians coming from this institution, but that no-one would take on the real work of agriculture. It is my view that a number of those men who are being trained in academics and science are not getting enough practical training. This applies in particular to the city-bred youths who have not had any training in farm life but who, if they had a year or two of practical work at that college, would make a success of agriculture. Certainly they would be more likely to do so than if they were trained only on scientific lines.

**Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (2.48 p.m.):** I am not satisfied that a full investigation has been made into the position of this college. There are only 28 students there now, and the amount to be voted is £24,653, and this means that the cost is approximately £1,000 for each student.

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:** You have to remember that the full quota of students was there last financial year until Christmas.

**Mr. NIMMO:** Only half the quota has been there since Christmas, and that position will continue throughout the current year.

I notice that some very large buildings have been erected near the railway crossing on the Southport line at Cooper's Plains. These buildings have round roofs, and they would accommodate a large number of

people. If the military authorities find it necessary to take over this college for a hospital, they do not need to use the whole of the grounds, and it seems to me that it should be possible to erect some temporary accommodation for the students in order that they might continue with their training; otherwise this huge expenditure cannot be justified.

On looking over the vote I find that last year there was a lecturer in animal husbandry, for whom £661 was provided. He has gone. There were three plant-breeders there last year, and this year there is only one. This year the assistant to the instructor in poultry-raising and beekeeping has gone. The matron has gone, one sorter has gone, the temporary assistant to the agriculturist has gone. All the other instructors and professors, even the English and mathematic masters, are still there. The principal, for whom £911 is provided, is still there. It is certainly somebody's business to get right onto this job and investigate the institution with a view to seeing that temporary accommodation is provided so that the students may be trained under normal conditions. If temporary accommodation cannot be provided, it appears to me that it would be a good thing to close down a good deal of the plant and be ready to carry on when the buildings are vacated at a later date. We cannot afford to go on spending money keeping a carpenter, blacksmith, herdsman, and others there when no tuition is being given.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (2.51 p.m.): I think the hon. gentleman is taking a rather narrow view of this matter. It must be remembered that the total area under the administration of this institution at Gatton is about 1,786 acres, of which only about 85 acres has been handed over temporarily for the use of the military. The herds, the piggeries, the butter factory, the bees, the poultry—all are still there, just as they were prior to the last vacation. The matters mentioned by the hon. member for Oxley have been very carefully considered but it is necessary to have staff to carry on the undertaking. There is no over-staffing by any means. The fact that the appropriation this year is almost the same as last year is readily understood. I explained by way of interjection that the functions of the college were normal until last Christmas and it is only for a period of five months, from February onwards, that the students were not there in the numbers of last year. I do not think there is much to question in that respect. The activities of the college, so far as staff is concerned, have not been reduced to any great extent.

**Mr. Brand:** There must be someone to look after it.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Yes, someone has to be there to look after it. Perhaps the hon. member for Oxley means that the reduction should have been much heavier, in view of the fact that there are only 28 students. The

amount of expenditure required cannot be gauged from the number of students attending at the moment.

**Mr. Nimmo:** I am satisfied, so long as you are looking into the matter.

**Mr. BRAND** (Isis) (2.53 p.m.): Having known Gatton College as it used to be and knowing the success it is to-day, I have nothing but bouquets to offer. It certainly deserves every credit and I hope the Minister will realise the tremendous advantage it is to rural life generally. The boys who attend the college learn a great deal, which makes them proficient in the science of agriculture and stock, and that is very important in this State. We are passing through a period of difficulty, the causes of which are beyond our control, but I hope the Minister is going to see that this grand old organisation is kept intact so that when a change takes place sooner or later the department will be able to carry on its useful work in a normal way. Again I say that its services are greatly appreciated by the people in the country. The Department of Public Instruction may not have been expected to render the same service with the college as another department would have done, but in my opinion it has made a splendid success of it, and to such an extent that every industry looks to it for tuition in many branches of agriculture.

It is to be regretted that the tractor schools inaugurated by this department cannot be continued. They were a boon to agriculture and I know that the great sugar industry made extensive use of them. Industry was able to obtain very useful information and training from those schools.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** They were well attended.

**Mr. BRAND:** They were very well attended. In fact, application for the right to attend had to be made a considerable time before the schools were held in order that a place might be found in them. They were followed with great interest by the people engaged in the sugar industry. Of course, we realise that it is impossible to carry on in a normal way to-day because those who would have taken part in this training are either engaged on the food front or in the fighting forces. The Queensland Agricultural High School and College is a magnificent institution, and one of the finest of its kind in Australia. It has been carried on very successfully and I hope the Minister will see that the organisation is maintained intact.

**Mr. PLUNKETT** (Albert) (2.56 p.m.): I take a contrary view to that of people who are not concerned with agriculture. We do not spend enough money on this college. I am satisfied that it has made great strides under the direction of the Department of Public Instruction. We must recognise that when the college was under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture and Stock it was starved for finance. Admittedly, the expenditure has been greater and its ramifications have been proportionally increased

since it was transferred to the Department of Public Instruction, but even now sufficient money is not spent on it. Gatton College should be our show place for training agriculturists in Queensland, as on the scope of our agricultural education there depends the success of our primary industries. It is essential that our students should be educated along the highest scientific lines to assure their success on the land. No-one should cavil at the expenditure of a few thousand pounds to attain this aim. The idea of reducing expenditure because its activities cannot be developed to the highest pitch is wrong. Its organisation should be kept intact so that when the war is over it can be immediately used to train our young men to settle and develop our land.

**Mr. DART (Wynnum) (2.59 p.m.):** This vote serves a very useful purpose and will not be opposed by anyone. We were under the impression that as the college had been handed over to the military authorities all its activities had ceased. The very welcome statement was made by the Minister that nearly all are continuing. The Minister should ask the military authorities to endeavour to find some other building that will be suitable for their purposes.

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:** They have spent £10,000 on the building.

**Mr. DART:** They have spent more than that in my electorate. They have spent many hundreds of thousands of pounds at Cooper's Plains and Cannon Hill. That being so, the amount spent at the college is infinitesimal. The college is situated on an area of 700 acres. Surely, the whole of that area is not required by the military?

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:** We tried to dissuade them from taking it.

**Mr. DART:** More money should be provided for the purpose of this vote. Many students have passed through the college and have entered callings either on the land, in the sugar industry as chemists, instructors in dairying, or instructors in other industries. They are performing a useful service to the State. Probably there is a scarcity of students offering owing to the war, but I should not like the impression to get abroad that the college was closed down. I was pleased to hear that 28 young men are receiving tuition there. When that fact is known I am sure more parents will send their boys to the college.

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

#### WOMEN'S COLLEGE.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.2 p.m.):** I move—

“That £350 be granted for the ‘Women’s College.’”

This grant is made annually to this non-denominational residential college, which is partly supported by public subscriptions, and

is performing a useful service, mainly for country girl students.

**Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (3.3 p.m.):** This college is situated in the very important district of Kangaroo Point, which is a seat of learning, and it caters for a great number of students. When the vote was before this Committee last year I advocated an increase in the vote. The college is in charge of a very fine principal, Miss Bage, who gives a wonderful service to the many young women who assemble there from all over Queensland. I think it would be a graceful tribute and show the Government’s appreciation of Miss Bage and her students if the vote was increased by at least £500. It would be in keeping with the good work that has been accomplished there and it would be an acknowledgment of the great part the Women’s College has played and is playing.

Vote (Women’s College) agreed to.

#### SECONDARY EDUCATION.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.4 p.m.):** I move—

“That £91,961 be granted to ‘Endowment, Fees, and Allowances (Secondary Education).’”

The amount of £7,000 represents an additional endowment to grammar schools, and is distributed as follows:—Brisbane Boys’ £2,500, Brisbane Girls’ £1,300, and Ipswich Boys’ Ipswich Girls’, Rockhampton Boys’, Rockhampton Girls’, Toowoomba and Townsville schools £500 each. A further additional endowment of £200 has been granted to Townsville Grammar School.

Of the sum of £84,961 provided for fees and allowances for State scholarships and extension scholarship holders in attendance at secondary schools, approximately £84,000 is required to meet the commitments for fees, allowances, and railway fares on account of scholarships and extension scholarships granted in previous years. New (ordinary) scholarships to the number of 5,400 were granted as from 1st January, 1942, and provision has been made to meet the cost for six months that will be involved in the granting of approximately the same number from the forthcoming examination in December next.

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

#### STATE SCHOOLS.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.6 p.m.):** I move—

“That £1,425,460 be granted for ‘State Schools.’”

This vote, the items of which are self-explanatory, is required to meet all expenditure on account of salaries and allowances and all general contingencies in respect of State, provisional, and primary schools, rural schools, high schools, &c.

In respect of salaries and allowances, automatic increases have been provided where payable, and in respect of the increase of £5,825 in the vote for school requisites, books, &c., this is primarily due to the necessity to meet charges on outstanding orders placed previous to 30 June, 1942.

Provision has been made for payment of pay-roll tax amounting to £33,012, principally on account of salaries of teachers in State primary and high schools.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (3.7 p.m.):** I should like further information about project clubs. I regard this branch of education as of such importance that I think it ought to be developed to a greater extent than it is. I understand—I should like the Minister to correct me if I am wrong—that it is optional for the head teacher to establish a branch of a project club in connection with his other work. In most of our country districts this work is so important that I think that if steps are not taken to encourage it, it should be included in the ordinary curriculum. This system has proved so successful that it should be encouraged. I have had the pleasure of opening a number of project club days, and, as I said a few days ago, I was amazed at the knowledge displayed by a number of the young people who were engaged in this work. I think it should be extended to all our country schools. I realise there are certain difficulties to contend with, such as the adaptability of the teacher, and whether the teacher is willing to take on the job. I understand the teacher has the choice of selecting any section of work, such as forestry, agriculture, or stock. I do not think it would be too much to expect the teacher in a country district to undertake at least one branch of this important project work. I feel sure that after the experience of the past few years the department must realise that its efforts have been worth while.

A very pleasing feature of this work is the meetings of the clubs, which are conducted by the children themselves. It was an inspiration to me to see a child acting as the chairman of the meeting and another as the secretary, and hear them discuss their problems in a businesslike way. They gain much useful information in this way. As I have said previously, it is a worthy movement and gives the children a wonderful grounding. If the work could be extended, I am sure the people of country districts would be pleased.

**Mr. PIE (Hamilton) (3.10 p.m.):** I have nothing but praise to offer State schools generally throughout the State, but there is a point on which I should like some explanation from the Minister. The item "High Schools, Principals, and Assistant Teachers," shows an increase of approximately £12,000 over the appropriation last year, but the number of teachers has increased by only 19—an approximate increase of £600 a teacher.

**Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (3.11 p.m.):** I ask the Minister if he cannot give a little more consideration to the schooling of aborigines. The Estimates provide an amount of £1,396. All hon. members will agree that

special consideration should be given to the children of the aboriginals of Queensland for many reasons. It appears to me a very small amount for the purpose of educating the children of those to whom we owe so much. I have no desire to give the history of the State, but we certainly owe a great debt of gratitude to aboriginals. They should have our special care and attention, and I have yet to learn that the amount of £1,396 is sufficient in comparison with our responsibilities. I should like to have information from the Minister, if possible, how many aboriginal children are attending school and what provision is or can be made for their higher education. I will not labour the question, but it is of vital concern to the people and the Government that considering what we owe to these people they should be given at least the same consideration as that extended to our own.

**Mr. PLUNKETT (Albert) (3.12 p.m.):** I suggest to the Minister that he ask his officers to see whether project clubs cannot be extended. If they were placed on a foundation that allowed of expansion, I think there would be greater co-operation, not only from parents, but others, interested in the development of agriculture and in pastoral improvement. The hon. member for Fassifern and I have been associated with pastoral-improvement schemes, and each year a certain amount of money is allocated by our organisation in an endeavour to co-operate with the department with regard to project clubs, experiments at Gatton College, and so forth, but I am of opinion that there must be greater specialisation for the future, and if a start was made with project clubs we should be placing the matter on the right foundation.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.14 p.m.):** As to the matter raised by the hon. member for Hamilton, the increase in the appropriation for high schools, principals, and assistant teachers, I would inform him that the salaries of head teachers of combined high and primary schools are now included in that item, whereas they were previously included in the next—primary schools, head teachers, and assistant teachers.

The department thoroughly appreciates the value of the work of project clubs, but it must be realised that as a result of present-day conditions there are certain difficulties. That is one of the reasons why the appropriation this year is slightly less than it was last year. Again, with petrol rationing and rubber shortage, it is difficult for project-club organisers to travel round the various districts. The department has always endeavoured to extend project-club work, and I think hon. members will agree that considerable progress has been made in this direction over the past few years. I agree with hon. members that a few thousand pounds is neither here nor there when we are considering the extension of this work. This morning many hon. members referred to the desirability of practical instruction in agriculture. The project club is where that instruction begins. The hon. member for Gregory referred to

the necessity for cultivating initiative. Again it is the project club that encourages initiative in children.

Nothing has been of more interest to me since I have held my present portfolio than the excellent project work that I have seen done at the few country schools I have been able to visit, and I have been greatly impressed by the interest displayed by the children. Recently a school in the electorate represented by the Secretary for Public Lands sent me a case of vegetables grown by its project club, in which was almost every type of vegetable that one could name. It was hard to believe that all these vegetables could have been grown by school children; and that is only one example of what is being done throughout the State. Many children who were engaged on different types of project work previously are now concentrating on growing vegetables, and I have received reports from the club organiser concerning the activities of these clubs throughout Queensland. I have one list here, and it is rather long, but in many centres the children have been growing vegetables and supplying them to hospitals and other institutions. Hon. members have only to read this report to gain some idea of what is being done by these children. I can assure the Committee that the department is very much alive to the importance of project-club work, and it is not intended to allow it to suffer in any way.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (3.19 p.m.):** I am pleased the Secretary for Public Lands is in the Chamber, because I desire to refer to one matter affecting his department—reforestation. Those project clubs that are undertaking reforestation work are a great benefit and education to the children, in that they are getting a great knowledge, not only of reforestation, but of the real timber position in this State.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** The Sub-department of Forestry is ready to co-operate at all times.

**Mr. MULLER:** That is so. I understand that officers of the sub-department are aiding the Department of Public Instruction in this direction. I have to confess that young children of 10 or 12 years of age have been able to give me a fund of useful knowledge connected with reforestation.

One school reforestation plot to which I should like to make special reference is that at the Slack's Creek State School, where Mr. Wilkes, the teacher, has done creditable work.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** It is a very fine plot out there.

**Mr. MULLER:** It certainly is a credit to Mr. Wilkes and the children who are attending to it. It is always a pleasure to hear these children lecture on the subject, and after hearing them, I am convinced that there is scarcely anything they do not know about timber, the possibilities of timber, and the need for keeping our forests going.

The Minister has referred to the cost of the project-club organisers and the difficulty

in arranging transport for them. In my opinion, this work is far enough advanced now for a number of the teachers to take a more active part than they have done in the past. The officer at Slack's Creek has such a knowledge of reforestation that he should be able to organise his school and at the same time help in organising other schools.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** The job is not much good without the interest.

**Mr. MULLER:** I do not think there is any man in Australia who has a greater interest in the work than this officer.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** That is quite true.

**Mr. MULLER:** If he had not that interest he could not have developed the children to the standard they have attained. The same can be said of vegetable-growing and agriculture generally. A number of teachers should have enough knowledge to keep the work going without the aid of organisers or instructors. It may be possible to get someone locally to assist the teachers in connection with calf clubs and pig clubs.

The hon. member for Albert stressed the importance of pasture improvement, and I should like to elaborate his remarks. I have been very interested in the subject for some years, and we have been trying to interest the people in it for a long time. I make bold to say that we have achieved a greater success through the State schools than through the Department of Agriculture and Stock itself, which goes to show how much more can be done with the child than with the adult, who usually has fixed ideas and thinks he knows everything, even about pasture improvement. If the teachers will interest the children in pasture improvement by the cultivation of little plots and give them the necessary attention I believe we can do more in that way than in any other. This is a matter that will have to be considered seriously by the rising generation, and I repeat that if we can instil into the minds of children the need for pasture improvement we are going to do more good than by beginning with people who have fixed ideas about it.

Vote (State Schools) agreed to.

#### SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.24 p.m.):** I move—

“That £4,160 be granted for ‘School for the Blind and Deaf.’”

The vote provides for the salaries of the principal and instructional staff and for the wages of a cleaner and the net cost of its maintenance. Owing to circumstances created by the war, the boarding establishment in association with the school has been taken over by the Brisbane and South Coast Hospitals Board. Consequent upon this there has been a reduction in the provision for contingencies expenditure for 1942-43.

Vote agreed to.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION IN STATE SCHOOLS, AND APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEES.

The **SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.25 p.m.): I move—

“That £164,751 be granted for ‘Technical Education, Practical Instruction in State Schools, and Apprenticeship Committees.’”

The vote provides for all expenditure on account of staffs and general contingencies in respect of Central Technical College, State Commercial High School and College, country technical colleges, the many State practical instruction centres, the travelling manual and domestic science cars, the apprenticeship committees, and the Juvenile Employment Bureau. Provision is also included in the vote for the usual State grants to non-State technical colleges in aid of technical education. Provision for the payment of pay-roll tax amounting to £3,277 has been included.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (3.26 p.m.): I should like to express my appreciation of the splendid work done by technical colleges in connection with the war effort. I know the training that has been given to many of our young people in practical engineering work has been considerable and I hope it will be expanded. I do not know what accommodation the department has for the students, but it occurred to me that perhaps it could make some use of the partly-constructed Government building at the rear of the Railway Commissioner's Offices in Adelaide street. Mechanics could be trained there. The large number of mechanical contrivances used in the present war demonstrates that we cannot have too many artisans. The technical colleges have done a great job in training many men for this work. The Minister should take the fullest advantage of every opportunity to impart technical training to our young men, for it would be not only a great help to the nation during the war, but of great advantage to the State in the post-war period.

Vote (Technical Education and Practical Instruction in State Schools and Apprenticeship Committees) agreed to.

#### MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The **SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** (Hon. A. Jones, Charters Towers) (3.28 p.m.): I move—

“That £2,600 be granted for ‘Miscellaneous Services.’”

An amount of £1,250 for adult education has been again provided for this year.

The grant towards the establishment of a central circulating library is made to the Queensland School of Artisans, which is instituting and maintaining this scheme under the guidance of and in collaboration with the department. An annual grant of a similar amount has been made to the association since the inception of the scheme in 1936-37. The administration of matters affecting the

Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland has been transferred to the department as from 1 July, 1942. Provision of the usual annual Government grant of £850 is included.

Vote agreed to.

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

##### CHIEF OFFICE.

The **ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (3.30 p.m.): I move—

“That £28,399 be granted for ‘Department of Justice—Chief Office.’”

This vote is a decrease on last year's vote of £410. A decrease is shown in salaries. This department, like all other departments, has been very hard hit by enlistments and call-ups for military service. Many senior officers have entered the fighting services and the department has been forced to carry on with depleted staffs as well as it could. Many junior officers are filling senior positions. There have been no changes in the Head Office.

**Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton) (3.31 p.m.): It is a long lane that has no turning. (Laughter.) Once again, I want to join issue with the Minister in connection with the fine that was imposed in the Industrial Magistrate's Court, Ipswich, on the Federated Moulders' (Metal) Union of Employees of Australia (Queensland Branch), and was not collected. I have asked a series of questions on this subject, and the last and really material reply I received was that given by the Minister on the 22 September last. That reply stated—

“Execution of the warrant was withheld under the following circumstances:—The prosecution was a private one by one Alexander McConechy Scott, of Ipswich, brass and iron founder, against the Federated Moulders' (Metal) Union of Employees of Australia (Queensland Branch), of Moorooka, Brisbane, as a result of industrial trouble existing between them. The magistrate found the union guilty of instigating a strike, and imposed the fine now in question. The warrant of execution was issued on 24 September, 1941, by the clerk of petty sessions, without any request by or reference to the complainant or his solicitor, Mr. Fitzgerald, and sent to the inspector of police, South Coast. On 26 September, 1941, Mr. Fitzgerald asked that the warrant of execution be withheld for a few days, as he anticipated a settlement of the dispute, and the clerk of petty sessions telephoned to the police to take no action under the warrant of execution until further advised.

“On 29 September, 1941, Mr. Fitzgerald telephoned to the clerk of petty sessions asking for further withholding of the warrant of execution. The warrant of execution was returned to the clerk of petty sessions on 2 October, 1941. The industrial dispute was settled, and a strike which

would have involved the Ipswich railway shops was averted. Such a strike might have had very serious consequences, considering the state of war then existing."

Parliament enacted the legislation dealing with industrial troubles, and under that legislation the court imposed a fine on the union. The clerk of petty sessions, without reference to the complainant, rightly issued a writ of execution; that was his duty. Why should the clerk of petty sessions, having discharged his duty up to that point, be swayed by the complainant in not making the levy on the union itself? What authority has a clerk of petty sessions to interfere with the process of justice? Can anybody say a clerk of petty sessions has the right to telephone the union's solicitors and bargain with them as to whether a warrant of execution shall be executed or not? No clerk of petty sessions has that power. Why did the clerk of petty sessions act in this way on that occasion? He has no authority to nullify the authority of the court, yet the clerk of petty sessions by his action nullified the authority of the court.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** I rise to a point of order. The hon. member made a misstatement when he said that the clerk of petty sessions had telephoned the union's solicitors and bargained with them. There is nothing in that reply that indicates that. It was the complainant's solicitor who got in touch with the clerk of petty sessions.

**Mr. MAHER:** The answer to my question went on to say—

"On 26 September, 1941, Mr. Fitzgerald asked that the warrant of execution be withheld for a few days, as he anticipated a settlement of the dispute, and the clerk of petty sessions telephoned to the police to take no action under the warrant of execution until further advised."

What warrant had an officer of the Department of Justice to ask the police to take no action? He was there to carry out the decision of the court; he was an officer of the Department of Justice. What right had he to bargain with the solicitors for the union?

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** He did not bargain with the solicitors for the union. Where do you get that?

**Mr. MAHER:** In the sense that he dealt with Mr. Fitzgerald, the union solicitor, on the question of withholding the warrant of execution.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** That is incorrect; he is the solicitor for the complainant.

**Mr. MAHER:** For the complainant—that is right. The point remains, Mr. Brasington, that the clerk of petty sessions at that stage of the dispute had no authority to delay the warrant of execution irrespective of what the complainant had to say on the matter. The court had made its decision. The court had fined the union and the warrant of execution had been issued, and whether the request come from the plaintiff's solicitors

or the defendant's solicitors is immaterial to the legal point involved—that no officer of the Department of Justice had the right at that stage to interfere with the execution of a warrant.

**An Opposition Member:** Did he interfere?

**Mr. MAHER:** The fact remains he did interfere, because the warrant was not served. The clerk of petty sessions held up the service of the warrant which was finally returned without service.

**An Opposition Member:** Acting under instructions?

**Mr. MAHER:** No, the clerk of petty sessions took it upon himself to interfere with the proceedings necessary in the terms of the decision of the industrial magistrate to further the ends of justice. If the clerk of petty sessions interfered in that way he did something that was unlawful, and he should be punished; but I do not think any clerk of petty sessions would take it upon himself to act in that way. Will anybody tell me a clerk of petty sessions would attempt to interfere with a warrant of execution that had been issued in an ordinary civil proceeding? Assuming that I was the plaintiff in an action before the Supreme Court and obtained a verdict, and I instructed that a warrant of execution be issued, no clerk of petty sessions has the right to stop the execution of that warrant.

**The Attorney-General:** If you request it, yes. If you make a request to him to withhold it, of course he has the right. Thousands of such cases go through every year. Arrangements are made about them.

**Mr. MAHER:** Even if that parallel is not right, the points involved in this case seem to suggest that action was taken in an irregular way, and I ask the Minister if he authorised the clerk of petty sessions to return the warrant of execution.

**The Attorney-General:** I can give you the answer that I did not authorise the clerk of petty sessions. The clerk of petty sessions acts on the authority of the Act under which he is working. Negotiations are entered into every day in connection with matters that arise.

**Mr. MAHER:** I must be frank with the Committee. I was under the definite impression that the action was taken on the request of the union's solicitor, but I find here now that the action was taken at the request of the solicitor for the complainant, Mr. Scott. Of course, if Mr. Scott asked for the warrant of execution to be returned that would take the wind out of my sails. As I have said, I was under the distinct impression that the request had been made by the union's solicitor and that the clerk of petty sessions had bargained with him in order to avert a strike. It is just as well to be frank and honest with the Committee, and that somewhat spoils the case that I proposed to submit. I will let it go at that.

**Mr. DART (Wynnum) (3.42 p.m.):** I regret very much the death of John O'Keefe,

who at the time of his demise was in charge of this department. I am sure every hon. member deeply regrets the passing of such an honourable gentleman. However, we have in his stead as Attorney-General a man who has had much experience, and I trust that he will tread in the footsteps of his predecessor and endeavour to straighten out any irregularities that there may be in this department. This is a department that seeks to administer justice to all, and I must say how much I admire the staff of the department from the highest to the lowest officer. They are always ready and willing to do their best in the interests of the people of Queensland, and treat hon. members with the utmost courtesy.

In addition to other things, the late John O'Keefe tried to clean up the electoral rolls. He is to be greatly admired for that, and I believe that in the present Attorney-General we have a gentleman who will endeavour to do his best to give the people of Queensland clean electoral rolls. The late John O'Keefe went so far as to institute a prosecution for personation. I admire him for that. There are those who would endeavour to have us believe that the electoral rolls are clean and that everything in electoral matters is above-board, and there are no cases of plural voting and things of that kind.

I presume that the majority of hon. members know of the Toowoomba "Chronicle." It is a very important newspaper and gives truthful reports. That journal reported to the public that, on 30 June, 1941, a man was prosecuted for personation.

Too much personation has been taking place in Queensland over a number of years, and on this occasion the late Attorney-General had the courage to test the position by prosecuting the offender. He was committed to the criminal sittings of the Circuit Court at Toowoomba for sentence, and on 7 July, 1941, was fined £10 and ordered to be imprisoned until the fine was paid, the term of imprisonment not to exceed three months. If hon. members want full particulars and the name of the person who was prosecuted, these can be obtained from a perusal of the Toowoomba "Chronicle" of those dates. Not so long ago I heard a man boast that he had voted six times at the last election. If it is possible for a man to do that, it is time that our rolls were cleaned up.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** The former Leader of the Opposition voted hundreds of times last election.

**Mr. DART:** I feel sure that the Minister is not alleging personation against the former Leader of the Opposition. If he is, I submit that he should withdraw.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** He had all the proxies.

**Mr. DART:** If a man votes under the authority of a power of attorney, he is not guilty of personation. Both the former Leader of the Opposition and the Premier cast many votes because they had powers of attorney enabling them to do so. I am referring now to people who cast numerous votes

without that authority. The fact that it was necessary to prosecute this man at Toowoomba proves that personation is possible in Queensland, and that being so, there is every need for cleaning up the rolls. I suggest that our present Attorney-General do his best to give the people of Queensland a clean roll. I am sure that every officer in his department will be willing to help him with this work.

I offer a suggestion that would tend to clean our rolls. I suggest that the Government issue identity cards to every elector in the State, and that he be compelled to present that card at the polling booth on election day. Of course, the identity card that he holds now might be suitable for the purpose, but I suggest that the expenditure of a few pounds on issuing special identity cards to every elector in Queensland would be justified, the card to be stamped with the date by the presiding officer or the person who gives the elector the ballot-paper.

**The Attorney-General:** How about having them ear-marked?

**Mr. DART:** The Minister's suggestion would be satisfactory for cattle, but I hesitate to suggest ear-marking human beings. The identification that I have suggested should be ample. Certainly, if my suggestion was adopted, it would go a long way towards keeping the rolls clean at election time. The electors of Ipswich would not think kindly of the Attorney-General if they believed he was serious in suggesting that they be ear-marked. What I have suggested is reasonable, and I trust that the hon. gentleman will accept it, for if he does there will be no question of one man's having two votes and another man's having numerous votes.

**The Attorney-General:** That is what you are trying to get down to.

**Mr. DART:** I hope my suggestion will bear fruit, for then both the hon. gentleman and I shall be able to say that we have been responsible for cleaning up the rolls of Queensland.

It is the duty of everyone to do his or her best to help win the war, but the war effort is being hindered considerably by the liquor traffic. The Attorney-General could do a great deal to control it much better than he is doing now. Every effort is being made to provide sufficient food for civilian and army requirements. The principle of rationing has been adopted in relation to food, transport, petrol, and other things, and I suggest that the Minister consider the advisableness of rationing liquor to the public. In Australia £42,000,000 is spent annually in producing alcohol, in the production of the barley, in labour generally, coal, electricity, manufacturing costs, transport, and other charges. The liquor business is a tremendous one and the people associated with it are growing very rich. Of course, that favours the capitalist, but I understand that Labour's policy is to give concessions to the working man rather than to the capitalist. I ask the Attorney-General to consider the advisableness of rationing liquor to the public and also to vary the hours of sale or to curtail them

in some way. Last year we spent a considerable time in considering an extension of the hours of sale, but they were no sooner adopted than the Government decided that they should not be enforced because the Federal authorities were of the opinion that it would retard the war effort. Then the authorities at Canberra asked the State Government to reduce the trading hours. If the authorities at Canberra found it desirable to prevent the sale of liquor in Canberra for two hours between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. there is no reason why the Attorney-General for Queensland could not adopt a similar provision for the State. The hon. gentleman was asked a question on the matter and his reply is contained in a report in the "Courier-Mail" of 13 October, 1941.

**The Attorney-General:** Both the "Courier-Mail" and the "Temperance Advocate" published a misstatement of my remarks.

**Mr. DART:** The hon. gentleman will have his right to reply to my remarks later on.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have given the hon. member considerable latitude. He is now discussing a matter that he suggests should be the subject of legislation. I must rule that no general discussion on the liquor laws can be permitted on this vote.

**Mr. DART:** I thank you for your ruling, Mr. Brassington, and I shall endeavour to abide by it. I do not think any legislation is required to reduce the alcoholic content of liquor. Our beer is too strong and its alcoholic content should be reduced from 8 per cent. to 3 per cent. while the war is on. The New Zealand authorities have reduced the alcoholic content of liquor by 25 per cent. I ask the Minister to give my suggestion consideration. He knows that this is a very hot climate. It has been stated that it takes 15 bottles of beer of the reduced alcoholic content to make a man drunk. That fact should not disturb us; it is the business of the consumer. If the consumer must have quantity, the only way to assuage his thirst without getting him drunk is to reduce the alcoholic content. The Minister may uphold my suggestion for a reduction in the alcoholic content of beer; it is held by many persons to be worthy of consideration.

**Mr. CONROY (Maranoa) (3.59 p.m.):** The Public Curator deals with many matters, including the preparation of wills, applications for probate, and letters of administration of deceased persons. A case was recently brought under my notice in which letters of administration of a deceased person were granted to the Public Curator in the intestate estate of an illegitimate person. He was not married, but at the time of his death his mother was alive and is still living. The estate was not a large one, the gross value being sworn at under £400. When the estate was finalised the net value was approximately £283. I want it to be distinctly understood that I have no complaint against the Public Curator. I have seen all the papers, and I am satisfied that the Public Curator carried out his duties faithfully and well. Probably

the present Minister has no knowledge of the case, which was dealt with by his predecessor.

Under our existing law the estate became the property of the Crown. It is within the discretion of the Attorney-General to pay to the mother of an illegitimate person the whole of the estate, part of it, or none at all. The Attorney-General decided to grant the mother war-savings certificates of the value of £200, the balance of the estate (£83) being paid into consolidated revenue. In the first instance, the mother employed a solicitor, who took the matter up with the Public Curator. He did not succeed in obtaining the balance of the estate for the mother. The mother then wrote to the Public Curator, who replied—

"In reply to your letter I have to state that it was explained to your solicitor that the Crown right of escheat was waived only to the extent of £200, and this amount has already been paid to you by means of war-savings certificates in accordance with the directions of the Attorney-General."

That is really confiscation. As the law stands, the Crown has the right to confiscate the estate of an illegitimate person. I, personally, do not agree with this provision. I contend that the mother is entitled to the whole of the estate. The mother of an illegitimate child has no bouquets thrown at her socially.

She has to feed, clothe, and educate her child until it is able to earn its own living. In this case, the child was a boy, and developed into a very decent citizen—a very steady-going fellow—but, unfortunately, he was not very strong and died at a comparatively early age. The Crown was not put to any expense, and I contend that the mother should have received the whole of that estate. I ask the Attorney-General to make inquiries. I will give him the name of the parties and all the necessary information in connection with it. I believe that something further should be done to protect mothers in similar circumstances to the one I have mentioned. The Intestacy Act is a very old one, having been passed in 1877, and has no bearing on the case I have just mentioned. As far as I am aware, it has not been amended in any way since it was passed. I endeavoured to find out if there was any amendment, but apparently there was not, otherwise the Attorney-General would not have dealt with the estate.

That is all I wish to say on the matter. I make the suggestion to the Minister that I think it is only fair and reasonable that the mother of an illegitimate child who dies intestate and is unmarried should get the whole of the estate.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (4.7 p.m.):** I am not sure whether we can discuss the administration of the Liquor Act. I notice that the Licensing Commission comes under the Estimates of the Department of Justice—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! For the information of the hon. member, I quote from

page 538 of May's "Parliamentary Practice"—

"The administrative action of a department is open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in committee of supply."

The hon. member will have an opportunity of discussing the Licensing Commission, but I suggest that he discuss it on that vote.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** In the first place, the administration of the Licensing Commission is rotten. The Licensing Commission is rotten.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** I rise to a point of order. I ask that the hon. member for Bundaberg withdraw the statement that the Licensing Commission is rotten. I think that is a reflection upon public officers of this State, and the man who makes that—I think he is rottener than anybody in Queensland. I ask that he withdraw it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have no power under the Standing Orders to ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement, but I suggest, in the interests of political decency in this Chamber, that the hon. member, in referring to responsible public officials, refer to them in a courteous, reasonable, and decent way.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** They would not understand it if I did. I demand an apology from the Attorney-General. I take it, when he said that I was the rottenest in Queensland, he means that I am rottener than anybody else.

**The Attorney-General:** So you are.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I demand an apology for that statement.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the Attorney-General to withdraw that expression.

**The Attorney-General:** At the request of the Chair, I withdraw the statement, if it is unparliamentary and out of order.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I have had the experience of coming before the Licensing Commission in a case in which the transfer of a licence by me could not be refused. I had two commissioners or judges on the Commission to back me up, but eventually, after a long argument I won. The Licensing Commissioner, working in conjunction with Carroll, the bombastic little squirt, tried to ruin me in my hotel. If they had succeeded it would have cost me thousands of pounds, and that is why I say the Licensing Commission is rotten. I will still say it, and I will not withdraw it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The responsibility is placed on my shoulders of seeing that there is a fair and reasonable standard of debate, and I appeal to the hon. member to come back to the debate. There is latitude for him to put his case fearlessly and fairly without recourse to language that is unparliamentary. I ask him to make his points on

proper lines; otherwise I shall have no other course than to take drastic action against him.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** In the first place, the Licensing Commission is designed to defy Magna Charta. It was designed by a Labour Government. If a Tory Government brought in that Commission we could expect it to be against the workers, but it was designed by a so-called Labour Government, and there is no right of appeal. As I have said previously, the Licensing Commission on two occasions made it that two and two are ten. Perhaps I should say, "Two and two is ten" to be in keeping with what they did. "Two and two is ten" is what they said to me. I had no right of appeal to the Full Court of Queensland, the High Court of Australia, or the Privy Council. Under a dictatorship a clause was put in that Act to suit whom? It was put in to suit the breweries, and by whom? By a Labour Government. It gives a monopoly a benefit, and they, the Labour Government, pretend to be the friends of the workers. It is all "hooey." They found it out in Cairns. The people are awakened as to whom Labour are labouring for.

And whilst I am on my feet speaking on the vote for the Department of Justice, under which comes the administration of the Elections Act, I ask the hon. member who is seated on my left on the Government benches and who made the statement that he would resign if I won the Cairns by-election, to prove that he has some honour, and resign. But he will not resign.

**Mr. Maher:** Who said that?

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** The hon. member for Baroona made that statement, but he will not resign. Last year the hon. member for Baroona, in this Chamber, accused me of having had to pay a fine of £5 for an assault on a male child. I demanded that the papers be tabled. They were not tabled because no such thing ever existed. Now, Mr. Brassington, the same hon. member last year—the same pig, I should say—

**Mr. POWER:** I rise to a point of order. I ask for an apology and a withdrawal.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I would ask the hon. member to withdraw his remark.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I withdraw. I try to keep—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have given the hon. member ample opportunity, and I must ask him to resume his seat.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I am out for good? I will have to change the Government.

At 4.13 p.m.,

Mr. FARRELL (Maryborough) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

**Mr. LUCKINS (Maree) (4.13 p.m.):** I desire to make a few observations on laws that were enacted in years gone by and do not meet the conditions of life to-day. The hon. member for Maranoa has just brought to light in this Committee a rather remarkable state of affairs. I can well imagine that

at the time the law was enacted in 1877 it attempted to cope with the conditions of those days. The laws made then were enacted to meet certain social conditions, and I appeal for an investigation to be made of the need for bringing up to date all the laws enacted for the good government of the citizens of this State.

To enforce my point, I might mention the instance of a young man brought before the court on 29 August last for having committed an assault on a girl of the tender age of four years. Interference with young girls is a crime against decency and morals, but the penalties provided do not fit the crime. I am not aware of the peculiarities of our Criminal Code—whether it provides for sentences severe enough to meet the crime of a young man who takes a little girl of four aboard a boat and commits an offence. The newspaper report of the case reads—

“Assault on Four-year-old Girl—£5 Fine.

“A young man pleaded guilty in the police court yesterday afternoon to unlawfully assaulting a four-year-old girl at Brisbane on 29 August. Mr. G. A. Cameron, C.S.M., fined him £5, in default one month’s gaol.

“Detective C. E. Risch, prosecuting, said the child had been playing with her brother, aged six, near the river where the man was fishing. Giving his rod to the boy, the man had carried the girl aboard a small launch, where the assault was committed.

“The man, he added, was at present under bond for seven charges of stealing last July.”

My complaint is against the light penalty imposed for this crime, and I cannot imagine that we have a law that is so lenient to wrongdoers that a man who commits a crime of this description on a four-year-old girl should be fined only £5. I do not know the circumstances, but I shall hand the newspaper cutting to the Attorney-General and ask him to have an investigation made into the matter so that he will be able to satisfy me, as a representative of a large number of the citizens of this State, that this penalty is in keeping with the crime.

The Attorney-General is new to his job, and I suggest to him that he ask his departmental officers—he has many able barristers and solicitors employed—to go through those old laws that were enacted about 70 or 80 years ago and endeavour to bring them up to date. We have at least eight months of the year in which Parliament is in recess, and if it was found necessary Parliament could be called together for the purpose of bringing those laws into conformity with present-day conditions.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (4.18 p.m.): Last year some cross-summons were issued at Cunnamulla. Mr. J. R. Hall, of the Wooldridge Rigby Shearing Company, had occasion to sue some of the employees for a breach of the award. Classer Barry issued a cross-summons, suing Hall’s company.

Those cases were set down for hearing at Eulo on 5 September, 1941. The Wooldridge Rigby Shearing Company had other business to attend to at that date and applied to the clerk of petty sessions, Cunnamulla, for a change of venue to Cunnamulla, but got no satisfaction. That company could not understand why the request was refused, especially in view of the fact that a little later Mr. Duffy, the district secretary of the Australian Workers’ Union, was unable to appear at Eulo on 5 September, and the cases were not only adjourned for a month—and presumably this adjournment was granted by arrangement with the Cunnamulla clerk of petty sessions—but the venue was changed to Cunnamulla.

**The Attorney-General:** That case was taken under the industrial law, not under the Justices Act.

**Mr. YEATES:** The Wooldridge Rigby Shearing Company wonders why people are not all treated alike.

**The Attorney-General:** We do not deal with those cases. They come under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

**Mr. YEATES:** Under the Department of Labour?

**The Attorney-General:** Yes.

**Mr. YEATES:** That is a good getaway. I shall go into the matter with the office.

I wish to deal now with the supply of grog. I do not propose to talk about hours, as I hope to have something to say about them when discussing the vote for the Licensing Commission, but I suggest to the Attorney-General that he use his influence to have the alcoholic content of beer reduced. I suggest that no licences should be granted to breweries to sell spirits; there are other vendors to look after that part of the business. It should be the work of the breweries only to brew beer. No licences are granted to breweries in Victoria to sell spirits.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (4.22 p.m.): The hon. member for Wynnum referred to a case of dual voting in Toowoomba. The defendant was fined. There is very little dual voting in Queensland, although there have been instances of apparent dual voting that have afterwards been proved to be errors by the poll clerk in ruling out the wrong name on the roll. There is no incentive for dual voting to-day. One of my first jobs as a small boy in connection with elections was in the Bundamba electorate when Mr. Glassey put up for political honours. I had my pony, and when persons voted it was my job to race to our scrutineer in the next polling-booth to give the names to him so as to prevent dual voting. It was necessary to do that at the time, because it was very difficult to prevent dual voting. Some people would vote at one booth, then go and vote at another, and so go round all the booths if they could.

The hon. member for Wynnum suggested that we should put a tag on everyone who

voted, that he should have an identification card or some card to show that he had the right to vote and that if he did not have such a card he could not exercise that right. At one time there was such a thing as a voter's right, and he had to have a card showing he had that right. I think it was only at breakfast in the refreshment-room this morning that stories were told about voters' rights. One story was of a man who did not know what to do with his voter's right, and when told that it was a shin plaster he promptly plastered it on his body so that he would not lose it. (Laughter.) Another story is told of a man who wanted to protect his voter's right and pasted it on the kitchen door, but when the elections came round he could not get it off, and in order to exercise his vote he had to unscrew the kitchen door and carry it to the polling-booth. (Laughter.)

**Mr. Dart:** I would not do that.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** It is very hard to say what the hon. member would do. If his only way to exercise the vote was by carrying the kitchen door or some other door to the polling-booth we should perhaps see him walking along the street with the door on his back. I do not think that suggestion is one that will be taken seriously by hon. members. The names of voters are properly enrolled and a proper card index is kept in the Electoral Registrar's Office. He has a complete record of all men and women who have the right to vote, and those records may be seen by any interested person who visits the office. He has the best possible tag on every voter that one could have.

Some hon. members have commented on the administration of the Licensing Commission, but I want to tell them plainly that the Licensing Commission has no control whatever over supplies of beer and spirits; they are controlled by the Commonwealth Government through the Customs Department. The activities of the Licensing Commission are confined to the granting of licences, the cancellation of licences, and seeing that licensed persons carry out the liquor laws of this State. The supply and distribution of liquor is solely a matter for the Commonwealth. The State has no say in it whatsoever.

**Mr. Dart:** Who fixes the hours of hotels?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** The State Government, but we, at the request of the Commonwealth Government, amended the trading hours in conformity with their expressed wish. The Commonwealth Government did not fix the hours, but merely requested that they be fixed to conform with their requirements. The State complied with those wishes. The State has a very limited control of supplies sold by licensees. The Commonwealth decides the quantity that should be made available.

The hon. member for East Toowoomba suggested that the breweries should be confined to the manufacture of beer or whatever it is they brew. Many breweries are agents for imported spirituous liquors and bottled beers, and as agents supply licensed victuallers with

them. That is how they are able to distribute supplies to hotels.

**Mr. Yeates:** Where do breweries obtain their licences from?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Under the State licensing laws. They are licensed, in the same way as wholesale wine and spirit merchants, both for beer and spirituous liquor. Wine and spirit merchants are also licensed as agents for beer and spirituous liquors. Under our present law a brewery, like a wine and spirit merchant, can distribute spirituous liquor as well as beer it manufactures.

As hon. members know, our legislation as to the sale of liquor has been tightened up considerably. Wholesale merchants cannot sell less than two gallons of liquor at the wholesale or brewery price. The law respecting the distribution of beer and spirits has also been tightened up. Every sale has now to be recorded and a copy supplied to the police every week. It is by this means that sly-grog selling, which at one time was very rampant, has been largely stamped out.

The hon. member for Maranoa raised the question of the law relating to the distribution of an intestate estate of an illegitimate. I will look into this matter to see if something cannot be done to protect the interests of the mother. She brought up the child and cared for it and she should get every consideration. I shall look into the matter and see if anything can be done.

The hon. member for Maree brought up the question of small fines. This is a matter that has been concerning the Government for a considerable time. Efforts have been made to fix a minimum fine in some cases and to provide for imprisonment for certain offences, with the option of a fine. Every effort is being made to mete out justice and to protect our children. The case mentioned by the hon. member for Maree was brought before my notice by officials of my department and a report was asked for so that we should know the circumstances surrounding the case. The magistrate who tried the case made a report in which he stated that after taking the whole of the circumstances into consideration he thought the fine was adequate punishment. I think the report stated that the child was not injured in any way, but that is no excuse. In my opinion, if a child is interfered with, the severest penalty should be inflicted on the guilty person, not for the protection of that child alone—that damage has been done—but as a deterrent to others. Anything that can be done by this department to see that persons committing sexual offences against small children are dealt with with the utmost rigour of the law will be done. If we cannot bring about a higher moral tone in any other way than by applying the penalties of the law then they will be invoked.

**Mr. POWER (Baroona) (4.37 p.m.):** The hon. member for Bundaberg—parliamentary procedure compels me to call him "hon. member," and if he knew what was in the back of my mind he would know that I

always wish I did not have to contend with parliamentary procedure in dealing with him—took the opportunity to try to score off me and asked me if I was going to resign. He alleged that I said I would resign if he was elected. That statement is untrue. He is too insignificant for me to pay any attention to. The fact the electors of Cairns went mad recently and elected his brother on a minority vote of the whole of the electors of Cairns does not give him any right to think he has the majority of the electors with him. Two thousand people were definitely against him in the electorate over and above the majority he got. I congratulate the Chairman on the firm stand he has taken in making the hon. member at least use this Chamber for purely political purposes and not for the purpose of attacking public officials and others. He has used this Chamber for a long time to attack public servants who have no opportunity of defending themselves. He took the opportunity of calling me a pig. I will deal with that gentleman in the right place. He has no chance of bluffing me. I repeat this: he was convicted of an assault on a Press reporter in Bundaberg, and the assault was described as a cowardly assault, and he was fined £5 for it. At a later stage the magistrate described it as a cowardly assault. On another occasion he assaulted a man on a tramcar and was prosecuted for that. This is the gentleman who claims to be a decent citizen. We know he was recently put out of the Lodge because he was 28 hours in there with a female.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** You are a liar.

**Mr. POWER:** If I called you a gentleman I should be a liar. I ask that the hon. member be made withdraw that statement.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I withdraw.

**Mr. POWER:** What about an apology?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! Mr. Power.

**Mr. POWER:** I repeat that the hon. member was recently put out of the Lodge because he was caught with a female in that Lodge, which is distinctly against the rules of Parliament.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I object and demand an apology. I was not expelled from the Lodge. I demand an apology.

**Mr. POWER:** If the hon. member for Bundaberg takes off the gloves to me, I will take off the gloves with him, and repeat the statement made by the hon. member for Bowen that I am not going to put on a dress suit to handle a nightman either. If this hon. member comes into this Chamber attacking me, I will finish matters and expose him to the public. I repeat also that he made representation to have a prosecution withdrawn against a woman who kept a house of ill-fame in South Brisbane. This is the person who claims to be an honest and clean and decent citizen. He is known as

“Pasha” by the female section of the community within the Bundaberg electorate.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** You are a liar.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to desist from interrupting the hon. member who is speaking.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I rise to a point of order. I object to the statement that I was known in Bundaberg as “Pasha” among the women. I was not known by anybody in Bundaberg as “Pasha,” but by the kiddies of Gympie I was known by the name of “Pasha.”

**Mr. POWER:** Mr. Farrell, I do not know whether you heard the hon. member for Bundaberg call me a liar. I ask that the word “liar” be withdrawn.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. POWER:** Now, Mr. Farrell, having dealt with the hon. member for Bundaberg, I will deal with those matters on which I intended to speak.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I rise to a point of order. I demand an apology from him. I was not expelled from the Lodge and that point of order has not been settled.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The point of order has been settled. There is no point of order.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I rise to a point of order. The hon. member accused me of having been expelled from the Lodge for a certain reason. I was not expelled from the Lodge and I demand an apology.

**The Attorney-General:** You were turned out.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I will shift the lot of you.

**Mr. POWER:** An attack was made on the members of the Licensing Commission and also on the Commissioner of Police, and I take this opportunity of defending these gentlemen, who hold very high and honourable positions in this State. The Licensing Commission was instituted by the Labour Government and has done excellent work on behalf of the people of Queensland. It has been responsible for an improvement in hotel conditions in many parts of Queensland. Previously to the enactment of the legislation empowering the appointment of the Commission, the accommodation in many parts of the State was not by any means all that it should be and the travelling public were compelled to put up with all sorts of inconveniences. Many improvements have been carried out, and the Licensing Commission is responsible.

I now deal with a position that is exercising the minds of the public in respect of the sale of liquor. It is the general belief that it is the State Government who are responsible for there not being sufficient liquor to meet the requirements of the consumers.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** You are out of order. The Chairman has just ruled that liquor

generally cannot be discussed, except the Licensing Commission, and I demand that the hon. member be put out of order.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I will decide whether the hon. member is out of order.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I am not asking you to decide. I will change your seat, too.

**Mr. POWER:** I was dealing with the supply of liquor when I was so rudely interrupted by an hon. member of the Opposition. Liquor supplies are controlled not by the State but by the Commonwealth Government and are issued through the Department of Customs. Any shortage within the State of Queensland is not the responsibility of the State Government, but that of the Commonwealth Government, who have curtailed the amount that shall be made available to the public. The position should be made clear so that the people of Queensland will know on whom the responsibility lies.

When the quantity of liquor to be supplied to the people of Australia was reduced, little consideration was given to the fact that there had been a large increase in the population as a result of the landing in Australia for war purposes of Allied troops. Had proper consideration been given to this fact, perhaps there would not be the situation that exists to-day, when working men after having done a hard day's work in munition factories, on the railways, tramways, or on the road are not able to obtain a glass of beer. Provision should be made by the Commonwealth Government so that these men could obtain at least a pot of beer when they have finished their day's work.

Through wise legislation by a Labour Government, provision has been made for members of the fighting forces to record their votes no matter where they may be. I want to pay a compliment to the excellent work done by Mr. McGuire, the Chief Electoral Registrar. With the many troop movements that are taking place just now, and with the heavy call-ups of our young men, it is difficult to keep track of their movements, but Mr. McGuire and his officers visit the various camps throughout the State in order to obtain from members of the military, navy, air force, and women's auxiliary forces, a signed authority for some person to vote for them. Mr. McGuire is being aided in this work by his various electoral officers throughout Queensland, and, because of Labour's legislation, adequate provision is made to give every member of the fighting forces a say in the government of the State. We in Queensland have done excellent work in making that right available, and Mr. McGuire and his staff are to be congratulated on what they have done.

We all appreciate the fact that as a result of call-ups and the seconding of magistrates to various positions in connection with the war there is a shortage of staff in the Department of Justice, and I compliment that very estimable gentleman who is now seconded by the State Government to the Commonwealth Government to do work connected

with the war effort. I refer to Mr. Hickey, who was clerk of petty sessions here for some time. I understand he is now doing work for the Commonwealth Government, and that as a result of his labours many industrial disputes have been prevented from taking place. In my view, a wise choice was made when he was selected for the job.

Mr. O'Hagan and his staff have rendered very valuable help at all times, and I make special mention of the work of Mr. McGregor. I have had occasion to refer many matters to Mr. McGregor, and all my representations have been dealt with to the satisfaction of the parties who have approached me. We are fortunate in having such capable gentlemen in control of the department. Officials can either make or break a Minister, and the work of those officials who do their duty fairly and impartially should be recognised. In the Department of Justice we have two excellent officers, and I hope that as the opportunity offers they will be given a chance to improve their positions.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (4.49 p.m.):** I understand that since an effort has been made to reduce the sale of liquor throughout the Commonwealth some authority has been established to allocate the supplies to the various hotels. The effect is that while country hotels have had their supplies of liquor curtailed the Government have made no effort to compensate country hotelkeepers in any way by reducing their licence fees. If it is right to reduce the allocation of the goods they may sell, then it is only right that their obligations should be reduced in some way. It is hard to make a definite charge, but one cannot help noticing the difference when coming to Brisbane from a country district. Licensed victuallers in the country have had their supplies reduced to such an extent that the supply of spirits in the winter months was considerably short of what was required for normal trading. After seeing the position in the country, it is annoying, upon entering Brisbane, to see grog flowing in every possible direction. I approve of a restriction of the sale of liquor in all directions during the war period, but if it is right to ask country hotelkeepers to reduce their sales, or if it is right to deny them their normal supplies, it is the responsibility of the Government to reduce their licence fees. I should like the Minister to explain the position because many of these country people have invested in hotels without knowing that this rationing of liquor was going to be introduced, and, of course, the licence fee is based on the conditions existing in the district at the time they bought the goodwill. That being so, these people are entitled to some consideration. Can the Minister tell the Committee if any move in that direction is contemplated by the Government?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (4.51 p.m.):** The licensing fees are arrived at on the basis of 2½ per cent. of sales, and so if the sales are reduced the licensing fee is reduced accordingly.

**Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (4.52 p.m.):** The Minister said that the Licensing

Commission issued licences to breweries to sell spirits, but that the Commonwealth controls supplies under the National Security regulations. In the beginning he said that the supplies were controlled by the Licensing Commission, and then went on to say that the other matter was a State matter. I thought so, too. Why grant the breweries a license to supply spirits? If a brewery owns the freehold of a hotel or is the lessee, it includes in the lease a provision binding the lessee to buy all his liquor from that brewery. That creates a monopoly. Ever so many hotels are controlled by breweries throughout Queensland—probably 7 out of every 10. The breweries have a monopoly, and so other wine and spirit merchants cannot get a look in. They have to take out licences, too. I want to know why the State Government encourage monopolies, as they appear to do in the case of breweries. Do the breweries confer any favour of any kind on the State Government?

**The Attorney-General:** In what way? Why the innuendo? Tell us straight out what you mean.

**Mr. YEATES:** Do they give you any money for elections?

**The Attorney-General:** No.

**Mr. YEATES:** Definitely no?

**The Attorney-General:** Definitely no.

**Mr. YEATES:** Recently a highly-respected citizen in Toowoomba was fined £50 for building a house. We all know how difficult it is to get houses now. This man was paying £2 10s. a week for a small house or flat and early this year he decided to build one of his own. It was before the National Security regulations came into force. The house was half built and the remainder of the timber, iron, nails, and other material was lying about.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. YEATES:** I know what you are going to say. (Laughter.)

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

**Mr. YEATES:** You want to put it on to the Commonwealth Government. He was fined £50, when I think £5 would have been ample. I shall take it up with the Federal authorities.

Now let me deal with the electoral office. I know that Mr. McGuire does his work very well. He is a gentleman, courteous at all times, and so are the rest of the officers. So they ought to be. They are paid to do that. I have got off to a good start. (Laughter.) Queensland is paying £8,968 a year for its electoral system, or £26,904 every three years. Why not amalgamate the State electoral system with the Commonwealth system? I do not want anyone to introduce party politics and say it would not suit this one or that one. That is all rubbish. Why not amalgamate the State system with the Federal system just as several—I think four

or five—other States have done to a large extent? Is it for party considerations, so as to get more voters by reducing the residential qualifications? Why have the duplication?

**Mr. J. F. BARNES (Bundaberg) (4.56 p.m.):** In the first place, I should like to reply to the hon. member for Baroona. I shall make charges against him similar to those he made against me, but mine have some foundation in fact. In the first place, where did he get his motor car? Out of a sanitary contract? In the second place, he is running around with a blonde, and he is a married man. He made a reflection on my character.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member to keep to the vote under discussion.

**Mr. POWER:** I rise to a point of order. The statements made by the hon. member are not true, and I want him to withdraw them.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member for Bundaberg to accept the denial of the hon. member for Baroona.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I will accept his denial.

I ask the hon. member for Baroona to table the papers concerning his charge that I was excommunicated from the Lodge. I denied that charge, and I ask the Chair that it be withdrawn. The hon. member was not asked to apologise, although I am compelled to. When I take over the Government—and that won't be long now—(laughter)—I can assure the Committee that I will not take over certain hon. members of the Government, and that one of those hon. members is the hon. member for Baroona. Last year the hon. member for Baroona made certain statements, and I asked that the papers in connection with his statements, including the one he repeated to-day about the brothel, be tabled. They have not been tabled. Last year a certain woman—I do not know her name now, unless I refer to the papers—rang me up on the telephone. She had been proceeded against for keeping a house of ill-fame. The hon. member for Kurilpa handled the case for her. When she rang me up she told me that, like a number of other people in Brisbane, she had a house of ill-fame, but she had been singled out for persecution as every other keeper of such a house had been allowed to carry on. She said that as I had been persecuted in Bundaberg, she knew that I would not stand for persecution. I told her that I would not stand for persecution and that I would stop it. As a result I went into the office of the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs. I said, "Ned," and he said, "Mr. Hanlon to you." I said, "You heard what I said." I made the request that he should withdraw the summons against this woman because she considered she had been persecuted. The Secretary for Health and Home Affairs said that he had never withdrawn a summons in his life. I said, "You

are making a mistake; you never withdrew a summons in Bundaberg against me, but you have withdrawn dozens of summonses." I informed him that this woman alleged that she had been persecuted and she asked that the summons against her be withdrawn. I furthermore said that while she was not innocent, why had not every other keeper of a house of ill-fame been prosecuted? I said that certain people wanted to buy her property and that the Police Force had given her a month to sell her property and in the event of her doing so they would withdraw her charge. The Police Force gave her a month to sell her property and then they would withdraw the charge! The result was I left the Minister's office, and as I left I said, "There is one thing, if you don't withdraw the summons you will wish you did." Three days later the woman rang me up and thanked me for having had the summons withdrawn.

At 5 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I took steps to have that summons withdrawn because it was a persecution. I do not stand for anyone to be persecuted. As I have said previously, the presence of houses of ill-fame is a lasting disgrace to a Government.

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

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** Last year I demanded that certain papers in the matter be tabled by this department and they were not tabled. Now the hon. member for Baroona gets up and repeats the slander he made then. Why did he not have the guts to see that the papers were tabled so as to prove whether I was right or wrong. Those papers will prove if that summons was withdrawn.

**The Attorney-General:** What papers?

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** The summons, the relevant papers in the charge that was withdrawn. They were not tabled. When these Estimates were being discussed last year the then Attorney-General attacked me about the Cleveland case because I termed the magistrate a fool. I asked that those papers be tabled. They were not tabled. Why? Why is it, too, that the police asked for a royal commission into police affairs and cannot get one appointed? You can take it from me, Mr. Brassington, that the people of Queensland are fed up to the neck of all the stuff that is going on. They want to know when papers are asked to be tabled, why they are not tabled in order to prove that the hon. member for Bundaberg is right or wrong.

**Mr. Devries:** It would only prove a story against yourself.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I am talking about something of a public nature. You can take my word for it that the people of Cairns were fed up with it. The ex-Attorney-General was the representative of the Cairns electorate. I have now taken that seat from the Government. I decided after the Cleveland case that I would go up to his own dunghill

and take the Labour seat from him. Why have the people changed? I will tell you: because they are fed up to the neck of everything that is happening. As for the police magistrate at Cairns, I will say this for him: he is the most solid man I have ever met in my life. I was pleased to meet him. Furthermore, I checked up on my own judgment by obtaining the opinion of a person against whom he had given a decision, and that person said he was a 100-per-cent. solid man. There are others in Queensland, but there will not be if things like this are allowed to escape and go through roughshod—you will not have anybody honest. I have made statements in this Assembly of a serious nature, I asked for the papers to be tabled, it was promised they would be tabled, but they were not tabled.

**The Attorney-General:** What was promised to be tabled?

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** You would not know if I told you.

**The Attorney-General:** You are making a lot of wild statements and you cannot substantiate them. No paper was promised to be tabled that was not tabled.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** They promised to table the Cleveland papers and the alleged case of my assaulting a male child—something that never happened.

**The Attorney-General:** I will table it.

A Government Member interjected.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** I never assaulted a male child; there is no such case. It was used by the hon. member for Baroona in an endeavour to blacken my character. There is nothing I have done in my life that I am ashamed of, and I have not an unscrupulous conscience. I will stand up to anything I have done. That is why I succeeded in Bundaberg against the Gestapo, and succeeded in Cairns.

In reference to the Liquor Act and the Licensing Commission there is only one possible way to get over the difficulty of liquor, and that is to control liquor. That can be administered by this Government. The Act is there, the penalty is there, and the Licensing Commission can see the Act is carried out. The Act provides for a fine of £20 or £50 on the publican for serving a drunk, and for a fine on a person for being drunk. If that is carried out and the fine increased to £100 on the publican and to £20 on the man who is drunk or anybody supplying him, you will get sound liquor laws again. But the international Jews who control the destiny of the people want us to get drunk and be drunk all the time so that we shall not think but let them live in their palaces. These 300 international Jews control our destiny, and they would do anything to us; they would even inoculate us with germs to win their way. There is only one fight for us to fight—the fight for the people and not the fight against one another. There is only one people we have to fight, and that is the 300 international Jews who

have planned everything that has happened, including our present war.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** They want the people to be drunk so that they cannot think on constructive lines. And this Government are to blame for the morals of the country. If the morals of Queensland are rotten the blame lies on the Government, and if the morals of the people are good the morals of the Government are good; you cannot get good people with bad government or vice versa. I will leave it to the people to judge the morals of Queensland and the morals of the Government.

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:** You should be the best judge.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** The morals of the Government are rotten.

**Mr. Mann** interjected.

**Mr. J. F. BARNES:** Why do you run a starting-price joint and a game in Elizabeth street? These jokers who are slinging mud cannot get away with it. I never did anything in my life that I am ashamed of and I do not run a starting-price joint.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.8 p.m.): The hon. member asked me to table the papers. I have the report that appeared in the Bundaberg "Daily News and Mail" of Wednesday, 28 February, 1940. It is headed—

"Very Cowardly Assault.

"Maximum Fine of £5."

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I admit that.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** You wanted the papers tabled.

**Mr. J. F. Barnes:** I ask for the papers to be tabled relating to the male child.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** The report continues—

"'A very cowardly assault,' commented the Acting Police Magistrate (Mr. D. Ryan) in the Bundaberg Police Court yesterday morning when imposing the maximum fine of £5, to include costs, on John Francis Barnes for having assaulted Roy Hansen on 21 January last."

I table the papers.

Whereupon the hon. gentleman laid the papers on the table.

**Mr. TURNER** (Kelvin Grove) (5.9 p.m.): I wish to take the opportunity of speaking on this vote and expressing my appreciation of the work of the department in prison reform. I have had the pleasure of visiting the prison farms and seeing the wonderful work that is being done there. The progress that has been made is more remarkable when it is known that it only began in 1934. The Palen Creek farm was opened 6 December, 1934, and it accommodated between 27 to 35

prisoners. Since that time the numbers of prisoners accommodated are—

1935	..	..	..	..	203
1936	..	..	..	..	220
1937	..	..	..	..	185
1938	..	..	..	..	175
1939	..	..	..	..	250
1940	..	..	..	..	250

1,283

All these men have passed through the Palen Creek prison farm, which is really amazing when one discovers that originally the Comptroller-General of Prisons sent to the locality on their honour five or six prisoners with an officer in charge of them to make a small clearing in the scrub and pitch their tents.

I am informed by the Comptroller-General that this small farm is more than self-supporting. The prisoners have planted and cultivated over 35,000 pine trees, which within a few years will be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds to the Government of the State. There, too, can be found some of the finest Jersey cows and Clydesdale horses in Australia.

**Mr. Muller:** It is a good district.

**Mr. TURNER:** It certainly is. I am praising the wonderful work done by the prisoners. When one observes how happy and contented the men there are and how much they appreciate this method of serving their sentences one feels that the farm is something Queensland can be rightly proud of. Early last year, in company with the Attorney-General, I visited this prison farm. We had with us on that occasion Lieutenant Wagner of the American naval forces, who was interested in prison reform work and wished to see for himself what had been done in Queensland. He expressed amazement at the things that had been done by prisoners who were serving life sentences, the work with which they were entrusted, the accommodation provided, and the extent to which the prisoners were trusted. Each prisoner has his own small hut. He has to keep it clean. One prisoner does the cooking for the farm and each day the prisoners are drawn up in front of a warder, and each is allotted a particular duty. They are allowed to go anything up to three-quarters of a mile from the accommodation huts on their honour. There is actually no fence round the property and if a prisoner desired to run away he could easily do so, but the reports of the department disclose that less than 1 per cent. of the prisoners there have had to have disciplinary measures imposed on them. Their conduct has been excellent, especially as we know that where a number of men are congregated there is always the likelihood of a squabble.

So successful has the Palen Creek farm proved that the department started another prison farm at Numinbah, between Southport and Beaudesert. I visited that settlement also, and other hon. members could well make arrangements with the department to visit these farms to investigate the wonderful

work done by the prisoners. Again so encouraged has the department been that recently another settlement was opened adjacent to Numinbah which is named Whitingbah, as a compliment to the Comptroller-General. That is a graceful gesture on the part of the Government and shows the appreciation in which the Comptroller-General is held. At the moment the last-named farm is capable of accommodating only six prisoners. Numinbah accommodates 20, and from its inception until the end of 1940, 70 prisoners passed through that institution.

I was really amazed at the interest shown by the prisoners in their work at this farm. The prisoner in charge of the piggery could not take a greater interest in it if he owned it himself. His sentence was about to expire and in answer to a question by either the Attorney-General or Mr. Whitney, he replied with a smile that he so liked the pigs that he felt that he could not leave them. It was extremely interesting to see the understanding that existed between him and his pigs. He had only to speak to one pig there, give it a few strokes, and it would lie on its side. He could have done anything with it, and I was surprised to learn that pigs could be trained as highly as he had them trained down there. That section was spotlessly clean and was left entirely to his control. When we realise that there are now an average of 20 prisoners there at one time, it is a tribute to the morale of the prisoners, and striking evidence of their appreciation of the Government's treatment of them to know that it is necessary to have only one officer in charge of them.

At Palen Creek they have a sawmill that cuts timber for the use of the department, and one young man who was a truck-driver before being sentenced to imprisonment is now a capable sawyer. He breaks down the logs and cuts the heavy timber into smaller sizes for flooring and general use. When he has completed his term of imprisonment he will be qualified to look for useful employment in a sawmill and he will be capable of holding down a responsible job. Another prisoner was conducting his own business before he was imprisoned. He is now an efficient cream-tester. His job is to look after the dairy herd. He tests the cream and checks the returns from the factory to which the cream produced on the farm is sent. I am sure that when he is released he will not want to continue his old business, but will prefer to carry on the useful work for which he has been trained.

The most pleasing feature about this prison farm is that Mr. Whitney goes out of his way when these men are released to find employment for them in the occupations for which they have been trained during their imprisonment. This system has done more for the prisoners and been of more help to the State than any other system of prison reform. At Palen Creek a man has something to interest him, he learns something that is of use to him in after-life, whereas the prisoner in Boggo road is given some routine

job in which he has no interest and at which he learns nothing.

Another man down there is an engineer. Before he went to prison he was a motor-driver. He is now an efficient engineer who looks after the lighting and refrigeration plants.

**Mr. Sparkes:** If they are so efficient, it is a wonder they do not put a few more down there.

**Mr. TURNER:** It would do the hon. member a lot of good to go there.

**Mr. Sparkes:** Do you think I would become as efficient as they are?

**Mr. TURNER:** I am sure the hon. member would. They have an excellent refrigeration plant there, and this man keeps it going. They produce their own beef on the farm, slaughter it there, and keep it in a refrigerator chamber, which has been built by the prisoners, and in which it is kept until it is sent up to the gaol or to the various other sections of the Department of Justice as required.

On the day on which I last visited Palen Creek they sent up 44 dozen bunches of white turnips (12 in each bunch) and 47 dozen bunches of carrots (12 in each bunch), of such good quality that any market-gardener would feel proud, indeed, to have produced them. They also had there a patch of cabbages, which they estimated would return the department at least £2,000, and they held that that was a conservative estimate. These prison farms produce enough meat and vegetables for their own requirements and also send large quantities to Boggo Road Gaol, to the hospitals, and to similar institutions.

**Mr. Nimmo:** I believe they are getting potatoes down there now.

**Mr. TURNER:** I sincerely hope so. That shows the wisdom of the officials in growing all kinds of vegetables, including potatoes. I should be very happy to spend a holiday on the prison farm and to gain some further insight into the work that is done by the prisoners there. The knowledge he would gain there would stand any man in good stead. He would, for instance, get a sound knowledge of reforestation. They have pine nurseries, and, as I have pointed out, they have planted out 35,000 trees. That knowledge would be very useful to anybody; indeed, it would be useful to members of Parliament should they be chased out of Parliament, as the hon. member for Bundaberg proposes to do with them.

I sincerely hope that this type of prison reform will be continued. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of taking some officers of the American Navy to these prison farms, and they were so impressed that they said that on their return to America they would make a favourable report on them to their superiors with the idea that that method of prison reform should be adopted there.

**Mr. MOORHOUSE** (Windsor) (5.24 p.m.): First of all I should like to thank the

Under-Secretary, Mr. O'Hagan, and his staff for the courtesies they have extended to me on every occasion that I have visited the department. I desire also to compliment Mr. McGregor on the tactful manner in which he has handled some very touchy matters, particularly some matters that might have been wrongly magnified but for his skill in dealing with them.

One hon. member appeared to be very interested in explaining what action had been taken by the Electoral Office to enable members of the fighting force to vote. I should like to know from the Minister why it is not possible for the Government to give the lead to Australia in democratic ideals by deciding that defenders of this country shall have a vote on reaching the age of 18 years. If they are willing to go to New Guinea and risk their lives in the defence of this country I see no reason why they should not have a vote.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have already ruled that matters requiring legislation cannot be discussed on this vote.

**Mr. MOORHOUSE:** I am sorry, Mr. Brassington, but I thought I should be in order. The subject is a very important one. Is it not possible to lay it down that before a person may vote he must produce his identification card so as to prevent plural voting and impersonation? Everyone is compelled to carry his or her identification card, and if he or she was compelled to produce it on election day it would prevent plural voting and impersonation.

**The Attorney-General:** Have you your identification card on you now?

**Mr. MOORHOUSE:** Yes, I have it here.

Vote (Department of Justice—Chief Office) agreed to.

#### COURTS OF PETTY SESSIONS.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.29 p.m.): I move—

“That £124,552 be granted for ‘Courts of Petty Sessions.’”

This vote is £53 less than last year. It is for a service that covers the whole State. It embraces stipendiary magistrates and clerks of petty sessions stationed throughout the length and breadth of the State. These officers perform an important and very useful work. They are virtually an encyclopaedia for the general public. Any person desirous of knowing his position in respect of the law, consults these officers. Clerks of petty sessions are able by the advice they give to prevent many hundreds of cases from coming before the court. They were specially trained and know the law. In this and many other respects they do a useful work in the administration of justice.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (5.31 p.m.): I am not rising to criticise the vote. I realise that these officers discharge very important duties. Why is there an increase of £2,665 in postage, telegrams, and incidentals? I should also like an explanation concerning

the item, “Retiring allowances, &c., £649.” This item did not appear in last year’s Estimates.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.32 a.m.): There are certain fluctuations in the vote for postage, telegrams, and incidentals. This year a greater amount is necessitated because of the additional telegraphic work connected with the war effort. Many of our magistrates and clerks of petty sessions have been allotted duties in connection with food supplies and other work appertaining to the war, as a result of which we have had to send additional men into many parts of the State, particularly the North. In matters associated with the conduct of the war communication by letter is very often too slow and resort must be made to telegraphic service.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Do you get any allowance from the Commonwealth for telegrams?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** No. We have not asked the Commonwealth Government; the State is finding the money.

The gratuity refers to one of our magistrates who unfortunately died during the year. A certain amount was paid to his widow. He was a very good officer and I am sorry that he died. His position was very difficult to fill.

Vote (Courts of Petty Sessions) agreed to.

#### ELECTORAL REGISTRATION.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.33 p.m.): I move—

“That £9,549 be granted for ‘Electoral Registration.’”

This is a slight reduction on last year’s vote, due to a decrease in the amount required for salaries. Practically all eligible males in this office are in the fighting services. Several juniors and one or two officers over military age carry on the work of this sub-department. The vote for postages, telegrams, expenses of elections, and incidentals is £510 less than last year’s appropriation. This is due to the payment last year of £588, the balance of expenses of the general elections, which will not recur this year. Accounts to that amount had not come in at the end of June and they had to be paid in the last financial year, and therefore they will not have to be paid this year.

**Mr. MOORHOUSE** (Windsor) (5.35 p.m.): I presume I should be in order in making a suggestion to the Minister that he introduce legislation in relation to this vote.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

Vote (Electoral Registration) agreed to.

#### FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.36 p.m.): I move—

“That £2,325 be granted for ‘Friendly Societies.’”

This vote is very nearly the same as the vote for last year. The decrease is similar to that

in the other offices—our male senior officers are in war work and we have had to replace them as far as possible with juniors, therefore there is a reduction in the amount required for this work. In regard to postage during the last six months the department has had to do a good deal of work by telegram instead of waiting for the ordinary post; that has been more costly, and is the reason for the increase. It is necessary to use the telegram service to get the work carried on during the war period. The office is doing splendid work under very adverse conditions.

The friendly societies also are carrying on under adverse conditions. In view of the numbers who have enlisted and those who have been called up, quite a big percentage of the members of the friendly societies are not paying any dues, consequently it is difficult for the societies to carry on. In some cases 70 to 80 per cent. of members are doing war work and are exempt from the payment of fees, and it will be very difficult for the societies to continue under their present permissible percentages for management. The societies are considering the matter. It may be necessary for Parliament to give the societies some help to tide them over a very difficult period. They have done a great work and they are carrying on as best they can. The vote is not a very big one, but it is a very important one, and one that is doing a good work in helping friendly societies.

The Registrar of Friendly Societies has had his service extended on account of the war. He is a friend of the friendly societies, he meets their representatives and talks to them and endeavours to keep them on the right track and to keep their funds solvent and keep their business going in the proper way.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (5.39 p.m.): I am glad to hear from the Minister that Mr. Porter's services are being retained. I raised this matter last year when the Estimates were going through, when he had received notice of his retirement. As the Minister said, he has done an excellent job for the friendly societies as Registrar-General, and I think it was a wise thing to keep him on. The friendly societies look on him almost as the father of their organisation. He has guided them on the right track on many occasions.

The friendly societies in this State have done a great job, and I was pleased to hear that the Minister is sympathetic and thinks that something might be done to tide them over this difficult period. I am heartily with him in that. I think the good health of our working people, particularly the children, is due largely to their work.

I take off my hat to those who pay their contributions to the various funds, but I think usually it is the wife who sees to it that the payments are made. I feel sure that the lodges have done much to preserve the health of the community. Immediately

a child becomes sick a doctor is called, and consequently medical attention is obtained sooner than it might otherwise. I was very pleased to hear the sentiments expressed by the Attorney-General. I congratulate him on taking any steps to help friendly societies in a very difficult period.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (5.39 p.m.): In order to save time I will endorse every word said by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I am quite in accord with the sentiments expressed by the Attorney-General.

Vote (Friendly Societies) agreed to.

#### PUBLIC CURATOR.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.40 p.m.): I move—

“That £1,300 be granted for ‘Public Curator.’”

This, Mr. Brassington, is only a very small item so far as the work of the Public Curator is concerned. The remainder of the funds required by that department will be found in Trust Funds. The amount of £1,300 is set down for legal aid to accused and other persons. The vote is increased by £100. This office performs a very useful service in helping those who have not enough money to pay for legal aid. We had as the Public Defender Mr. Salkeld, who, unfortunately, died during the past year. He was a very brilliant scholar. I might mention also that he came from that little town from which come so many good men, the hon. members for Meryth, Port Curtis, Kurilpa, and others—Ipswich. We were sorry to lose Mr. Salkeld. He had the confidence of the public and those whom he defended. He was absolutely conscientious. Although he was retained by the State, when he was defending a person on a criminal charge he carried out his duties without fear of consequences to the Crown or anybody else. I am sure every hon. member regrets the passing of such a brilliant barrister. He was unassuming and did his work quietly but very effectively.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) (5.43 p.m.): I join with the Attorney-General in his remarks with reference to the late Mr. Salkeld. I knew him for a number of years, and I am sure every hon. member in this Committee was shocked to hear of the tragic ending to a brilliant career and the death of a very fine officer. He took his duties very seriously, and I know that he worked very hard. I met him frequently and know that he virtually lived for his work, and when appearing on behalf of anybody did everything possible to present all the facts for him. I am sure we all extend our sympathies to his family in his untimely death. I do not know whether the Attorney-General has made an appointment to this office.

**The Attorney-General:** The Public Service Commissioner has not yet filled the position. He is calling applications for it.

Vote (Public Curator) agreed to.

## REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.45 p.m.): I move—

“That £7,639 be granted for ‘Registrar-General.’”

This, too, is a very important vote. It covers the Registrar-General, who is also Registrar of Friendly Societies and Registrar of Building Societies, and many other officers. There is an increase in the number of officers and a slight increase in the vote. We have had to fill the office with juniors as far as possible, and additional work has been created for the Registrar-General during the past 12 months.

The Registrar-General of Queensland has, I think, the most complete record of registrations in the Commonwealth. This was borne out by the fact that at the end of the last war the Commonwealth Government and other State Governments found it necessary to refer to the Queensland Registrar-General in order to obtain complete records of happenings both here and overseas.

The Commonwealth Government placed a big strain upon the Registrar-General's office when it introduced the scheme for widows' pensions. Our office had to supply birth certificates to the widows for submission with their applications for pensions. The staff worked day and night in getting out those certificates in order to avoid any delay in the granting of pensions to widows, many of whom have to thank the Registrar-General for the expeditious and effective work that his staff did in supplying those certificates.

The war has made much more work for the Registrar-General's office, especially so far as marriages are concerned. As hon. members will appreciate, the question of marriages is giving us great concern in that a number of girls—minors—were getting married without the consent of their parents, and a good deal of trouble arose. Quite a number of cases were reported to us, and we were unable to deal with them because the girl had given her age to the officiating clergyman as 21 years when in some cases she was as young as 16 or 17.

**Mr. Edwards:** That 21 is very handy.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** It is. They are all 21 until they attain that age, then after they remain 21 even when they are actually 41.

The department has endeavoured to put this matter right as far as possible. Public statements have been made, and officiating clergymen have been requested to help the State by endeavouring to ascertain the girl's true age and, if he found that she was a minor, to insist that she have the consent of her parents before the ceremony was celebrated. Cases have come before our notice in which girls of under 21 years have been married since we appealed to the clergymen, and we have taken the matter up with the Registrar-General's office with a view to reducing the number of these happenings as far as possible.

There are a number of cases in which persons whom we might call foreigners come here, get in touch with young girls, marry them without the consent of their parents, and then desert them. In one case that came before our notice the girl got married at the church, went to the pictures for her honeymoon, and the soldier walked out of the pictures, leaving her sitting there, and she has never seen or heard from him since. We have not been able to trace him. Of course, the great difficulty is that the men often give false names, and it is impossible to trace the husbands even through the military authorities. We have endeavoured to tighten up on this practice as far as possible, and we have had the co-operation of the officiating clergymen. Of course, when couples come to the Registrar-General's office to be married the position is quite safe, in that the Registrar immediately looks up the birth certificate and satisfies himself that the girl is 21 years of age.

The Registrar-General has also been a very good father to many young people who wanted to make arrangements to be married. In many instances, our friends from overseas meet girls, become enamoured of them, and after a few days want to be married. In a great many cases the Registrar-General has advised them to think the matter over. He has told the menfolk to wait a while to see if they really like the girls and perhaps to wait until the war is over and things are more settled, when they would know better what to do.

**Mr. Dart:** Have they taken his advice?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Yes, in quite a number of cases they have gone away to think the matter over. He has helped them to develop a proper frame of mind and not to rush into a marriage without realising all its implications.

Then there is the question of nationalisation when an oversea soldier marries an Australian girl. The matter had to be determined by the Commonwealth. An arrangement has been come to between the Commonwealth Government and the American Government that an Australian girl who marries an American soldier can retain her British rights in this country. I think that is a very good idea.

The question has been asked whether the girls will be able to acquire American citizenship, but that is a question we cannot answer. It is a matter that is governed by the immigration laws of America. We have endeavoured to discourage such marriages as much as possible and the Registrar-General and his staff have been very useful in providing all the information required. Regulations have been framed to enable a complete record of deaths to be made. Of course, we already have a very complete record of all persons who die in Queensland, and we have now made arrangements with the Commonwealth Government to get complete records of all persons who die on active service abroad. Our record of births, marriages, and deaths will be very complete. Indeed, the system is being copied

by the other States and we have been able to supply a great deal of information to other places that are now adopting our methods. It can be said that our methods are becoming Australia-wide. Additional work has been incurred and that is one reason for the slight increase in the vote. However, I think it is justified.

Vote (Registrar-General) agreed to.

#### SHERIFF AND SUPREME COURT.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.55 p.m.): I move—

“That £31,903 be granted for ‘Sheriff and Supreme Court.’”

This represents a slight increase on the previous vote. Although we are providing for fewer officers this year provision is made for quite a number of junior officers. Extra appropriation is required for travelling expenses. Owing to war conditions travelling is becoming more difficult and these expenses are increasing. The expenses of jurors and witnesses have been adjusted to the recent increases in the basic wage.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (5.58 p.m.): Why is the appropriation for a bailiff at Toowoomba £90 and at Rockhampton £100? Surely Toowoomba is as important as Rockhampton!

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (5.59 p.m.): The fees for bailiffs are fixed according to the volume of business. It may be that Toowoomba is a more law-abiding city and the volume of court work is less than at Rockhampton. Consequently, the amount required for the bailiff there would be less than at Rockhampton.

Vote (Sheriff and Supreme Court) agreed to.

#### TITLES OFFICES.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (7.15 p.m.): I move—

“That £25,548 be granted for ‘Titles Offices.’”

This is a reduction of £3,594 on last year’s vote, made up of £2,964 in salaries and £630 in contingencies. The remarks I have made on previous votes as to the loss to war service of senior men and the employment of juniors in their places apply to an even greater extent to this office, and this accounts for the decrease in the vote. There are nine fewer employees in the Brisbane office and two fewer in the Townsville office; the number in the Rockhampton office is the same as the number last year. There is no alteration in the Rockhampton office expenditure except for the increase in the basic wage. The Titles Office in Brisbane is the main clearance office for titles in the State, and the register of titles is virtually kept in Brisbane. The other two offices in Townsville and Rockhampton each have a Deputy Registrar of Titles, but the main clearance office is in Brisbane. This is a very important office because we depend upon it to see that our titles to real property are correct and that everything is kept up to the mark. Often the Titles Office is called upon to

produce records that determine disputes between litigants. The officers are doing good work and carrying on to the best of their ability with the labour that is available to them.

**Mr. COPLEY** (Kurilpa) (7.18 p.m.): I wish to pay a tribute to the officials, from Mr. Thomson down to the lowest clerk, for the work they are doing in the Titles Office. I feel that Mr. Jack McPhie, who is now in private practice, is one of the officers who laid the foundation on which that office works so efficiently. I think Jack McPhie was one of those victims of circumstances who should really never have been put into the positions in which they find themselves. I do not think Jack McPhie, or any other person associated with the Public Curator’s Office, would have ever had to face a jury. Jack McPhie was one of the officers who developed the system in the Titles Office to the stage where a man could get a transfer through within a week instead of having to wait three weeks, six weeks, and sometimes three or four months. I want to say that Bob Thomson, in following Jack McPhie, is doing a pretty good job and he has to thank Mr. Jack McPhie for the good work he did while he was there.

Because of the lack of man-power, a question has arisen about solicitors going into the Titles Office to lodge documents. That raises a question about the Queensland Law Society’s appointment of a committee to deal with solicitors of the Supreme Court who are entitled to exemption from military service. With your indulgence, Mr. Brassington, I wish to say that I think the man-power people have made a definite mistake. The setting up in Melbourne and Sydney of a panel of officers of the Law Society might have been all right, because they would then be dealing with applications on their merits, but here in Queensland we have old-established firms, and everyone in the profession knows everyone else. In stating my views on this matter I am probably doing myself an injustice from this point of view: probably these older firms, because of my politics, may never give me a brief—up to the present some of them have not given me one—(laughter)—but that does not matter in the slightest, because I shall continue to state my views fearlessly and without fear or favour, as I have done in the past.

Some hon. member on my right laughed. It was some Tory organisation—and I say “Tory organisation” advisedly—whose representatives, when I stood for the Kurilpa electorate in 1929, remarked to me, “You are doing pretty well in the legal profession, but you will never get another brief from us.” But I can stand here to-day and take the sneers and laughs of hon. members of the Opposition, but be that as it may, one hon. member who held a portfolio in the 1929-32 Administration as Secretary for Public Instruction, I think, has to-day to go round and make searches in both the Titles Office and the office of the Registrar-General. I am sorry that that is necessary, but it is only because of the oligarchy—and I say that advisedly—

that is to-day dealing with applications for exemption in the legal profession, especially solicitors. In the South, Sydney and Melbourne, owing to the number of members of the legal profession there, it may have been possible for a secret panel of three to decide who were entitled to exemption, but in Queensland, because of the small number of members of the profession, there are those who to-day have been practising for only three years and are exempt from military service and man-power call-ups, whereas men who are not of their political persuasion and who have never been associated with them in any way except that they have always paid their fees to the Law Society, are being recommended to the man-power office.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member to link his remarks with the vote.

**Mr. COPLEY:** I will connect my remarks with the vote. These men are being recommended to the man-power office as being able to go into the army, and there will not be even a girl, office boy, or anyone else to go to the Titles Office and search as to whether one of their clients has any right, title, or interest in property, or anything associated with that office, because the legal profession is one where personal touch is vital, and people will not go to a place where the principal is away.

The Federal Government have decided definitely that there are to be restrictions on the transfers of property, and in their wisdom first decided that any valuator dealing with any valuation to be put through the Titles Office had to keep the valuation fees to £1 ls. It has now been increased to £2 2s. The Federal Government have not for a moment considered the members of the Real Estate Institute, nor have they considered members of the legal profession in dealing with the call-ups. Both things are scandalous. First of all, members of the Real Estate Institute are entitled to more than £2 2s. if they value properties that are worth thousands of pounds. Hon. members must not for a moment think that I am dealing with the Real Estate Institute or the Federal Government, but I am pointing out that the man-power officer, as a representative of the Federal department and working in the Federal arena, trying to get solicitors and real estate representatives into the forces, is going too far. The labourer is worthy of his hire. From this side of the Chamber I have always insisted upon the payment of at least the basic wage. A member of the legal or any other profession is entitled to the basic wage plus, because the sacrifice his parents have made or he himself has made in attempting to rise above the grade in which is the man on the basic wage.

There are two things involved with this Titles Office. Before a transfer can go through there must be a certificate from a member of the Real Estate Institute that the amount in question in the transfer is not 10 per cent. above or below the contract price. I heard of the case of a solicitor the other day who had to go to the Federal Department to get permission for the transfer of a contract of £2,250 because there was £22 in

issue. That is carrying the position a bit too far, and I make no apologies for that statement. I say further that the oligarchy who are in control of the Law Society of Queensland should not allow their sons who may have been practising for five years in Bungeworgorai—and I mention that place because there is no solicitor there and my remarks cannot be construed to refer to any particular person—to be exempt, especially when they have no children, while a man in Brisbane who has been practising for 23 years and who has five children is called up. When I mention Bungeworgorai I am not exaggerating the size of the town in which the other boy gets exemption because he is one of the sons of the powers that be.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I do not desire to interrupt the hon. member's speech, but I must ask him to connect his remarks with the vote under discussion.

**Mr. COPLEY:** I am merely going on to say that when that man comes down from Bungeworgorai, Woop Woop, or anywhere else he probably has not got enough practice to induce a solicitor of this town to go and make a search in the Titles Office.

I congratulate the Attorney-General with what he has been doing not only in dealing with the Titles Office but in every other sphere, but at the same time I think that he, as officer in charge of the Titles Office, would be well advised to take cognisance of the things that are going on in the legal profession and among the people who frequent the Titles Office.

Vote (Titles Office) agreed to.

#### PRISONS.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (7.30 p.m.): I move—

“That £45,999 be granted for ‘Prisons.’”

This is the first time this vote has been included in the Estimates for the Department of Justice. Up to this year this vote has been included under the heading of the Department of Health and Home Affairs. There is an increase of £3,341 in the vote this year.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Has this increase been brought about because you are handling this department?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** The prisons were handed over to the department before I became Attorney-General. The work of the Department of Health and Home Affairs had become so heavy that it was found necessary to transfer certain of that department's activities to other departments, and one of these was the transfer of prisons to the Department of Justice. Whoever happens to be Attorney-General has nothing to do with the matter.

I think it can be accepted that Queensland has been striving for a considerable time to set an example to other parts of the world in the treatment of prisoners. When a man

is sentenced to a term of imprisonment, there is no escape from the fact that he is a prisoner and that he is being punished for a crime, but the fact that he has fallen foul of the law and been so sentenced should be no reason for treating him as less than human. The Government look upon these men as human beings although they are put in our charge as prisoners for the time being. A very eminent divine, when walking down the streets of London came across a man who was down and out, an ex-convict, and said, "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford"—thus mentioning his own name—and I think that applies to every one of us.

We do not know what may happen to any one of us. A man may make a slip, do something wrong on the spur of the moment, and thus fall foul of the law. However, if he is sent to prison, he should be treated as humanely as possible, always on the understanding that he is there to expiate any sin he may have committed against society. After he has served his sentence he has a right to expect to be taken back into society.

When the prisons were under the control of the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, the Hon. E. M. Hanlon, he conceived the idea of establishing prison farms, where short-term prisoners and men who were imprisoned, not because of any serious criminal act, could serve their sentences. It was his idea that they should be taken away from the environment of the ordinary prison. The experiment has been such an unqualified success that the Comptroller-General assumed the responsibility of taking even long-term prisoners there and placing them on their honour, he vouching for their conduct. The Comptroller-General has no complaints to make about them. With one exception, they all lived up to their pledge and obeyed the rules. The exception occurred when two young fellows got away, but not very far away, and it was not long before they were recaptured and returned to serve the rest of their sentence behind prison walls at Boggo road. In addition, the department and the Comptroller-General do all they can to help the prisoners, so that they may be able more easily to find a footing again in society when they are released and thus earn an honest livelihood. The majority of them have served their sentences on the prison farm, and upon their release they have expressed a determination never to return to gaol. On one occasion when I visited the farm the Comptroller-General sent one of the prisoners back to his hut to pack his goods, saying that he would take him back with him. When the Comptroller-General returned to the hut he found the prisoner sitting with his face in his hands and sobbing as if his heart would break. Upon inquiring what was the matter, he said, "Mr. Whitney, I did not think I had done anything wrong; I have obeyed all the rules and I have carried out my work." Mr. Whitney replied, "Who has said that you did anything wrong?" The man said, "I do not want to go back to the Brisbane prison," and Mr. Whitney said, "You are

not going back to the Brisbane prison. I am taking you over to Palen Creek." The man's face immediately brightened up and his sobbing ceased. Here was a grown man sobbing because he believed he was being taken from the prison farm back to the gaol. Some of us may regard this treatment as sentimental and sloppy, but I do not. I believe that if we can encourage these men to realise their responsibilities and feel that they are men who can serve a useful part in society, we should do it. We should do all we can to re-establish their faith in themselves and in humanity, and so encourage them to lead honourable lives.

The farm has also encouraged the breeding of pure-bred stock. They have some very fine Clydesdales that have been used, not only for breeding purpose on the farm, but also to improve the bred of horses for farmers in the surrounding districts. Quite a number of the progeny of these Clydesdales are now in the district doing splendid work. We have the finest Jersey herd that it is possible to get there, too. Indeed, the Comptroller-General has gone out of his way to get the best, even to the extent of obtaining the progeny of the best imported Jerseys. As with the Clydesdales, so with the Jerseys—a very fine herd has been developed.

The stocking of these Clydesdales is only a secondary consideration for the prison farm. The idea is to help the neighbouring selectors by infusing new blood into their horses. We also have pure-bred Berkshire pigs. They were looked upon as being equal to anything of their kind in the State and have won many prizes at the shows. The neighbouring selectors were able to buy the progeny of these Berkshires, and make suitable exchanges to improve their stock. The whole of these Berkshires were subsequently removed from Numinbah to Palen Creek. The Comptroller-General subsequently bought some very fine pigs of the Tamworth strain and sent them to Numinbah. Again, the department was able to help neighbouring selectors by infusing fresh blood into their stock. All this work was not done primarily for the purpose of assisting the prison farm itself, but in order to lend assistance wherever possible in building up selectors' live stock.

Reforestation is another very useful work carried on at the prison farm. A nursery has been established at Numinbah and thousands of seedlings have been raised and planted out as the ground has been cleared. Over 30,000 seedlings have been planted out, while another 20,000 are ready to go out as soon as the ground is ready.

**Mr. Dart:** What wood?

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Pine.

When the Commonwealth Government made an appeal to the people of this State, through the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock, to make increased plantings of vegetables and become self-dependent in this respect, the Prisons Department endeavoured to set an example at its various prison farms. To date it has supplied between 1,000,000 and

2,000,000 lettuce from these farms for the use of the army. Other vegetables, including cabbages, beetroot, and turnips, have also been grown and supplied to the army. I have never seen superior cabbages. They weighed 11 lb. and over, and were beautiful specimens. These vegetables have been sent to the army authorities as far away as Cairns. The lettuce, too, were excellent specimens. They were grown quickly, in a few weeks, and grew to an amazing size. Four head weighed 11½ lb. and were not specially selected. They went to the army for the use of our soldiers and were fully appreciated.

The new prison farm that has been established at Numinbah contains very fine country. The work that has been done to establish this farm has been of a very high order. On the opposite side of this prison farm was established Numinbah No. 2 farm, on the old sawmill site. The name of No. 2 farm was changed to Whitinbah in honour of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, who has taken a lively interest in establishing these farms.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (7.44 p.m.): It is some time since I was at Boggo Road. (Laughter.) My last visit there was about four years ago; I did not stay long. (Renewed laughter.) I intend at some future time to pay another visit. On one occasion I noticed some young men there. Assuming boys under 17 are sent to Westbrook State farm, I wonder where youths from 17 to 21 are sent? Are they sent to Boggo Road or are they sent to one of these farms?

**Mr. PLUNKETT** (Albert) (7.46 p.m.): Anyone who has had an opportunity of visiting these prison farms has been impressed by the very good work they are doing. Somebody deserves to be complimented for initiating the scheme, which has demonstrated to everyone that it is not right that a man should be ostracised for a lifetime because he has committed a crime. The people who commit misdeeds are given the opportunity of paying for them on these prison farms, where they are able to rehabilitate themselves. There is a real story in what these prison farms are doing to recover men from a life of crime and direct them along the road of good citizenship. Men are placed on their honour on these prison farms and they do their work well, and at the end of their terms they can face the world and lead useful lives. It is not generally known what a good effect these farms have on the inmates. We have been too prone to ostracise anyone who has committed a crime and treat him as a social outcast. That is not the right attitude to adopt. No matter who the man may be, no matter what his failings may be, he has within him such material that, aided by good surroundings, he can be developed into an excellent character. Unfortunately, many people live in surroundings that are not conducive to making good character and very often they fall victims to temptation. The prison farms afford people who have offended against society the opportunity of re-establishing themselves. The short experience we have had with our prison farms has demonstrated beyond doubt that they are a wonderful

medium for helping people to become good citizens again. While they are on these farms they learn a great deal that is very useful to them when they seek employment afterwards. As the Attorney-General pointed out, the Government have established highly bred stock on these farms and the neighbouring farmers are able to obtain the service of the sires. Instead of waiting for somebody to create a stud farm in the district the Government have done it and they allow the people to use their stock for a small fee. Thus, besides doing something for humanity, they are doing much to encourage the production of better stock.

Quite a number of members probably thought the Attorney-General was boasting when he said that four lettuce grown on the Numinbah farm weighed 11½ lb. That is not extraordinary when one realises that the Numinbah farm is established on scrub land, which usually grows outsized vegetables. The trouble with lettuce grown on this type of soil is that it grows too big.

The Numinbah Valley is one of the richest in the world. The prison farm there is serving two purposes. It is utilising land that no other person would use and giving those who happen to fall by the wayside an opportunity of becoming good citizens and enabling pure-bred stock to be made available to farmers in the locality. I commend those who were responsible for initiating the movement. I do not think we know the full story of the good that is being done for our own people, and the movement should be developed to a greater extent. Frequently, by placing our fellow-men behind prison walls and making outcasts of them, we kill their spirit.

**Mr. COPLEY** (Kurilpa) (7.52 p.m.): It was with pleasure that I read the report of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, Mr. Whitney. In Mr. O'Connor, the Superintendent of Prisons, we have one of the finest officials of our time. I have visited the gaol on many occasions in a professional capacity. Probably the hon. member for East Toowoomba has visited it on some mission also, but I could not permit him to get away with this remark. On the occasions I have visited the prison in my official capacity I have always met with the greatest of courtesy from Mr. O'Connor and other officials. Hon. members of the Committee must realise the truth of the story the Attorney-General told—although I disagree with the hon. gentleman on the wording—"There go I but for the grace of God." I have been fairly lucky in my professional career. I have only been successful, if I may use that term facetiously, in putting three men into the Brisbane prison and one into Palen Creek in 14 years. These men, when they came out of prison, have visited me.

To-day, I understand some references were made to my appearances in court. In my professional capacity I appear for every section of the community, including those who have been in the Brisbane prison, at Palen Creek, and in the Townsville gaol. The only person I will not appear in court for is he who calls his own mother a harlot.

I believe there are some men in gaol to-day who have to thank a decision made regarding the administration of the Jury Act for being there.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I do not think the hon. member would be in order in discussing the administration of the Jury Act on this vote.

**Mr. COPLEY:** A man who has been inside a prison was put there because of something that occurred in the administration of the jury system. I will connect my remarks with this vote.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! We are discussing the vote on prisons and prison administration.

**Mr. COPLEY:** I will bow to your ruling, Mr. Brassington, but I hope you will bear with me so that I can connect it up. Unfortunately, in the administration of the Jury Act people of certain characteristics cannot be on a jury. I am given to understand that when there is a doubt names that have been selected for the jury panel are referred to the police.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. COPLEY:** I will not proceed with that further. One man, at least, who was sent to that prison farm believes that he would not have been either in prison or on a prison farm but for certain administration, but I bow to your ruling, Mr. Brassington, and I will not proceed.

**Mr. Sparkes:** The prison farm is a home away from home, they say.

**Mr. COPLEY:** The prison farm is as near as we can get to the good prison. I suggest to this Committee that the day is not far distant—when the war clouds have rolled by—when we shall have a halfway house equivalent to Palen Creek. I have appeared for some people who should never have been sent to either Boggo Road or Palen Creek. Because we are not conscientious of our social duties, people who are not fit for Goodna or our mental hospitals or asylums are in prison. They have to go to Palen Creek or somewhere else. They should not be in those prison institutions to-day. I want to see the day when an end is made to the conditions obtaining in our prisons. They are now extremely bad, because of lack of warders. Because of lack of warders, the arrangements made for prisoners to go to the latrines and for other things are scandalous. I am sure that every hon. member who has read "Prison Walls," "Paper Prison," or similar works will not countenance a continuation of the present system in our prisons.

Judges are usually inclined to give a man the benefit of any merit that may be on his side, and of any of the merciful provisions of the Criminal Code, but some of the judges of our Supreme Court—and I say this advisedly—will not take into consideration the fact that a man's previous lapse may have been many years ago. I have heard other judges say quite fairly and fearlessly, "Mr. Crown

Prosecutor, I am not going to take that into consideration; that was three or four years ago," but there are other judges of the Supreme Court of Queensland and other parts of Australia who say that the moment a man is arrested on a charge there is a conspiracy to get him out of the charge made against him. One judge, who has now gone to his eternal reward—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. COPLEY:** This is getting back to the point. One judge said on one occasion, "Instead of warning a man when he is arrested, he should be put through the grill and dealt with and any statements made by him should be used in evidence against him." It is because of these things that men are sent to prisons and prison farms unfairly. We who are here as legislators in this the Twentieth century should stand for those conditions. If a man has made a mistake, or if he shows year after year that he wants to remain in prison, or if he commits any wrong against society, he should remain in prison, but let prison conditions be reasonable conditions for human beings. Because he has offended against the laws of society, do not submit him to inhuman conditions.

I hope that before very long the Attorney-General will have a commission of inquiry into conditions operating in the prisons. I hope that the day is not far distant when we shall see an end to the locking-up of a man from 4 o'clock in the afternoon until 6 or 7 o'clock the following morning and keeping him locked up irrespective of any calls of nature in the meantime, irrespective of the fact that it may be necessary for a man to be put in with him. How would any hon. member of this Assembly like to see those conditions operating? First, is that sanitary? Second, is it human? Can we not do something to alter these conditions? If a man is ill and does not go to hospital those conditions continue. There are some prison officials who think a man is malingering when he is ill. As evidence of that, we have the notorious case of a man who died of peritonitis, a man who would have been free to-day if he had lived but a few days longer. The conditions under which he died were bad. The question of prison reform is one for the serious consideration, not only of this Attorney-General and hon. members of this Assembly, but for all persons the whole world over.

If hon. members would only read some of the books that have been written on the subject they would agree with my idea of prison reform. Although we have done everything that is humanly possible in the interest of prisoners, it will be seen from Mr. Whitney's report that we are still a long way behind other places in the world in doing what we ought to do for these poor, unfortunate wretches who are in prison.

**Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (8.4 p.m.):** I think the Government were very wise in transferring the control of the Prisons Department from the Department of Health and Home Affairs

to the Department of Justice, because the latter department deals with other aspects of the law relating to criminals.

After listening to the speeches of some hon. members, I wondered what would be the reaction of the public if they heard them—whether the existing prison farms would be big enough to hold all the prisoners. The hon. member for Kelvin Grove went so far as to say that he would like to have two weeks' holiday down there, which I consider to be an inducement to people to go there and have a good time. However, I prefer to think that he was speaking figuratively. The Attorney-General told us that four lettuce grown on the farm weighed  $11\frac{1}{2}$  lb. and he went on to say that they were not specially selected, that they were cut at random. My reason for rising was to ask the Attorney-General how many long-term prisoners are on parole in this State to-day.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (8.6 p.m.): I do not know how many long-term prisoners are on parole, but I do not think any have been on parole for a considerable time. The only one I can recall is that of the soldier who was released into the custody of his commanding officer at the request of his commanding officer.

I should like to tell the hon. member for East Toowoomba that when boys are committed to our care they are kept to themselves as much as possible in Boggo Road gaol, because there is no other place for them. The hon. member for Kurilpa advocated the establishment of a half-way institution for certain cases. That is a matter the Government have been considering for some time, but bear in mind that it is not a half-way prison house that is needed, but an institution where the inmates can receive curative treatment. It should be a place specially established to receive cases that should not be sent to gaol and at the same time cannot be certified as being bad enough mentally to be sent to a mental hospital. These people are not mentally responsible for the crimes they commit. The institution would have to be properly staffed with a psychiatrist and other medical aid to enable the inmates to recover after proper treatment. Had the war not intervened, such an institution would probably have been established ere this.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (8.8 p.m.): Millions of pounds are being spent to-day for war purposes and I do not see why we should wait until the war is over to establish an institution for prisoners who are of weak intellect and who are not really responsible for their crimes. We could build such an institution at a cost of a few thousand pounds. I always thought that the Government building at Dalby, at one time called the Jubilee Sanatorium, would have been a suitable place. When Japan declared war the Diamantina Hospital patients were moved to this sanatorium. It is a shame that young people from 17 to 25 years of age who have had lapses should be sent to Boggo Road. It may be that they have been the victims of sinus or nervous troubles, or have

lacked parental control and are not responsible for their actions.

**Mr. MOORHOUSE** (Windsor) (8.10 p.m.): The Minister informed the Committee that one soldier was released on parole.

**The Attorney-General:** The report of the Comptroller-General states that four were released. The one I mentioned was released about three months ago.

**Mr. MOORHOUSE:** Was the soldier he mentioned 21 years of age when he was released and under 21 years when he was committed to prison?

**A Government Member:** What difference does that make?

**Mr. MOORHOUSE:** It makes a difference, because I have been advocating the extension of the franchise to soldiers under 21 years of age.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson) (8.11 p.m.): The soldier I mentioned is over 21 years of age. He was a warrant officer and was released by the parole board into the custody of his commanding officer. Four prisoners were released on parole by the Parole Board during the year ended 30 June last.

**Mr. COPLEY** (Kurilpa) (8.12 p.m.): I should like the department to consider releasing a prisoner on parole wherever possible. Only four prisoners out of 57 applications were released on parole by the board. The late Mr. Justice H. D. Macrossan, Senior Puisne Judge, took many risks with men who came before him, even in the cases of seasoned criminals who had been practising crime for years. After lecturing a man in the dock—he was a great judge of human nature—he would release him on parole and he very rarely returned to a career of crime. That learned judge rarely made a mistake. There were times when, after telling a prisoner what he proposed to do, he saw the prisoner waver and immediately remanded him for sentence, telling him he had changed his mind. I think that if there is the slightest chance of extending the merciful provisions of the Criminal Code to any prisoner a judge or magistrate should do so. The Parole Board ought to adopt the same practice.

I propose to tell a story against myself. The other day an officer of the army made a faux pas in that he stole eight pairs of scissors from a medical unit. He decided to sell six or as many of them as he could, to barmaids in a certain town. I appeared for him and in pleading guilty on his behalf asked the magistrate, who is notorious for giving heavy sentences to any person guilty of stealing, to extend leniency to him. The magistrate said to me, "Mr. Copley, in view of the fact that this man is a member of His Majesty's service I am not going to give him the merciful provisions of the Code, I am going to convict but not punish him." I nearly fell over, and so did the prisoner.

The Parole Board, instead of releasing only four out of 57 prisoners making application

to it, should have been a little more reasonable. A prisoner who has been convicted, where repentance and good conduct are shown, and the crime was not a very bad one, should, after serving some years of his sentence, be released by the Parole Board on condition that he reports regularly. That would be of benefit to the community and a saving to the State.

Vote (Prisons) agreed to.

#### LICENSING COMMISSION.

The **ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (8.15 p.m.): I move—

“That £3,846 be granted for ‘Licensing Commission.’”

This is a slight increase on last year’s vote. There is one less officer to pay. The same position operates here also in regard to juniors and seniors and less is required for salaries.

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (8.16 p.m.): I suggest that the Licensing Commission make a recommendation to the proper authority that the hotelkeepers in the country districts have their rents reduced, in view of the fact that supplies they are able to get are cut down and their sales are less. They cannot go to the Fair Rents Court. I know the Hotel Drayton, for instance, has been well kept—they never sold drink after hours, but carried on strictly according to the law—and it is very hard indeed for them when things are so slack.

I am not sure which authority should deal with this matter, but I put it to the Licensing Commission to make a recommendation that the alcoholic content of beer be reduced.

**Mr. TAYLOR** (Enoggera) (8.18 p.m.): The Licensing Commission of Queensland has one of the broadest franchises of any authority of its kind in Australia. There is opportunity for the application of the democratic principle in granting licences. One thing that I think should be taken into consideration by the Government is the fact that the Commission’s powers are not at all clear. There seems to be a dual control. It may be necessary for the proper authorities to give consideration to centralised control so as to fall into line with the desires of the community at the present moment. It is noticeable in this city that certain hotels close their doors at certain times and do not open them at certain times; there is a differentiation in the times in accordance with the locality in the town or city, and some of the hotelkeepers close the public bar and sell their drinks in the saloon bar at an increased profit. Those are factors that do not tend to give the results that the people who brought about the fixation of conditions and prices in regard to liquor desired should be brought about. I think the concentration of drinking of liquor within a given period is bad for those who drink it. The fact was brought under my notice during my enforced stay in Melbourne, when I was ill. There the hotels close at 6 o’clock, and I was impressed by the consumption of liquor by the average worker between 5 and 6 p.m. I saw more drunks in the streets there than I have seen in any

other city in Australia. The tendency in Queensland is to imitate those conditions. During the last few months, at any rate, the number of drunken Diggers and civilians in the streets of Brisbane in the brown-out has been noticeable.

One night recently, when going from a meeting in the City Hall to catch the 11.25 p.m. train for home, I passed a group of Allied soldiers accompanied by some very young girls, who were so thoroughly intoxicated that one girl could not stand, and a fair amount of bottled liquor was being carried in the hip pocket. The Licensing Commission should have greater powers. With dual control there is no actual responsibility. Probably it would be well if the Attorney-General had the administration of the Police Department also—a co-ordinating of the forces necessary to bring about good order in society. He would then have under his control all of the instruments necessary to control the traffic for the good of society.

Something should be done in that direction. There is evidence that people in high places are becoming very perturbed at social conditions in Australia in general, and this State in particular. Why should hotelkeepers be able to fix the time of closing their bars to meet their own wishes? At a time when Australia, with the British Commonwealth of Nations, is fighting one of the greatest wars in history, why should we have to admit that the alcoholic content of our spirits and grogs generally is greater than that allowed in any other country in the world in a period of war, either this or the last war? Possibly this fact is not realised by hon. members, because it can be said that this House has not the capacity for the consumption of liquor as former Legislative Assemblies had. Hon. members do not realise the amount of liquor that can be consumed in a very short period of time. If they did they would realise that some consideration should be given to the alcoholic content of liquor and that liquor should not have a greater alcoholic content than 3.5 per cent.

**An Opposition Member:** That would be plenty for me.

**Mr. TAYLOR:** It would be plenty for me and for the average man. Beer is Australia’s national beverage, and a 3.5 per cent. beer should satisfy the palate.

**Mr. Maher:** What about the fellow who drinks over-proof rum straight?

**Mr. TAYLOR:** Such a man may eventually become a drinker of methylated spirit.

**The Secretary for Public Works:** Men in the bush drink over-proof rum who are as fit as you.

At 8.25 p.m.,

**Mr. DUNSTAN** (Gympie) relieved the Chairman in the chair.

**Mr. TAYLOR:** I am speaking of the man who drinks liquor merely for the sake of drinking it and not of the man who has a

drink or two in a spirit of jollification. In the community, and particularly amongst those whose business it is to study sociological problems, a very grave doubt exists as to the conditions obtaining to-day and their consequences, and it is therefore necessary that the Government should take heed. I am aware the State Government cannot alter the alcoholic content of liquor.

**Mr. Massey:** Why?

**Mr. TAYLOR:** Because at the moment the Federal Government have control of liquor.

**Mr. Massey:** Do you think they would stop it?

**Mr. TAYLOR:** They may not, but the fact is the State Government may be able to do it in conjunction with the Federal Government; therefore, why not try? Liquors with an alcoholic content of 8 per cent. and 9 per cent. are having a very devastating effect on some of the members of the Allied forces in this country who have not been used to drinking liquors with an alcoholic content as high as that.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the vote.

**Mr. TAYLOR:** The Licensing Commission controls the licensing of hotels, and, as I say, should have control of the hotels. I am stating a case, not for dual control, but for complete control by the Department of Justice of the whole of the liquor question. I repeat that it might be advisable for the Attorney-General to have control over the administration of the police. If he had that, he would then have complete control of all the administration of the liquor laws, and under such conditions we should get on much better than we do now. Certainly, something must be done to remove some of the difficulties that are arising in this and other States of Australia because of our confused liquor laws.

**Mr. MAHER** (West Moreton) (8.28 p.m.): I support the contention that country hotel-keepers are entitled to a reduction in the percentage scale of licence fees under present conditions. Those who consider all the ramifications of the hotel business must take into account the fact that there is no comparison between conditions that prevail in the metropolitan area and other provincial cities and towns in the State where there are army camps, and the conditions obtaining in rural districts where there are no army camps, districts from which the young men, who comprise the big spending-power, have been recruited for service in the army. Because these young men have gone into the fighting services, many hotelkeepers in western, northern, and central districts, as well as many of the dairy-farming and agricultural areas of the State, are having a very bad time. The special circumstances of the hotel proprietors in those districts entitle them to consideration. After all, the rural hotel proprietor does not run a "grog house," he runs an accommodation house. He gives a

definite service to the travelling public, and if his trade over the bar is reduced, it is obvious that he is not able to give the same measure of service to the travelling public as he did. Then, the population in many of these rural areas is limited and with the young men away in the army, serving in the Middle East or New Guinea, there is not the same turnover of trade across the bar. I have personal knowledge of many country hotel proprietors who are having a very thin time indeed and who are finding it difficult to make ends meet. To accentuate their difficulties, they are faced with reduced quotas of beer and spirits under the austerity campaign.

Under all these circumstances, the country hotelkeeper has a just claim on the Licensing Commission for a reduced scale of licence fees. That necessarily would come back to Parliament for ratification, but if it was approved by the Commission, it would not take long to bring the required measure before Parliament for consideration, and I put forward that special plea for the country hotelkeeper.

I should like to say, if you will allow me a brief moment, Mr. Dunstan—because I know it is really outside the scope of the Licensing Commission—that the country hotelkeepers in districts in which there are shearers, drovers, station-hands, cane-cutters, dairy-farm employees, wheatlumpers, and so on, districts far removed from army camps, should have an increased allocation of beer and spirits.

**Mr. Edwards:** The cows would not be milked then.

**Mr. MAHER:** I think the cows would be milked all right. After all, some men might drink to excess, but there are a great number of hard-working men in the bush whose only pleasure in life is to go to town perhaps once a quarter, or once every half-year and have a few drinks in the comradeship of their friends.

**Mr. Sparkes:** It is not confined to the hard-working men in the bush either.

**Mr. MAHER:** No. While I respect the views of many good people, at the same time I believe in the principle of individual freedom. If a man wants to have a drink of rum and wants to drink it straight or neat, as they say, let him enjoy himself that way, and if a man does not like rum and prefers lemon squash, well and good—good luck to him. But there are too many sticky-beaks to-day, too many who are slandering our soldiers by saying they are drunkards. When one analyses the position and realises the net amount of money the Australian soldier receives, it will be seen that he has not too much for excessive drinking, unless, of course, someone else buys it for him.

**The Secretary for Public Works:** There is not any more drinking to-day than before.

**Mr. MAHER:** I do not think so. There may have been some excesses in the beginning, but on the whole I think the Australian soldiers are exemplary fellows in the matter

of drink. They may go into a bar and have a few drinks and an odd one may get drunk, but I resent this continuous slander that the Australian soldier is a drunkard. We see that opinion constantly expressed in the Press by many people who have an axe to grind under present conditions, and they do it to gain a point in another direction. I think it is a pity.

I make those submissions to the Licensing Commission in the hope that it will recommend to the Government a reduction in the scale of licence fees for hotels in country districts far removed from army camps that are suffering because of the recruitments of men from their districts to serve in the army, and where these hotels are giving a definite service in providing accommodation for the limited number of travellers under present-day conditions. They are entitled to some consideration to enable them to carry on and survive the present difficult days. Where we can ease the burden let us do so. Let us meet them wherever we can, let us temper the wind to the shorn lamb. That is my principle. Where the burden presses heavily, whether on the hotel keeper in the country, the storekeeper, grazier, the farmer, because of war conditions, let Parliament be just and help them.

**Mr. Sparkes:** Do not miss the cattle man.

**Mr. MAHER:** I include the cattle man, the sheep man, the dairy farmer, all who toil and toil to produce the wealth of the country. All I ask is that we give them a fair go. I make that submission to the Licensing Commission, and I am sure that if it will make the recommendation it will have every sympathy from hon. members.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (8.36 p.m.):** The hon. member for West Moreton has built up a very fine "Aunt Sally." The State Government have nothing to do with the quota of liquor supplied to hotels, whether in the country or the city.

**Mr. Maher:** But you have control of the licence fees.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** The quota of liquor is controlled by the Commonwealth Government. The hon. member's argument about licence fees is another "Aunt Sally." If the hotel keeper does not buy any liquor he does not pay any licence fee because the licence fee is arrived at on the basis of 2½ per cent. of the wholesale purchases. If a country hotel gets no quota it pays no licence fee. If he only provides accommodation he has no licence fee to pay. If he buys £1 worth of liquor, the fee is 6d.; if it is £2 it is 1s., and so on. If he does not buy any then the poor country hotel keeper who is perishing because he has no sales, pays no licence fee.

**Mr. YEATES (East Toowoomba) (8.38 p.m.):** When the Federal Government requested the State Government—as I presume they did—to cut down the hours of trading to eight a day, the State Government decided that the hotels should not open for

business until 11 a.m. The trading hours are to be eight daily. I suggest that they should begin at 9 a.m.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! This vote does not deal with the trading hours of hotels, but with the Licensing Commission.

**Mr. YEATES:** The hotels could then close from 2 to 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. YEATES:** Why should people be sitting in hotels drinking all the afternoon in war-time?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the hon. member to respect the ruling of the Chair and to obey my call to order.

**Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (8.40 p.m.):** The suggestion made by the hon. member for Enoggera that the Licensing Commission be given more control over hotels is a very good one. I hope that the Minister will consider it.

**The Attorney-General:** Has the Attorney-General not enough on his hands at the present time? There is a war on.

**Mr. NIMMO:** The Attorney-General has made many excuses for not doing anything because of the war, but if we all do our bit we could help in winning the war. By conceding the Licensing Commission a little more control of hotels and making representations to the proper authorities that it control the alcoholic content of liquor also we should achieve some good. It is very wrong to be always attributing excessive use of liquor to the soldiers. We all know what young men are. When they have leave and come into the city or town they like to mix with their fellows and enjoy themselves. Innocent enjoyment ought to be encouraged. Why should we condemn them because a beverage is forced on them that contains an excessive percentage of alcohol?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. gentleman cannot make any more than passing reference to that subject. The vote before the Committee deals with the administration of the Licensing Commission.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I am coming to that point. The Commission has been appointed to control licences issued under the Liquor Act. I am suggesting that its powers be increased. Hon. members should have an opportunity on this vote of making suggestions that might help the Attorney-General, who has so much on his hands at the present time.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. NIMMO:** I will obey your ruling, Mr. Dunstan. I think the hon. member for Enoggera made an excellent suggestion, and I trust it will be acted upon.

Provision is made in this vote for an appropriation of £819 for a secretary and member. I presume that refers to Mr. Byrne. Mr. Ferry and Mr. Cameron are the other two members of the commission. I cannot see any appropriation for their services. How are they paid?

**Mr. Taylor:** They are on another pay roll.

**Mr. NIMMO:** The Director-General of Allied Works receives a salary for his specified duties and an allowance for additional work. This Committee does not want Messrs. Ferry and Cameron to do work without remuneration.

**Mr. Taylor:** Their fees are provided for in incidental expenses.

**Mr. NIMMO:** It is no use camouflaging the issue. This Committee should know exactly what these members are paid. If they are not paid, then we should vote them an amount.

**The Secretary for Public Works:** You complained last session that Mr. Ferry was overpaid.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I did not complain about him at all. I believe he should be paid according to the work he does.

**The Secretary for Public Works:** You complained about the amount he was paid.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I ask the hon. gentleman to turn up "Hansard" and tell me the page where it was recorded that I made that complaint. I am merely asking for information.

**The ATTORNEY-GENERAL** (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich) (8.45 p.m.): Mr. Ferry and Mr. Cameron get fees of £2 2s. and £1 11s. 6d. respectively for every meeting they attend.

Vote (Licensing Commission) agreed to.  
Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 8.47 p.m.

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