

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 1913**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER, 1913.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. D. Armstrong, *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table—

Return to an Order, agreed to on the 3rd instant, on the motion of Mr. G. P. BARNES, showing—

The amounts paid in freights and fares on traffic inwards and outwards from a number of sections of railway on the Southern Downs, from 1884 till 1912 inclusive, and also the proportion which the through traffic to Brisbane or beyond, or vice versâ, bore approximately to the total traffic.

QUESTIONS.

COTTON GINNING AT IPSWICH.

Mr. HUNTER (*Maranoa*) asked the Secretary for Lands—

"1. On what terms has his department undertaken the ginning of cotton at Ipswich?

"2. Is it the intention of the department to undertake to find a market for the cotton when ginned?

"3. Is it the intention of the department to undertake similar offices for other industries?"

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Tolmie, *Toowoomba*) replied—

"1. Cotton has been ginned at Ipswich to obtain seed, which is being distributed free to intending growers.

"2. Yes, on owner's account, under the conditions already published.

"3. No; but the Department of Agriculture will always help in the development of new primary industries."

"DROP PIT" AT ROCKHAMPTON RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is it the intention of the Commissioner, in constructing the railway workshops in Rockhampton, to arrange for what is known as a "drop pit," so as to facilitate the repairs to engines, the axle-boxes of which have become hot?

"2. If not, would it not be well, in the interests of the men who have to make these repairs, that such a "drop pit" should be arranged for?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *MacKay*) replied—

"1. No. Electric cranes will be provided.

"2. See answer to No. 1."

RAILWAY WEIGHBRIDGES.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Who supplies the weighbridges at present in use by the department?

"2. Are these weighbridges giving satisfaction?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. The weighing machines now in use are of various makes, principally Avery (Birmingham), Pooley (Liverpool), Fairbanks (New York), and Mears (Brisbane). They have been supplied from time to time by various firms, as the result of public tender, and during recent years machines have been bought from Messrs. Paul and Gray, Webster and Co., Smellie and Co., and the Mears Scale Company.

"2. As a rule the machines give satisfaction; but some recently supplied have been adversely reported upon by the inspector of weights and measures."

RAILWAY INSPECTOR PROMOTING HIS SON.

Mr. KIRWAN asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is there no regulation in the department prohibiting an examining inspector from putting his son through an examination and securing promotion for him?

"2. Will he cause inquiries to be made into a case in the Toowoomba district when an acting inspector in the Locomotive Department examined and passed his son for driver from the position of fireman?

"3. If it is proved on inquiry that there are about thirty firemen senior to the fireman in question, will he issue instructions to prevent a similar injustice in the future?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. No.

"2. When it was discovered that the candidate was a son of the acting inspector, the whole examination was submitted to another inspector before accepting him as qualified for the position of engine-driver.

"3. Yes."

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH LAND SALES BILL.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor intimating his assent to this Bill.

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. J. Stodart, Logan, in the chair.*)

Question—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1913-14, a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor—again stated.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN (*Burrum*): Before this vote goes through, I should like to avail myself of the opportunity of expressing my congratulations to the Hon. the Treasurer, to the Government, and I may say to the people of Queensland, on the very excellent Statement that has been placed before us. I think it is a matter for sincere congratulation, not only on this side of the House, but also on the Opposition side of the House, that Providence has bestowed such beneficent rains and seasons upon us that we have been able, for the ninth time in succession, to close the year with a surplus. This in itself may not seem a very great thing, but, to my mind, it marks, not only very excellent administration, but also a very keen desire to conserve the interests of the State—the best interests of the State—generally. True, the surplus in itself is not a particularly big one, but I think it is absolutely wrong that a large surplus should occur at any time. No Treasurer, no Government, has any right to take from the people more money than is required for the upkeep of the public

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service of the State. And in this connection, I think the Treasurer is to be congratulated, because whilst most of us, perhaps, will admit that it is not a very difficult matter to keep your expenditure within a certain limit—that is, if the Treasurer has sufficient backbone to be able to sit tight when demands are made upon him and funds are not available; yet it is a difficult matter and it is outside the range, or the power, of any Treasurer to increase by one iota his revenue—that is, his income from the State. And I say it is a matter for congratulation that the Treasurer has been able to foresee so accurately, exactly what the income of the State was going to be for the past year. I was very much interested in listening to the speech of the hon. and learned leader of the Opposition the other day, and I confess that it consisted, chiefly, I think, of a very healthy curiosity—I say healthy curiosity, because it was not an idle curiosity by any means—to find out exactly what was the financial policy of the Government. He went on to show what the financial policy of the Labour or Socialistic party would be if such a calamity should ever take place as would enable them to occupy the Treasury benches. But he did show a healthy curiosity, a healthy spirit of desire for information, as to what was the financial policy or the principal policy of the Government. Now, I would just like to point out to him here that I might be able in a brief sentence to give what, at all events, is one of the leading characteristics of the financial policy of the present Government.

Mr. RYAN: You are not in the Cabinet yet.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: No; I am not in the Cabinet, and it is not necessary to be in the Cabinet. You have here the Financial Statement for the year. Surely any man—"he who runs may read" within the four corners of that Financial Statement what the financial policy of the Government is. And the policy of this Government is to pay its way. The policy of this Government, and of those gentlemen sitting behind the Government, is to meet their obligations, and I can quite understand that that is not a policy which appeals to the hon. gentleman opposite. I can quite understand that, so far as his financial policy is concerned, it is not one that appeals to him at all, because, so far as we can gather, so far as we can learn from the policy of the hon. gentleman, whenever it has been practised within the States of Australia, at all events, it has not disclosed itself in that fashion. We have only to turn to the sister States of New South Wales and Western Australia. There we see something of the financial policy of the Labour party; there we see something of the effects of that financial policy, and I reiterate that when you look upon the financial policies of the Socialist parties in those two States, it is easily understandable that a policy which has for its object the paying of your way—the meeting of your obligations—is not likely to be one that will appeal to the hon. members opposite. I was rather struck by a somewhat important announcement that the hon. gentleman made during his speech. It was an announcement that enables us better to criticise at this stage the financial policies of the two parties in this House.

Mr. GILLIES: Are there only two?

[Lieut.-Colonel Rankin.]

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: It was an important pronouncement. The hon. gentleman, in stentorian tones, stated as follows:—

"The Labour party is one throughout Australia. The Commonwealth and State Labour parties are one. They are prompted by the same motives; they are actuated by the same desires; and they are guided by the same conclusions."

Let us then recognise that in this announcement from the hon. and learned leader of the Opposition we have a distinct statement that throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth there is one financial policy which they wish to put in operation. Now, my object in impressing upon the Committee this fact is that, so far, in Queensland good fortune and good common sense have so favoured this State that the Labour socialistic party have never had an opportunity of putting their policy into operation; and I hope they never will. Consequently, if we are going to criticise that policy, it is of the greatest value to know from the hon. and learned leader of the Opposition that their policy throughout Australia is one, and, consequently, we are perfectly at liberty, if we will, in trying to diagnose and perceive the working of that policy, and the object of that policy, to turn to those States where already it has been put into practice. Why, it is almost appalling, when we compare the professions that from time to time are made by hon. members opposite—the professions of economy in administration, the professions of curtailing borrowing—with the examples set by the sister State of New South Wales. Surely, I say, it is enough to make any common-sense people halt and consider where a policy of this kind is likely to land us. It is a matter of common knowledge that, during the three years of the Labour Socialistic Government's sway in New South Wales, they have practically gone to the bad by about £6,500,000 sterling. And yet these are the people who are following out the policy which the hon. and learned leader of the Opposition declares to be his policy. I think my reasoning is sound. If they are one throughout Australia; if their aims and objects are one; and if their policy throughout Australia is one and undivided; then, I think it is only by looking at those places where their policy has been placed in operation that we can see the dire results of it. Practically, we see the same thing in Western Australia as in New South Wales. There we have another example of that financial policy disclosed by the hon. and learned leader of the Opposition. There we have in the financial administration of that western State a deficit; there we have an inability to meet their obligations—

Mr. RYAN: Due to assisting the farmer.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I shall deal with the farmer presently. Now I am dealing with the leader of the Opposition. I am dealing with the hon. gentleman's statement, and I submit that if we accept his statement—and I presume we must accept it as being accurate—of this unity of purpose throughout the Labour Socialistic party in the whole of Australia, then I am justified in asking the people of Queensland to halt and consider what is practically to be the effect of the advent into power of a party who have for their aims and objects the carrying out of such a financial policy. All along the line there is a distinct tendency

to belittle the importance of paying our way. Most of us recognise the great value of paying our way in private and commercial life, and I submit that it is just as important that we should maintain a high ideal of honesty and integrity in public matters as it is that we should maintain such an ideal in private affairs. There is another matter that the leader of the Opposition referred to, and it is just as well that I should mention it in passing. Statements coming from the lips of a gentleman occupying a high position in this House—and there is no doubt that the leader of His Majesty's Opposition in this House does hold a high position in the State—must be regarded as of infinitely greater importance than any statement that may come from the rank and file of any party. That very fact carries with it certain obligations, and one of the first obligations is that his statements should be accurate and true. I do not assert that the hon. member is misleading anybody; but I do say that, whether he is misleading or not misleading in his remarks, during his speech he made some statements which are certainly not in accordance with facts. Take one instance: that dealing with the sugar question. I mention it first because the hon. member happened to mention the hon. member for Burum in connection with it. Referring to the Financial Statement, the hon. member said—

“I see no reference to the fact that a large amount of excise duty practically has been made a present to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company by the Commonwealth Government.”

Mr. RYAN: Hear, hear!

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Could any person make such a statement believing that statement to be true? Could any enlightened person who seeks to educate political opinion put forward such a statement honestly and sincerely? We have a perfect right to demand that such statements shall be in accordance with fact. But could anyone make such a statement as that in the face of what has taken place in connection with the abolition of the excise and bounty on sugar? We know what took place with regard to the sugar excise on the 25th of July last, owing to the apathy, the carelessness, and the indifference of the Fisher Government—owing to their criminal neglect in not passing the necessary legislation in time to enable the proclamation to issue, so that the season could begin with all sugar free from excise and bounty. (Opposition dissent.) I say that, owing to the neglect of the Fisher Administration in that regard—owing to their hanging up the whole matter for weeks and months—it was inevitable that, when the abolition of sugar excise did take place, some adjustment would be necessary. It is impossible to get away from that conclusion; any business man will tell you that it could only be a matter of adjustment, seeing that the abolition of the excise and bounty took place when crushing operations were going on. We know that one of the largest firms in the sugar world—the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—to whom the hon. member referred, offered to refund, or rather offered to pay, the full amount of the excise on sugar manufactured up to the moment of the abolition of the excise.

Mr. GILLIES: Why didn't the Commonwealth Government take the money?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I shall come to that point presently. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company offered to do that. Not only did the Colonial Sugar Refining Company offer to pay the whole of the excise on sugar manufactured and in process of manufacture up to the moment of the proclamation, but other companies offered to come into line with them. The hon. member probably did not know about this, but I happen to be in possession of the necessary facts to enable me to say that without any hesitation. The hon. member for Eacham asked me: “Why didn't the Commonwealth Government take the money?” The hon. member must know perfectly well that no Government can take money any more than they can give money, unless they have some legislative enactment to enable them to take the money.

Mr. GILLIES: You admit that it is a blunder.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I admit that it is a blunder due to the apathy of the Fisher Administration in delaying the passing of the necessary legislation.

Mr. GILLIES: What was this House doing?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: We were waiting for Mr. Fisher until it was too late for this House to pass the necessary legislation. It is too late for the hon. member for Eacham to resurrect that incident in order to make capital out of it. Anyone who is familiar with the history of the sugar industry knows perfectly well that that was the beginning of the trouble. We also know that there was no intention on the part of the Federal Government to make any present to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company or any other institution, nor is there any danger of the Liberal Government accepting a present from the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Of course, that may be in accordance with the financial and business integrity of hon. members opposite, but so long as we have a Liberal Government in power in the Federal Parliament—so long as we have an honest Government to deal with—I do not think there is much danger of such a thing taking place. But the hon. the leader of the Opposition and members opposite should be honest in the statements they make in this House, and not make statements which create a wrong impression. To make statements of that kind is manifestly unfair, and it is particularly unfair and unjust coming from a gentleman who occupies the distinguished position of the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. RYAN: I repeat it; it is perfectly true.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: There is just one other matter in the hon. member's speech that I want to deal with. It is another of those statements put forward not infrequently—it may be, innocently, because they may be made for want of better knowledge, but not infrequently they are made for the purpose of misleading. The hon. member, in the course of his speech, pointed out the great importance of the development of our lands.

Mr. RYAN: Hear, hear! I am always telling you that.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: We will all say, “Hear, hear!” as we are all unanimous on that point; but I say that, in criticising the land administration of any Government, we

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should observe the first principle of honesty.

[4 p.m.] Finding fault is not criticism; a more erroneous statement does not constitute criticism. What does the hon. member say with regard to land settlement? He tells us that land cultivation in the State has gone steadily back under this Government.

Mr. COYNE: Is that not true?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: It is not true. It is emphatically wrong. That statement shows exactly the sum of knowledge which hon. members opposite have with regard to an important matter of that kind. Has the hon. member read the Financial Statement? The Treasurer tells us the exact area under cultivation.

Mr. RYAN: Read my speech.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I have read your speech.

Mr. RYAN: You find that statement in my speech?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I will find it in the hon. member's speech.

Mr. RYAN: Read the full context in that connection.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN—

"How is it,"

asked the hon. member—

"that during last year there has been a falling off in the number of acres under cultivation in this State?"

Mr. RYAN: That is correct.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: According to the very Financial Statement I am discussing, the hon. member will find that there has been a steady increase in the area under cultivation.

Mr. RYAN: Not for the last financial year.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I say there has been every year. Let me tell the hon. member that I am dealing with facts, and it would be of the greatest value to this House if hon. members opposite would deal with facts instead of with fiction. Let me read the information contained in the Financial Statement itself. Surely this will convince hon. members opposite that the leader of the Opposition has told us what is not true!

Mr. RYAN: Read what I said.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I have read what you said.

Mr. RYAN: Finish it.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Do you want me to read the whole speech?

Mr. RYAN: Read the whole context.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN—

"We find, from the Financial Statement itself, that the total area under cultivation for the year ended 1912 was 84,420 acres, being an increase of 64,620 acres, or 8.29 per cent. over the previous year."

Mr. RYAN: Go on.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: How much does the hon. member want me to read? That is a plain statement of fact. The hon. member told us that no increase has taken place, and the Financial Statement tells us that an increase has taken place. Personally, I prefer to accept the Financial Statement.

Mr. RYAN: You have not read what I said. You may have unintentionally misquoted me.

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Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I certainly have not intentionally misquoted you. There is one other matter that also has a bearing on the financial policy of the Government, and that was dealt with by the deputy leader of the Opposition. The deputy leader of the Opposition rose and gratuitously offered a policy to the Government. There was nothing very original about that policy—nothing new about it. If anyone will look closely into it they will simply see that it is the old game of saddling the burden on to the farmer. The same old principle—pass it on to the man on the land. There is such an absence of originality in the hon. member's proposal that we marvel at it, because one generally looks for better things from the hon. member. He tells us the basis on which taxation might be adjusted so that, first of all, railway construction could be carried out without borrowing. He also tells us that there is no reason why the revenue should not produce sufficient money to carry out the railway policy of the Government.

Mr. THEODORE: I never made such a statement.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I wonder how much hon. members opposite know about these things. My statement was that the deputy leader of the Opposition said that there was no reason why sufficient revenue should not be raised for the construction of railways without borrowing money. Let me read what the hon. member said—

"No doubt there is some justification in the cry, 'Why should you not build more railways?' You say you cannot build railways without money, but you can build railways without loan money, as was explained to the hon. gentleman by one of the visitors from the Imperial Parliament."

What does that mean—you can build railways without loan money? Can I pin the hon. member down to that statement? In one breath he says, "We should build railways without loan money," and then when he is called to book for it, he says he did not say anything of the kind. What are we to believe? Is he correctly reported? I take it that he is. That is a definite announcement from the deputy leader of the Opposition.

Mr. THEODORE: I accuse the hon. member of deliberately misquoting me.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: That appears in "Hansard." I must appeal to you, Mr. Stodart. I read an extract from the hon. member's speech. I shall read it again. The hon. member for Chillagoe, as reported on page 1241 of "Hansard," said—

"You say you cannot build railways without money, but you can build railways without loan money."

Mr. THEODORE: You know I did not mean all railways.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: What does that mean? He now says, "Not to build all railways."

Mr. THEODORE: You are deliberately misquoting me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is entirely out of order in stating that the hon. member for Burrum is deliberately misquoting him; and I must ask the hon. member to withdraw the statement.

Mr. THEODORE: I withdraw, and I wish to make a personal statement. The hon. member, in speaking, inferred that I said I did not mean what I had said. I interjected "Nothing of the sort," nor have I advocated the building of all railways out of revenue.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Lieut-Colonel RANKIN: How am I to tell what he meant. I will leave hon. members to draw their own conclusions as to what the hon. member meant. I am accustomed to putting the usual construction on the English language, and I submit in reading this extract from the hon. member's speech I have read it perfectly accurately. The same talk is carried on when he begins to explain his financial policy of how this work is going to be done. I suppose he will admit that amongst the ways he proposed to raise money for this purpose, that a land tax is mentioned. He gives us some other suggestions, and tells us that there are other ways of raising money. He says that he would increase the income tax, increase the succession duty; that he would impose a land tax.

Mr. THEODORE: Hear, hear!

Lieut-Colonel RANKIN: Then we know perfectly well where that burden is going to rest. When the hon. member claims that this proposal of his will excuse a large number of farmers from the operation of the income tax, he knows very well that nearly the half of the income tax at the present time is paid by about 800 individuals and companies, so that he is really going to excuse the farmers in a great many instances for nothing. He evidently saw that he had made a statement that might perhaps be picked up, as I have picked it up, by the farmers themselves, and so he goes a step further, and he tells us that it is not intended that this land tax is going to injuriously affect the farmer. I will quote his own words—

"I assure hon. members that the farmer who cannot afford to pay the tax would escape, because adequate provision will be made for him."

What a charming land tax! It is only to be paid by those people who can afford to pay it.

Mr. THEODORE: Hear, hear!

Lieut-Colonel RANKIN: How many people are going to claim that they can afford to pay it? How many are going to voluntarily submit themselves to the operation of the tax, when the hon. member says he will make adequate provision to exempt those who, I presume, say they cannot afford to pay? It seems to me that the whole idea which centres in the minds of hon. members opposite who have spoken on this matter is simply to throw dust in the eyes of the primary producer—of the man on the land. One significant remark fell from the hon. member for Herbert when he was speaking on this very question. I ask hon. members on both sides to listen to it, and I ask the people outside to listen to it, because it is practically the keynote to all the protestations which we hear coming from hon. members opposite. The hon. member for Herbert, speaking on this Financial Statement, said—

"Farmers are a very gullible people."

That is the position which the farmer holds in the minds of hon. members. I can assure the hon. member for Herbert, and hon. mem-

bers upon the Opposition benches, that the farmers are not a gullible people. They may, in days gone by, have been gulled by the protestations made by hon. members opposite, but the farmers of Queensland showed how far they were to be gulled at the last general State election when they had seen the effect of some of the socialistic rule. I submit that the farmers are not a gullible people, but they are a distinctly honest people, and consequently they are apt, not infrequently, to look upon other men as they themselves are—honest in what they say and profess—and I have no doubt that it is on account of that that the remark fell from the lips of a member on the Opposition bench that the farmers are a gullible class of people. I submit—and I throw back the remark to the man who made it—that the farmers are not a gullible people; they are an intelligent people. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. FOLEY: They must be gullible to put up with you

Lieut-Colonel RANKIN: They know too much to be led away by these specious promises made from time to time by hon. members opposite. With regard to the remark which the hon. member for Chillagoe made about building railways from revenue, what would the position of this State have been had that policy been adopted all along the line? It is a pertinent question. If the policy is a good and acceptable policy at the present time, it must have been an equally good and sound in days gone by. If it is a good policy now, what reason was there for departing from that policy in the earlier stages of this country's history? Look back, and see what has been done during the developmental work which was only made possible by obtaining loans elsewhere. I have looked up the figures, and I see that as far back as 1875 we had a population of 115,567, and a revenue of £1,263,268. In the period between 1875 and 1882 those figures altered to a population of 126,077, and a revenue of £2,102,094. I have quoted the figures relating to a period between 1875 and 1882, and I have chosen that purposely because those are the dates of the loans which are maturing in 1915, and about which we hear a great deal of talk from hon. members opposite at the present time. Hon. members may say that the borrowing of that money was a mistake—they practically say so—they tell us that public works and railways should be built from revenue. I ask hon. members what possible railway policy could have been carried out during the period I have just mentioned had they been depending on their own revenue? It is preposterous. I say unhesitatingly that if we are going to make this country progress, if we are going to open up the waste places, if we are going not only to populate it but to develop our latent resources, it can only be accomplished in one way, and that is by securing loan money. Nor is there any danger for one single moment. So long as the expenditure of that money is restricted to reproductive work, we have nothing to fear as to the financial stability of this State. The hon. member for Eacham, following the hon. member for Chillagoe, had a good deal to say upon a sinking fund. He gave us to infer that we should have made provision to retire those loans from revenue which fall due in 1915. Whatever may be said for or against a sinking fund, I think we might

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fairly leave posterity to look after themselves. Surely it cannot be claimed that we are inflicting any very great hardship upon those people who come after us! It cannot be claimed that we are placing any very serious burden upon them when we bequeath to them all our railways and public works, when we give them all the public utilities which have been brought into being, merely for the actual cost of them.

Mr. HUXHAM: Are we doing that?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: We are doing that, undoubtedly. Out of our national debt of £46,000,000 which we have incurred up to the present time, we have expended no less than £32,000,000 on railways alone. I say that these railway works, irrespective of others altogether, have a face value at the present time of far more than our indebtedness. Surely if hon. members look at it in anything like a serious or business light, they cannot but recognise that it is no great hardship—

Messrs ADAMSON and HUXHAM interjected.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I cannot hear myself speak for interjections.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: The hon. members who have been interjecting cannot dispute the figures which I am quoting. Does the hon. member for Rockhampton mean to say that out of our national debt of £46,000,000, £32,000,000 has not been expended on railways?

Mr. ADAMSON: I did not say that at all.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Our railways are one of the most excellent assets which we have got at the present time. I will go a step further. In handing over these wonderful assets, burdened even as they are with the amount of loan money expended on them, we are leaving to posterity a glorious heritage.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and Opposition laughter.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: If any hon. member opposite built up a business on £1,000, and was able to convert it into a business that paid a handsome profit on a capital of £2,000, then in giving it to any of their sons they would not be inflicting any hardship or injustice on that son. In a broader and larger sense we are doing exactly the same thing here in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) Why should we tax the mere handful of people here in order that we may make a present to posterity of our public assets? There is no reason for it in the world. We have heard a good deal about a sinking fund from hon. members opposite. It is interesting to know that even in the expenditure on our national debt in loans to local authorities we will eventually recoup ourselves, so our national debt is nothing to be afraid of. We have good assets in our railways. One could understand all this cry about a sinking fund if the expenditure of our loan moneys had been upon works that were not reproductive, if we had spent our loan money on armaments, or in maintaining a standing army, or in the construction of a fleet. Our hon. friends opposite would then be right in calling out for a sinking fund. But all the money spent in Queensland has been spent in a way that it gives something in return for it, and so

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long as we pursue such a course as that we ought not to trouble ourselves about the infliction of further taxation by the operation of a sinking fund. Western Australia has been frequently quoted to us by hon. members opposite as being a bright and shining example of what they have done in the matter of providing a sinking fund.

Mr. McCORMACK: Don't you believe in that sinking fund?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Yes, where the expenditure, as in Western Australia—a great proportion of it, at any rate—is upon non-productive works. In cases such as that I say that we should have a sinking fund. What are the comparative figures between Western Australia and Queensland? The figures quoted by the "West Australian Year Book" show that the national debt of Western Australia is £23,000,000, and of that sum only £11,000,000 was spent on railways, or less than half of the total amount borrowed.

Mr. BERTRAM: What are the other items?

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I will give the other items directly. In Queensland, out of £46,000,000 borrowed, we spent £32,000,000 on railways alone. The hon. member for Maree asked me to give the other items on which Western Australia spent money. We find, for instance, looming large in the national debt of Western Australia, "Harbours and Rivers, £2,500,000." We know perfectly well that harbours and rivers, unlike railways, are works the expenditure on which might be swept away at any time. In our railways the maintenance has to be of a high standard of efficiency, and has to be kept up from day to day for the safety of the travelling public. They must, of course, be maintained from revenue, but, with harbours and rivers, we know from personal experience that a single flood might wipe out works costing hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Mr. BERTRAM: That applies to railways, too.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Another source of expenditure in Western Australia is "Mining, £1,000,000" and "Agriculture, £1,000,000." There you have also got two items of expenditure—avenues of outlay—where you should have a sinking fund, for the simple reason that they are not likely to be reproductive. (Opposition dissent.) I am not complaining about the Western Australian sinking fund at all. But I point out that, because of the nature of the expenditure in Western Australia, it is necessary that they should have a sinking fund, but it is not necessary in the case of Queensland at all. (Hear, hear!) A good deal of concern has been displayed by hon. members opposite about the renewal of the loans due in 1915. True, it is a fairly large sum that we have to meet, but I was rather surprised to find that the attitude of the Treasurer was adversely criticised because he had the business aptitude of feeling the pulse of the money market and was keeping in touch with the swing of the pendulum from day to day. By doing that he was able to secure a loan under more favourable conditions than that pertaining to any of the other States. I was, therefore, rather surprised to find the conduct of the Treasurer adversely criticised in this House in this regard. What is there to cavil at in such an action as that? Would hon. members opposite prefer that Queensland's finances should be penalised through the ineptitude of a dull Treasurer? Surely



not! Surely hon. members are more patriotic than to even suggest such a thing! What do we find here? We find one cutting remark from the deputy leader of the Opposition, who talks as if he were a financial genius sprung upon us—

Mr. THEODORE: You handle the truth very recklessly.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: The hon. the deputy leader of the Opposition says that the reason the cost of money has gone up so rapidly is this—I will read what the hon. member says—

“It is now admitted that it is on account of the great competition between the Australian States that the rate of interest is so high as it is at present.”

Have I quoted the hon. member correctly this time?

Mr. THEODORE: You did not do so before.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Could anything be more pitiable than that? Could anything be more pathetic or more ridiculous than the hon. member, the deputy leader of a party in this House, getting up and claiming that the whole of the financial world had been affected by the £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 which had been borrowed by the people of Australia?

Mr. THEODORE: I didn't say that at all.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: The thing is posterous on the face of it. We know that, in the Balkans alone, as was pointed out by the Premier the other night, during the past few months they borrowed and expended in the Balkans no less than £245,000,000.

Mr. MURPHY: Good heavens! (Laughter.)

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: That is a fairly large sum. Yet we have an hon. member standing up in this Chamber and telling us that it was owing to the competition of the Australian States in the money market that money became dear.

Mr. THEODORE: I said because of that we had to pay more. I was quoting from the “Age.”

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: The money market is not affected by borrowings such as these.

Mr. FIDELLY: That settles it.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: It does settle it, and I think I can quote from a higher financial authority than the hon. member for Paddington, or the hon. member for Chillagoe, or even the hon. member for Burke. When we come to recollect [4.30 p.m.] that Canada is borrowing, or, rather, taking, something like forty millions of money a year from the British and Continental markets, and when we find this enormous expenditure going on in the Near East, in the Balkans, surely it is ridiculous for anyone to tell us that our borrowings, prejudicially or otherwise, affect the price of money throughout the world. Now there are two things, to my mind—

Mr. FIDELLY: A portfolio.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: It will be a long time before the hon. member gets a portfolio; the only portfolio that he is ever likely to get is one with two handles to it. (Laughter.) There are, I say, only two things that are likely to affect the money market. One is

the nature of the security that you have to offer, and the other is the scarcity or otherwise of the money available.

Mr. THEODORE: Wonderful words of wisdom.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: They are words of wisdom, and I hope that they will sink deep into the minds of hon. members—that is, those of them who have any depth of soil. The best way to secure from the financial people on the other side of the globe the most favourable terms is to show good administration. And, surely, I submit, the administration disclosed in this Financial Statement will do more to help us when we come to renew those loans than all the talking of members opposite. There is no doubt that, when the financiers come to see that we have in this State a Government who are not prodigal in their expenditure, a Government who are keen on paying their way, a Government who are desirous of keeping their outlay within the limits of their income, then, I say, that is one of the first things likely to stamp Queensland loans as sound, good, gilt-edged security. I think that our friends opposite should be the last ones to talk of anything or any action on the part of the Government that is likely to harden the price of money. If there was ever a party which did show up for mismanagement, it is that party which we have had quoted as part and parcel of the Socialistic party opposite—our friends in New South Wales, who, practically, through their high carnival of reckless expenditure, have exhausted all sources of revenue, and had to show to us, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary methods of raising money that has ever been perpetrated in the history of the Australian States—that is, to go to some private firm and ask them to build £3,000,000 worth of railway, paying them 4 per cent. for the money and 5 per cent. for supervision.

Mr. GRANT: Private enterprise.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Private enterprise! I should think it was private enterprise. That is what our socialistic friends do—that party of which the hon. the learned leader of the Opposition told us, in the opening remarks of his speech, were one throughout Australia, that they were a great solid body throughout Queensland and a great solid body throughout the Australian States. Now, if this is a sample, if this is what we may term a test, of the financial policy of the Socialistic party, then I think Queensland will be well advised to keep them where they are—in the cool shades of Opposition. I had intended to have said something on the Financial Statement proper—(Opposition laughter)—but chiefly through the interjections of hon. members opposite I have not been able to do so. I shall probably have an opportunity of dealing with some details when the Estimates come before us. I would have liked to express my pleasure at the development in our railway revenue. I would have also liked to congratulate the Treasurer on the splendid work done by the Lands Department. I would also have liked, perhaps, to have given a note of warning to our Agricultural Department and to our Mines Department—because I think most of us will admit that they are the two departments in the State that require careful attention. They represent the two primary producing industries—mining and agriculture—and they both have been, it seems to me, during the long succession of Governments in this State,

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practically the Cinderella departments of the State. I trust that even at this late hour we may have from the Minister a statement that we should have something for those departments more than has been done in the past. I cannot imagine that the paltry sum set down is at all in consonance with the amount that really should be set down. We find, for instance, that although there was only a matter of £65,000 set down for the Mines Department altogether, only £52,000 was expended last year, so that, you see, I think there is room for very great improvement. Then, when we come to talk about the various expenditures and compare them with the revenue received, we find that the Mines Department gave an income of £35,000, as against an expenditure, as I have already stated, of £52,000, really leaving a total cost to the State of something like only £17,000.

Mr. GRANT: They got indirect revenue as well.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I submit that that is not sufficient—that Queensland, with her vast mineral resources, with her vast undeveloped wealth under the soil, is competent to spend a great deal more than £17,000 on the mining industry and the development of our mineral fields, and I think the Minister would be well advised if he told us that some greater assistance could be arranged to be given in that direction. The same thing applies to agriculture. I recognise that successive Ministers have tried to revivify it to some extent, but so far they seem to have met with only imperfect success, and I think there is scope for a great deal of improvement in that direction. I speak now more particularly in regard to the matter of sugar. We know that, so far as the manufacture of sugar is concerned, we are practically abreast of the world, not through the action of the Government, but through the action of a private company, through the action of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, who have expended enormous sums from time to time in sending their officers abroad in order that they might be able to learn the most up-to-date methods of handling and dealing with the manufactured product. Now, I say, cannot we do something towards the success of the other branch of the industry—that is, the cultivation branch? I submit that the state of the cultivation of sugar is practically just the same as it was half a century ago. Let us, by sending some of our experts or some of our officers into other countries, try to do for the grower of sugar what private companies have done for the manufacturer. I think that in that regard something might be done for the Agricultural Department. I should have liked to say a word in regard to the dairying industry.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. MURPHY (*Burke*): Unlike the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, the leader of the fourth party in this House, I do not profess to have a very close acquaintance with the intricacies of high finance, but that is not going to deter me from offering a few modest observations on the Financial Statement. If members spoke only on the subjects they thoroughly understand, there would be a considerable falling off in the number and length of speeches delivered in this House. Perhaps that would be appreciated by the members of the "Hansard"

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staff, but it would certainly bring us into disrepute with a number of deserving compositors in the Government Printing Office, who depend upon the setting up of our speeches for their livelihood. It seems to me that the phrase "high finance" has been invented by leaders in the world of money for the purpose of covering up their peculiar methods—not, perhaps, so much of deceiving as of mystifying the public. I suppose the Budget presented by the Treasurer must be considered as satisfactory. It is certainly interesting and informative. From it we can gain particulars concerning the various industries of the State. If we examine it carefully, we shall discover the number of eggs which have been exported, the quantity of butter which has been manufactured and exported, the revenue which has been collected and expended, and how the pastoralists and dairy farmers have got on during the past twelve months. It is a review of the whole of the work in the State, and a very interesting review. Everybody is satisfied because we have a surplus. This is the ninth successive surplus. It is only a small one, certainly, but it is being made the most of. During the course of this debate we have had a variety of comparisons. We have had Queensland compared with New South Wales, and New South Wales with New Zealand, Victoria, and Western Australia; and, as far as I can see, the only definite conclusion arrived at from these comparisons, with all their multiplications, additions, subtractions, and divisions, is that Queensland will be all right provided Providence and the money-lender stick to us. At the present time a party of distinguished old-world politicians are visiting Australia. We have had them in Queensland, and they have visited other parts of Australia. They have only been able to obtain a partial knowledge of our country, owing to the hurried nature of their visit, but there is one thing that has been dinned into their ears by all Premiers, whether Liberal or Labour, and that is, that they should be kind enough to put in a good word for us with Uncle Cohen and his brothers, Isaac, Jacob, and their various relatives, and ask them to be good enough to send us out more money. (Laughter.) Providence is merely a secondary consideration. Providence is brought into the Financial Statement with the object of getting sufficient revenue to carry on the country, but He only comes second to the British money-lender. We are told that, unless the British financier sends along money, this country, with its millions of acres of unalienated land awaiting occupation by agriculturists, orchardists, poultry farmers, grazing farmers, and pastoralists, will go to smash. I do not believe that at all. The speech of the Premier on the "Lucinda" trip was followed by equally enticing speeches from the leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Townsville, and sundry other gentlemen, and they all pointed out the wonderful resources of the State and the remarkable security which this country offered to the British capitalists, and asked the visitors to be good enough, when they returned home, to say a kind word for the State. The visitors have not left Australia yet, and I am satisfied that, just as the ship casts off its lines, the last man to leave the boat will be an Australian Premier, who has been on board to ask them to remember us to all at home, especially to dear old "Uncle." Years ago it used to be argued that Australia had to depend for its existence on the motherland, and that, without the assistance

of British capital, we could never develop our resources. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat referred to the extravagance of the Labour Government in New South Wales. That extravagance will not prevent the Labour Government from being returned at the next election, provided they can get money to carry on a boom policy until polling-day has passed. It is the Government which cannot raise and expend huge sums that loses confidence and is turned out of office. We are told that, if we cannot get more money, there will be no further development in Queensland. I cannot subscribe to such a doctrine. The fact that the British money-lender will not send out a few more millions to be spent in railway building will not prevent the pastoral industry, agriculture, dairying, mining, or manufacturing from progressing in this State. Given good seasons, these industries will continue to thrive. The lack of loan money will simply mean the curtailment of railway construction and some other public works. Men will find other avenues of employment, and the curtailment of loan expenditure may lead to the utilisation of lands in the vicinity of railways already constructed. That would not be such a bad thing. We pride ourselves on having the greatest mileage of railways in Australia. The Minister for Railways frequently refers to that fact, but there is surely no necessity to maintain this record. We are told that railway construction and land settlement should go together. So they should, and I unhesitatingly say that any man who gives any study to the question—any man who has travelled along our railways and has seen the immense tracts of country which are uncultivated and unoccupied—must come to the conclusion that there is ample room for the settlement of thousands of people along existing lines, if we did not build another mile of railway for some considerable time.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: Hon. members say, "Hear, hear!" to that statement, but it is not a popular policy. I had a wire from my own electorate yesterday, informing me that they want some railways up there, and I should be very pleased if the Government would grant the requests.

Mr. HUXHAM: Or only one.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, if we got only one. The people in one part of my electorate have been waiting thirty years for a railway. We hear a lot of talk about wanting money to develop the State, and people the waste spaces in Queensland for defence purposes, but the Government never displays any great anxiety to carry out works which will tend to attract population to those isolated centres.

Mr. FIBELLY: The Downs bunch prevent that.

Mr. MURPHY: The Downs bunch and the Brisbane bunch, too. The hon. member for Brisbane wants a graving dock, and he wants railway matters rushed in the vicinity of Mayne. The hon. member for South Brisbane also wants a dock, and the hon. member for Paddington wants a good number of things. All these things have to be paid for, and people living in the waste spaces, who are trying to develop the outside parts of Queensland, get no consideration at all. They have not sufficient representation. Party politics means that the Government have to continually get money to build rail-

ways to placate their supporters in the House and in the country. The *via recta* is a case in point. The Minister says, "Yes, we are going to table the plans, but the railway is not going to be built for some considerable time to come," and the papers on the Downs and quite a number of Downs people have risen in their wrath and condemned the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course they did.

Mr. MURPHY: The Secretary for Railways knows that perfectly well, and the Secretary for Railways also knows that under the system of party Government, if the Downs bunch have sufficient pull, they will get that railway before very long. That is the whole question in party politics; the people with a pull get consideration. Everybody knows that. The Rockhampton people are kicking up a row because their railway has been stopped. They say it was stopped at a water hole. Well, that is a very good place to stop at sometimes, if there is not a pub. handy. (Laughter.) No constituency cares a single rap about financial honesty as long as it can get money spent. The business man wants to see plenty of loan money expended, because it means more business to him. The worker likes to see plenty of loan money spent, because it provides work for him. Of course when the question of payment comes up, we cheerfully sign a promissory note. The Financial Statement reminds us that a very large sum of loan money is maturing at no distant date, and we are told that the Government's financial advisers in the old country are doing everything possible in order that there may be a new flotation. We are quite prepared to pay the amount due if we can borrow it on another promissory note. They say it is good sometimes to borrow from Peter to pay Paul. That is all right if Paul gets paid, but occasionally it is borrowed off Peter and Paul does not get it at all. Still, this is part of the game of politics, only members do not like to mention the fact. A good number of comparisons have been made about the surpluses which have been received since 1904, but nobody has ever thought of comparing the revenue from 1904 up till about 1907, when Mr. Kidston was Treasurer, and was succeeded by Mr. Airey, and the surpluses which were then obtained on a much smaller revenue than we are getting now. Look at the amount of money those Treasurers paid into the public debt reduction fund. Not a single reference to that. We are told now, that as long as we get a small surplus everything is all right. That the British money-lender looks at our revenue and compares it with our expenditure, and if he finds there is a small surplus, our financial position will be marked good, and we will be able to get more money. A few years ago people used to argue that Australia had no possibility of defending itself; that we had to depend for our safety upon the fleets and the army of the mother land. In the days before Federation whenever a proposal was made in a State Parliament to pay a certain sum annually to the British Government for defence purposes, the democrats in the House used to get up and strongly object. They considered it was an absurd proposal to pay money for defence. That was a mean way of looking at the matter. But now the Australian people have recognised their responsibility in that matter.

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We have our own fleet, which will grow as the nation prospers. We have compulsory military service. We find that we are able to pay for it. If it became necessary to curtail loan expenditure in Queensland, the place would not go smash. It is absurd to argue that you must not criticise the financial position for fear something may be said which is likely to injure the credit of the country. If you do you belong to "the stinking-fish" party, and are referred to in political circles as a bogey man. It is this fear which prevents politicians from dealing with finance. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat, after speaking for an hour, acknowledged that he had not touched the Financial Statement, the annual balance-sheet of Queensland. Why? Because he was afraid he might say something that would injure our credit. The rapidity with which capital is said to fly out of the window at the mere mention of democratic legislation is nothing in comparison to the alleged timidity of the money-lender. He is a most nervous individual—except when the interest becomes due. When we ask them for a loan we give them good security and the interest bill is regularly met. There are other countries in the world which, after having borrowed their money, do not even bother about paying the interest.

Mr. McCORMACK: And still borrow more.

Mr. MURPHY: And they lend them more. Read the papers to-day. They point out the row there is because it has been impossible to collect the salt tax in China. We are not asking the British money-lender to give us money on bad security. We have got a marvellous security. The Premier told us all about that security on the "Lucinda" recently, and so did the leader of the Opposition. There is no doubt they are both correct. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the British money-lender also knows this perfectly well. Take the Estimates. We look down the various departments and we find that the Government are giving some of the highly-paid public servants an increase of £100. We are shocked. We think it is absurd. We threaten that this item will be fought for hours, for days, for weeks; that it must be withdrawn; that the country cannot afford to give it; and yet when the matter of big loan expenditure comes up, members on either side of the House are rarely critical. That is how Governments find themselves in an awkward fix at times. The Premiers of the various States become wan and weary because they are continually wondering where they are going to get money from to continue their works. My impression is, and I have said this before frequently in this House, that so far as loan expenditure in Queensland is concerned, it has been carried on at too great a rate. I do not think Queensland can afford to be spending, as it has been, £3,000,000 a year on railways and other public works. It is too much, and adds a heavy burden on our revenue in the shape of interest, and yet when the Treasurer announces that he has prudently decided to reduce loan expenditure this year, objections are raised on every side. We want to know where our railways are to come from. We want to know where money for harbour works, and all that sort of thing, is coming from. The result will be with this Government—as was the case with the Kidston Government in 1907—they

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will have to continue their heavy expenditure. When you point out to these expert high financiers about this vast increase in loan expenditure, they quietly say that it is all right. They are expert mathematicians, and they get a pencil and paper and divide the indebtedness of the State by the number of people in the State and they say everything is all right, as the loan per head of the population is not as much to-day as it was some years ago. Everything is all right provided we get a surplus. If you point out to them that probably we are not going to continue to have the good seasons with which Queensland has been blessed for many years, and ask what is going to happen then, they do not care about discussing that phase of the question. All the reply you get is a shrug of the shoulders. They look to Providence to keep the revenue good. The fact of the matter is that we simply conduct our politics on the "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die" principle, not only in Queensland, but in every other State in Australia. They say we do not owe much. Well,

[5 p.m.] we owe as much as we can, and we are trying to owe more. I notice that in New South Wales they have started a "Million Club"; they want to have 1,000,000 people in Sydney; and they also have a debt of £100,000,000. The increasing interest on these loans is a big burden on the revenue. Everybody knows that. I do not suppose anybody ever had a worse financial time in Queensland than the hon. member for Townsville had, and the party which was opposing him, and some of those who were supporting him, used to refer to his Government as the most extravagant Government that ever existed. I do not suppose the hon. gentleman had a revenue of £3,000,000 in those days. Now we have a revenue of £6,000,000, and we spend every shilling of it. We are told that, if we impose more taxation, we shall be able to build some railways out of revenue. We would be able to do nothing of the sort, because the more revenue we get the more clamour there is for it to be expended in our ordinary business avenues. People do not want to build railways out of revenue. If you imposed a land tax and got £1,000,000 per annum out of it, means would be found for spending the money without building railways with it. The more revenue you get the more you have to spend. Members of Parliament clamour for it. But it is not the fault of members of Parliament; it is the fault of their constituents. Your constituents sum you up when you go before them for re-election, not so much by what you have tried to do for the country as by what you have done for your electorate. (Laughter.)

Hon. R. PHILP: On what you have got for them.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes; on what you have got for them. On one occasion when I was fighting an election they got out a book against me, entitled "What Murphy has Done for his Electorate." (Laughter.) When you opened it, you found it consisted of blank pages. (Renewed laughter.) That had a great effect on the electors—I got beaten that time. (Laughter.) All the writers in the financial papers—the editors of the daily papers—who are not standing for members of Parliament—take Governments and Parliaments to task for their extravagance. They point out how they would run

the country if they were permitted to do so. But they are outside of politics. If they were in politics—if the editor of the "Courier," for instance, or the editor of the "Telegraph," or the editor of the "Standard" happened to be the leader—perhaps I had better include the editor of the "Daily Mail," so as to get square with all the papers—(Laughter.)

Hon. R. PHILP: And the editor of the "Worker."

Mr. MURPHY: I am talking of the daily papers. The editor of a little weekly paper, no matter what its opinions are, has a better billet, if the screw is fairly good and comes in regularly, and there is not much work to do, and is better off than the average member of Parliament. But, of course, the editors of the daily papers know how to run the country. If one of those gentlemen could be placed in the position of the Premier—especially when these loans are maturing—he could show us exactly how it ought to be done, and, after he had shown us, the electors would probably show him that he did not know as much as he professed to know. I am dealing with the Financial Statement from the standpoint of high finance—(laughter)—not merely from the ordinary everyday method of looking at it.

Mr. McCORMACK: You are not dealing with the garden variety of finance.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not know whether it is the garden variety, but it is a very rare variety, and the average politician does not deal with it from the high standpoint that I am doing.

The PREMIER: This is the orchid variety.

Mr. MURPHY: Well, it is a very "awk'd" variety—(laughter)—remarkably "awk'd," and no doubt the Premier has frequently found it very "awk'd" to raise the money. (Laughter.) But Providence has been on his side—as the Financial Statement tells us—and things have gone on all right. There are many things in the Financial Statement that I would like to deal with, but other people have dealt with them, and I have no desire to inflict on this Committee all the figures which I have taken out of the financial tables and all the comparisons which I have made. Other hon. members have gone to "Knibbs" and other high authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They have used a good many "nibs" in doing so.

Mr. MURPHY: The ordinary member of Parliament cannot touch a bell and get a clerk to take down his notes in shorthand and then go and type them out. He has to worry them out for himself, and, if he does not go to the trouble of worrying them out for himself, but simply waits for somebody else to worry them out and then uses some particular set of figures on which to base his argument, some member on the other side gets up and proves that that particular set of figures is all wrong. There is one table in the Financial Statement that is worth noting, and that is the table which refers to all the railways that have not yet been completed. That is a table which affects members of Parliament more than any other table in the Financial Statement, as it is the identical table which constituents want to see carried out. It is a matter of perfect indifference to them whether the surplus is large or small—of course, if there is a large surplus, it makes things look better. This table shows that

there are something like 2,000 miles of railway not yet completed, and the electors are wondering when the Government are going to proceed with some of those railways. I wonder, when Ministers were fixing up the Financial Statement, whether the Premier ever gave any thought to that tour of his through the Gulf country. I wonder whether he brought under the notice of his colleague, the Secretary for Public Instruction, for instance—who also travelled through the North some years ago—the necessity of doing something for the undeveloped North. I do not suppose he did. They were so busy fixing up this particular table of uncompleted railways, and pondering where they were going to get the money from to complete them, and wondering whether the fact that some of them were not going on as rapidly as some of their followers desired, was going to make any difference in the support those followers would accord to the Government, that there was no time for dealing with what the Premier has termed "the tragedy of the Gulf." I suppose I shall have another opportunity of dealing with that question. Certainly I have worried the Premier enough on this matter.

The PREMIER: You observe on page 10 of the Financial Statement, among the lines to be opened this year—"Cloncurry to Mount Cuthbert (first section) 42 miles"?

Mr. MURPHY: What has the Cloncurry-Mount Cuthbert line to do with Normanton? What interest does Normanton take in a railway from Cloncurry to Mount Cuthbert? (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: It is towards Normanton.

Mr. MURPHY: Towards Normanton. (Laughter.) There is not the slightest doubt that it is "towards Normanton," but what the Normanton people are particularly interested in is that there should be a railway going out to that mineral area from a Gulf port. That is what they are interested about. That is what they interviewed the Premier on, and the Premier said it was a tragedy the way the place had been treated. Of course, if he had been Premier years ago it would have been different.

The PREMIER: Not the way it was treated, but the way they decided for themselves, and went to Croydon—put it that way.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not like to put it that way. Not that I would not put it that way, but it might not sound so well to the electors of Normanton as if I put it the other way. (Laughter.) We interviewed the Premier with a large deputation up there. Everybody was there—the Premier will admit that.

The PREMIER: Large and influential.

Mr. MURPHY: A "large and influential" one aptly describes it. The facts were placed before the Premier in a proper light. He said he would give the matter due consideration, and he has been giving it due consideration since April last. The Premier went to Georgetown, and a very large and influential deputation waited upon him there. They wanted a railway from Forsyth to Georgetown. I got a wire from them, asking me to get up a deputation to the Secretary for Railways to see whether there is any chance of getting it started.

Mr. GRANT: We all got circulars.

Mr. MURPHY: Every member of the House has got a circular. It shows what a

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genial crowd members of Parliament are. Every member of the House has promised to go with me, and request the Secretary for Railways to build that railway. (Laughter.) It does not matter on what side of the House we sit, we are all anxious to help the Government to spend money—not one of us objects to it. I am hoping that some of this loan money which is being obtained will be expended in the Gulf country. I do not think we have had a fair deal up there. The people do not think they have had a fair deal, and every Premier who comes there tells them they have not had a fair deal.

Mr. COYNE: That is not very often.

Mr. MURPHY: Not very often. He comes up, and says, "I would like to do something for you, but I do not know where to start."

Mr. COYNE: It is usually a new Premier.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: I think there has only been two or three there.

Mr. MURPHY: There has been quite a number. We have had Mr. Philp and Mr. Kidston; Sir Samuel Griffith used to run up there occasionally, and Sir Thomas McIlwraith was up there. All the distinguished people go up to the Gulf. Certainly, when Mr. Philp came up to Croydon we put him on to a good thing. (Laughter.) We put him into a good mine—a good call-paying mine. (Renewed laughter.) Other Premiers came along. They apparently understood finance better than the hon. member for Townsville, because we have not been able to put them in at all. We tried to induce Mr. Kidston to speculate some of his hard-earned wealth in a Croydon mine, but, although he was a Scotchman, he did not seem to want to make more money. (Laughter.) The present Premier did not feel inclined to speculate, either, but he said, "If you people can decide upon some scheme for deep sinking, the Government will help you." We have not been able to decide upon that scheme up to the present, because deep sinking runs into a fair amount of money, and we have been waiting so long up there for railway communication, and for harbour facilities which were promised thirty years ago, that our supply of money has run out.

Mr. THEODORE: Bennion has got a scheme.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, Mr. Bennion has got a scheme. I understand the deputy leader of the Opposition is in favour of it, and the only harm I wish him is that he will make a fortune out of it.

Hon. R. PHILP: I hope he will have better luck than I had.

Mr. MURPHY: Everybody knows what mining is. The hon. gentleman for years had bad luck himself. It is like Tattersall's sweep. There are not many prizes in mining. What surprises me is that when a man gets up to talk about mining he seems to make out that everybody who invests in mining is going to become a rich man.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He thinks so.

Mr. MURPHY: He does when he goes in, but he knows better after he has been speculating awhile. I remember years ago when I went to Normanton as a youth I got put on to a good mining venture, and I

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thought I was going to be a millionaire. I have been up there for something like twenty-five years, and I am not a millionaire yet.

Hon. R. PHILP: Time enough yet.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, I am only young. (Laughter.) I am not nearly as old as I look. If one studies high finance properly, gives due consideration to all the tables which are presented with the Financial Statement, and goes carefully into the various figures which are presented in company balance-sheets, there is a probability that he will become rich some day—or mad. (Laughter.) Anybody who tries to deal with all the tables which are supplied to members of Parliament—who looks at the various references in the Financial Statement, and then tries to work out the figures, devoting the time and attention which should be devoted to that particular class of work—I am afraid he is not going to be able to go out electioneering for some considerable time to come. (Laughter.) Not that we are anxious to go electioneering. In conclusion, I think that the Financial Statement shows, at any rate, that Queensland has made steady progress during last year. Pretty well everybody has congratulated the Treasurer upon the way in which he has looked after the finances of the State. We have been told there has been no destructive criticism. I have shown why there has been no destructive criticism. It is simply because members of Parliament are placed in the position that they have to be continually running to the Government asking them to do certain things for their constituents, and consequently are not what may be termed free agents to criticise.

Mr. RYAN: There has been constructive criticism.

Mr. MURPHY: We know that the hon. gentleman delivered a constructive criticism speech on the Budget, and the leader of the country party also delivered a constructive critical speech, and I have delivered a constructive critical speech, too. Other hon. members who have spoken have also delivered either constructive or destructive criticism speeches, according to the way you view the question. I have been delivering a policy speech. (Laughter.) I have been pointing out to the people of Queensland, through this House, that while we are praising the Government for being able to balance the ledger, all the same there has been very heavy expenditure; that while our revenue has bumped up, our expenditure has gone up correspondingly. During the last ten years, with the exception of gold mining, every industry in the State has been flourishing, but, notwithstanding the years of plenty, we have not made the slightest provision for the lean years which everybody tells us will surely come. There has been plenty of employment for people, private enterprise has been pouring out money into industries and buildings, and singing out that it could not obtain sufficient labour, and the Government has been rushing along with railways as though it were necessary to provide work for the people.

Mr. HARDACRE: The people are no better off.

Mr. MURPHY: How can the people be better off when we spend money as we get it? When there is extravagant loan expenditure by the Government it is followed by extravagant private expenditure. Anyone

who reads the financial criticisms in the Sydney "Bulletin" will see that they show conclusively that, where the Government spends huge sums of loan moneys, it is followed by unlimited private extravagance. The result is that, as soon as a bad time comes, everything goes bad.

(AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Even the eggs. Laughter.)

Hon. R. PHILP: What do you suggest?

Mr. MURPHY: I will tell you what I suggest. I suggest that we fix a certain sum of loan expenditure every year and not exceed it. That was done in 1904. The hon. member for Townsville went out of power himself as a result, practically, of the drought. It is just as well to tell the truth about it—it was the drought that killed the Philp Administration. The railways were not paying, and everything was in a bad way. Money could not be borrowed, and revenue went down to zero, yet the Government was expected to carry on works just as lavishly as if everything was flourishing. The hon. gentleman knows that perfectly well. That was the result. At that time the critics blamed the hon. gentleman for his extravagance, although I consider that, at that particular time, there was a necessity for loan extravagance, because it is the duty of a Government, when times are bad, to provide work for the people. We should try to open up our resources at such a time as this to meet the bad times. (Hear, hear!) But we never do it. Hon. members say, "Hear, hear!" because they know what I say is quite true, and we know that that is the policy which the Government ought to carry out; but the Government does not carry that policy out simply because of the pressure both within the House and from outside. (Hear, hear!) Mr. Beeby, of New South Wales, delivered a speech on the financial position of New South Wales the other day. He pointed out that the Labour Government went into office sincerely desirous of carrying out their platform, but pressure from their parliamentary supporters, and the pressure of the general public, compelled them to undertake schemes that they could not finance, that has brought about the present position of affairs in New South Wales. At one period or another this policy has brought it about in every State in Australasia. I heard one hon. gentleman talking about what New Zealand has done for the settler, and asking why the Government did not follow the example of New Zealand. Why, there has been no honest financing in New Zealand for many years. Queensland would be bankrupt if it attempted to carry out some of the schemes which have been initiated in New Zealand. Look at the loan indebtedness of New Zealand. Look at the clamour for more loan money. Look at the position of affairs there, too. The people in New Zealand are beginning to realise that there must be a cessation of the mad borrowing policy otherwise there will be a big smash in that Dominion.

Mr. COYNE: They spent £2,250,000 in building a warship.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes. New Zealand is known as the "I.O.U." Colony. They decided to present the motherland with a warship. They went home and borrowed the money. They built and presented a warship to Great Britain. There was a similar proposal made in Australia. I do not know if Mr. Cook was the man who made the proposal to raise the money in Australia to pre-

sent the old country with a warship, but, anyhow, the proposal was not a success. We all know that. We have done better than that in Australia. We have done far better in the matter of land and naval defence than New Zealand has done, or even better than any other British dependency has done. (Hear, hear!) It is creditable to Australia, in the face of a grave national danger, that all political parties dropped their animosity for the time being to deal with the urgent question of defence. I think it is a good advertisement for Australia, and I do not think that anyone objects to the expenditure on defence at all. If we were to follow the example of some of the other States with regard to loan expenditure, we would be making a mistake. We are asked why we do not spend more money on workers' dwellings, and why we do not spend more money in helping the settler? All these things are good, but we have got to recollect that the Government can go no further than its finances will permit it to do. We talk about financial stability being an essential of sound government. There is no doubt that that is true. In dealing with financial matters there should be no party politics brought into it at all, because, if there be honest financial administration, the State cannot fail to progress. We do not want to be so prodigal in our expenditure that, when hard times come, money cannot be obtained, and a general smash follows, and the Government finds itself unable, through lack of means, to pay its employees, and turns hundreds of men out of employment. It is bad to have conditions of that kind. My suggestion now is—as it has always been since I have been in Parliament—we should limit our loan expenditure. We should say to the North, Centre, and South, that a certain amount will be spent on railway construction during the year, and we should not exceed it.

Hon. R. PHILP: We are doing it every year.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. gentleman says we are doing it every year, but some years, as the hon. gentleman knows, we have spent as low as £500,000 in railway construction, and I think the year before last we spent £3,000,000 in railway construction.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was not all spent on railways.

Mr. MURPHY: We spent £3,000,000 of loan money. I do not care how they spent it. My point is that Queensland, with its small population—and it has already got a big interest bill—cannot afford to spend £3,000,000 of loan money every year. Everybody admits that that is too much. We ought to let the people know how much loan money is to be spent every year. It would be a fairer thing to do that, instead of having a big table of railways passed every session and telling the people the railways are going to be built when we know that they will have to wait for years for them.

Mr. HAMILTON: They should not pass any new railway until the others are constructed.

Mr. MURPHY: That should be the policy of the Government. I sincerely hope that Providence and the British money-lender will continue to stick to the Government this year as they did last year. (Hear, hear!) I am sure that if the British money-

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lender does that, the Premier will be pleased. All the same, I repeat this: that if the Government is compelled to curtail loan expenditure rather than pay a high rate of interest for money, there will not be the great depression which some people dread. I have too much faith in the vast resources of the State to think that our prosperity is solely dependent upon the expenditure of loan money.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FIHELLY (*Paddington*), who was received with Opposition "Hear, hears!" said: I can join in the congratulations of hon. members at the healthy state of the revenue for last year—the buoyant revenue I might call it—but at the same time I regret that I cannot give the Government any commendation on the way that that revenue was administered, or upon the administration of the Government departments—upon its expenditure or upon the loans in general. It seems to me that this State has become one huge cash register, a sort of counting-house. Cheques are collected, money paid out, cheques honoured, promissory notes sent here and there, and so on, but there has been nothing done in the way of big developmental work. It occurs to me that we are right behind the times so far as the Government development of the country is concerned. Certainly the Minister for Railways has given promises, some of which have been redeemed. These promises which have been redeemed by him are pointed to as the development work completed by this Government. We have a big country and we have land to settle. We have railways to open up that land and we have also a big Education Department. But this Government will do nothing at all to solve the big city problems, or the problems surrounding the people in the country districts. It is all very well to talk about the Farmers' Union and the farmers' party, and the Downs bunch, and the pressure on the Government.

Mr. GRAYSON: The farmers' party is a good party.

Mr. FIHELLY: It is a good party. We understand that the leaders of that party went to Canossa the other day—or was it Cambocoya?—where they said they were in favour of the present Government. Whether the leader can justify himself with the gentleman who is president of the Farmers' Union outside I do not know, but apparently he has at least one thing in view, and he is determined to arrive at it by what [5.30 p.m.] ever means he can. That gentleman the other night attempted to deal with me rather summarily, and just in passing, I might tell him that he might hear the rough side of my tongue if he ever attempts to become personal again. I would advise him to remember that people who live in glass houses should pull down the blinds. It is a very easy precaution for him to take, and he should take it. My objection to the present Government is, that the revenue, big as it is, is simply expended. The Treasurer says he is only £100,000 out on either side. That is his financing. The matters of city rents, the matter of food prices, the matter that even Mr. Watt in Victoria is touching upon—the matter of gas prices—are not mentioned. And that last is also a matter which might affect this Chamber. These are matters which have not been touched upon by either

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the Treasurer or his chief. We have no comprehensive extension of the Workers' Dwellings Act.

The TREASURER: There is some gas in this Chamber that would be extinguished, if I had my way.

Mr. FIHELLY: The hon. member means probably that he would resign, but the suffering country will not let him. I say that the unfortunate workman in the cities, who has no capital, is unable to take advantage of the Workers' Dwellings Act. He has nothing wherewith he can give a deposit or to buy land, or show his good faith, and he must go on paying rents in the congested districts.

The TREASURER: You know that the facts are entirely against you.

Mr. FIHELLY: This morning I spent a very pleasant hour looking through old "Hansards," and the interjection that comes from the hon. gentleman is reminiscent of those that he used to hurl across the Chamber at his colleagues, the Secretary for Public Lands and the Secretary for Public Instruction. They were all in the same strain, that if a person disagreed with him he "is trying to damage Queensland," or else "he is telling an untruth," or perhaps—I really forgot this—"he may be a disloyalist," or "he may be a revolutionary," or, in fact, he may be like Mr. Cook in the Federal House—an ex-republican. Whatever it might be—whether he was attacking his colleague, the Attorney-General, in the other Chamber, who at that time, was not sitting on the same side of this House—

The TREASURER: Of course, you know that he never said such a thing.

Mr. FIHELLY: I will quote "Hansard" later on for the hon. gentleman. I intend to have a very pleasant afternoon at some later time, because it shows what Christian charity can do when you are sitting in the cold shades of Opposition. Nor do I want to remind the hon. gentleman of other things of which I am reminded. But what I have said about the Workers' Dwellings Act is absolutely true, and the hon. gentleman knows it. And I say that there is a conspiracy between the Government, the Tramways Company, and the Commissioner for Railways to prevent the people living out of those districts, living decently like human beings.

The TREASURER: That is not a correct statement.

Mr. FIHELLY: The hon. member for Buranda the other night talked about his district, and asked people to go there and see the slums for themselves and the conditions under which human beings had to live and rear their families. Australia has no poverty, we are told. There is no poverty in Australia, when the Premier is entertaining the British members of Parliament. I say again distinctly that there is a conspiracy between the Tramways Company, the Government, and the Railway Commissioner to keep the people in the cities for the sake of the revenue that they can get out of them.

The TREASURER: That is an absolute misstatement, and you know it.

Mr. FIHELLY: And I will go further and say that the gas company also comes



into it, the gas company, which charges a higher rate than either of the companies in Sydney or Melbourne, where they both have been clipped; and where Mr. Watt, of Victoria, who is a Liberal, is going to clip them again. They are in harmony with all the various agents who are trying to keep the people within the city precincts. I am sure that the people who come here must be charmed with our suburbs, at the beautiful hills and valleys around the city, and must stand aghast at the tragedy of their not being settled.

The TREASURER: And if they made inquiries they would find that most of the development in the suburbs is being done by the Workers' Dwellings Act.

Mr. FIELLY: The Treasurer draws the long bow, and very cleverly, by way of interjection. But his own figures in relation thereto and municipal rating will show how far astray he is. Every one of us has had a Workers' Dwellings Board return, and so on. In fact, we know that Mr. Fowles, one of the pets of the hon. gentleman, draws another £100 from that board. But, at the same time, we are not going to swallow such an absurd statement, because the hon. gentleman knows that every building society in Brisbane would be up in arms against him, were his statement anything near the truth.

The TREASURER: Absolutely true.

Mr. FIELLY: At any rate, visitors to Brisbane can see the lack of development in the suburbs. They can see about the deputation to the Premier about the Tramways Company, and their objections to the company being allowed to make a few extensions here and there. Why should we not have the benefit of cheap tramway rates and allow our people to get out of the city into the healthy suburban areas? Here, you pay 1d. to go from the North Quay to Petrie's Bight, and I have travelled miles for a halfpenny in Glasgow. And under the London County Council—I forget how much I paid, but it was some very small charge. Here is this conspiracy—the Home Secretary allowing Badger to overload the cars, to have insufficient rolling-stock—and the country members, including the leader, who generally leads his party from behind, do not object, because they at present do not want any money spent in Brisbane.

The TREASURER: Your party have been trying to get hold of the country party and failed, and now you are very angry.

Mr. FIELLY: The Treasurer says that we have been trying to get hold of the country party. May I make a suggestion to the hon. member—that he should himself get hold of it properly. He will do a good turn for the farmer, whom we want to befriend, and he will, I am sure, have the support of all members on this side of the House. I ask the hon. member to establish factories to manufacture agricultural implements. I also ask him to open a State coalmine, and to manufacture bricks in a State kiln. I ask him to subsidise co-operative movements amongst the farming people. (Hear, hear!) I say that members on this side of the House stand for these principles, and we are not contending for the support of the farmers' party. We stand for principles, and although they may be unpopular now, their time is coming, and we are prepared to suffer in the meantime until their

unpopularity is past. At any of our conventions we could sacrifice the land tax—that great fetish—but we know that it is a real necessity, and we are only waiting till we educate the farmer to believe in it so far as to realise its efficacy and see for himself that it is the only safeguard that we can give him against the land speculator and the land monopolist. I see that, recently, the Treasurer was at the opening of a co-operative bacon factory and was almost assaulted. He and another individual crossed swords in a rather heated manner, and the Treasurer's indignation followed him to a deputation in his office, because a certain poor unfortunate would not take off his hat. But the Treasurer, when he was at these bacon works, arguing with these co-operators, should have thought of these fine things—a State manufactory of agricultural implements, and a State coalmine. And I notice that the Railway Commissioner has had the audacity to establish a State sawmill. That is a particular form of socialism that will make the Downs bunch very indignant, and I do not know what Mr. Cecil Roberts will say to the Government. I do not know what the Treasurer thinks of it in his own inmost soul, if it could be exposed to the vulgar light of day; but the Railway Commissioner has not only established a State sawmill, but he also boasts that in two years the profits from the mill have more than paid for the whole thing. When the leader of the farmers' party was speaking, and was drawing near to the end of his allotted time, a member of his party gave him the tip that he had only five minutes to go. During that last lap we heard a great uproar about socialism. May I direct that honourable and gallant gentleman's attention to the Railway Commissioner's report, where he states that in two years the State sawmill which he established paid for the plant out of profits? May I also use that fact as an argument why the Treasurer should go in, and catch, and lead the farmers' party by the useful methods I have mentioned? What I complain of is that the Government merely receive moneys and expend them. They are a sort of cash register. Excuse me harping on the phrase "cash register," but it aptly describes the position. We have nothing bold, big, or comprehensive—nothing at all that can be called statesmanship—from the Government. In fact, it appears that imagination even has vanished from the Treasury bench. In the good old days, when boomsters ran the show, we had big schemes, passing plays of thought and fancy, something national, wide, and expansive. To-day we have money-boxes and rulers. The Treasurer, in his leisure moments can only devise a ruler with an advertisement on the back, asking the small child to save up—an excellent injunction to a small child; but the people of Queensland, who have £33,000,000 invested in railways, do not value a little parable printed on the back of a piece of wood.

The TREASURER: You are exceedingly sorry that the Treasurer has been able to compete with your friends in the Commonwealth.

Mr. FIELLY: Our friends in the Commonwealth! The competitors of the hon. gentleman to-day are Mr. Joseph Cook and his sturdy henchmen who conduct the Government of Australia, who run the post office, the navy, and the army, who sacked Mr. Chinn, and wiped out the kangaroo from the postage stamp.

The TREASURER: Who commenced the competition?

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Mr. FIELLY: The person who laughs last usually laughs the most satisfactorily, and the person confronting the hon. gentleman to-day is Mr. Cook, and I can assure the hon. gentleman that a small ruler and a big money-box are not going to defeat Mr. Cook. I remember that the big schemes of the Government, as disclosed in the last Financial Statement, were comprised in the number of pumpkins and melons produced in the State during the year. I am glad that pumpkins and melons, valuable as they may be as assets and useful as they may be as food-stuffs, are giving place to the more industrial money-box and the very useful mechanical ruler. But I hope the Government will think of bigger things, that they will understand that the land needs settlement, that squatters must not be allowed, through the Farmers' Union or through any other body, to conduct the legislation of this country, and that our huge revenue should not be merely collected and spent, but that something of a tangible nature that will endure should be done for the country. In his Financial Statement, the Treasurer says—

“Queensland does not yet nearly supply her own requirements, but has to import considerable quantities.”

We have a land which produces everything which can be grown on the earth, and everything of value that can be dug out of the earth, and yet we do not produce sufficient to meet all our requirements, and we do not manufacture the raw material which is obtained in the country into the marketable commodity that is of commercial value. We send across the sea our raw ores, and then buy them back as manufactured articles. We send wool to the old country, and then buy it back as a manufactured article, and on it we pay harbour dues, port dues, commissions to agents, travellers, and middlemen; and the Government make no attempt to establish factories to deal with those two products. Every time I go down the river Brisbane, I feel sorry, as an Australian, that not one among all the ships to be seen there has been built in Australia. We have no shipbuilding in Australia. You will see ships built in every part of the United Kingdom, and even vessels which have been built in Japan, which thirty years ago had no manufactories, but you will never see a boat built in Australia, unless it is the “Ena” or the “Hetherington.” I am sure that if the Treasurer left his little band of hope money-boxes at one side and turned his attention to bigger affairs, he would find better and more fruitful occupation of his time in endeavouring to make the people of Queensland a self-contained nation. The conduct of the Fisher Government during their three years in office is in striking contrast with that of the gentlemen who at present control the Treasury bench in Queensland. They at least attempted something big in the way of constructive work. They established their own factory for the manufacture of clothing for their soldiers, and they also made an earnest effort to build their own boats, or at any rate to have the parts sent out and fitted together in Australia; and their transcontinental scheme is deserving of some little credit. They are the only people who have tackled the real problems in front of Australia. As I am reminded by the hon. member for Warrego, they also established a Commonwealth Bank.

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We in Queensland, in our wisdom, take our Savings Bank money and lock it up in the Queensland National Bank for safety. The Commonwealth Government recognised that the Government are as capable as any private company of taking care of mere cash, and established a bank of their own, which is perhaps the most progressive move made in any civilised country during the last fifty years. I would recommend these things to the Treasurer just now while he has a big revenue, because, as pointed out by the hon. member for Burke, it only needs a bad season—less wool traffic—when retrenchment must come. My opinion is that some of the high officials in the service are having their salaries increased for the simple reason that if retrenchment comes along they will not suffer much. We know that retrenchment must come along when revenue is so near expenditure. The Treasurer is very fond of remarking that he was only £100,000 out. I took the trouble to take out his various estimates and compare them with actual expenditure, and the hon. gentleman is £500,000 out. Of course, when they are all looped together he is only £100,000 out, but he was £100,000 out each way on railways alone. On income tax he was £70,000 out. In the stamp tax he was £53,000 out, which, I would suggest to him, shows a very big leakage somewhere, and shows great carelessness in some part of the administration.

The TREASURER: Your argument shows that you know nothing at all about it.

Mr. FIELLY: Licenses were underestimated by £6,000, which is a very serious matter, and the remarkable thing—I give every credit to the hon. gentleman for it—is that his only really accurate estimate was so far as totalisators are concerned. One must have experience, I maintain, to be able to deal with these matters in a proper fashion, and I compliment the hon. gentleman for his close study of this particular matter of totalisators. The hon. gentleman remarked “that I knew nothing at all about it.” I am taking his own figures to show how much he is out. There is one thing at least that the most stupid mathematician should know something about, and that is the revenue derived from the Commonwealth; and the hon. gentleman is £15,000 out there. I will quote his own words in regard to this matter. I will confute him out of his own mouth.

Mr. FORSYTH: Whose estimate are you going on in the figures for the Commonwealth?

Mr. FIELLY: I am taking his own figures. I will give you the Treasurer's words of last year, and I am sure the hon. member for Murrumba will be satisfied when he hears them. The hon. gentleman said—

“It is quite an easy matter to estimate what is going to be received from the Commonwealth.”

And he is £15,000 out. Convicted out of his own mouth.

Mr. FORSYTH: That is what the Commonwealth said they would give us, but they did not.

Mr. FIELLY: The leader of the country Liberal party seems to set the fashion here—the fashion of misrepresentation. He attempted to misrepresent the more prominent members on this side, and I regret very much that other hon. members on the

other side are drifting into that very bad habit. The hon. member who leads the country party talked about Mr. Fisher and the Acts that he passed for the abolition of the excise and bounty, and he made a clear statement in his speech to-night that it was Fisher's fault that there was any delay.

Mr. SWAYNE: Certainly it was.

Mr. FIDELLY: The hon. member, who is also an executive officer of the country party, confirms the statement of his leader, which is very loyal of him. However, I quoted, earlier in the session, an article from "The Australian Sugar Grower," which, amongst other things, said—

"The Hon. J. Cook, has sent a message to the Australian Sugar Planters' Association through the three Liberal senators, the Hons. T. D. Chataway, R. J. Sayers, and A. J. J. St. Ledger, to the effect that in the event of the Liberal party being returned to power, at the approaching general election, proclamations abolishing excise and bounty unconditionally will at once be issued."

That pledge was never kept. Mr. Chataway, in the same paper, said—

"It may sound strange; but I hope that only a few more contributions will go from my pen to the "Sugar Journal." If the Liberals are returned to power the excise and bounty will disappear without conditions."

The Liberals were returned to power, and yet hon. members in this Chamber have the brazen audacity to still blame Mr. Fisher, although Mr. Cook was found to be more severe than Mr. Fisher was in the original proposal. When the Premier was speaking subsequently, I asked him by way of interjection—

"Is Mr. Cook's attitude the same as Mr. Fisher's?"

"The Premier: Absolutely."

And we know from experience, notwithstanding their brazen impudence, that Mr. Cook demanded more than Andrew Fisher demanded, and we know that he got it. At least it is thought that he got it, but we are not quite sure whether he got all that he thought he got. But had it been Mr. Fisher who had delayed the matter after this Parliament passed certain legislation, what an outcry there would have been in the Tory Press. Mr. Cook took a stand even more severe than Mr. Fisher proposed, which was the strongest indictment of the present Government that has ever been made in regard to any Queensland Government so far. While I am on Messrs. Cook and Fisher, it appears very strange to me that the people's money, which, you will remember was filched from them by Mr. Fisher—it appears strange that Mr. Cook collects the same amount of interest on that money, and that he will not give any extension of time. We know the Federal campaign was carried out on two or three articles on the other side. One was that Mr. Fisher, through the note issue and the Commonwealth Bank, stole money from the people, and then he had the audacity to lend this money back to the people at interest. We were shocked by it. Our sense of decency—financial and every sort of decency—was shocked by that, but we do not hear that Mr. Cook, who belongs to the same great

Liberal party, has lowered the rate of interest since then, nor do we hear that he has given any extension of time. I think Mr. Fisher is more than vindicated. Every one of his actions has been confirmed by his successors in office, and, in the light of later developments, we are only wondering how moderate he was and how tamed Mr. Cook has the Treasurer and Premier. I suggest to the Treasurer that, while this great united Liberal party holds the reins of office, he should arrive at some understanding with Mr. Cook about a redistribution of the revenue derived from the Commonwealth. I certainly think, and I always was of the opinion, that the States are entitled to more money for developmental work, than they can get. I also think the Commonwealth has too much money to spend in their own particular sphere. For the next ten years I anticipate that the Commonwealth will loom more largely than the States, but after that period, when the tariff becomes a settled policy, when defence also is a settled policy, and when the big railways in the Territory and Papua are proceeded with, and the Federal capital gone on with to a certain stage, I think the States, with their big factors, and their railways, land, and education, will come back to their own, and will require big money for expenditure. The

Treasurer should come to some [7 p.m.] agreement with the Commonwealth to obtain more revenue.

It is all very well for members of the British Parliament like Mr. Lough to say that the Commonwealth build their railways out of revenue. That is so, but they build them at the expense of the States. They get their revenue fairly easily; they have not to work for it—it is always assured; and I hope that, now that the great Liberal party is in power, the Treasurer will make some agreement whereby he will be able to lay his hands on more money and not have to approach the foreign money-lender for cash at a ruinous rate of interest. On that particular topic, I also think that the time is ripe to rottenness for Mr. Cook to give us the money invested in transferred properties. His Treasurer, Sir John Forrest, has £2,000,000 to juggle with. If he only gave us an advance of £300,000 or £500,000, instead of charging us with big interest upon our own money, to use the Treasurer's words, it would be better for the State and much better for the Commonwealth. I would just like to touch upon the scathing criticism of our land administration of the hon. member for Murilla; and, seeing that the Secretary for Lands is in his place, I would also refer to the fact that the hon. member for Townsville—a former Premier—strongly condemned the hon. gentleman's administration a short while ago. I hope the hon. gentleman will take that to heart, and that he will pay closer attention to his duties, and attempt to set right the matters on which the hon. member for Townsville laid his finger. I am sure that the hon. member from the North was perfectly conscientious in so far as the Minister was concerned. The hon. member for Murilla said that he would not advise his own brother to come here under present conditions.

The TREASURER: Was not that with reference to prickly-pear land?

Mr. FIDELLY: I am simply quoting the hon. member's own words. He said he would not advise his own brother to come here and settle down.

*Mr. Fidelity.]*

The TREASURER: On a prickly-pear selection.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I will take the risk of saying that the hon. member for Murilla made a general statement, and, if I am proved to be wrong I am prepared to make a personal correction to-morrow afternoon at half-past 3, provided the Treasurer will do the same if he should be proved to be wrong.

The TREASURER: You are simply drawing a bow at a venture in the hope that you may hit someone.

Mr. FIEHELLY: The hon. member for Murilla has done rather well in Queensland. He had only got off the boat, so to speak, when he got into Parliament, and his land has improved in value out of all proportion. If he says that he would not advise his own brother to come here, and also to be a Premier in embryo, then things must be bad indeed, and there must be something rotten in the land administration. There must be something very wrong when a member, who has been in the State only a few years and who is comparatively wealthy, will not advise his own brother to come here. As I do not pose as an authority on land matters, I shall leave the Government to the criticism of the hon. member for Murilla. The hon. member for Eacham has obliged me very considerably by turning up the speech of the hon. member for Murilla—I do not say he has obliged the Treasurer—I am sure the hon. gentleman is very much annoyed, because "Hansard" confirms my statement, which the Treasurer very cunningly tried to quibble about. The hon. member for Murilla said—

"I am receiving letters from Victoria every day, asking me if I can put people on suitable lands, and I must confess that I have to write back and tell them not to come to Queensland at the present moment."

The TREASURER: Read on.

Mr. FIEHELLY: Further down he said—

"I could not write and advise my brother to come here and take up a prickly-pear selection under those circumstances."

The TREASURER: So that it was in connection with prickly-pear selections?

Mr. FIEHELLY: I wish to be fair, and that is why I quoted the latter part. He said that he would not advise his own brother to come here and take up a prickly-pear selection, but the first statement was of general application, and referred to the hon. member's friends in Victoria. There must be something wrong with the land administration of this State when such a statement is made by the hon. member for Murilla. The hon. member who leads the party supported by the hon. member for Murilla endorses the statement, because he said that he feels a great deal of dissatisfaction at things perpetrated by the Ministry. I know the Treasurer felt a good deal of dissatisfaction with things perpetrated by the Ministry when he was in Opposition. I notice that the Secretary for Public Lands used to feel the same. It seems to be an easy road to get from the Opposition or from the rank and file to a seat on the Treasury bench to express dissatisfaction with things done by the Ministry.

Mr. KIRWAN: They adopt the role of the candid friend.

[*Mr. Fiehellly.*

Mr. FIEHELLY: Coming to the railways, I am of the opinion that they deserve some criticism. To my mind, they are scandalously managed. I say that coldly. There is no heat about my statement. I think they are bungled from start to finish. I think the Murphy's Creek disaster is an index to the management of the whole railway system. The Minister prides himself upon the fact that they had a clean record a while ago, and now his prominent officials are hounding the poor unfortunate strikers, harassing them, making their families bad citizens by not giving them a fair wage, and, generally speaking, looking after those vindictive details instead of looking to the policy of the country and the development of our railways in a proper way. It may surprise hon. members to know—but I have investigated the matter, and can guarantee that it is a fact—that we actually lose money on our stock trains. There is certainly a big turnover, and the average man in the country thinks that, like on our wool, we are making a huge profit. But we are actually losing money on our stock trains, and all to boost up the squatter and to give the meat companies bigger dividends, and also, incidentally, so that we can place meat on the London market cheaper than we can give it to our own citizens in Australia. I have taken the trouble to work out some of the figures in connection with the stock trains.

The TREASURER: Are there not some rebates in connection with the freights?

Mr. FIEHELLY: Exactly; but that 25 per cent. rebate that is allowed there operates in a good way to give them cheap meat in London; they can make it up here easily. They get a 25 per cent. rebate there, and, as far as I can gather—I am quite sure the officials are not too communicative—they are the old drought rates. These are very excellent rates for the squatters, and the squatters do not want them altered. My attention was drawn to this during Exhibition week, when I saw particulars of a deputation to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner's reply. That started me on a general inquiry into the matter. From what I can ascertain, for a distance of 500 miles, each head of cattle in Queensland costs 13s. 7d., while in New South Wales it is 17s. 4d.; for sheep it is 1s. 5d., and in New South Wales 1s. 9d.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I gave those particulars to the House on the motion of the hon. member for Maranoa.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I am sorry about that, because it would have saved me a lot of worry. At any rate, it is an extraordinary thing that New South Wales rates and freights are so much in excess of the Queensland rates, so far as pastoral products are concerned; whereas, in agricultural matters, New South Wales, for a mere matter of 325 miles, is 100 per cent. cheaper than we are. We have certain concessions for the Downs bunch, because the via recta has not been built. We have 15 miles, and 15 per cent., and other things, which are a bit too intricate for me to go into here; but with all those concessions it will surprise you to know that agricultural produce can be brought to Brisbane from Warwick at double the expense it costs for a similar distance in New South Wales. What a remarkable thing that this Ministry, which is supposed to be influenced and controlled by the hon. member for Burrum, who is chairman of the country

farmers' party, or the country Liberal party—we are not sure which—but this Government which is inspired by them, which is going to introduce a produce Bill, which is further going to reduce certain profits of certain Ministers—(Opposition laughter)—this Ministry, run by the farmers, is pandering to the squatters, and giving the farmers nothing. You only need this little comparison between the freights in New South Wales and the freights here to realise how well the squatters are doing. You have only to inquire into the Railway Department—I must say the officials have been very kind to me, but at the same time they would not go beyond a certain point—you have only to inquire what a mail train costs, and whether stock trains pay—and my own solid conviction is that they do not pay at all, and that is a scandal. I say again that this Government is run by the squatters—the squatters, to whom Mr. Cecil Roberts belongs, to whom Mr. Wienholt, their only candidate, belonged, and who raised a big fund for the work of the association throughout Queensland. It is not run by the farmers, nor is it in the farmers' interests, and the middlemen in charge of it have no concern about the farmers' welfare generally. Another matter which came under my notice while I was delving into railways, is in regard to Gladstone and Rockhampton. With all due respect to those members concerned, it seems to me very unfair that high-class goods from Longreach to Gladstone should cost £1 a ton more than from Longreach to Rockhampton—that there is some preferential rate in favour of Rockhampton right along that line, and that the moment the goods come south, whether to Gladstone or Brisbane, there is a fine put on them. It can be called nothing else but a fine, and that is why it operates mainly in giving shipping people very satisfactory concessions when they do not deserve them.

Mr. COYNE: The hon. member for Port Curtis stated that he was going to get all that removed.

Mr. FIFELLY: We know that the hon. member for Port Curtis is more or less of a confidence man. (Laughter.) I am astonished that, with good seasons, we should still be giving these concessions to the squatters. I trust the Commissioner for Railways will look into the matter, instead of relentlessly following half a dozen unfortunate fellows who went out on strike. There is a little matter also in connection with the railways that the hon. member for Brisbane deserves a good deal of credit for, and that is for ascertaining the amount spent in advertising during the Exhibition. We know very well that Mr. Badger spent nothing in advertising—that shipping companies spent nothing extra in advertising—and we also know that the people in the country are kept abreast of the various train movements and the amendments made in the timetables. Yet we find that £250 was spent in advertising—in giving sops to conservative rags. Naturally, the "Courier" heads the list with £45. No wonder the Labour people are relegated to oblivion by the gallant colonel who conducts the "Gallery Notes" column for the "Courier." No wonder he gets his little bit of spleen in on them, and misrepresents them, and figuratively gives them a blow in the middle of the back. (Laughter.) Forty-five pounds for telling the country people how they are to get to Brisbane! Coming down further—I must again say that the hon. member for Brisbane ascertained this infor-

mation—the other conservative papers get a fair lump also. I notice that one paper founded quite recently—the literary scavenger of, perhaps, all Australia, with a circulation, I will guarantee, of no more than 400 copies—gets £12. I will not give the paper an advertisement by mentioning its name, but the literary garbage tin, run by a drunken blackguard—that paper with a circulation of a few hundred—gets £12. That, I say, is a disgrace. I see, also, that the Treasurer, who says he keeps a tight hold on the purse, has given that man an advertisement for the Savings Bank. I say the Treasurer should be ashamed of himself, and if he will only do what I say, and ascertain the circulation, if he is a conscientious man, he must withdraw that advertisement to-morrow. I say that in all good faith; but, of course, these papers are conservative papers. This particular paper was founded by the National Liberal fund in Sydney. It is subsidised, and the editor gets, probably, something to have an extra beer on. While on this matter in relation to papers, there is another paper in Brisbane that was refused an advertisement, and that is the "Age." That has an assured and guaranteed circulation, and it shows the dishonesty of the people who administer the railway advertising fund that they would not give that paper some of their money. After all, if advertising is to be more than double the cost, especially State advertising, give it to a paper with a good circulation, a paper which is going to inform the people of what you want to tell them. The "Age" is knocked out, and this scurrilous reptile contemporary, which I refuse to mention, got the sum of £12 10s. I sincerely hope the Ministry will review the general advertising—the railway advertising in particular, and also the Savings Bank advertising. It seems a pity that money is recklessly thrown away in that careless fashion, and I hope that something will be done, because it is really a most reprehensible thing—a thing to be deprecated—when good cash raised from the unfortunate man getting 7s. or 8s. a day, and who has 2d. deducted in the paysheet for the stamp tax—it is pitiable to think that these unfortunate labourers have to pay so that blackguards like the man who controls the particular paper I have mentioned can live. I would not mind if the paper had a circulation.

The TREASURER: It is very well to make charges like that under the privileges of the House.

Mr. FIFELLY: I am game to make any charge I made here outside.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FIFELLY: I am game to do a little more than that.

The TREASURER: You are very game when you are speaking under privilege.

Mr. FIFELLY: The hon. gentleman at one time told a deliberate lie about a man who afterwards became his chief, and he did it under the privileges of this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FIFELLY: If the Treasurer is looking for fight in that particular direction, he will get it.

The TREASURER: Mr. Stodart, I ask: Is the hon. member for Paddington in order in stating that I told a deliberate lie?

Mr. THEODORE: Will you say that it was true at that time?

*Mr. Fihelly.]*

The CHAIRMAN: The remark made by the hon. member for Paddington is quite unparliamentary, and I must ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. FIELLY: In accordance with the usages of this House, I withdraw it, if the hon. gentleman says that the statement he made was true.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman must withdraw the statement unreservedly.

Mr. FIELLY: I withdraw it unreservedly. The hon. gentleman made the statement that Mr. Kidston was drummed out of Falkirk, and he made it in this House under privilege. I ask him to go outside and make that statement, and let Mr. Kidston deal with him.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FIELLY: I trust that I have dealt with that matter sufficiently. There is one other matter with regard to railways that I might refer to, and that is the crass ignorance of the Railway Commissioner in his dealings with Badger. He should be competing with Badger. He should be running motors on his railway lines for the benefit of the people just as he runs them for his own private use and for the use of his officials. If necessary, he should also run motor buses to feed his own termini instead of feeding Badger's trams. That will do for the Railway Department. I next come to the Education Department, which I look on as a very important department. I am very pleased that the Minister for Education took the advice which I gave him last year when I suggested that he should train artisans, especially boys going to school, by which they could be thoroughly equipped for the battle of life. I suggested that last year, and the Minister told me it would receive every consideration. I am very glad that he has considered it and adopted it, and I hope that, under sympathetic administration, that venture will be made a complete success. I am sorry to see, on glancing down the Estimates, that the expenditure voted for medical inspection was not appropriated. Last year I complained about this, and it is to be regretted that our children should be neglected. In New Zealand they have a card system, which I will bring before the House when we are considering the Estimates, and I will present the House with full particulars showing that in New Zealand they can trace the child practically from the day it is born until it leaves school, at any rate. There they look after the health of the children, which this Government do not appear to bother about. With all our talk about our education system, and with the big advertisements which the daily newspapers have been receiving lately, it does seem to be absurd that we are spending—taking the figures of "Knibbs" for 1911-12—only 14s. per head on education, while the average for Australia is 15s. 9d. per head. So we are not too lavish in our education expenditure. We are not too kind to the children of the working people who are growing up. Later on I hope we will get to the Australian average of 15s. 9d. per head, which in itself is nothing wonderful. I was going to give the Treasurer something about his Savings Bank, which he has been advertising so freely in the conservative papers. I was going to tell him something about his extravagance there, and of his general neglect of the welfare of the taxpayers who provide

[Mr. Fihelly.]

the money which is spent in so ridiculous a manner. The people know we have got a Savings Bank; they know we have a State bank; and there is no necessity to spend one halfpenny in advertising that fact. Everybody is well aware of it. However, I will tell the Treasurer that the deposits in his Savings Bank per head are less in Queensland than in any other State in Australia, which indicates that there is something pretty bad in his management of that bank. That is according to the 1911-12 figures. I will tell him also that the average deposits per 1,000 people are less in Queensland than in any other State. We had some excellent figures given by the hon. gentleman about the gross figures, but when you get the fact that the average deposit is £11 11s. 8d. in Queensland, £14 odd in much despised New South Wales, £14 odd in Victoria, £19 odd in South Australia, and £14 odd in Western Australia, we wonder where the good administration comes in in Queensland. We wonder if we are not a huge cash register with a little girl behind the counter taking in the money and giving out the tickets. There is nothing in that administration. In connection with immigration I complained last year that the Government spent £70,000 on immigration in excess of the money appropriated. That money was unauthorised, and the Treasurer and his chief came here with the smug promise that it would not happen again. On looking through the tables this year I find that £21,000 was spent last year which was not authorised. Am I right? There is no reply from the hon. gentleman. There was £21,000 spent on immigration last year that was not authorised by this House.

The TREASURER: The hon. gentleman is altogether wrong.

Mr. FIELLY: Was there not an excess of £21,000 spent in regard to immigration?

The TREASURER: You said it was not authorised by the House.

Mr. FIELLY: It must have been transferred from some other vote, then, as it was not authorised under the heading of immigration.

The TREASURER: It was.

Mr. FIELLY: The Premier said he would be satisfied with £30,000 and he spent £50,000. I have taken the trouble to look up these things, and I know that of my own knowledge. There was a deep-laid scheme to spend more money on immigration, and that is shown by the financial receipts from the Commonwealth. On that particular matter the Treasurer under-estimated his receipts by £15,000, which represents 11,245 persons whom he expected to bring in here as immigrants. We want some system in the matter of immigration. We do not want a rush this year and a slackening off next year. We want something that is modulated and which will run easy, and we want a system whereby proper provision will be made for every man, woman, and child that comes here. I am giving the hon. gentleman a few hints as regards the development of the country. I consider that the best immigrant is the native-born immigrant—the child born in the country. We pay a doctor to examine the immigrants when they leave England; we give them cheap passages; we pay a doctor to examine them on their arrival in Queensland, and we provide them with free medicines and free doctor en route. In-

stead of doing that the Government should supplement the £5 bonus by providing free nurses and medicine for every child born here. I would wipe out the £5 altogether, as I have no time for it. I would give proper attention to the mother and child. Infantile mortality is not high in Queensland, but it is not the fault of the Queensland Government. If we adopted that method there would be no need for the £5. In the meantime, of course, the £5 is very necessary indeed. I notice my time is getting on, and I have to jump over a few things which I intended speaking on here. I particularly wanted to talk about the farmers, and I would like to quote some things from the old world regarding their foolishness at the present juncture, but I will not be able to do so now. I am sorry to see so many big increases down for the big-salaried people.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: I ask the leave of the Committee to make a personal explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the hon. member for Burrum be permitted to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: In speaking this afternoon I quoted from a speech made by the leader of the Opposition on Wednesday last, in which the following sentence appears:—

“How is it that during last year there has been a falling off in the number of acres under cultivation in this State?”

In quoting that sentence I was under the impression that it was part of the speech delivered by the hon. the leader of the Opposition on Wednesday last, but I now find that it was a quotation made by him from a speech he delivered at the Labour Convention in February last.

Mr. RYAN: Dealing with the previous Financial Statement.

Lieut.-Colonel RANKIN: Yes, dealing with the previous Financial Statement. I do not desire that there should be any misapprehension with regard to the matter, so I make this explanation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

#### SUPPLY.

##### FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE IN COMMITTEE.

Mr. B. H. CORSER (*Burnett*): Every Queenslanders must be proud of the state of the finances of Queensland at the present time, and I congratulate the Treasurer on the Financial Statement which he presented to this House in August last. Not only can we congratulate the Treasurer, but we can also congratulate the Premier and his Ministry on achieving for Queensland the ninth successive surplus on the financial year's operations, whilst under similar circumstances other States have produced deficits. I might point out that the Treasurer, in his

modesty, does not attribute all the success to himself; he says the good seasons

[7.30 p.m.] have helped him. But good seasons have been the rule in many of the other States, and I think I might claim that right through, New South Wales particularly, the seasons have been as good during the last financial year as has been the rule in Queensland for the same period, and yet that State has returned a deficit of £1,500,000. The Treasurer under-estimated his revenue by £109,911, and I contend that in making provision for his expenditure, it was necessary that he should be below instead of above. His expenditure was above the estimate by £109,464, which very nearly cuts out the increase in revenue. It is somewhat alarming, and I might say that the annual increase in expenditure has been alarming, because seasons can easily reduce our revenue, but we cannot easily reduce our expenditure at the same time. I think we might well take a word of warning, and if we increase our expenditure we might increase it possibly on reproductive works in the country, as suggested by some members of the farming section of this side. I notice that the total loan expenditure during the last five years was £11,535,327, a very big amount, but when we come to find that of that sum £9,903,492 has been spent on railways and other reproductive works, then I think it is sound business, particularly as we find that the balance of that money has been practically expended in assisting local authorities and water boards and in other ways which are going to be of profit to the people generally.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And which are to be repaid.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: Certainly, which are intended to be repaid. Our interest bill amounts to £1,844,096, but when we come to find that our receipts from loan works were £1,436,049, it is not so alarming, and leaves an actual charge of £408,047 against revenue, and the income tax of £450,000 compensates for the lot, so that I think it is really good sound business. I think the Government and the Cabinet are to be congratulated, and I feel sure that members on both sides of the House will feel pleased with the condition of the finances as revealed by the Treasurer. Railways are matters which interest practically every district in the State, and I may say that I am a little bit disappointed at the great progress that is being made with the Great Western and North Coast Railways. I think it was stated that these railways were to be constructed in ten years, but I think that at the rate that the Minister is pushing them ahead at the present time, he will be finished under ten years, and that the 330 miles which are under construction to-day are having a bad effect on the construction of the lines into agricultural districts and eating up too much money.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Is not the North Coast Railway through an agricultural district?

Mr. B. H. CORSER: It is portion of it, but I may say that at the present time those people have transit by water, and there are people in other districts who have not even that facility. (Hear, hear!)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They have no transit at all.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: The pushing forward of these lines has to a great extent

*Mr. B. H. Corser.]*

been the cause of the delay in the construction of the line into the North Burnett. And I do not think that there is any member in this House who knows more of the facilities offering there for settlement than the Secretary for Railways. The Premier, in his Ministerial statement to the House last year, made it clear that that was one of the railways decided upon, and, although certainly he did not give a date on which its construction was to be commenced, it was left to the Secretary for Railways to push that line.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are constructing a section now.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: Not the section referred to by the Premier in his Ministerial statement. I am alluding to the line from Mundubbera to the North-west Burnett, the line which was selected of the two, in preference to that from Wolca to Eidsvold and the North Burnett. They were in dispute for a long time, and it was decided that full information should be obtained by experts from the departments. Now, the Lands Department is opening up 300,000 acres of land in that district for settlement, and I fear that because the actual course of the railway is not decided upon, they are likely to make a mess of it, in this way: They are designing roads leading to what they think may be the proposed line; they cannot be right in all particulars, and they may find that they have cut up the land in such a way that the line will unnecessarily cut through selections, as occurred at Dallarnil, through no fault of the Railway Department. I know of one individual in particular, a Mr. Dobby, who had his water supply cut right off from his selection. The greater part of the selection is on one side of the line and the permanent water on the other. I know that this selector made application to the Railway Department to have an open crossing placed across the line so that he could take his stock over to the water, and I am very sorry to see that the department has not seen its way clear to grant it, in place of the gates which exist at present. In reference to stock trains, I notice that the traffic on the line from Gayndah to Mungar last year established a record, so far as the South of Queensland is concerned, but the alarming feature of it is that, in spite of that fact, the line did not pay interest—I think the return was £2 4s. 4d. on the cost of construction—so that I think something really should be done. Whether the fault is that there is not enough being charged on these trains, or whether the fault lies with the construction of the line, I do not know. Some time ago, I think, ten cattle trucks were hauled by one engine, but to-day only six can be hauled because of an accident at one point on the line. It seems a pity that for all time small trains will have to be made up if they are going to result in deficits at the end of the year. There is another matter which largely interests the hon. members for Wide Bay and Maryborough, and that is the Tinana deviation. I understand that the Premier has been very considerate and given a lenient ear to the suggestions put forward, and I know the Minister has had a trial survey made, so that I think everything is going well so far as these particular members and their constituencies are concerned. But I think that the Burnett people should have their side considered, and it is my intention, when

[Mr. B. H. Corser.

this Bill comes before us, to have something to say about this deviation, because we must preserve the interests of the Burnett, even if we are going to do damage to somebody else. There are some on the present line who may lose their stations, and many who should know say that the department will not keep the double line if they get the deviation through. If they do get it, all that we want is a guarantee from the people who know, not only from politicians, but from members of the Cabinet, that they will keep that line open and maintain the two lines, and, what is more, we should require a guarantee that we should not be charged extra railage over that line to come to Brisbane. I think such concessions are made on the Toowoomba line, and that the extra distance run is not charged for produce and passengers, and I contend that if this line is constructed, the people of the Burnett and the produce from the Burnett coming to Brisbane should not be charged for the extra distance. I am perfectly well aware that there will not be much produce coming to Brisbane at that time, because the deep-water port will be open, but at the same time I think that if that line is built for the convenience of travellers over the North Coast Railway, or even for a national convenience, the people of the Burnett should not be compelled to travel a greater distance than they have to travel at present and pay for that greater distance. With reference to prickly-pear settlement, things seem to be going along smoothly enough in some directions, although probably in some particulars we might have some little amendments made in the Act to the advantage of the people who are first selectors of prickly-pear lands. A desirable amendment would be to apply to Crown township allotments pear-clearing conditions. At the present time, when a township is cut up and sold, speculators or residents in the district can buy those township allotments, either pear-infested or non-infested land, and they have not to fulfil any clearing conditions. There should no longer be the excuse that the Act will not permit of such lands when sold being included under the prickly-pear conditions. The Hon. J. T. Bell did a great deal of good when administering the Lands Department, and brought in a number of Bills which were an advantage to the department and the country, but they now need revision, as it is found after they have been put into practical operation that many people have left their prickly-pear blocks after spending a good deal of money on them, and the land has reverted to the Crown. That is not desirable, and the sooner the Lands Department recognise the fact, and do something to try to keep these men on the land where they have gained experience in dealing with the pear, even if that has to be done at some sacrifice to the department, the better it will be for the country.

Mr. COYNE: What is the area of those blocks?

Mr. B. H. CORSER: The area of the blocks I am speaking of is 200 and 300 acres. I urge, as I have advocated before, that the pear question should be placed in the hands of a board consisting of practical men from the Lands Department or somewhere else, and that they should have power to grant an extension of time, in the interests of the community generally.

Mr. COYNE: What about those experts on the Royal Commission?



Mr. B. H. CORSER: I think they might very well be recalled, if they have not gathered any more information during the first six months of their investigations than is contained in their first report. When an entomologist and vegetable pathologist tell us in their first report that they find that pear is being cleared by the use of arsenic and soda—a thing which we knew ten years ago—we do not learn much from their inquiries. I might here refer to a remark made by the hon. member for Paddington with reference to something which fell from the hon. member for Murilla. The hon. member for Paddington said the hon. member for Murilla stated that he would not recommend anyone, not even his own brother, to take up land. That was not what the hon. member for Murilla said. What the hon. member referred to was prickly-pear land. I have not looked up his speech in "Hansard," but I was present when he spoke, and I distinctly remember that he was referring to prickly-pear land, and that it was that kind of land he said he would not ask his brother to take up under present conditions.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is correct.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: The butter industry should claim a lot of attention from this House at the present time. We know that England is no longer a market for anything but first-class butter. Margarine has become so popular in England that really it is time we considered this question in the interests of the great number of people we have settled on our lands and who are engaged in the dairying industry. Those people were induced to go on the land by the Crown, and it is the duty of Parliament to see in what direction they can be assisted in this their hour of danger. I hope the Government will institute some investigations into this matter, and help those people in a manner I am able to suggest. I do not say that dairy inspection should be more stringent than it is at the present time, but I think the Government should help them in another direction. A hot climate is not favourable to the making of the best butter, though we know that it was proved at the show at Islington that we can make the best butter, and that if rumour is true we manufacture very much of the butter that is supposed to come from Denmark. Our agricultural settlements are scattered, our dairying country is scattered, and this makes it impossible for us under present conditions to have good roads to enable dairymen to deliver cream as often as it should be delivered in the hot weather. If the Government could see their way to assist the local authorities in such a way as would make it possible for them to secure some of the revenue derived from the sale of Crown lands and timber for the purpose of road making, that would be a great assistance. I claim that assisting the local authorities in this way would not necessarily imply more taxation, or the imposition of a land tax, or an increase in the income tax, as it would be very easy for the Crown when throwing open land to allocate one-tenth of the revenue derived from that land to the local authorities for the purpose mentioned. That will have to be done, if the local authorities are to be placed in a position to make roads which will enable dairymen to carry their cream to the factories more regularly and quicker, in order to manufacture butter to be placed on the British market. I might say

that this business has received some consideration from me, and I find that the manufacturers of this article are extending their business with wonderful rapidity and success. In Denmark they are importing some 2,000,000 lb. of margarine a year, and in 1912, they manufactured in their own country, in twenty-two factories, no less than 63,500,000 lb. That country that is manufacturing a first-class butter is not affected by the manufacture of margarine, since they can put their first-class butter on the market, and now they are coming with margarine to capture the market for second-class butter, much of which comes from Australia, because the conditions here render it impossible for our cream to arrive at the factories in the state it should. Germany, in 1912, produced no less than 440,000,000 lb. of margarine, and the business is extending there every day. You will notice there is a bit of a stir amongst the island plantations in the New Hebrides, and we find that plantations there that have been lying idle for a number of years, as there was nothing much doing in copra, are now being taken up and worked. What is the reason? Nothing more than that margarine is getting on the market, and copra oil in Liverpool last year realised £40 a ton. We all know that the United Kingdom is our greatest butter market, and in 1912, in coconut butter alone, they imported over 500,000 lb., and 630,360 lb. of oil for manufacture, and they claim also that they have the largest margarine factory in the world just outside London, employing 1,000 hands, and their weekly output is 1,000 lb. of margarine. This matter really deserves our serious consideration, because, as I have said before, we have put so many people on the land, and these people are making their living directly by dairying. They have borrowed money, secured cattle, and have erected stalls; they are paying for their land, and in many cases the land is not suitable for agriculture; and if these people are not able to get their butter on the market in first-class condition, then Queensland's finances will not be as satisfactory as they have been. We should take time by the hand, and if this is a word of warning, I can assure you it has not come too soon. The Department of Agriculture I contend is still starved. At the present time it has all the old Acts to administer—every old thing at all is shoved on to the Agricultural Department to administer. Its experts cannot go out and they cannot administer their several departments because they are not allowed to speak.

Mr. COYNE: Do you consider the department is well administered?

Mr. B. H. CORSER: I do not think it has been. I think it is like an old broody hen: all the eggs are under it, and they are not allowed to hatch. They cannot hatch as there is no warmth in them. I believe the present Minister has sufficient warmth and enthusiasm in him to hatch some of these eggs, and I think the first thing he hatched is the new director of Gatton College. The Principal of Gatton College has a free hand, I understand, and so he should have. So should all the experts in the Agricultural Department have a free hand, and I think if they had had a free hand in the past we would possibly not have any great troubles in the dairy business at the present time. We would not have—as I heard coming down in the train—"blackleg" starting throughout the country and no report or warning from

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the Agricultural Department that such is the case. A further reason for anxiety in regard to the butter industry is contained in a cable of the 15th instant, reporting an important project in Western Africa, and in which it states that the Government have sanctioned the building of a railway in Western Africa at an estimated cost of £3,000,000. This great artery of 550 miles in length will tap what is considered to be the largest and richest palm oil belt in the world. The cable states further that the line will traverse a mysterious country, and an unknown land. In this connection I want to point out that palm oil at the present time has not been used in the manufacture of margarine. It has only been used for the manufacture of soap and candles, but we find that the average of fat in the kernels from this palm is 30 per cent. I also learn that there is no limit to the supply of this product. It requires no planting, and I feel perfectly confident that this tremendous company is opening this valuable territory in the interests of margarine. It is claimed for this oil that it has the consistency of butter, it is not tainted in any shape or form, and a report of ten years' standing goes to show that some day it may be used as a substitute for butter, and I claim that that is what the company is out for at the present time.

Mr. McCORMACK: What are we to do about it?

Mr. B. H. CORSER: We cannot prevent people from eating margarine, but this Government can construct roads to assist the farmers in this country, and enable them to produce butter which will outsell margarine. It is only first-class butter that there is any sale for at the present time, and if we do not look out, we will not get a sale for that.

Mr. COYNE: Sending the bad stuff home is killing the whole trade.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: It is not always the fault of the farmer. Take the Munduberra district. For years a railway was promised to them. It has now been under construction for about 140 weeks, and it is not open yet. These people have had to send their cream to Munduberra and then another 23 miles to Gayndah—something like 50 miles to a butter factory—and how can it arrive there in first-class order? Assistance in the

direction I have indicated to [8 p.m.] the people engaged in the dairy-ing industry will save a very nasty situation arising in the future. With regard to the Home Secretary's Department, I do not wish to refer to it in detail, nor to any other departments until they come before us on the Estimates, but I must say that in the present Home Secretary we have a born administrator of that department. A little time back we had an opportunity of seeing one of the institutions under the hon. gentleman's administration, and from time to time we have seen others, and I must say that they reflect credit upon the hon. gentleman. The same may be said of the Department of Public Instruction, with its able Minister and its very capable and energetic Under Secretary. I might also say that I was very pleased to see the increased vote for schools on last year's Estimates. We wanted many in the Burnett, and we got them. If you go right through Queensland, there are not many instances where there is any complaint against the Education Department—probably not many against many of the

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other departments. You could not find better officials than some of the officials in the Lands Department. Still, I claim that there should be something done in connection with the terms on which our settlers have taken up land. Their tenure should be extended, if possible, and the people who have taken up prickly-pear selections should be assisted, and should have a board to deal with them.

Mr. McCORMACK (*Cairns*): It is remarkable that most of the speakers from the other side, during the course of this debate, have made a point of holding up New South Wales and its deficits to show how good our financiers are compared with the Labour Government in that State; but there are circumstances connected with the deficits in New South Wales which hon. members opposite have not taken the trouble to point out. Now, I have in my hand a speech delivered by Mr. Holman, the Premier of New South Wales, in which he explains the cause of the deficits with which the Government are confronted. At the outset I may say that most of the members of the Liberal party in Queensland advocate the policy adopted by the Labour party in New South Wales. Almost invariably they advocate the adoption of a policy that involves the spending of a large amount of loan money on railways. That is what the New South Wales Government has been doing. Mr. Holman said that a good deal of the expenditure was really on account of works passed by the Wade Government, and which the Labour Government had to continue. Speaking on the want of confidence motion, he said—

“He (Mr. Wade) said ‘We carried a Bill in the last few days before we left office.’ It is true they did carry a Bill. They were carrying Bills for almost every purpose under the sun—Bills for increasing the salaries of public servants, and a number of other things. . . . He left only duplication as an heirloom for us, his successors, just as he left land settlement to us.”

That heirloom involved an expenditure of £2,500,000. He says distinctly that all the expenditure of the Government has been due to the actions of the previous Government, and that is always the case. Whenever a Government takes office, it finds itself bound to carry out works undertaken by previous Governments, especially railways. Mr. Holman proceeded to give details of some of the increases in expenditure for the year—

“Now I come to the Chief Secretary's Department. Here there is an increase of £300,000 in round figures, actually a little more. That, I am informed, is wholly due to increased expenditure upon hospital and charities' grants, and upon increases in salaries in the police force, and the numbers of the police force—this increase which was denied by the hon. member for Gordon.”

There was an increase of £300,000 in one department. Will any hon. member say that it was wrong to expend money on charities and hospitals? Then, Mr. Holman said that the increase this year in the Education Department was £364,000. Will any hon. member on the other side say that that was money wasted? It is in consequence of increases of this kind that there was a deficit. The hon. member for Burke aptly placed the position before the Committee, and I do not think

hon. members on the other side make any point by comparing the Labour Administration in New South Wales with the Liberal Administration in Queensland.

Mr. GRANT: What about handing over railway construction to a private firm?

Mr. McCORMACK: That has nothing to do with us—we are not discussing that. (Government laughter.) Before dealing with the Financial Statement, I would like to correct a statement made by the hon. member for Burrum, who is pretty good at making statements concerning what members on this side have said, and stopping reading just where it suits himself. The hon. member said that the hon. member for Chillagoe, during his speech the other evening, proposed to build railways out of revenue. Now, I will read what the hon. member for Chillagoe said on that occasion, and any fair-minded man will admit that the honourable and gallant colonel stopped where it suited his purpose.

Mr. COYNE: He told a half-truth.

Mr. McCORMACK: Yes, and half a truth is worse than a lie. The hon. member for Chillagoe said—

“Then, I would, without any hesitation, advocate an increase in the income tax, a heavy dividend tax, and the imposition of a land tax. By these means the Premier could supplement his revenue very considerably, and by these means he might be able to carry out the policy hinted at by the hon. member for Herbert—the policy of spending possibly not more than £1,000,000 of loan money on railways each year, and if more railways are required, building them out of revenue; and I would suggest to the hon. gentleman that he revise his taxation on those lines.”

Now, there is a distinct statement that £1,000,000 should be taken out of loan every year for railways, and yet the hon. member for Burrum stated that the hon. member for Chillagoe proposed that all railways should be built out of revenue by means of a land tax or some other tax. Dealing with the Financial Statement, like the hon. member for Burke, I do not intend to weary hon. members with figures. No doubt there are hon. members more competent to do that than I am. When I have been here a sufficient time to be able to criticise the Financial Statement from that point of view, I will do so; but there are numerous other points of view from which I can criticise the Statement, and I intend to take that course. In connection with immigration the Treasurer says in his Statement that there were 7,083 souls brought to Queensland last year. This question of immigration is one on which the Labour party are always being attacked. Liberal members invariably say that we are against immigration. They make use of that charge from every platform throughout Queensland. We say that we are not against immigration at all, but we are against bringing people to this country unless facilities are given to them to make a living. Now, what has happened with the immigrants who have come to this country? In one boat that brings a batch of immigrants there are two for Cairns, four for Townsville, five for Rockhampton, and from 350 to 400 for Brisbane. On the next boat there are two for Cairns, two for Townsville, five for Rockhampton, and 500 for Brisbane.

The TREASURER: Don't you know they are all nominated?

Mr. McCORMACK: It does not matter, they are all coming to Brisbane. The Government is spending a large amount of money in bringing them here, even though the immigrants find a little of the cost. The country party, on the other side, tell us they want agricultural labourers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You cannot get them.

Mr. McCORMACK: Of course you cannot, because of the Government's inability to govern their own immigration bureau.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You cannot get them in England.

Mr. McCORMACK: No doubt a good many immigrants who have come out are very worthy people, but they have been used to working in factories—consequently, we have people in the country singing out for more immigration. The policy pursued by the Government in regard to immigration will never give us agricultural labourers, or people who will settle on the land. The hon. gentleman knows that city people—people from London—are not keen on going on the land. The result is that in bad times we shall have thousands of unemployed in Brisbane; in fact, there are unemployed at present, in spite of the prosperous Statement. The Labour party say in regard to immigration that we must have people. I will advocate immigration of a proper character. The right people must be brought here, and we should provide homes and pieces of land for them. There is any amount of land. You can go along the railway lines along the coast, and see the pick of our land, with perhaps three people to the square mile. Dealing with the question of land settlement, I think the hon. member for Murilla dealt severely with the Government when he stated that only 15 per cent. of the farmers are paying income tax. The percentage in other professions and industries is a good deal more than that, and if only 15 per cent. of the farmers are paying income tax, I think only 3 per cent. of the Downs farmers pay income tax. In the sugar industry there is a large number of people paying income tax, but there is very little paid in the farming industry, apparently. There are very few big sugar farmers in my electorate who are not paying income tax. From the hon. member for Murilla's statement, if the sugar farmers were deducted from the general farmers, the percentage would be a good deal less. What is the reason of this? Whose fault is this?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Prices are too low.

Mr. McCORMACK: Bad Government; there can be no other answer. If the hon. member would honourably represent the people whom he says he represents there would be quite a change—we would have more than 15 per cent. of the farmers paying income tax—but he does not represent them. I am quite sure that the farmers' party, or the country party, or the country Liberal party are not too sure whom they represent at the present moment. (Opposition laughter.) There is no doubt that the keen leaders in the Liberal party are making very good use of the supposed representatives of the farmers in this House.

Mr. HUNTER: They have got them by the wool.

*Mr. McCormack.*]

Mr. McCORMACK: They have got them by the wool.

Hon. R. PHILP: They won't take your bait.

Mr. McCORMACK: I am not holding out any bait to the farmers. If the farmer wants to vote for me, I will tell him plainly what I advocate. If he votes for me, he will vote for me on what I advocate; he will not vote like he does for the hon. member for Drayton, on what he advocates outside, and what he is afraid to do in here. A farmer who votes for me will vote for me on my merits. He knows that I advocate good wages, that I advocate protection for his crop so that he can pay those wages, and I advocate that he should get a fair price for his cane from the big miller who controls the industry. If he gives me his vote on those grounds, he knows where he stands, because I will give my vote in this House for those three things.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What is the protection on sugar?

Mr. McCORMACK: We have £6 a ton on raw sugar.

Mr. KESSELL: Is that enough?

Mr. McCORMACK: It is very fair protection.

Mr. KESSELL: Is it enough?

Mr. McCORMACK: That is a question, in my opinion. I would like to see sugar grown to a much greater extent than it is in Queensland, and I propose to deal with that question. First of all, we want to find out whether the farmer gets a fair price for his cane. If the miller and refiner are not taking more out of the industry than they should—a fair return on their capital—then we should have more protection to enable them to pay fair wages and make a better industry. But if these people are taking more than a fair thing out of the industry—which I believe at the present moment they are—we should consider the question, and find whether we cannot get more betterment out of our present protection. The Treasurer is in charge of the Sugar Bureau, and do we see the Government doing anything to develop the growth of sugar? Take the Sugar Experimental Farms. In my district they have a plot, and the local farmers are making good use of the cane plants supplied. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has done a great deal of this work, because it paid them to do it; but now that they are going out of sugar-growing, as they have a monopoly in refining, they are not troubling their heads about it. I think the Government should take this matter up, and see that the best classes of cane are grown on these experimental farms, and distributed amongst the farmers. At the present time it is not done generally. During the last six months things have been a little better. I hope the Treasurer, during the coming year, will do something to enable farmers to get better varieties of cane. At present they have to depend on any variety at all. The Mulgrave people have been very successful with their cane. They grow a certain class of cane, and are enabled now with the equalisation or the abolition of the excise and bounty to pay about £1 10s. 6d. a ton for sugar-cane.

Hon. R. PHILP: What kind do they grow?

Mr. McCORMACK: Badilla principally.

Hon. R. PHILP: That was imported by the Government.

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Mr. McCORMACK: Yes; that is a good variety, and the Government should do more in experimenting with new varieties to suit our different districts. This question of sugar is of great importance to Queensland. In my own district, all the sugar that can be grown is not being grown. When the Babinda Mill and the Freshwater Mill are in operation, the whole of the country around Cairns will be under sugar, but there are thousands of acres in the Herbert electorate—the Darrigi, Liverpool Creek, and the South Johnstone—which will grow cane to give us sufficient sugar at least for our own use in Australia. This year, which is going to be a record year, we will have a shortage of probably 40,000 or 50,000 tons. Last year we had a shortage of 100,000 tons. Here are 100,000 tons of sugar being imported into Australia which we ought to be growing in Queensland. We have got the land on which to grow the sugar; that is admitted on all hands. Raw sugar is worth £11 to £13. Look at these large sums going to Fiji, a black country! We should grow every ounce of sugar in Australia ourselves. We have the land in Queensland, we have protection on sugar, and we had a couple of Acts of Parliament passed here which gives protection to most people in the industry, so why not go straight ahead? Here is an industry in which there is ample room for improvement and ample scope for people to go on the land. The sugar industry is not like the dairying industry. There is no substitute to take the place of sugar. We all want sugar, and there is an increasing demand for it. The fact remains that we do not produce any more sugar than we did ten years ago. If we allow for the protection, then we give £7 per ton for the sugar that comes from Fiji, and on 100,000 tons that amounts to £700,000. Just fancy such a huge sum as that going to Fiji and other countries!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It will not go this year.

Mr. McCORMACK: No, it will not go this year.

Hon. R. PHILP: You cannot make sugar for £7 per ton.

Mr. McCORMACK: That is the amount which we have to pay free of duty. When it comes here we have to add the £6 duty on, which gives us the price of the raw sugar in Australia.

The TREASURER: You must remember the dry conditions last year and the unsatisfactory crop.

Mr. McCORMACK: But this year we have a record crop, and we are still 40,000 to 50,000 tons behind.

Hon. R. PHILP: Not as much as that. It amounts to 20,000 tons.

Mr. McCORMACK: Look at the increase there would be in our agriculture if we grew all our own sugar. The one thing that affects us in this matter is that it affects Queensland alone. We have got the land in the North for it. If that land was in the Southern part of Queensland it would be different. If that land was in the Darling Downs, or if they could grow cane on the Darling Downs, there would be no hesitation about building central sugar-mills at every available spot. (Hear, hear!) One real good thing that the Government can do is to deal with the sugar industry. The Government can take advantage of the lack of sugar manufacture in Australia, and see that we, at least, produce enough sugar to satisfy our own requirements.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Are not the Government building the Babinda and South Johnstone mills?

Mr. McCORMACK: I have heard about the building of those mills for the last six years. They are getting along a bit faster now, but up to this they have been like the railway the hon. member for Burnett speaks about, pretty slow. The Secretary for Railways knows the sugar industry better than I do, and I am not speaking for my own electorate, but for other sugar districts as well. We have got the land there, and we should get the benefit of producing this sugar. The protection is there, and both parties in the Federal Parliament are of the same opinion with regard to the sugar industry, so why hesitate in this matter? The only reason I can see for the hesitation of the Government is that it is not in the South of Queensland. This amount of shortage should be made up.

Mr. HAMILTON: Why don't you join the farmers' party and shake them up?

Mr. McCORMACK: The farmers' party do not want sugar representatives. The mills under the control of the Treasurer do not seem to make any effort to come up to date to meet the modern requirements of a sugar-mill. I see from the last issue of the "Sugar Journal" that the Mulgrave Mill is now making 1 ton of sugar from 7 tons of cane. I admit this has a lot to do with the district, but I notice that it reduced the cost of fuel by 30 per cent., and that is something that the Treasurer should take into consideration. That is an important matter. One of the people interested in the mill went abroad for a trip, and he noticed how they conducted their mills there. The result was that he got up-to-date machinery and appliances, and the result is that they can produce a ton of sugar from 7 tons of cane, and only 1½ cwt. of fire-wood is used for each ton of sugar manufactured. That is a remarkable result; and yet they hope to do better. I know that the climatic conditions have a good deal to do with the density, but the manufacture is purely a matter of equipment. The Government use broken-down out-of-date machinery in their mills, and they only pay the growers a poor price for their cane. The farmers are talking about striking against the Treasurer's mills, because they do not get a fair price for their cane. This group of co-operators, by introducing these reforms in their own mill, can bring about the result I have mentioned, and the farmers there are getting the benefit of it. Why cannot the Government do the same? There are numerous ways by which the Treasurer and the Government can benefit the various industries in Queensland, and the Treasurer could easily show a better Financial Statement than he has done. This Statement is merely a balance-sheet of revenue collected and expenditure disbursed. It is just the same as a balance-sheet issued by any private firm. To criticise the Financial Statement properly would require financial ability. It is the industries in the country which the people here are engaged upon that is the foundation of the Financial Statement. If the Minister for Railways has plenty of agricultural land, plenty of dairying land, and plenty of people settled on the land adjoining the railways, he will see a great increase in his railway returns, and the Treasurer's Financial Statement will show increased prosperity also. Is anything done by the Government in this direction? Nothing at all. The business is just let run on, and the revenue is just made

to meet the expenditure. In any business where you borrow millions you can do the same. The loan money is coming in, and it is easy to keep the balance-sheet square. But when the day comes that there is no loan money coming in, where will the Minister for Railways find his returns then? He will find they are much reduced.

Mr. STEVENS: You are giving plenty of argument against nationalisation.

Mr. McCORMACK: Not at all. I am showing how the railways will return increased revenue. I have no fault to find with the Minister for Railways at all, but if he had plenty of people settled on the land near the railways it would not require a financial genius to know that it would mean increased railway earnings.

Mr. STEVENS: You were talking about nationalisation.

Mr. McCORMACK: I was talking about the things that make the Financial Statement.

Mr. STEVENS: You compared a co-operative mill to the Government mills.

Mr. McCORMACK: I am not comparing them at all, but the Government have done nothing in the past twelve months to make their mills successful. The Government have given us the balance-sheet. It is the machinery of administration which is disclosed in the balance-sheet. I hold that the machinery could be better. There could be more work done in the various departments, as I illustrated with regard to sugar. One industry which would be better, provided proper attention was given to it in the way of increased mills, would be the sugar industry. There would be increased fares from the men going to the industry. The country generally would benefit by those who are engaged in handling sugar and putting it in trucks, and work for the waterside workers, and so on. The sugar industry is a great industry, and not sufficient is being done for it. Now, the same applies to almost every other form of land settlement. We have the hon. member for Burnett telling us the same thing in regard to the dairying industry—

[8.30 p.m.] exactly the same tale. And the members from the Downs are telling us the same thing. The hon. member for Murilla, Mr. Morgan, told us the same thing. Who is to blame that we are not getting people on the land? It must be the Government. If it is not the Government, who is to blame? I ask the Treasurer, "Who is to blame?" Our lands are good, we have a beautiful country, we have the Premier and Ministers and members on this side telling us that.

The TREASURER: I will tell you. If there is any blame to be attached to anyone, it must be attached to the Labour party, because they are frightening people off the land. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. McCORMACK: The present Government has been in office eight or nine years and the Labour party has had nothing to do with the government of the country. Certainly since I have been here—and that is twelve months—I have never known the Opposition to get one little bit of say in the government of the country at all. It is certainly attachable to the people in power, and if we were over there we would have to take blame just as the New South Wales Government is taking it. Here is

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the Treasurer's statement, and in one place it deals with eggs. Now, I think he might have left the eggs out of a Statement like this and told us about the maturing loans.

THE TREASURER: We will tell you later on; you will have a Bill.

Mr. McCORMACK: That is the trouble; you never tell us anything about the loans.

THE TREASURER: We believe in running the State in our own way.

Mr. McCORMACK: Yes; and the result is that you are getting no settlement on the land.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: And running it to the detriment of Queensland.

Mr. McCORMACK: Yes; to the detriment of Queensland—of our own people. Here is a great prosperous country and any amount of people willing to go on the land. It has been quoted times out of number—how many applications there are for every block of land. We had it mentioned by the Scottish Agricultural Commissioners; but whose fault is it that there are ten or twenty farmers applying for every block of land and sixty or 100 applicants for every block of grazing land in the West? Whose fault is it? The Government's fault. It must be their fault.

THE TREASURER: It seems to me that if there is such a desire to get on the land, it must be the result of good government.

Mr. McCORMACK: They cannot get on the land. And while I am on this subject, I may say that the administration of the Lands Department has not been so good as it might. It is very hard to get a man who understands it thoroughly, and that may have had something to do with it. But that is the fault of the Government. The hon. gentleman stated in this House that Mr. Tudor ruined the sugar industry by declaring that men should get 8s. a day and by—

THE TREASURER: I never said that.

Mr. McCORMACK: It has been stated by the hon. member, by the hon. member for Mirani, by the hon. member for Burrum, and by every other hon. member who represents a sugar constituency, that the Labour party was going to ruin the sugar industry. And I will here just quote you how much your own Minister knows about it—Mr. Groom, the gentleman who knows all about it, and did not make a mistake about the excise. The hon. member for Burrum told us to-night that it was the Labour party's fault, and that legislation should have been passed; but really it was an administrative fault. You will find what Mr. Groom said in No. 3 of Federal "Hansard," on the Address in Reply—

"If the Queensland Government had passed the necessary legislation on 17th December, then on 24th December the Commonwealth excise and bounty legislation would have been repealed, both the bounty and excise would have been abolished, and the whole of the sugar manufactured in Queensland during the following six months—the excise value amounting, probably, roughly speaking, to about 600,000 tons—would have been free of excise duty.

"Mr. Tudor: 600,000 tons?

"Mr. GROOM: I said 'roughly speaking.' I am speaking from memory. The

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honourable member did not inform me that he was going to raise this question."

Now, here is the Minister who knows all about it, saying that 600,000 tons of sugar would be produced in Queensland in six months. He did not know. He was corrected by Mr. Tudor, and he said "roughly speaking."

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He meant 200,000.

Mr. McCORMACK: It does not matter what he meant.

Mr. KIRWAN: If Tudor said that, they would laugh at him.

Mr. McCORMACK: He said "600,000." It is there, in Federal "Hansard." The hon. member may look at it for himself. He said "roughly speaking." It is pretty roughly speaking. And these are the people who are going to save the sugar industry! These are Liberal authorities on sugar! Here we have our own Queensland member, the Minister for Customs, saying such a thing as that! We were not so lucky in the other Government as to have a Minister for Customs—

Hon. R. PHILP: You had a Premier.

Mr. McCORMACK: We had a fair share, and the late Prime Minister knew about sugar thoroughly. If he said 600,000 tons, he should not have been Prime Minister. But the other side told us that we were the people who were ruining the industry. How can it be ruined more by people who know something about it than by those who know as much as Mr. Groom?

THE TREASURER: There is one thing certain; he did immediately what was required.

Mr. McCORMACK: He let the Colonial Sugar Refining Company get in and take a large sum of money. As a matter of fact, he should have said about 50,000 tons. There was no mistake in quoting at all. It shows that the present Minister for Customs knows nothing about the sugar industry, and here we have an hon. member telling us he is going to save the industry. I hope he is right and we shall have 600,000 tons.

Mr. STEVENS: Then we need not import from Fiji.

Mr. McCORMACK: We need not import from anywhere. We could export. The next matter with which I intend to deal is stock. The Treasurer says he is pleased to see that there has been an increase in connection with cattle. One thing has been happening in connection with cattle, and the hon. member for Townsville knows it as well as I do. Bullocks are not up to the standard they were a few years ago. Cattle are being killed in Townsville that are below the standard, and when the new meatworks start, I do not know where they are going to get cattle. It is an important thing, one of our primary industries, the raising of stock—

Hon. R. PHILP: Very few cattle are being killed at three years old. There may be cows.

Mr. McCORMACK: But the very fact that there are some being killed at that age shows that the supply is not as good as it

was. The hon. member knows as well as I do that they will not kill cattle at three years if they can help it.

Hon. R. PHILP: Suppose he wants money?

Mr. McCORMACK: That is not the question; some of your people have to keep the works going.

Hon. R. PHILP: They are not bound to sell them.

Mr. McCORMACK: You are killing your own cattle. Carpentaria Downs—

Hon. R. PHILP: Not three year olds.

Mr. McCORMACK: The people are not looking after their stock properly.

Hon. R. PHILP: A bad season this year.

Mr. McCORMACK: That is not the reason. The station people are not attending to their stock. The numbers are good but there is no importation of fresh stock.

Hon. R. PHILP: I bought some in Scotland myself.

Mr. McCORMACK: That may make a difference. I have talked to cattle men about it, and it is admitted that stock are deteriorating. They are not as good as they were, and the reason is that the same attention is not being paid to them. Sheep is a much better paying proposition, and they are attending to sheep and the people in the poor country apparently do not seem—

Hon. R. PHILP: The difficulty is to get bulls from the tick country.

Mr. McCORMACK: Yes, I know that that is the trouble. I have heard of people who lost 100 head of bulls through that cause. Still, that is one of the matters the Government will have to give their attention. It is one of the questions with which Governments deal in other countries. I think the Government should do something in the direction of supplying bulls for the improvement of herds. They are doing that in connection with the dairying industry, and they might do it to a greater extent. It is socialism, but the members of the Liberal party are all socialists. They want railways built in their own districts, or something else done for them by the Government, and they might extend their socialism in the direction I have indicated. The hon. member for Burnett referred to the decrease in the quality of butter manufactured, but he forgot to mention that a lot of that decrease in quality is due to a decrease in the quality of the dairy cattle.

Hon. R. PHILP: The dairy cattle are very good.

Mr. McCORMACK: I read in a newspaper the other day a statement by a prominent dairyman in New South Wales, in which he stated that unless a cow gave a certain quantity of butter-fat per day—and he mentioned a good quantity—she was not profitable. He further stated that they would have to continue to improve the strain of their milch stock by importations from the old country if they were going to compete with margarine. The dairying industry in Queensland is an important one, and the Government might do more to assist it. They can easily help the man on the land if they want to do so, and the Labour party will not object to that sort of socialism. We have been told that the Government and their supporters are the farmers' friends, but at the same time we find that the Government are being

forced to introduce a Produce Bill. If the farmers are doing at all well, it is not because of anything that has been done for them by the present Government, which has been in power for the last nine years—indeed for the last nineteen years, for it is the same old Government.

Hon. R. PHILP: No; the Labour party were in power part of that time.

Mr. McCORMACK: Things were a good deal better when they were in power. But I am not going to say much about the time the hon. member was in power; he had a good deal of bad luck during his administration, and it is hardly fair for the present Treasurer to institute a comparison between the present time and the two or three years of intense drought—about the worst drought that Queensland has ever experienced. It is hardly fair to make a comparison between that period and a period in which we have had nine prosperous seasons in succession. I have every sympathy with the hon. member for Townsville, who had to face strenuous times, and I hope no other Government will ever have his experience. The hon. member may have been a far better Treasurer than the gentleman who now occupies that office; at any rate, he had a better knowledge of Queensland, and if he had had good seasons he could have sat down in his office and have had a surplus.

Hon. R. PHILP: As Treasurer, I never had a deficit.

Mr. McCORMACK: No; the hon. member was Premier when he had a deficit, and probably the Premier has as much to do with the finances as the Treasurer. Another matter I intend to touch upon is the mining industry. The hon. member for Chillagoe, who represents a mining constituency, dealt very fully with this question, but I should like to point out to the Government that they can help the mining industry better by building railways to new mining fields than by sinking shafts in old fields. The best help we can give the mining industry is railway communication, which will afford cheap access to fuel, and a means of getting their products to market. In one part of Queensland it is railway communication that enables the mining industry to hold the place it occupies to-day. If there was no railway to Cloncurry, what would be the position of the copper mines in that district to-day? As a miner, I have worked underground nearly all my life, and I have no sympathy with anyone who wants a 4,000-foot shaft so that men can work 4,000 feet below the surface. I am not going to deal with the merits or demerits of the Charters Towers proposal, because it has already been very fully dealt with, but I think the Government should pause and consider before they spend £60,000 or £70,000, or possibly £100,000, in sinking a deep shaft. They could build a good branch railway in a mining district for £60,000. I believe the line from Mount Elliott to Hampden cost that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: £180,000.

Mr. McCORMACK: My estimate was about half the actual cost, but it is near enough to show what might be done for a mining district by building a railway with the money proposed to be spent on deep sinking. As a miner, I should be willing for the Government to spend £100,000 at Charters Towers if there was any certainty of success, or even a good prospecting chance,

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but I think that the people who have approached the Government in this matter have not approached them in the best manner possible. If the Government subsidise those people for the purpose of sinking a shaft, I should advise them to make the people who will get the benefit of the ventilation afforded by that shaft—and any minor will know that that is what they are after—pay interest and redemption on the money expended. If the scheme proves a failure, they should make the owners of the adjoining mines pay interest on the money expended, because those mines require ventilation. It is getting too hot to work in the mines at the depth they have now reached, and if the Government sink this shaft and the adjoining mineowners are not required to pay anything in connection with it, that will be a very cheap way of getting their mines ventilated. If that is their reason—and I believe that is one of the chief reasons actuating the people behind this venture—I say let them do the work themselves. The Government are not proposing to ventilate Mount Morgan or any other mine, and if that is all there is behind the proposal, let the people interested in the adjoining mines sink the shaft themselves. Anyone who knows anything about mining, knows what an expensive job it is to sink an up-to-date shaft straight down 4,000 feet. God knows how much it will cost before it is finished, and when it is down, we do not know that there will be any ore. It is to be sunk purely—as the hon. member for Chillagoe says—on the blind, and I know of no place in the world where a shaft has been sunk 4,000 feet on the blind. I do not think any authority can be shown where a shaft has been sunk 4,000 feet to cut a lode.

Mr. WALKER: We have one 3,000 feet.

Mr. McCORMACK: Without prospecting?

Mr. WALKER: Yes; the Gympie Scottish.

Mr. McCORMACK: What sort of ore?

Mr. WALKER: Gold.

Mr. McCORMACK: The New Chum Railway in Bendigo is not 4,000 feet on the straight. It is sunk in several sections. I believe it is three-quarters of a mile from the mouth of the shaft to the bottom, and it is all underlie. In this particular instance they are going to sink straight into the ground, and nobody knows what is there. Of course, some people in Charter's Towers are interested in mining, and in one case they sunk a shaft 1,000 feet—the Brilliant P.C.—on the blind, and they were successful. Some old miners think they know more than the geologists, and in some cases they are correct, but I do not think any hon. member who knows anything about mining would put money into a proposition that has been reported on only by a practical miner, and who thinks, because a certain line of country is there, that there will be gold. It is ridiculous. One must take some notice of Mr. Marks's report. Before I conclude, I wish to say a few words with reference to railways. The Government would be wise, if, instead of continuing the construction of so many lines, they were to concentrate on one or two lines and finish them—take them to a centre where they would be payable propositions. The Minister said that certain amounts were granted for different sections of lines to keep the propositions going. That is altogether a wrong policy. A line should be closed down completely or else it should be pushed ahead with vigour. That is the only

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policy any sane man could advocate in connection with railway construction. If the Government intend to continue the North Coast line, why not hustle along and finish it? If they only intend to placate the electors in those electorates, they are doing a North Coast line, or any other line which the country's money at the same time. The North Coast line, or any other line, which has been passed by this House, if it is the best line to build at the time, should be gone on with, and stop construction on some other section. On various sections of the North Coast line, the proposition has been kept going by a staff and about ten workers. That is not good policy.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Nor is it correct.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. gentleman knows that on the Townsville to Ingham line, there were only ten or twenty men working, and there was a complete staff. The hon. gentleman knows also that the railway station was held up in Townsville for several months through maladministration. Nothing else. I was in Townsville during the whole of the period when a whip horse with a pulley wheel would have settled the whole difficulty. Still we had a huge building exposed to the weather in the roughest time of the year and nothing done by the Government. It was maladministration, and the hon. gentleman cannot deny it. The man who went up there and finally started the job, solved the problem by a whip horse to pull the bricks up to the top of the building. Men were asked to carry bricks 60 feet up a straight ladder. It was a physical impossibility. They did not strike for more money, because it was a physical impossibility to get to the top of the building with a hod full of bricks.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is my first information of it.

Mr. McCORMACK: Then, the hon. gentleman is getting information.

Mr. STEVENS: How was it being built—contract or day labour?

Mr. McCORMACK: By day labour.

Mr. STEVENS: If it was a contract, that delay would not have happened.

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member cannot tell us anything about contracts. We know, according to the departments' own words, uttered by the Minister, that there is no comparison between the contract and day-labour systems.

Hon. R. PHILP: You are condemning all the Government work at the present time.

Mr. McCORMACK: I am condemning the administration, and not the question of carrying out the work by day labour. Surely the hon. member would not blame the man on the job if the boss of that job was not competent?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Did not the Ross Island meatworks take all the bricklayers?

Mr. McCORMACK: Not at all. The administration was bad in that particular instance.

Hon. R. PHILP: I heard the Ross River works gave the men 1s. a day more.

Mr. McCORMACK: Nothing of the kind. A meeting of the men was held and a deputation waited on the Commissioner months before the trouble was settled, but he could do nothing in the matter, because,



apparently, the Government had not the money to go on with the building. That was the reason that seemed to be apparent, but it shows bad administration. I am not blaming the Minister, because the Minister may not have known anything about it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It shows that the whole of the bricklayers were engaged at the Ross River Meatworks.

Mr. McCORMACK: It shows bad administration, and it shows that, given good seasons, the country will come along and give us a little surplus, even if it is badly administered. Does the hon. gentleman say it was a fair thing to ask men to carry bricks 60 feet up a straight ladder?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think it was.

Mr. McCORMACK: I do not think the hon. gentleman, or very few members in the House, could walk up there with a hod on his shoulders, without any bricks in it. My argument does not condemn the [9 p.m.] day-labour system at all. It condemns the people who were in charge of the proposition, and the people who are responsible for those people are the Ministry sitting on the front Treasury bench.

Hon. R. PHILP: Will you ever better that system?

Mr. McCORMACK: Of course I will better it.

Hon. R. PHILP: Look at Chinn!

Mr. McCORMACK: The hon. member refers to Chinn. Well, he should look at the line laid out by Mr. Deane in connection with the Oil Company's works, and he would wonder which was the worse, Chinn or Deane. Certainly that line would not give one the idea that Mr. Deane is an engineer. The Chinn affair is purely political. And in that connection I hope we shall hear no more in this Chamber about the Labour party sacking Major Cahill if we should ever get into power. At the last election the people were told that, if we got into power, we had threatened that we would sack Major Cahill because he took a stand during the strike, and the Government tried to protect him, and they did protect him to a certain extent. Now, the Liberal party in the Commonwealth have done the very thing that they accused us of intending to do in connection with Major Cahill, and we find the Prime Minister has sacked Mr. Chinn.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. WILLIAMS (*Charters Towers*): So much has been said during this debate that I think hon. members are getting weary of it, and I do not propose to occupy much time. I congratulate the Ministry, and the Treasurer in particular, on the Financial Statement they have placed before hon. members. The criticisms from the other side appear to me only to have shown what a splendid financial position Queensland is in. That position is due to the fact that we have a good Liberal Government. A lot has been said about the financial policy in connection with the loans which are falling due in 1915, and some members have contrasted our management with the management of other States which have socialist Governments, and hon. members have interjected, "What about the Commonwealth?" Well, I do not think we can compare the financial

policy of a State with the financial policy of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is simply an artificial creature designed to draw blood from the States, and I am sorry to say that it has been very successfully designed to carry out that object. It resembles an octopus. No sooner do they exhaust the money they have drawn than another tentacle goes out, and sweeps in something like the Savings Bank—or attempts to sweep it in.

Mr. FOLEY: That was the policy of the Commonwealth Liberal party.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I do not agree with the hon. member. I think the Liberal Government proposed to establish the Commonwealth Bank, but not the Commonwealth Savings Bank. But whether it was the Liberal Government or the Labour Government which attempted to take over the Savings Bank, I do not agree with it. I think it was a wrong thing to do. If you want to make a comparison, you must compare the policy of this Liberal State with the policy of socialist States. Such a comparison will show how good has been the management of the Liberal Government in this State and what disastrous smashes the socialist Governments have made. A good deal has been said about our debts. The State is a big concern, of course, but we have enormous assets and an enormous amount of security to offer for the very trifling amount we owe.

Mr. FOLEY: Keep on borrowing.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Certainly, if we need the money. It has been pointed out that the money we have borrowed has been largely spent on railways and other productive works, and on public buildings and other things which are necessary for the working plant of a State. If we could conceive of a purchaser buying our assets, whilst the price would be enormous—I think our present indebtedness amounts to something like £36,000,000—I have no doubt whatever that the works represented by that money would be considered to be worth two or three times that sum. With regard to re-floating loans there need be no hesitation about that. When it becomes necessary to make a rearrangement—that is all it is—of our loans, I am certain the operation will be a complete success, and it will compare with the success of any country in the world. We may have to pay more interest, but all countries are paying more interest. The hon. member for Mundingburra says, "Keep on borrowing," and I certainly say, "Keep on borrowing."

Hon. R. PHILP: We cannot go on without borrowing.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It does not seem fair that the people of this State should spend their money for the benefit of posterity so that posterity may have bigger assets. I do not think we have anything at all to fear. I do not want to deal with all the subjects touched upon in the Financial Statement, but there is one matter which I consider most important, and which has not been dealt with very largely, and that is the question of roads. When requests to the Government are made for roads, Ministers practically say that they have no money. When a deputation waited on the Premier, led by the hon. member for Eacham, the Premier said, "Where are we to get the money from? I do not approve of touching

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that matter with loan money." Well, in that I do not agree with the hon. gentleman at all. If we borrow money to build our railways—which are really passages—there is no reason why we should not also borrow money to build roads. I think that we have neglected to build roads in this State, and I have no doubt that, if we had good roads, we should not have so much clamouring for railways. If we had a good road from Blair Athol to Charters Towers, there would be less clamour for a railway to connect the two places. Everybody seems to be getting railways but Charters Towers, and I hope that the House will see that the claim to have that particular railway built is a just one. If the hon. member for Cairns will promise us that railway, we might even abandon the deep shaft.

Mr. McCORMACK: I think it would be a better proposition.

Mr. WILLIAMS: There is one matter in the Financial Statement which appeals to me, and that is the reference to the Savings Bank. I trust that the Government will stick to their guns in that matter, and that they will make the position of the bank impregnable.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: It was stupid obstinacy.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I think it is very fine obstinacy. I am certain the people in this country admire it.

Mr. KIRWAN: The Treasurer has offered more facilities, even to the extent of money boxes.

Mr. WILLIAMS: We are all open to improvement, and if the hon. member will come along with something sensible, we shall improve matters. But hon. members opposite always oppose a measure with obstructive tactics; if they would come along with something constructive, we would adopt their suggestion. I agree with the hon. member for Burrum when he said that he considered agriculture the biggest thing in the State—the most important industry. I am quite certain that we are not managing things as we should do in that direction.

Mr. RYAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am not speaking of this Government; I am speaking of Governments generally. The Minister who is conducting the business may be a merchant or a lawyer, and he is put into that position and expected to know everything. I am quite convinced that what we want in this department is some expert.

Mr. KIRWAN: Would you pay him?

Mr. WILLIAMS: We should even pay him more than the Minister, if necessary. I believe that if that system was adopted in the Department of Agriculture it would lead to success. I do not believe in the cheaply-paid officer for these things. We had an example here the other day. I saw from the newspaper that an experienced officer in an important department is leaving, because the position is not on a proper footing. I think that that is a matter which should be well considered by the Government, and in particular with regard to the Department of Agriculture. The experts, no doubt, would relieve the Ministers largely of their work. It takes a good Minister all his time to attend to his correspondence properly. Everything would have atten-

tion, and there would be nothing pigeon-holed. I do not say that our present Ministers do it, but it has certainly been done in other Governments. There is also another procedure that would relieve Ministers—that is, a little more decentralisation. Some of my friends opposite have been speaking about separation. I do not like the idea of separation, and I hope to have the opportunity of speaking about it on some other occasion.

Mr. RYAN: We advocate decentralisation.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am no supporter of separation under present conditions. If you say unfederate, then I would say have separation, but not under present conditions; with the powers taken away from the States under federation, I do not believe in separation, but I do say that there is too much centralisation. If we could get more decentralisation in various parts of the State there would be less growling about want of attention.

Mr. RYAN: I advocated that in connection with the Lands Department—to have centres at Rockhampton and Townsville.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am quite with you, so long as we do not interfere with the general policy of carrying out the Act. I think a large measure of relief could be given in that way. Possibly, we might have the same thing in connection with the Department of Public Works, and so on. It is very harassing to have to send all your little wants down to Brisbane to be dealt with. I trust the Government will see their way to bring in some relief of that kind. Coming to the least important part of the Statement—I speak now of the mining industry—

Mr. RYAN: The least important?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I put it that way—it is not the least important to me.

Mr. FOLEY: It is the most important to you.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It is important to me, but after hearing the hon. member for Chillagoe and the hon. member for Cairns, one feels constrained to think that it is a matter that the Government should not look at—that is why I said the least important.

Mr. THEODORE: Not in regard to prospecting.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I deplore the speech which the hon. member for Chillagoe made the other day in connection with this scheme. Generally speaking, the hon. member for Chillagoe is endowed with a cold-blooded self-control, which enables him to keep himself well in hand, which is very commendable—(Opposition laughter)—but on this occasion he let himself go with a vengeance. He not only showed a deplorable ignorance of gold-mining in general, but a deplorable ignorance of this scheme, and, on the top of that, he has gone out of his way as far as I can see in his speech to insult various people.

Mr. THEODORE: Do you say I am ignorant of goldmining?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I say so from your remarks. If the hon. member would go up to Charters Towers, any competent men would simply laugh at him.

Mr. THEODORE: That is a cheap sort of gibe which anybody could make.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The hon. member gets a certain set for some reason. When the Wee Macgregor line was proposed—a line which the copper-gougers were crying out

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for—the hon. gentleman having got his Mount Mulligan line, got up and tried to squash it.

Mr. THEODORE: Another cheap sort of gibe.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes. If he allowed himself to go out to that district, the copper-gougers would chase him out of the district.

Mr. THEODORE: That is a stupid remark.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The hon. member is no friend of the miner, and he is proving himself no friend of the miner on Charters Towers. If the hon. member would refrain from sneering at this scheme, accusing people of being dishonest, accusing the Premier of being got at—

Mr. THEODORE: Nothing of the sort.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member is making an attack on me.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am quite certain that the hon. member for Queenton, like myself, has not the slightest interest in that scheme, and yet the hon. member for Queenton and myself, and other hon. members, supported that scheme, and showed that, in our opinion, a private board of inquiry should be asked for.

Mr. McCORMACK: Will you justify the scheme to the House now?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am going to leave the board of inquiry to report on the scheme; it is sub judice. I deplore the attitude of the hon. member for Chillagoe, and I say that he is no friend to the working man when he attacks a scheme like this.

Mr. THEODORE: That is a stupid remark.

Mr. WILLIAMS: As the hon. member for Queenton has pointed out, this is a scheme which is wanted for the miners. Hundreds of the miners are now living away, and would like to come back, and they believe that, under this scheme, there is a chance of getting back.

Mr. THEODORE: Therefore you give £16,000 to boodlers and mining speculators?

Mr. WILLIAMS: No. The hon. member talks about gibes and cheap sneers, but the hon. member is absolutely ignorant of gold-mining, and of this scheme in particular. The actual profits in relation to the scheme will be paid-up shares given to the people going into it; it will give no chance to boodlers. I trust the hon. member for Chillagoe will withdraw the remarks he has made.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman is very insulting.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Yes, the hon. gentleman was very insulting. He is always insulting. (Government laughter.)

Mr. McCORMACK: Justify the scheme.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The hon. member for Chillagoe and the hon. member for Cairns talk about putting down a blind shaft. I never saw such blindness in my life.

Mr. THEODORE: Are country lawyers such great authorities on mining?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must call the hon. member for Chillagoe to order. He must cease his interjections.

Mr. THEODORE: I am only protecting myself from personal attack from a country solicitor.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must maintain order.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The hon. member for Chillagoe made an offensive speech. My remarks are quite mild compared to his.

Mr. McCORMACK: Justify the scheme.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It has been pointed out by the hon. member for Townsville that the scheme is sub judice at present. An inquiry is to be made into it by a board, and we are quite satisfied to leave it to the board which has been appointed by the Government. I invite the hon. member for Chillagoe and the hon. member for Cairns, if they are game enough, to go up to Charters Towers, and give evidence before the board.

Mr. THEODORE: What right have you got to invite anyone to give evidence?

The CHAIRMAN: I must again call the hon. member for Chillagoe to order.

Mr. THEODORE: I have a right to protect myself.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to maintain order. Any remarks he has to make must be made to the Chair.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I do not propose to go into what the board is going to do.

Mr. McCORMACK: Why not give us some particulars about it? You know nothing about it.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The combined wisdom of Charters Towers believes that this scheme will result in another mine being opened up for many years. The hon. member for Chillagoe talked about depth of shafts. What does the hon. member know about the depth of a shaft? He quite lost himself there. He does not know if the shafts are 1,000 feet, 2,000 feet, or 3,000 feet deep on Charters Towers. Some years ago when a suggestion was made to sink a shaft 1,000 feet, the geologists ridiculed the idea, and said, "What? Go down 1,000 feet. You are mad." Still the shafts were sunk to 3,000 feet, with the result that good gold was obtained. Now it is suggested to go down 4,000 feet, and there is no reason why it should not be successful. There is a feeling on Charters Towers that it will be successful if it is given a chance. It is a remarkable thing that people would want to sink their money in it if they did not believe in it. Those hon. members who spoke against the scheme know nothing whatever about it, and did nothing but sneer at it. They have not pointed out any advantages that the people and the country will derive from it.

Mr. McCORMACK: It will give better ventilation. That is what they want.

Mr. WILLIAMS: No other industry is asked to do what the mining industry is called upon to do. The people in the South very readily expect the Government to provide them with an agricultural college without putting up a penny themselves, and I do not complain about that.

Mr. RYAN: Do you belong to the country party?

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Mr. WILLIAMS: I belong to all parties. (Laughter.) I mean to all good parties. As a matter of fact, I did try to join the country party once. I do not want to go into this matter any further.

Mr. THEODORE: You cannot.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I hope the hon. gentleman will go up to Charters Towers and see this scheme. I think I have said enough to justify the scheme. The people are prepared to put their money into it, and they submit themselves to the Government to take evidence, and they will rest on the findings of the board. The board is a good board. They are practically all Government people.

Mr. THEODORE: They are not all Government people. Mr. Rands is not a Government official.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes; he is our consulting geologist, and we pay him a retainer.

Mr. MURPHY: Mr. Rands is one of the best geologists in Queensland.

Mr. McCORMACK: The people who are opposed to the scheme are satisfied with the board.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I would be glad if we could pick our own board. I am not satisfied with the board, as I would rather pick our own. At the same time, I think that the gentlemen appointed on the board are unimpeachable people. It has been suggested that the Government were so anxious not to spend money that they tried to get an unassailable report, but I do not believe that at all. I am satisfied that the members of the board are men of integrity, who will give a fair deal. If this matter comes before the House to be dealt with, I think it will be dealt with in a fair and generous way. In conclusion, I congratulate the Minister on his Financial Statement.

Mr. CRAWFORD (*Mount Morgan*): I do not propose to talk on finance, as hon. members who have preceded me have done, but I hope to be able to place before the House a few plain, short, and I hope easily understandable propositions in regard to what has been placed before us in the Financial Statement. I think we cannot but feel a sense of gratification at the satisfactory financial position in which the country finds itself to-day, and the substantial record of progress, as shown in the Statement put before us. There is no get away from the facts presented in the Statement, strengthened as they are by so many figures—figures which will bear inspection and which will bear the utmost criticism that can be directed against it. In expressing my gratification at hearing a good account of the country, I must follow that expression with the assertion, which I know cannot be contradicted, that no attempt has been made from the Opposition side of the House to give to the Statement the criticism which it deserved. I am not going to say that that side of the House is lacking in ability to do so. I dare say there is abundance of ability to criticise, but an example of criticism will certainly not be found in the speech of the hon. the leader of the Opposition. I have read a number of financial criticisms, but I have never read of one nor can I recollect one that was more weak, and more lacking in the essentials of criticism, than that which was de-

[*Mr. Williams.*

livered here by the hon. gentleman who now has the honour of being the head of the Opposition. It was utterly futile. Knowing the futility of it, the hon. member got away from criticism as soon as possible and dropped into the safe line of quotation from the Labour party's platform, or from some platitudes which he gave utterance to at the conference some few months ago. After reading his speech and endeavouring to find something in it worth criticising, I decided that it would be just as well to devote my time to something more valuable, because I felt as if I saw on the faces of his colleagues when he was speaking a look of most unutterable disgust and disappointment. The statement which the Treasurer has had the honour of placing before us is not lacking in substance; it is not lacking in argument; it is not lacking in facts and figures upon which able critics could fasten, and if they had the [3.30 p.m.] ability which they ought to have in criticising Statements of this sort, they should be able to show to the Treasurer and his colleagues that this Statement is very far from being what he and his colleagues believe it to be—a truthful statement of the actual financial, commercial, and industrial position of Queensland. I very much regret to reflect that a number of members, even on this side of the House, seem to think that this Government should be perfect. We know that no Government has been perfect in Australia, except perhaps that one which was so happily put out of Australian office a few months ago. That appears to be the only example of perfect government; it was immaculate; it could do no wrong. The greatest treason that is recorded in history is infinitesimal in comparison with criticism directed against the late Fisher Government. It is not my intention to take up time dealing with fatuous idolatry of that sort. If members opposite find any consolation in the regard with which they regard the Fisher Government, if they are compelled to see in that Government a perfect Government, I leave them to derive what consolation they can from it. A good deal of assertion has been made in relation to land settlement, and I have heard hon. members say that very considerable delay has occurred in opening up Crown land for selection. Now, I want to say as one who has been reading the newspapers for something like a score of years, that no complaint has been more conspicuous in the Press than that dealing with the delay in opening up land for settlement, not alone in Queensland, but in every State of Australia. And I would like to have heard from those who brought forward this Statement some specific instances in which there has been some special delay in the present case in Queensland. We know that delay is a matter which strikes the individual. Some men are looking for land in particular localities, and because they or their friends cannot get those lands, they condemn the whole State as being backward and retrogressive in its land settlement policy. I do not think that is fair, and the most effective answer that can be given to them is to point to the figures given by the Treasurer. When we reflect that last year nearly 11,000,000 acres of Crown lands were opened and nearly 7,000,000 acres were taken up, I think it is very satisfactory, and a very substantial answer to those who say there has been delay in land settlement.

We cannot expect to rush ahead. The Lands Department must be carried on on business lines, and the vast areas of country have to be properly prepared, properly surveyed, properly classified before people can be invited to go upon them. Now, we know that before these figures are finally disposed of this session, a great deal will be said about railway policy. I am inclined to think that we have a few too many lines on the table just now, but be that as it may, we have to go on and finish them. And I think it would not be a bad idea if we could lay out for ourselves to finish at least, say, 360 miles a year. I do not think that would run us into too great an amount of money, and it would put us in possession of a very much more extended railway system than what we have at present in the course of ten years, and we would also have extensions which would give the very greatest satisfaction to the people, and would facilitate settlement in the various parts of the State. Just now, in regard to the railways which have been authorised, I think the Minister is wise in discriminating in regard to the speed with which they are to be constructed, so that those which promise to return profits in the quickest possible manner will receive preference. We want to get the return from these railways as soon as possible, and if the Minister carries out that idea—of giving preference to those which will facilitate settlement in the most rapid manner—I think it is a good thing for Queensland. I want to say a few words about mines. I am glad to see from the Statement and the tables that mining is holding its own. I feel somewhat disappointed, however, in regard to an Act which we passed some years ago—the Mining on Private Property Act. I do not think it has realised the expectations that were expressed here when it was being advocated and passed into law. I know myself of several places where prospectors told me, that once this measure could be brought into operation, great development would arise. But I have been disappointed in having heard not one word of the development that was expected in these parts of the Central district. And I would like to say in regard to that Act, that I think it should be amended so that those persons who have held freehold land for many years—land known to be metalliferous—and have not worked it, should receive twelve months or longer notice to do something, or else let others go in and exploit the minerals which are known to exist there. I do not think we would be breaking or repudiating any contract if we said that companies like the Scottish Australian Company, which has held property down the Dean Valley for the last forty years and has only worked it for two years, although it is known to be a rich property—we would be doing no injustice and certainly would be repudiating no contract if we gave them notice that they must come to some terms one way or the other, because, as a State, we have maintained our part of the contract and we cannot continue to do this against the interests of Central Queensland. I am very glad to see that the department has taken a very firm stand in regard to the safe working of Mount Morgan. I was very much interested in the developments that have taken place, but I was prevented from speaking on them, because the matter was before the court and was sub judice. I do not intend to go

deeply into the matter now, but I must say a word of praise for the department for sticking out for a safe method of working, and I know that the miners of Mount Morgan feel deeply grateful to them. Considerable talk has taken place in regard to the proposed expenditure of £50,000 or £60,000 in the development of mining in Charters Towers. I am not going at this hour to express my opinions in regard to it, because the whole of the facts have not been placed before me. I want to know a considerable amount more about the country and the whole of the proposals, and especially I want to know what are the opinions of those whom the country regards as experts before I express myself one way or the other about that particular scheme. It is a very large scheme, certainly, and I cannot help expressing the wish that it could be carried out because of the great amount of employment it would afford, and the impetus it would give to a large centre from which Queensland has derived very great profit. The Financial Statement deals with immigration, and we are told that some 7,000 people have been brought into the State during the year. I should like the Government to bring out a minimum of 10,000 persons each year, if they can possibly do it. I do not know that it can be done easily, but, according to statements which have been made, quite large numbers of persons in Europe are offering themselves as immigrants, and I think we might stretch the purse strings of the Treasury in order to help a larger number of these people to come out to this country.

The PREMIER: All berths have been applied for up to the end of January.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am glad to hear that, and I hope that that state of things will continue, as immigrants are what we want. If we cannot get immigrants from Europe—and we have been told by visitors from the Imperial Parliament and by the Scottish Agricultural Commissioners that the old country is not able to spare as many people as was formerly the case—we might, perhaps, find on the Pacific slopes of America many thousands of people who would be willing to come to Australia and who would make very good citizens. We might have there a Government agent lecturing upon the opportunities which Queensland offers. I do not know whether the Government have taken this matter into consideration, but I would seriously recommend it to their consideration as a means of increasing the population of the State. I am very glad to notice that the Education Department is expanding. Although it is a spending department, the expenditure takes a form which we must all applaud, because it is laying the foundation of an intelligent, active, and progressive nation. I do not know that we are getting the whole of the benefit from that expenditure that we might expect; I do not know that the social results arising from it are as good as we might reasonably expect; and I do not know whether it would not be a good thing for us to give still greater encouragement to the teaching of elementary economics, or citizenship, in some better form than we are doing at present, so that the children, on going from school, would have in their minds the elements of commercial knowledge in a better form than they have to-day, and would be less likely

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to be gulled, and duped, and deceived by people who have an interest in gulling, duping, and deceiving them. It would be a good expenditure on the part of the Government to save the children from their friends, or from those who ask them to believe that they are their friends; and the best way to protect the child is to give him an intellectual equipment which will prevent his being deceived by those who have an interest in deceiving him. I was very pleased to notice at the end of the Financial Statement that increases have been given to the junior branch of the service, and that a substantial foundation has been laid for their progress in the departments. Quite a number of the increases provided for in the Estimates will come up for criticism when we get on to the departments. I must confess to an amount of perplexity with regard to some of the increases, not being able to satisfy myself by any means of analysis which I could utilise what is the rationale of those increases. I have not been able to discover why one officer getting £150 a year should get an increase of £20, and another receiving £500 a year should get an increase of £50, although I quite believe that the explanation will be perfectly simple, but at present it is not very obvious. I shall be glad to hear from the Ministers in charge of the various departments an explanation of the disparities in the increases which have been given. The subject of general finance has been very well treated by hon. members who have preceded me—members who have devoted themselves to that class of intellectual exercise. I have taken a different point of view. I do not at all see how we are to develop this country without continuing the system of borrowing from the old country the money necessary for carrying out great public works. It is a miserable platitude to talk about carrying on public works out of revenue. For many years we have been obtaining money from the old country for the development of the State, and I think we must continue to do that for a large number of years. A great deal of success has attended the method of expending the money which has been borrowed, and the success that has attended it in the past is a clear indication to me that success will attend it in the future, so long as that expenditure is in the hands of the Liberal party. We have heard a great deal of talk about a sinking fund. I confess that when I first came down here the phrase attracted me. I rather liked it. I thought a sinking fund was something which ought to be advocated, and I looked into it for some little time in order to acquaint myself with its general features; but I arrived at the conclusion that, while our creditors reflect that the interest bill is regularly paid, and while they remember that the Liberal party is in power and will continue in power, they are not likely to make any demand that we shall establish a general sinking fund. They are perfectly satisfied that the way we are expending the money makes that money safe, or makes it so safe that their interest will always be regularly paid; and until the confidence which our general success has built up disappears, as it certainly would disappear if this party disappeared from office, we can go on borrowing and using the money borrowed for the benefit of the people of Queensland. The best form of sinking fund

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we can have in Queensland is an increased and increasing population. There can be no better form of sinking fund than that, because if we bring people here and give them the facilities which they can reasonably expect to enable them to settle in whatever occupation is best suited for them, we shall have always at hand a large number of people from whom taxes can be raised to meet any financial emergency. That is my idea in regard to a sinking fund—that we should continue as we are doing, and bring more and more people to settle on our lands and in suitable employment, and so have at hand whenever it is necessary the means of largely increasing the amount raised from taxation. I do not see that there is any prospect at present—taking into consideration the very successful way in which the finances of this State are managed—of any increased taxation. The revenue is increasing very nicely, and very naturally, and the expenditure is naturally following it. That expenditure is following on wise lines, and is assisting in the development of the State. But what financial policy was offered to us from the Opposition side? It is found in a word of five letters, t-a-x-e-s, taxes, taxes! That is the whole financial policy that springs from the genius on the Opposition benches. I shuddered a little when I heard so many taxes being imposed on the devoted heads of the people, because generally it requires a little bit of audacity, and certainly boldness, to impose taxes, as taxes are always most unpopular; but when I thought a little more about it, I saw that this boldness arose from despair. It arose from the fact, which the Opposition are now admitting to themselves that they will never be given an opportunity of imposing those taxes. Their generosity in offering taxes to the people is the outcome of their knowledge that they are condemned to remain upon that side of the House. If these taxes were imposed—if, unfortunately, in a moment of blindness, the people gave the Opposition a chance of sitting in power, and they imposed these taxes, how rapidly would the taxes be passed on to the worker, of whom, the Opposition claim, they have a monopoly of representation! That is a matter that they will have to justify to their own constituents, and no doubt they will coat it over with so much sugar and so much plating, that those who have been duped before will be duped again. There is no such attempt on the part of the Liberal party. They go before the people with the plain statement of what has been done, and tell the people that upon those lines the future will be conducted, and up to the present they have found themselves returned to power from year to year, and it is my strong expectation and strong conviction that they will continue to be returned to power. I am very pleased to notice how well the workers are taking advantage of the Workers' Dwellings Act, and to know that, although there might be a prejudice in favour of the Opposition, they are very willing to avail themselves of the good measures passed into law by the Liberal party, and among the very best measures passed by the Liberal party I place the Workers' Dwellings Act. It is a real source of pleasure to me that the workers are availing themselves of the provisions of that Act more and more every year, and in connection with assistance to the small man, I

would also couple with this Act that of the Agricultural Bank, whose utility is being every year more clearly discerned, and its operations every year are being extended further and further throughout the State. I hope that that will continue to be so, and I take it as a realisation on the part of great numbers of the people that the Liberal party are their friends. I think no one can over-estimate the value of industrial peace to this State, and I hope we shall long continue to enjoy that industrial peace which we now see prevailing throughout the State. I hope the leaders of political unions will see to it that the best, the noblest, and the most permanent interests of the State are wrapped up in a permanent peaceful industry; and contributing very largely towards the permanency of that peace is the realisation which is steadily pervading the minds of the workers, that the Industrial Peace Act, far from being a measure to crush them and their aspirations, is, if properly used, a measure which will lift them up very high indeed and give them ampler opportunities than they ever had before, and bring about more harmonious relations and more remunerative results between their employers and themselves. It has been continually thrown at this party that we have no proposals; that we are simply opportunists; that we have no guiding features in our policy; and that we simply come here session after session and we know nothing until the Premier announces his programme. That is all wrong. An analysis of the Statement, and of the figures that have been placed before us, show that, although there is no great platform reaching out into eternity and requiring a superhuman genius for its realisation, yet on this side of the House there are strong and vigorous propositions which must be recognised, and which, being put into operation from year to year, as they have been, and improved as they have been brought into operation, are vital to the welfare of the people of Queensland, and constitute the real platform of the Liberal party. I have not bothered you with too many figures. I think you have had a perfect deluge of figures during the last few days, and I hope I may be excused for not going into those positions which are so easily created by a misquotation of figures. In listening to the figures which were placed before us by hon. members, I thought it would be better for me, rather than to criticise and compare the figures themselves, to find out for myself what were

[10 p.m.] the underlying principles of the whole Statement and of the figures as given to us, and I intend to read what appeared to be deducible from the Financial Statement. I intend to place before the Committee what I conceive to be the actuating principles of the Liberal party—the party now in office and now in power. The principles which I find inferable from the Statement are these—

“1. Impose new taxation only when absolutely necessary; then only to the extent necessary, and in the shape least burdensome to taxpayers.

“2. Construct railways out of loan money.

“3. Devote all surplus revenue to reduction of the public debt.

“4. Consider the whole question of public debt redemption when the railway system has been more fully developed.

“5. In constructing railways give preference to those districts in which increased settlement can best be expected.

“6. Retain and utilise the State Savings Banks for the benefit of the people of the State.

“7. Maintain by practical assistance a stream of healthy, industrious immigrants.

“8. Encourage land settlement by classifying Crown lands, and opening them for selection; by resuming and subdividing private estates, and by extending the operations of the Agricultural Bank.

“9. Insist upon safe mine working, and give practical aid towards prospecting, deep sinking, and the construction of roads, bridges, and water supplies in mining fields.

“10. Assist the agricultural, stock, and dairying industries by railway and marketing facilities; and by experimentation, and the application of scientific methods at the State college and on State farms; and by publication of results.

“11. Encourage oversea traffic by aiding the improvement of shipping accommodation.

“12. Minimise industrial troubles by means of the provisions of the Industrial Peace Act and similar measures.

“13. Help people in receipt of small incomes to provide comfortable homes for themselves by means of the Workers' Dwellings Act.

“14. Ensure the health of the community by maintaining a vigilant Public Health Department.

“15. Provide for the children the educational essentials that will best fit them for industrial, commercial, or professional occupations.

“16. Insist upon safe appliances in all branches of industry.

“17. Co-operation with Commonwealth where mutual advantage is the objective.”

I have drawn out what I consider to be the leading principles that animate the Liberal party. They have not been expressed to my knowledge in that form before, and for my own satisfaction and for the satisfaction of my fellow-members, I endeavoured to bring out from the Statement its underlying principles. I was reading the memoirs of Lady Dorothy Nevill the other day, and, talking of the changes which had taken place in the Liberal party—and it must be admitted that large and progressive changes have taken place in that party in England—she exclaimed “Good gracious! These people are actually doing what we were all along content to promise.” This Liberal Government and this Liberal party are doing what our predecessors in the far-away past were content to promise. We are actually doing what the people of Queensland want. In reviewing the whole situation as presented to us by the Treasurer, I feel that I cannot better conclude than by saying that the policy of the Government is conceived in the best interests of the State, and for the purpose of bringing prosperity, happiness, and physical well-being to the people of Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

*Mr. Crawford.]*

Mr. CAINE (*Bowen*): It appears to me that, in congratulating the Treasurer and the Government upon the present Financial Statement, excellent as it is, I am only doing what hon. members on the other side are also doing, for their remarks have scarcely savoured of criticism. Indeed, it might be said that they have been moderately commendatory of the Government. Speaking as they do from the side from which we should expect hostile evidence, I take it that they are excellent witnesses in support of the excellence of the position disclosed by the Financial Statement, and of the good management which the affairs of the country have had at the hands of the Government. I have listened with considerable interest to what purported to be criticism from the members of the Opposition. I notice that the hon. member for Maranoa remarked that the recent Commonwealth Labour Government had been much more successful in reference to its financial position than the Liberal Government which preceded it. Does one need to answer a statement of that kind? Does one need to say that the Labour Government had thrown at it, some two years ago, £1,500,000 more from Customs and excise, and that it had to face a smaller payment to the various States of about £3,000,000? Can we wonder that that Government was able to show a better position at the end of the year than the Liberal Government which preceded it? A contention of that sort is absolutely nonsensical. Again, I noticed a reference by the hon. member for Herbert with regard to an increase in the sugar duty. Certainly, we on this side would like to see an increase in the duty on sugar, and the Premier is just as anxious to see the duty increased as we are, and, as he has pointed out, he is ready to bring before the Interstate Commission the absolute necessity for an increase, bringing the matter, as he will do, before the proper authority. With regard to the sugar industry, I say again that I would like to see cane price boards established. They are an absolute necessity, and, without them, we shall not be able to do what we might do for the sugar industry, and the position will be, in some cases, at any rate, insecure. I hope this matter will be dealt with during the present session. The hon. member for Herbert also referred to the juggling of the Treasurer in having his finances so nearly square. Is it, then, essential that there should be a large surplus or a large deficit for the Treasurer's work to be other than juggling? The position is surely absurd. Because we find two sums taken out of revenue which otherwise might have come out of loan—for wooden buildings and immigration—we are told there is juggling. Surely, that is good policy. To my mind, it is somewhat as if that money had come out of loan and had afterwards been repaid. Those who are advocating a sinking fund and the like should be pleased to see an attitude like that displayed. I also notice that the fact that there is an increase in revenue and an increase in expenditure is again to be condemned. As the Treasurer saw his revenue becoming larger than was anticipated, surely he was justified in, at the same time, allowing the expenditure on matters which were necessary to the State to become larger than they would otherwise have been, keeping at the same time a careful check, as apparently he has been doing, and as the result clearly shows. Again, we hear of the padding of the Financial Statement. What is the Treasurer

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expected to do? Is he simply to present to the House a bundle of headings? To my mind, many of the remarks in the way of criticism are absolutely remarkable for ingenuity, showing as they do the great efforts that have been made by the Opposition to try and bring forward some fair criticism when they realised that they could produce none. The hon. member for Bockhampton gave us some extracts from the "Insurance and Banking Record" with regard to the sinking funds at home. Surely, that cannot in any way be parallel with our position! There they are at times heaping up enormously their national debt for munitions of war, when there is nothing to show for it. Two-thirds of our money is borrowed for the purpose of building railways, and the remainder for some other reproductive works, such as buildings, which are absolutely essential, and which save what we would otherwise have to spend in the way of rent. It seems to me that some of the objections which have been raised by the deputy leader of the Opposition must appear very weak when looked into. We see a statement made that we should not raise money by loan—that all the money we require for reproductive works should be raised by taxation. If we had to do that, we could only provide a limited sum, and the amount of work must be very limited indeed. The hon. member took the opportunity of making a comparison with those very lean years of 1904, 1905, and 1906, when we were still feeling the effects of the 1902 drought, and pointed out that £250,000 or £500,000 was spent, and that we might follow that example. Where would the hon. member be when he was wanting work carried out in his own electorate? Would he be satisfied to stand down? I do not think so. Yet we have this inconsistent statement brought forward—on the one hand, borrow money; when, on the other hand, behind the scenes there is the same demand from members for work to be carried out in the various electorates. Again, a remark was made by that hon. gentleman with regard to the proportion that the balance of interest bears to the income—6.4 per cent. being incorrect. That percentage was really quite correct. If we had left out the money received from the Commonwealth by way of interest, the proportion then shown would have been 7.5 per cent.; but surely when we find that we are not going to be paid for those properties, the Commonwealth are willing to pay the interest we are paying for money to carry out those works?

Mr. RYAN: Why don't you ask Mr. Cook about it?

Mr. CAINE: That gentleman is paying the interest which was paid previously. But if we are going to leave out the consideration of the amount we receive from the Commonwealth, then we must leave out the consideration of the interest we have to pay on that portion of our national debt. I notice another remarkable statement from the hon. member with regard to the mining industry at Charters Towers, consideration of which is now being given by a committee. I fail to see what reason there is to support the hon. gentleman in his condemnation of this movement. I am not saying that the money should be spent; but complete investigation should be made, and unless the result of that investigation shows the un wisdom of the scheme, it should then be carried out. Is it to be condemned because it is being done by private enterprise? It is only in keeping with the



actions of hon. members on the other side, who want everything done by the State; but, fortunately, the State is not prepared to do everything—unfortunately, too, they are not able to borrow all the money which our present system requires. If this report is satisfactory, I, for one, shall be very glad to see that money expended, because, if it is expended, other money will also be expended by these men who are entering on this private enterprise. The money spent will benefit that industry, and, in doing that, it will benefit Queensland generally. This calls to my mind a reference which I am glad to see in the Treasurer's Statement about the developmental work which has recently taken place in connection with the Bowen River coalfield. Recently, a seam, 14 feet in width, of excellent coal, said to be anthracite coal, has been discovered only about 50 miles from Bowen. If the development continues satisfactory, and we have every hope that it will, we shall then approach the Minister for Railways for a railway line. I ask in that event that the people of Bowen shall receive the consideration which the people in other parts of the State would receive—that is, to get the railway as soon as the funds of the State will permit. I am not saying this out of any spirit of doubt as to the success of the application when it is made, but I hope we shall receive the consideration which we shall then be entitled to. The leader of the Opposition, from his remarks, showed that he realised as well as we do his inability to really show any weaknesses in the Financial Statement, or in the administration of the Government. I noticed, to my surprise, that he was ready, for once, to bring before the members of this Committee the Labour party's platform. It gave me a surprise, because I have on many occasions tried to get full information, and have had great difficulty. The hon. member had a limited time of one hour, and it seemed strange to me that he should devote so much time even to the good cause of bringing this grand policy before the electors of Queensland. I was surprised, but I realised that that was a fine way of filling up the gap. When he had no arguments to bring forward, it was very easy to repeat this platform, and a speech made by him on a previous occasion. The Treasurer will have nothing to answer, and, perhaps, will not think it necessary to rise.

Mr. RYAN: What better work could I be engaged in than bringing forward the policy of the Labour party.

Mr. CAINE: If the hon. member thinks he could not be better engaged than that in this House, I am afraid he won't be doing the work he is expected to do by that party, because, if he circulates that around amongst members, it will probably do just as much good. In regard to the Labour party's platform, particular reference was made to finance—borrowing for reproductive works. Is not that the policy that is being carried out, and have we not to-day, for every penny we have spent, very good value and excellent assets? The very work which was criticised this evening—taking the sum of about £50,000 out of revenue instead of loan fund—is only bettering our position, because, from a proportion of that money (the money spent on buildings), we have some further assets without having taken any money from the loan fund. Then, again, we must remember that every year the money spent on wooden buildings, or a

great part of it, is taken out of revenue, and strengthens our position in the way of assets without increasing our liability.

Mr. COYNE: Is it a good thing to borrow money and reinvest it?

Mr. CAINE: I think it is an excellent way to do as the Treasurer did—get on to the money market at a favourable time. It is a good thing to get the money when it is available, and I am pleased that the Treasurer has made use of the money in the way he has. It was excellent business on the part of the Government, and, with the hon. member for Burrum, I am surprised that such good business ability shown by the Government should be denied by the Opposition as it has been.

Mr. KIRWAN: The Treasurer was ashamed of it at first.

Mr. CAINE: No; he was proud of it. It was a good stroke of business, and was well carried out, although it gave the opportunity for attack on the part of members of the Opposition, as it made them feel very sore.

Mr. RYAN: We are not sore. We are quite happy.

Mr. CAINE: I am glad to hear it. I noticed that the hon. the leader of the Opposition was careful to remove any doubts from members on this side, and it was very wise of him to do so. If you want doubts removed, and you want matters cleared up, it is best to do it at once. This land tax, which we all thought was such a dangerous and unpleasant thing, we find, according to the leader of the Opposition, is a very excellent thing. They say, "You are going to have a land tax, but in order to compensate you, you will not have to pay any income tax on the particular piece of land on which you pay land tax."

Mr. RYAN: That is the Labour platform which you misrepresented.

Mr. CAINE: I was glad to hear it explained by the hon. gentleman. Take a man with a farm. I suppose that, instead of paying income tax, he will just pay the land tax.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He has to pay the land tax in good seasons or bad.

Mr. CAINE: That is just what I am going to point out. There are many seasons when he would not be called upon to pay any income tax at all. Take the man who lives in the town on his own piece of land. He will not have to pay income tax on that land at all, yet he will have to pay a land tax.

Mr. RYAN: No. He gets an exemption up to £300.

Mr. CAINE: If it is over £300 in value, he will have to pay a land tax. What is the object of the land tax? We hear that it is for the purpose of raising revenue and for breaking up big estates, but the real and plain reason for it is to tax the man with the land, so that he shall not have any land at all.

Mr. RYAN: No; not at all.

Mr. CAINE: Is it right for anyone to have any land? If it is right for them

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to have land, why does the Labour party say they will not give them any freehold? The way to get at the man on the land is to tax him off it. The unfortunate thing is the glorious uncertainty, and the land tax is going to be as heavy as possible, because it is no good if it is not heavy.

Mr. RYAN: Do you suggest that the Labour party want to put people into the sea?

Mr. CAINE: The Labour party want to prevent them from owning land. For the sake of argument, we will presume that members opposite are going to be consistent and that leasehold is going to be the thing in future, but present freeholds are not to be interfered with. We who thought there was going to be confiscation are mistaken. Members opposite say that in future there are to be no more freeholds, but those who have freeholds can keep them; that they will carefully consider the matter of previous contracts, and will not interfere with them. That is very good indeed. I have heard the leader of the Opposition talk about the pastoral lessee as a man who did not want freehold, but was content with leasehold. Why? Because of the large amount he would have to pay for the freehold and the little money he would make out of it. We were told that the pastoral lessee did not want the freehold, but wanted cheap land.

Mr. RYAN: We want all land to be cheap.

Mr. CAINE: Then, members opposite said that they would not interfere with the men who had leasehold, but they would be dealt with in this way: their rents would be increased when members opposite had the opportunity. What would be the position of the man who has freehold to-day? He would be subject to this land tax, and the amount of it was utterly indeterminable. If hon. members opposite were consistent in what they advocate, they would sit on the man with the freehold and tax him until he would be glad to get rid of his land.

Mr. RYAN: Did I give you a different view of the land tax to what you told your electors?

Mr. CAINE: Not the least bit. This sugarcrofting is on a very unpleasant pill indeed. There are one or two local matters I want to refer to. Recently we had the opening of the line from Bobawaba to Ayr—a very excellent thing indeed. It really means that we have got railway connection not only from Proserpine to Townsville, but right out to Selwyn. I am sorry that we have not got a sum on the Estimates for purchasing the Proserpine Tramway or for relaying the old line on the Bobawaba section. I am sorry also that the line is not being started southwards towards Mackay. These are matters which affect my district, and which we look on as being of urgent importance, and I trust the Government will give consideration to them as soon as funds are available. With regard to land settlement, I am of the same opinion as I was previously. I am sorry to find that there is too much money got from the people settled on the land. The land is not given as cheaply as it should be. There are too many agricultural farmers and too few homesteaders. If we raise that objection, we will be met at once with the cry, "Where is our revenue to be found?" There was £387,000

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obtained from selections last year. I know that the greater portion of it was from agricultural farms, and if it had been homesteads there would have been a loss of probably £200,000. I admit that that is a difficulty. The same remarks apply to grazing farms as to agricultural farms. With regard to immigration, I think that the system which the Government are carrying out is an excellent one. The nominated system is as perfect a system as we can get. It is the people who are wrong and not the system. If people come here who are not desirable, that is no reason why we should abolish the system. I do not think any nominated immigrant should be declined unless there are good reasons for doing so. The Opposition do not give the Government credit for anything. They say there is no credit due to the Government, but that it is all due to the good seasons. We

know that the Government cannot [10.30 p.m.] take all the credit for what has happened any more than a man can in every-day life, but when you meet a man who is talented, do you say to him that he does not deserve any credit for having got on in the world and made use of his talents? Surely he deserves some credit for making use of them! The State has had wonderful talents, wonderful seasons, wonderful prosperity; is the Government to have no credit for having made use of them? There are several other States that are fairly talented, but they do not make use of them so much as Queensland. I am thinking more particularly of New South Wales, which may not have as great talents as Queensland, but she has not made as much use of her less complete talents as Queensland has made of her more complete talents. There is no doubt that the policy of the Government, as disclosed by the Statement, has been good indeed and deserves commendation in every way. I am glad to see that the Government has seen fit to provide on the Estimates an increase for cadet and junior clerks. And I am glad to see that so much money has been expended under the Workers' Dwellings Act. I was surprised at the criticism that fell from the hon. member for Paddington this afternoon. Are we to give applicants money without any security or margin at all? I think the Act has done a wonderful amount of good, and, as the Treasurer remarked this afternoon, it is surprising the number of medium-sized houses that are going up in the suburbs through its operations.

Mr. MAX: You want to give better facilities in the country.

Mr. CAINE: Perhaps; I do not know. I know that up in Bowen the Act is being used. If we give these advances without this margin of security, we should have to see where we are going to obtain this money. And, as one hon. member remarks, we want to make people thrifty also. And in most cases the working man can provide the one-third security which he is called upon to give by the Act.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Thousands of them are not able to do it.

Mr. CAINE: Then, again, a wonderful deal has been done under the Agricultural Bank Act; but there is one case which appeals to me, although it does not concern my electorate, and that is the advances that may be made, say, on prickly-pear land. If the bank is to be consistent and require a margin of security in the case of

property which is practically valueless, then it seems to me that in most cases we cannot advance the money. If it was practicable, I would like to see something done by which it would be legal to advance money in such cases, but there again we meet with the same difficulty of finding the money. Excellent work has been done in connection with education, with regard to secondary schools, technical education, and the training of teachers, and even in the allowances made to teachers an improvement is provided. I am very glad to see it. This is one of those non-paying departments, non-paying except in the wonderful eventual return which the State must derive from the proper and systematic training of its children on right lines. In regard to finance, we have heard a great deal about the maturing loans. I am sure that members on the Opposition side will join in wishing that the money will be raised without any difficulty, and I am sure we must congratulate the Government on having done what they could, so that when the time comes the money will be raised satisfactorily. A remark was made by the hon. member for Maree, and in fact by several hon. members, in regard to the need for a new dock in Brisbane. I am quite sure that this matter is being kept in view by the Government. Of course, we are not here to mention only matters which we desire to see carried out in the next few months; surely we are at liberty to call attention to matters which we want carried out some time hence. I want to say in conclusion that the rain which we look for, and the construction of new railways on which we are dependent, mean so much to this State, but we need something else. We have done what we can to bring it about and we are looking forward to it, and I hope that both sides of the House will do what they can to help the result, because with all the rain in the world and railways built by the thousand miles, what would be the good of them all if we did not have industrial peace? Fortunately we have seen a great improvement made lately in this State, and I hope we shall see a continuation of it. Given that, I think the State cannot fail to have a continuation of the favourable circumstances in which she finds herself to-day. Let me again congratulate the Treasurer and the Government on what they have done. I feel sure that during the coming year they will continue the good policy on which they have worked during the past year, and that they will do just as good work during the coming months as they have already achieved.

The TREASURER moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*): I am very much surprised that the Government have not been able to bring this debate to a conclusion to-night. I have listened to a large number of speeches from the other side of the House, and the general tenor of them—from the most fawning supporter of the Government to the renegade of the party—has been that there has been no criticism levelled against the Financial Statement, and yet the Government has found it necessary to put up man after man to defend it against that criticism that has been levelled at them from this side of the House. I

understood on last Thursday night that the debate would be finished to-night, and some reason should be given why that has not been done. We have had a certain number of days of debate, and there is a lot of other business that will occupy us during the remainder of the session. The weather will get hot, and I think the Premier might give some reason for the state of affairs I have indicated. Of course, I should say that the reason is that the Government is in such a desperate plight that they have to send out corner men to persuade the farmers that they are still their friends, and also get their supporters to pull them out of a very inconvenient situation.

The PREMIER (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I should be very glad to close the debate to-night if that were possible. I have to admit that I did not bring any influence to bear on the hon. member for Bowen or on the hon. member for Mirani, who wished to speak. I learned that if the debate proceeded any further than the present stage some two or three members on the other side wished to speak, and that would involve late sitting.

Mr. RYAN: Finish now.

The PREMIER: Yes; if the hon. gentleman will not regard it as a breach of the arrangement made last week to adjourn at about 10.45 p.m.

Mr. RYAN: Let the Treasurer finish now.

The PREMIER: I understand the hon. member for Mirani desires to speak, and if it will not be regarded as a breach of the arrangement come to last week, I should be only too pleased to continue till the debate comes to a close.

Mr. RYAN: Finish to-night.

The PREMIER: Willingly.

The TREASURER asked leave to withdraw his motion.

Mr. MURPHY: I object to leave being given to withdraw the motion. I think that any hon. member who wants to speak on the Financial Statement, no matter on what side he sits, is entitled to be heard. I think it is a very poor spirit that those who have already spoken on the question should want to force other members to remain silent. Every member has a right to speak on the Financial Statement or any other matter. Complaint was made last week that we were sitting too late, and it was urged that we should adjourn at a quarter to 11 o'clock. The hon. member for Mirani has as much right to speak on this matter as any other member of the Chamber.

The PREMIER: The opportunity will be given him now.

Mr. MURPHY: It is a very unfair decision to go on with the debate, especially after an agreement has been made between the Premier and the leader of the Opposition that we should adjourn at a quarter to 11.

The PREMIER: During this debate.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, during this debate. Why should the hon. member for Mirani,

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after sitting here from half-past 3 o'clock in the afternoon till twenty minutes to 11 o'clock, have to get up and make his speech now?

Mr. RYAN: He is supposed to be ready all the time.

Mr. MURPHY: It is all very fine to say that a member can speak just when he likes. He cannot. The Chairman controls the position, and can call upon a member or refuse to call upon him. Every member who wants to speak has a right to do so, and I do not agree with the action of the Government in deciding to complete the debate to-night.

HON. R. PHILP: I hope the Treasurer will not withdraw his motion. The arrangement made to adjourn at a quarter to 11 o'clock should be kept. Why should any member be forced to speak at this hour, and why should we be asked to remain until midnight to hear the Treasurer in reply, at the will of the leader of the Opposition?

Mr. RYAN: Not at all.

HON. R. PHILP: It is entirely. An arrangement was made to adjourn at a quarter to 11 o'clock, and the Government wish to do so.

Mr. RYAN: I want to facilitate business.

HON. R. PHILP: I want to facilitate business as much as you do.

Mr. RYAN: Your position does not show it.

HON. R. PHILP: I am not given to talking as much as you are.

Mr. RYAN: Your position does not demand it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask hon. members to preserve order and address the Chair.

Mr. RYAN: On the question of leave to withdraw the motion you have allowed two members to speak.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. RYAN: I am speaking on the question of leave to withdraw the motion. Two members have spoken on that question, and I claim the right to speak on it also.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member may speak on the question that the Chairman leave the chair.

Mr. RYAN: I am speaking on the question of leave to withdraw the motion.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be in order in speaking on that question.

Mr. RYAN: I do not wish to speak on the motion that the Chairman leave the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: The leave to withdraw a motion must be unanimous, or it cannot be withdrawn.

Mr. RYAN: I wish to speak to that very question. I do not want to embarrass the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Unless the hon. member dissents from my ruling, he cannot speak on that question.

Mr. RYAN: I am dissenting from your ruling, and that gives me an opportunity of speaking. The Premier has said that he is quite willing to finish the debate to-night according to the arrangement made between

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him and the leader of the Opposition. I wish to know whether the hon. gentleman intends to keep that arrangement. There is a means of doing so, and that is by voting against the motion that the Chairman do leave the chair, and defeating it when I call divide on the question.

Mr. FIEHELLY: Mr. Stodart, as you have allowed two members to speak on the request of the Treasurer that leave be given to withdraw the motion, I think I am perfectly entitled to speak on that question, notwithstanding the ruling you gave when the leader of the Opposition was speaking.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member spoke on the motion that I do now leave the chair, and if the hon. member for Paddington does that he will be in order.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I am not speaking to that motion.

The CHAIRMAN: Then the hon. member is not in order.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I am speaking now on the question of privilege.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not entitled to do so after I have given my ruling.

Mr. FIEHELLY: I bow to your ruling. At the same time I regret that such a ruling should have been given after two members have spoken on the request of the Treasurer that he should have leave to withdraw his motion. I object strongly to your leaving the chair, and I am prepared to vote with the leader of the Opposition when he calls divide on the question.

Question—That the Chairman do now leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 24.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Mackay
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Murphy
„ Bebbington	„ Paget
„ Blair	„ Petrie
„ Bridges	„ Philp
„ Caine	„ Stevens
„ Crawford	„ Swayne
„ Denham	„ Tolmie
„ Grant	„ Vowles
„ Grayson	„ Walker
„ Gunn	„ Williams
Tellers: Mr. Grayson and Mr. Gunn.	

NOES, 18.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Kirwan
„ Bertram	„ Land
„ Bowman	„ Larcombe
„ Coyne	„ May
„ Fihelly	„ McCormack
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Gillies	„ Ryan
„ Hamilton	„ Theodore
„ Huxham	„ Winstanley
Tellers: Mr. Bertram and Mr. Huxham.	

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. White. No—Mr. Gilday.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The House adjourned at six minutes to 11 o'clock.