

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 1921**

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FRIDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER, 1921.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock p.m.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS IN  
REPLY.

The SPEAKER: I have to report to the House that this morning I presented to His Excellency the Governor the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech, agreed to by the House on the 7th instant, and that His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply thereto:—

“Government House,  
“Brisbane.

“Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the  
Legislative Assembly,—

“I thank you on behalf of the King for your expression of continued loyalty and affection to our Most Gracious Sovereign's Throne and Person.

“I am pleased to receive your assurance that the various measures referred to in my Speech opening the present session, and all other matters that may be brought before you, will receive your most careful consideration, and that it shall be your earnest endeavour so to deal with them that your labours may tend to the advancement and prosperity of the State.

“And I again pray that these labours may be blessed.

“MATTHEW NATHAN.”

QUESTIONS.

CATTLE CARRIED ON QUEENSLAND RAILWAYS.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. What is the total amount received for freight on cattle conveyed on the Queensland railways for the years ended 30th June, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921?”

“2. What is the total number of cattle conveyed on the railways during each of the abovementioned financial years?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

“1. Freight for cattle only is not recorded separately.

“2. Year ended—

30th June, 1914	...	...	646,924
30th June, 1915	...	...	834,711
30th June, 1918	...	...	730,396
30th June, 1919	...	...	552,422
30th June, 1920	...	...	641,927
30th June, 1921	...	...	669,475.”

REPORT OF SETTLERS' BRANCH, STATE ADVANCES  
CORPORATION.

Mr. MORGAN asked the Treasurer—

“Is it the intention of the Settlers' Branch of the State Advances Corporation to issue its annual report; if so, will it be printed and presented to members, and when?”

The TREASURER (Hon. J. Fihelly, *Paddington*) replied—

“It is not intended to issue an annual report. Reference to the activities of

the corporation will be made in the Treasurer's Financial Statement, and I assume that the Auditor-General will also deal with the operations in his annual report.”

EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION SINCE  
JULY, 1915.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*), in the absence of Mr. Swayne (*Mirani*), asked the Secretary for Railways—

“What sum has been expended on railway construction in Queensland since 1st July, 1915?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

“£5,064,928.”

STATE SAWMILL, IMBIL—LOG TIMBER CUT AND  
PRICES PAID.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. What amount of pine log timber was cut during 1920-21 by the State sawmill, Imbil?”

“2. What were the prices charged by the Forestry Department for various classes of log pine to the State sawmill, Imbil, during 1920-21?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. H. Coyne, *Warrego*) replied—

“1. The amounts are as follows:—Pine logs, 1,286,386 superficial feet; pine tops, 384,123 superficial feet—total, 1,670,509 superficial feet.

“2. The State sawmill at Imbil is now under the management of the Forestry Department, which delivers the logs to the mill dump at the prices current at the time. Towards the latter end of the financial year the prices were:—Logs, 60 plus, £1 0s. 10d. Imbil, or £1 3s. 6d. Brisbane. Imbil: Logs 48-59 inches, 18s. 4d.; logs 38-47 inches, 16s. 10d.; logs 38 and tops 60 inches plus, 9s. 10d.; tops 60 inches, 8s. 10d. At that date the prices charged the sawmill were slightly more than those which private millers were paying. In the mid-financial year the prices charged were:—Imbil: Logs, 60 plus, £1 4s. 10d.; logs 48-59 inches, £1 2s. 4d.; logs 38-47 inches, 16s. 10d.; logs under 48 inches, 9s. 10d.; tops 60 inches, plus, 9s. 10d.; tops 60 inches, 8s. 10d.”

BABINDA HOTEL RECEIPTS.

Mr. WALKER asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

“What was—(a) the total amount received from the bar of the Babinda Hotel, (b) the total amount received from the dining and coffee rooms, (c) the total amount received for accommodation, (d) the total amount received for billiards, for the year 1920-21?”

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) replied—

“This information is not yet available.”

## FISH MARKET CHARGES.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"1. What were the average prices realised for fish in the market last week?"

"2. What amount does the Government charge the fishermen for market dues?"

"3. What amount does the fisherman have to pay to the Fishermen's Co-operative Company?"

"4. What is the storage rate charged by the Government?"

"5. Do the market dues and storage charged by the Government cover the expenses incurred by the department?"

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1. Mullet, 13s. 9d. per 40-lb. tray; bream, 16s. per 40-lb. tray; black bream, 6s. 9d. per 40-lb. tray; whiting, 18s. per 40-lb. tray; tailor, 10s. 9d. per 40-lb. tray.

"2. 5d. per tray of 40 lb.

"3. 3d. per tray market dues, and 7½ per cent. commission on sales.

"4. If the fisherman desires to store his fish, 6d. per tray of 40 lb. for the first twenty-four hours, and 3d. per tray for every subsequent period of twenty-four hours thereafter.

"5. No."

## GOODNA ASYLUM—NUMBER OF INMATES AND ATTENDANTS.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. What was the number of inmates at the Goodna Mental Asylum on 30th June, 1915 and 1921, respectively?"

"2. What was the number of attendants on those same dates?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"1. Patients.—30th June, 1915—Males, 872; females, 475. 30th June, 1921—Males, 995; females, 402.

"2. 30th June, 1915—Attendants, 100; nurses, 55. 30th June, 1921—Attendants, 128; nurses, 88."

## ANZAC DAY BILL.

## INITIATION.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*), it was formally resolved—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to constitute Anzac Day a national holiday."

## POLICE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

## COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*, in the chair.)

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

On clause 3—"Superannuation fund"—

The HOME SECRETARY moved the omission, on line 40, of the words "under this Act." Those words were not necessary, and they made the clause rather difficult to understand.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 15, both inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 16—"Retired officer may be required to give service"—

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): He could not approve of the clause, and he thought it was a mistake to have it in the Bill. He took it that, before a pensioner would be allowed to retire, he would have to go through an important examination by a referee or medical man. Certain circumstances might arise leading to a desire to supplement his pension—perhaps with the assistance of his wife or some of his grown-up family, and he would find himself called upon to re-enter the service in some other department. Once a medical man certified he was unable to resume his occupation, the Government should stand by that and allow him to retire. If, after a rest, he recovered a certain amount of his usual health, good luck to him. The fund should stand up to its obligations.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member had misread the meaning of the clause. Not only the State Government but the Commonwealth had taken advantage of the provision to make use of the services of officers who had retired. As hon. members well knew, retired police officers were engaged on recruiting work. It was not proposed that they should be engaged on any work and not receive their pension. If they were given additional work, or work within the service of the State, they would get paid for it. He did not think any advantage would be taken of it. They readily recognised that once a police officer had been retired he was beyond the stage where he was of any use in other services.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 17—"Appeal Board"—

Mr. MACGREGOR (*Merthyr*) thought the proposal to allow an appeal from the decision of the Commissioner in regard to trivial offences, not including dismissal—which, he thought, included resignation, although it was not mentioned—was unwise. The Commissioner's decision on trivial offences should be final. He therefore moved the omission, on line 9, of the words "or disrated or fined."

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not intend to accept the amendment, for obvious reasons. If they were going to give an appeal at all, they might as well give it in regard to all offences. The hon. gentleman had said the question of a fine was a trivial matter. It might appear trivial to appeal against the decision of the Commissioner in fining a man 10s. for a breach of the regulations or something like that. But in the Police Force it had to be remembered that those breaches were marked on the conduct-sheet of the officer, which was kept by the Commissioner in his office, and used for reference in regard to promotion. If a man were wrongly convicted of a minor offence and fined, he might be debarred from promotion because of his charge-sheet; whereas, if he had the opportunity of appealing and removing that stigma—if he had been unjustly treated—he would be placed on the footing of other men who had no charge recorded against them. For that reason he thought they should allow those words to go in. It had been argued on the previous day by different members that it was trivial; but when the matter affected probably the whole

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future of the officer, he thought the Committee would agree that it was wise to allow that officer the right of having that black mark investigated. The position was not the same as in most other occupations, where a fine was simply a punishment. Although it might not influence the Commissioner who imposed the fine, some Commissioner might be in the office in the future who would have only the charge-sheets to go upon. He would find there was a conviction against that man, probably for some trivial offence; but still, putting him side by side with a man of similar capacity who had had no conviction, the Commissioner would give promotion to the man who had no conviction recorded against him. It was not a good thing to insert the amendment, and he could not accept it unless some good reasons were given for doing so.

Amendment (*Mr. Macgregor's*) put and negatived.

*Mr. VOWLES*: On page 7, lines 32 to 45, subclause (10), reference was made to the powers of the Governor in Council. He moved the deletion of the whole subclause. He gave his reasons the previous day for the deletion of that subclause. They had a board to deal with appeals, and they should allow the decision of that board to be final. When they gave a decision, it was no use sending it on to the Government. The clause as it stood gave the Cabinet a certain amount of political pull which should not exist at all. In certain matters of promotion, they knew that officers were being held back. He knew one capable officer who was not receiving his promotion.

The HOME SECRETARY: Who was that?

*Mr. VOWLES*: Donnelly, of the Criminal Investigation Branch.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is not being kept back at all.

*Mr. VOWLES*: A junior officer was put over his head.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. It was a man of the same rank.

*Mr. VOWLES*: The officer put over his head did not have Donnelly's qualifications, and there was a grievance.

The HOME SECRETARY: Donnelly is a man I admire very much.

*Mr. VOWLES*: So did the public. The matter went right back to the tramways strike. A statement was made by a Minister of the present Cabinet that, because of the part Donnelly took in that tramway strike, he would not receive any promotion.

The HOME SECRETARY: He has received promotion.

*Mr. VOWLES*: The promotion was not in accordance with his service, and others had been put over his head. The Cabinet should be glad to be relieved of the responsibility put upon them by the clause.

The HOME SECRETARY: You cannot leave the Executive out of it.

*Mr. VOWLES*: They could make provision in the next clause for including the Executive. The position was different in the Railway Department, where the decision of the appeal board was final.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No, it is not.

*Mr. VOWLES*: In the clause it was provided that after the appeal board dealt with the matter it would have to go to the Minister. That was not the case in the Railway Department. What was the use of having

a board of appeal merely to get the evidence if they had to send it on to the Governor in Council?

*Mr. GLEDSON (Ipswich)*: The matter required consideration before the amendment could be accepted. They should not make the Commissioner an autocrat, and allow him to do as he liked. The Government should take the responsibility of having the final word in connection with any matter affecting policemen, or anyone else. An autocratic Commissioner might fine a man or dismiss him, and the Cabinet should have the final say in the matter. It would not matter to the leader of the Opposition or the hon. member for Merthyr if they lost a month's salary, but it was a serious thing for a policeman to lose a month's salary, and that was why the Government should have the final say, and retain the power provided in the clause. The Government could see that the policeman got justice. When the Commissioner knew that the Government would have the final say, he would not do anything but what was absolutely fair, and certainly would not act against the interests of the police.

*Mr. MOORE (Aubigny)*: The hon. member for Ipswich was mistaken in his reference to the Commissioner. The clause provided for an appeal from the Commissioner's decision to the appeal board, and the Opposition thought that the appeal board's decision should be final. The clause, however, provided that the Governor in Council could further consider the matter after the appeal board had dealt with it. A police magistrate would preside over the board, and, as he would have experience in taking evidence and giving decisions, the decision of the board should be final. They wanted to remove the whole business from political interference, but they could not do that unless they deleted the subclause altogether.

The HOME SECRETARY: You are willing to give the Railway Commissioner a power which you will not give to the Government.

*Mr. MOORE*: Not at all. If they were going to have an appeal board at all, they should let their decision be final.

*Mr. MORGAN*: He hoped the Minister would accept the amendment, as the appeal board would be rendered valueless if the Minister introduced political control. He thought that any Cabinet would wish to get rid of any political interest that might be exercised. One policeman might have friends who might be influential enough to get his case dealt with leniently by the Governor in Council, while others might not be able to exert sufficient influence. All sections interested would be represented on the appeal board. It would not really be an appeal board if their decision was not final. The principle in the Bill of requiring the recommendations of the board to be transmitted to the Commissioner, and then on to the Governor in Council, who had the final say, was a bad one. He thought that the system in connection with the railway appeal board was very much better. Political control was not a good thing to have in the public service. They all had experience of it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, we have. I can read a letter from a previous Premier in which he asked for a mitigation of sentence in regard to a policeman because he was a subscriber to political funds.

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Mr. MORGAN: Did the hon. gentleman believe in anything like that?

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not. None of our party has ever done that.

Mr. MORGAN: Even assuming the Bill became law in its present form, and the Government were above such a thing, might there not be another Government which was not above it, and a mitigation [4 p.m.] of sentence be given because a prisoner might have some political influence? A sentence might be justly imposed on a policeman, who, if the votes of his friends were strong enough, might be able to influence the Governor in Council.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a very serious reflection on the police.

Mr. MORGAN: In the case mentioned by the Home Secretary that appeared to have been done.

The HOME SECRETARY: In that case it was not done—the Cabinet would not do it.

Mr. MORGAN: It might have been a much stronger Cabinet than there was at the present time. If the decision rested finally with the Governor in Council it meant that it was entirely in the hands of a political party.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Did you not object to the powers conferred on the Savings Bank Commissioner?

Mr. MORGAN: No.

Mr. WEIR (*Maryborough*): Just as he was opposed to the final decision being left in the hands of the Commissioner for Railways in regard to an appeal, he was against any power that would eliminate the power of the Governor in Council to finally deal with these offences. In each case it was an autocracy versus the people's representatives. The appeal board was constituted by a police magistrate and the employees' and employers' representatives respectively, and there might possibly happen to be a conflict of feeling between a magistrate and a policeman, and a policeman might have very grave reason for dissatisfaction with the decision of the board, which would really be the decision of one man—the police magistrate. No one could shut their eyes to the fact that there was a probability of the decision being left entirely to the police magistrate. If a policeman found himself in that position, he should be able to have his case referred to the Governor in Council. If the police union had reason to think that the interests of any of their members were jeopardised, why should they not be allowed to appeal to the representatives of the people? It was unwise to leave the final decision in the hands of the Commissioner, as desired by hon. members opposite. Where was the wisdom of allowing the board to sit in judgment on the decision of the Commissioner, and of then allowing the Commissioner to give another decision?

Mr. MORGAN: We do not want that. We want the board to give the final decision.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): He understood the hon. member for Maryborough to say that, generally speaking, the railway appeals were a one-man show.

The HOME SECRETARY: The final decision rests with one man.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: On this appeal board there would be someone representing the Commissioner of Police, who had dealt with the case and imposed the penalty.

The HOME SECRETARY: It would not be wise for the Commissioner to appoint the officer who imposed the penalty.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: He knew that in connection with the railway appeal board the man in charge of the department whose action was questioned might sit on the board as a representative of the Commissioner. They had been told by a member the other night that when a man went into the Arbitration Court to fight he did not always believe in what he was fighting for, but he was there in the interests of the employees. The Commissioner of Police had already dealt with any case which went to appeal, and he was inclined rather to support the clause as it stood. The Governor in Council had the right to increase the penalty or to take any other action. The aspect of the Government's attitude which appealed to him was that when they were sitting in Opposition they used to take exception to various Acts of Parliament under which an officer who was charged and not prosecuted always had to appeal to the Minister. Here was a case where they had altered their minds.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The appeal board was practically in the position of arbitrators. The arbitrators were appointed by the respective sides because of their direct knowledge of the case—they were told all about the case for that purpose—and they had to advise the umpire on the technical questions involved. They were there as technical men, and no man was so unfair that, knowing the facts of the case, he would use his position to give it a complexion which it could not possibly bear. In the same way the man appointed to represent the Commissioner on the board would have a direct knowledge of the particular branch involved, and the police magistrate would be advised by him and the representative of the employees. To say that they went there to represent sides was farcical. They went there with expert knowledge to assist the magistrate to arrive at a decision.

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not intend to accept the amendment. A very poor case had been made out against the clause. The illustration of the Railway Appeal Board, given by the leader of the Opposition, really defeated his own argument. In that case, the hon. member was quite satisfied to allow the Commissioner for Railways to have a power which he was not prepared to give to the Executive Government.

Mr. VOWLES: We say, give it to the board.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member knew quite well that the Executive Government in a Sovereign State had the supreme power, and no Government would legislate away from themselves that power and responsibility, nor should they do so. The right of appeal to the supreme power in the State from the bureaucracy was one of the unwritten laws of the British constitution. Parliament, through its executive representatives, was the highest court of appeal in the land, and almost everything could be made the subject-matter of appeal to the Executive Government.

Mr. VOWLES: Why put it in the Act?

The HOME SECRETARY: Because they wanted the people to understand exactly what the appeal board meant. He for one

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would not agree to give away the power that resided in the Executive Government, for if democracy meant anything, it meant that every individual in the State had the right of petition from the bureaucracy, and the right to be heard in Parliament if he so desired.

Mr. VOWLES: Does the power apply to railway men?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. The Executive Government could reinstate any man over the head of the Commissioner for Railways. The appeal board was being established primarily to give the appellant an opportunity of stating his case publicly, and the safeguard in the matter was publicity. To-day, he had the right to appeal to the Government.

Mr. VOWLES: Then why state that the Governor in Council may confirm the decision of the board?

The HOME SECRETARY: That was only a matter of form. Publicity was the main thing in appeals and acted amongst other things as a deterrent to an autocratic Commissioner. The tribunal forwarded its decision to the Cabinet really to be confirmed, and he made bold to say that on all occasions the decision of the board would be registered by the Cabinet. If that process were not followed there would be no publicity and they would have cases such as that mentioned by the hon. member for Townsville and the leader of the Opposition himself last session. It would have been much more satisfactory to the hon. member and to himself and to the Commissioner if that case had been tried before a tribunal. Then, if any action were taken by the Cabinet contrary to the decision of the tribunal, the hon. member would have his opportunity of flogging the Government. The hon. member knew that no sane body of men would follow the procedure suggested by the hon. member for Murilla. The hon. member for Merthyr said that the Cabinet would have to deal with trivialities. That was the case before the Public Service Commissioner was appointed. The Public Service Board, really the Cabinet, sat one morning a week to deal, not with appeals, but with the most trivial matters that arose in the service, and hon. members opposite had supported the Government that maintained that system. To-day they said there should be no appeal to the Cabinet. In this case the Cabinet really only had to register the decisions of the board. It gave another appeal to a responsible authority apart from the decision of the appeal board, and that was recognised in court. He would take that opportunity of replying to the statement of the hon. member for Merthyr last night that he (the Home Secretary) knew nothing about the Bill. He could not understand how the hon. member had arrived at such a decision. If the hon. member was right, then every other hon. member in the House was wrong. The only thing that the hon. member had said in any way substantial was that the Bill should have been introduced long ago when the Government had plenty of money. The hon. member had not read the Bill and did not know how it would operate. Claims would not be made under the Bill for some fifteen or twenty years.

Mr. MACGREGOR: It would have been six years earlier if it had been introduced six years ago.

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The HOME SECRETARY: No criticism was of any value unless the critic had a knowledge of the subject-matter. The hon. member was a man of high standing in his profession, and he should be a little more careful when attempting criticism. If the hon. member would give attention to the business of the House, his criticisms would be valued. He was not going to say that the hon. member was not a man of capacity, but he gave no attention to the question. He simply got up and said something nasty. At the opening of the present Parliament the hon. member said that every law passed by this Parliament would be invalid because of some wrong procedure in the House. Surely that was not the hon. member's legal opinion!

Mr. MORGAN rose to a point of order. Was the Minister's remarks applicable, in any shape or form, to the amendment before the Committee? The hon. gentleman should keep to the matter under discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Murilla has been long enough a member of this House to know that Ministers are allowed a certain amount of latitude. The Minister is perfectly justified in taking up his present line of argument, so long as he intends to connect his remarks with the question. Should he depart from the subject before the Committee I will soon pull him up.

The HOME SECRETARY: The criticism of the hon. member for Merthyr could be taken little heed of because of his apparent lack of knowledge in other directions. The hon. member had told the House, and gave it as his definite legal opinion, that any laws passed by this Parliament would be illegal because of some wrong procedure. A law student in his first year would be plucked for making such a statement.

Mr. MACGREGOR: You might find it true yet.

The HOME SECRETARY: Then he would be sorry for the mayors and councillors recently elected under an Act passed last session. As a matter of fact, it was not the hon. gentleman's opinion. The hon. member was prepared to jump in without any proper study of his subject, and having a legal reputation he expected hon. members on the Government side of the House, because they were laymen, to accept his opinion. No hon. member of any standing in the legal world could afford to come into the House and do what the hon. member was doing. It was just as well to show that those hon. members who were handling the business of the House knew something about it, and hon. members who criticised would be well advised to fully ground themselves on the matter beforehand. He opposed the amendment. The police desired the appeal and recognised that publicity was their safeguard, and that it was not a wise or good thing to allow great powers to remain in the hands of autocracy. Hon. gentlemen knew that the Executive Government had power over an individual in the matter of life and death. When a man was sentenced to death, the Executive Government could reprieve, yet hon. members opposite objected to the Executive Council having the same power in respect of the decisions of an appeal board. No case had been made out in favour of the amendment, and he did not propose to agree to it.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): He was sorry the Home Secretary had taken the matter so badly. If it was the wish of the police that there should be the appeal hon. members did not desire to do anything contrary to their ideas. He had said that the Executive Government had control over an individual in the matter of life and death, and that they were the ultimate appeal in every case. If that was so, why put it in the Bill?

The HOME SECRETARY: We do not want to mislead the people.

Mr. VOWLES: They were simply setting out a power that was unnecessary. Would it not be better for the Home Secretary to consider the matter again; calmly this time? The hon. gentleman took the golden opportunity to have a tilt at the hon. member for Merthyr, but he did not come out of it too well. The hon. gentleman said he was "the great I am," and "the Poo-bah."

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not exhibit my ignorance.

Mr. VOWLES: The Home Secretary had shown his ignorance of the Standing Orders, and had taken advantage of an opportunity to do something which was [4.30 p.m.] strictly irregular. For the sake of carrying on Parliament as it should be carried on, it would have been far better if the hon. gentleman had stuck to the business before the Committee, and left those little matters alone.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): It was surprising to find that two legal gentlemen could not see the value of having a revising authority on a question affecting such an important arm of the Government as the Police Force. Both hon. gentlemen seemed to miss the point—that an appeal board to the Police Force was on a totally different footing to an appeal board for any other public department. It was a more important body in this way: that the Police Force was a semi-military force; it was the only force in the State on which the representatives of the Crown could rely for the enforcement of law and order and the safe-keeping of the public generally in any emergency; and the only ultimate authority which should have entire and complete control of such a force must be the representatives of the Crown. There was a parallel for that in the Imperial army. It was a much more democratic institution than even this appeal board. Before any court-martial could be formed, the prisoner could object to the president or any member of the court-martial; and even after a decision had been arrived at, there was some revising authority appointed by and acting for the Crown, who could revise the decision of that court-martial, decrease but not increase penalties, and sometimes rescind them altogether. The point in relation to this appeal board was that it practically took the part of a preliminary or lower court, and the clause gave to the Cabinet the right to revise or rescind any decision which might be arrived at. It simply made the Governor in Council the highest court, at which the decision of the preliminary appeal board might be revised.

Mr. MOORE: They must be revised.

Mr. HARTLEY: No, they must not. They could confirm. In cases of emergency, particularly when public excitement might be running high, it might be very wise that the representatives of the Crown should have

complete control of the Police Force and be able to override any decision of the appeal board in the interest of public safety and security, if such became necessary.

Amendment (*Mr. Vowles's*) negatived, and the clause put and passed.

Clauses 18, 19, and 20 put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment; and the report was agreed to.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

## BANANA INDUSTRY PRESERVATION BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (*Hon. W. N. Gillies, Eacham*): The Bill, the second reading of which I am about to move, is a very short one, but, nevertheless, is of very great importance to Queensland, and one which, I think, will meet with the approval of every member of this House, as well as the great majority of the people outside. The Bill is really an adaptation of the Sugar Cultivation Act of 1913, which was passed by the Denham Government. That Act was passed because of a compact which was entered into between the Commonwealth Government and the Government of Queensland with regard to the abolition of the bounty and excise. Those interested in the industry thought that a system of bounty and excise, while it was a comparative success in discouraging the cultivation of sugarcane by black labour, nevertheless did not ensure to the white growers the whole of the effective protection, and it was advocated by some that the bounty and excise should be equalised or wiped out altogether, so that the growers would get the benefit of the protective duty without the conditions. Considerable correspondence ensued between the Governments, and it finally was decided that, if the Commonwealth Government abolished the bounty and excise system, the then Government of Queensland would introduce legislation to make the sugar industry a white one. Consequently, the Sugar Cultivation Act of 1913 was passed, which enabled the Minister to submit a dictation test to any person engaged in the industry, at the same time allowing the Minister power to exempt certain people from the operations of that Act, principally persons already engaged in the industry. I mention that to show that this Bill is practically on all fours with that measure. This Bill seeks to do for the banana industry what the Sugar Cultivation Act sought to do for the sugar industry. The great justification for this measure is that the growers of Southern Queensland, by deputation and correspondence, have urged me to bring in this legislation. An important argument for this legislation at the present time is the fact that the House of Representatives recently, in their wisdom, increased the protective duty on bananas from 2s. 6d. per cental to 8s. 4d. per cental—really a protective duty of 1d. per lb. That is an effective duty to protect the Australian growers against the Fijian bananas. We know that the industry in Fiji was subsidised by the Victorian authorities; but, notwithstanding that subsidy, I think that the Queensland and New South Wales growers will practically have a monopoly of the banana industry in future. That

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makes it more important, seeing that the industry must expand, to have this protection. When we realise that the Southern people have said—what they used to say about our sugar—that it is largely a black-labour industry, which, of course, is not true, we can see the necessity for legislation of this kind. During the discussion on the tariff in the Federal House, it was stated that the banana industry was becoming a black-labour industry in Queensland. That is not true; but the fact remains that if there is a protective duty put on bananas, it may have the effect of causing coloured labour—principally Chinese—to engage in that industry. The growers therefore have urged me to introduce legislation to keep the industry as white as it is at the present time. I may give this assurance on behalf of the Government: that it is not the intention of the Government to interfere with any person who is engaged in the industry at the present time. It is desired to get this legislation on the statute-book as quickly as possible, because we have received information to the effect that Chinese are buying up land in Queensland and contemplate going in for the banana industry. They are gradually going in for banana-growing in Queensland again; and just over the border of New South Wales the Chinese growers are increasing to an alarming extent. I hope this legislation will be acceptable to the House, so that the white people can be fully engaged in the industry in Queensland. There is an additional argument in favour of this legislation. The duty on bananas at first was 1s. 6d. per cental. That was increased in March, 1920, to 2s. 6d. per cental, and by the tariff before the House of Representatives to 8s. 4d. per cental, equal to 1d. per lb. The Senate, however, on the 3rd August, upon the motion of Senator Pratten, agreed by twenty-one votes to seven, and in which Senator Russell, the representative of the Government in the Senate, according to the Press, concurred, that the duty should be ½d. per lb. Though this resolution was made by the Senate, no alteration has yet been made in the duty. It has not been finally dealt with by the House of Representatives yet. I advance that as an additional reason why we should get this legislation on the statute-book as early as possible, in order to show the members of the Federal Parliament, particularly the Senate, also the taxpayers and consumers of the Commonwealth, that we are determined to keep the industry white and conduct the banana industry in Queensland under white-labour conditions. I sincerely hope that the House of Representatives will not reduce the tariff as suggested by the Senate, because the effect of a tariff of 8s. 4d. per cental will be to encourage the growers to establish themselves in Queensland and New South Wales. We know there are rich scrub lands in Queensland and New South Wales capable of growing bananas. The banana is an important article of diet, and it is hoped and expected that the increased tariff will have the effect of building up a very important industry in Queensland. On our returned soldier settlements, and in other parts where they have scrub areas in Queensland, they can go in for banana-growing and carry it on successfully under this protective duty. It is our desire to justify the House of Representatives and Mr. Massy Greene, the Minister who introduced the tariff, in keeping that tariff. Mr. Massy Greene knows something of the indus-

try in New South Wales. He represents that part of New South Wales where the bananas are grown, and he realises the importance of protecting this industry against cheap coloured labour outside. We want to justify that by, as far as possible, keeping the industry in the hands of the white people. There are about 1,300 growers of bananas in Queensland—that is, growers who are producing bananas commercially, and they are scattered along the coastline, the greater number being between Maryborough and Coolangatta. There are not many Chinese engaged in the industry now, but at one time they predominated and practically controlled the industry. Their methods of harvesting unripe fruit and small fruit and sending them to the Southern markets did a great deal to injure the industry in the eyes of the consuming public. For that reason I hope the banana industry will be kept exclusively to the white growers, or, at any rate, that all the growers will see that only white people will be employed. The total area under bananas in 1919 was 7,694 acres, yielding 956,044 bunches. The value of the crop that year was estimated at £258,929. In 1920 there were 8,900 acres under bananas, which yielded 1,184,210 bunches, of an estimated value of £356,000. The increase in 1920, therefore, was 1,206 acres, and in value £97,171. The districts containing the largest areas under bananas are Maroochy, where there are over 2,000 acres, Gympie 900 acres, and Brisbane 850 acres. In my opinion, the best flavoured bananas are those grown in the southern parts of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) There is no doubt that the better flavoured bananas are grown in the temperate regions. It is an industry the returned soldiers can engage in, and it is hoped that it will be kept white. In support of that legislation, a deputation waited on me some time ago. The secretary of the Southern Queensland Co-operative Fruit Growers' Association urged very strongly that this legislation should be introduced. He thanked me for the part I played in doing my duty as Minister for Agriculture when I supported the increased tariff. I took the matter to Cabinet, and on it being approved I prepared some figures and furnished them to one of the Federal members in favour of an increased tariff. The secretary called to thank me for assisting to get the tariff increased. I know that that will help to keep the industry in the hands of the white people. I notice that "Nicko's," the journal controlled by Mr. Nicklin, who is a strong advocate of white labour in the banana industry, makes the statement in regard to New South Wales—

"Mr. R. G. Bartlett, Assistant Fruit Expert of New South Wales, has received instructions from his head office to visit all Chinese banana plantations in the State, and obtain particulars of areas under cultivation. On Friday last a visit was paid to the plantation of Sang On Tiy and Company, at the Little Pocket, Billinudgel, where there are 150 acres under bananas. This large plantation is fairly free from bunchy top, which is dug out as soon as noticed, and fresh plants put in a few feet away. The manager, Mr. W. War Chan, stated that in two years £20,000 had been spent on the plantation, £2,000 on a large two-storey house, £2,000 on a road, and a further £2,000 is being spent in the erection of packing sheds. To date, only

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1,000 cases have been sent away, although it is expected that later in the year up to 1,000 cases weekly will be despatched. All the bananas are sent to Wing On and Company.

"The labour is solely Chinese, of whom there are fifty-four, divided into two gangs, each under a foreman. They are paid £3 per week with keep, starting at 6 a.m., and finishing at 5.30 p.m. They have an hour off for dinner at 11 a.m., and have 'smokos' of twenty minutes at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., when tea is supplied. Most of the labourers wear the old Chinese round hats and wooden clogs. Visits will be paid in due course to the Chinese plantations at Burringbar, Crabbes Creek, and Mullumbimby."

That indicates what is taking place over the border in New South Wales. I trust that the New South Wales Government will follow our example, and place legislation on the statute-book to make the industry a white one. The Bill might be described as a Bill of two main clauses; although there are seven clauses in it, there are two clauses that really count—clauses 3 and 5. Clause 3 provides for the granting of certificates after the passing of a dictation test in the prescribed manner. Clause 5 gives power to make regulations, amongst other things, for the granting of certificates to persons who have passed the dictation test, and for the exemption from the Act of any person or classes of persons who, for any reason, it is not considered necessary to examine. Persons who are owners of crops of bananas actually planted, but not harvested at the passing of the Act, may also be relieved from its operation. Those two clauses are the strength of the Bill. It is not the intention of the Government to interfere with those persons who are engaged in the industry. We wish to get the Bill passed as soon as possible, so as to keep the industry in the hands of the white people, and justify the duty which has been granted by the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. VOWLES: We have in other Acts of Parliament similar principles to those contained in this Bill. We all desire to keep the industry for the white race, and to keep, not only Chinese, but every class of Asiatics out of the industry. With regard to the dictation test which has to be passed before a certificate is granted, it appears to me that there is a possibility of injustice being done unless we are very careful. Every person in the community has certain rights, even though he may be a Chinaman, or any other kind of Asiatic. There are some Chinamen here who are naturalised and hold land in fee-simple. Would it not be better to state definitely as to what individuals, and under what circumstances, relief shall be given from the passing of these tests. Of course, the hon. gentleman will say that a Labour Cabinet would not do any injustice to anyone; but the position is that we are delegating our authority to one individual—the Minister—to do certain things, which we would have the opportunity of objecting to if they were put definitely before us. That is my objection to government by regulation. We are getting to the position of introducing what might be termed a skeleton Bill; but under the big power of making regulations contained in it, we allow the Governor in Council to carry out the things which we should deal with in the House. As there will be a possibility of interfering

with existing rights of individuals, and bringing about confiscation, it would be well to make the position more definite. I trust that, under the operation of this measure, whoever the Minister may be, he will see that every consideration is given to those who have acquired rights, and that nothing savouring of injustice may be done. I believe that many Asiatics come to Queensland who have no right to be here. They come from the North, and also over our Southern borders, and get into communities of Chinese who are working on different places. We do not want to make Australia attractive to them, but we should be particular to see that those who have been allowed to acquire interests here in the past are not harshly interfered with.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): If I followed the leader of the Opposition rightly, it seems to me that he was doing a little special pleading on behalf of certain persons in the State who have been allowed, as it were, to exploit the Chinese, in case there might be some injustice done.

Mr. VOWLES: No.

Mr. COLLINS: I accept the hon. member's assurance. I am glad the Minister has introduced this measure.

Mr. VOWLES: We are all glad.

Mr. COLLINS: It is in accordance with the white Australia policy. The Federal Parliament has put a fairly high protective duty on bananas, increasing it from 2s. 6d. per cental to 8s. 4d. per cental, which I think is a fair protection for the industry. Considering that North Queensland is the home of the banana industry—

Mr. BRAND: The Minister said South Queensland.

Mr. COLLINS: North Queensland. I represent a portion of North Queensland in which more land would be brought under banana cultivation, given cheap methods of transport. In the Proserpine district we have some very rich lands on the hillsides, which were cleared in the early days by kanakas, but which are now growing lantana. That land is very suitable for growing bananas,

and I am very pleased that we [5 p.m.] are going to make this a white man's industry, because it means that we shall have in that district something besides the growing of sugar-cane. I think it will be found to be profitable now that bananas are being found to be largely consumed in the South. The measure will be beneficial, not only to the district I represent, but also to Queensland generally.

Hon. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): It is not often, I am sorry to say, that I can congratulate the Administration upon any measures which they introduce in this House, but upon the Bill now before the Chamber I can offer them some congratulations, because it is going to have a very far-reaching effect on the settlement of land in our coastal districts, and that in very small areas. The banana industry in the Albert electorate has progressed by leaps and bounds. On Currumbin Creek and on the islands of Moreton Bay it is affording a fair living to a number of men who, if they had to pay for labour assistance in farming, would be unable to make it pay, and it has been the means of settling lands which otherwise would have remained neglected and deserted. I am somewhat

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interested in the matter personally, and, as I have already indicated, a vast number of the electors of Albert are vitally concerned. The Chinese are to be feared by the white banana-growers of Australia, and it may not be generally known that they possess a syndicate, having control, it is said, of a very large amount of capital. The headquarters of the syndicate are in Melbourne, but their operations are very far-reaching. They have acquired on the Northern Rivers of New South Wales some of the choicest banana lands, paying such a large amount of money that it seems hardly possible for them to make a profit; but we all know that by their methods and—as I have no hesitation in saying—by their industry, they are able to invest capital to such an extent as would be impossible for the white man with his rightly different ideas of life. It has been pointed out by the leader of the Opposition that there are in Queensland naturalised Chinamen entitled to hold the freehold of land. I am glad to say that in their invasion of the Southern portion of Queensland I do not think they have so far got any foothold in that respect. Inquiries were recently made by the agents of the syndicate I have mentioned as to the purchase of land, but the growers, acting on my advice, practically put the position of any possible sellers in this way—that they would boycott them if they sold land for the purpose of Chinese settlement in this industry—(Hear, hear!)—and, through the Fruit Growers' Association on the Currumbin, they have been able successfully so far to keep the Chinese out. Owing to the duty which is now being paid on bananas, it is possible for a man, with no very considerable assistance from the members of his family, to make a very excellent living on from 8 to 10 acres, provided it is of good quality and suitable for the purpose. I know of an instance of that kind myself. A young fellow, who was a clerk in Dalgety's, had to go upon the land for health reasons. He bought a block of 10 acres of suitable land on one of the islands in Moreton Bay. Two years ago I saw him clearing the land. About eighteen months ago I saw him planting suckers, and they were not forward suckers either. To day he has less than 3 acres under bananas. So far, with the aid of one horse, he has been able to keep the land in perfect cultivation, and from those eighteen-months-old banana stools he is averaging a return of £5 10s. a week. Of course, if he had to employ labour at award rates, there would be no profit in it; but such farming solves the difficulty of settling land in small areas. I noticed that Mr. Benson, writing in the April number of the "Agricultural Journal," spoke of a small area of bananas at Buderim, somewhat under an acre in area. It was occupied by a man who, owing to health reasons had to retire from the Department of Public Instruction. The land was previously under bananas for about six years, and then was laid down in *paspalum* and used for pasture until he ploughed it out and put it under bananas in 1911. He carefully cultivated, approximately, an acre. He spent £25 on suitable fertilizers and also planted pineapples. He has got a payable crop of cucumbers from 1919 till the present time, and also a paying crop of earth nuts. To-day, at the price bananas are realising, Mr. Benson says, there is £400 worth of fruit in sight. The Secretary for Agriculture

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deserves the congratulations of everyone who has the country interests of the State at heart for introducing a measure having for its object the preservation of that promising industry to the white manhood of Queensland. Land at Nerang—not scrub land, but what may be called jungle scrub—which a few years ago was regarded as practically worthless, has been found suitable, owing to its eastern aspect, for growing bananas, and to-day settlement is taking place on small areas of 10, 12, and 15 acres. This land, a few years ago, was not considered of a greater value than £1 to £1 5s. per acre as pasture for cattle. To-day, these small areas are going to maintain a man and his wife and children in comfort. When the Bill is in Committee, if there is any doubt as to any of the provisions, I trust the Secretary for Agriculture will accept an amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no doubt.

HON. J. G. APPEL: If this measure becomes law, it will be one of the most valuable measures for the settlement of our coastal lands in Queensland that has ever been introduced into the Queensland Parliament. I quite agree that, on account of the fertility of the soil and the moisture obtained there, a magnificent specimen of banana is grown in the North; but, as the Minister has stated, bananas which are grown in the Southern part of the State, in suitable localities, although not so large, have indeed a finer flavour. It is an industry which is not so hard upon a man and his family as dairying. A man with very slight assistance from his family—practically none on the land itself—can easily cope with the cultivation of 8 to 12 acres of land. It is not an occupation which causes him to be engaged in it from early in the morning till late at night. Moreover, he might take a holiday every now and again and the bananas are still growing. So long as the land is suitable and he gets a fair price for his product, and facilities are afforded in the way of bringing that fruit to the market, and provision is made for the marketing of that fruit, it is going to be one of the factors involving the settlement of our coastal land in Queensland. I congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture on the introduction of the Bill, and I think I can safely say that it will be passed without dissent.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): I am not so much concerned about the coloured aliens as I am for the white growers that are likely to be engaged in this business. During the past eighteen months I have put in a considerable time in various sections of the banana-growing districts, and from evidence I have gathered from the men in the industry and from my own observations, I consider that the measure is one of extreme urgency. It has been said by the hon. member for Albert and other hon. members that this industry is likely to bring about more rapid settlement and will keep settlement on small areas of land. The hon. member for Albert's experience does not quite tally with my own observations so far as growers being able to take a holiday frequently. He said that there was no necessity to work long hours. My experience in these districts is that these men are up before sunrise, and have done a considerable amount of cultivation before breakfast, and most of them work practically until dark. Reference has been made to the

value of the industry to the State from the standpoint of settlement. In travelling round the Landsborough district, I could not see any industry that has given the same opportunities for the settlement of such a number of our returned men as the banana-growing industry. I was pleased to find that a considerable number have gone into the industry. While at the present juncture the outlook seems to be fairly encouraging, there is a considerable amount of apprehension existing in the minds of the growers as to the future of the industry. I would like to quote a letter that I have received from an official of one of the branches of the South Coast Fruitgrowers' Association. The letter reads—

"Bananas are fairly hard to dispose of at present at anything like satisfactory prices. It is necessary for growers to get 16s. clear to get a living out of the game. At present we are not getting that. One hears lots of 'reasons' for the low prices. I am convinced that the real factor is that we are overproducing—I mean that we have got ahead of the demand under our present method of distribution."

There is a considerable amount of truth in that letter. The amount of organising work that has been accomplished during the past twelve or eighteen months by the South Coast Fruit Growers' Association has been almost inconceivable, but it is necessary for a great deal more work to be carried out so far as the distributing side of the matter is concerned. He goes on to say—

"I fancy I see a little danger this way—that low prices will squeeze some of our good growers out of the industry. Chinese companies will hop in, and by the time we have worked up to fixed prices for various grades of bananas and have got the selling end of the game on a business-like footing, 'Chink' will be well enough established to keep a lot of good men out of this very important and interesting industry. I do hope that you will be successful in preserving this fine industry for our white men and their families."

That remark has reference to the knowledge this grower had that the Government were introducing this measure. I have collated a lot of information in reference to the industry, received by letter and extracts from papers, and I supplied information to members of the Commonwealth Opposition to enable them to get a fair grip of things. I am egotistical enough to think that it carried considerable weight among members of the Commonwealth Parliament. At the present time some of the finest bananas grown are being sent to the Brisbane markets from almost immediately at the back of One-tree Hill. Two years ago a returned soldier took up a piece of land there, and he is sending in some fine fruit, and others are doing the same. During the past twelve or eighteen months in the south-east of the range a considerable number of men have gone into the industry, and I am satisfied that in most cases they will make good. In some cases the prices these men have had to pay for land has been altogether too high. I know cases where they have paid from £60 to £70 per acre for virgin soil. They have to wait eighteen months at least to get a crop, and with the amount of work they have had to put into the business these men have been

under a very considerable handicap. I know of one extreme case where a man paid just on £100 per acre, and I am satisfied he has a bigger load than he will be able to carry. Another point I would like to make is that banana-growing has resulted in considerable revenue coming to the State. The progress made by the South Queensland fruit-growers has been remarkable. I have collected some facts from statistics given by Mr. W. Ellison, secretary of the Fruit Growers' Association. He states—

"Some details concerning its exports of fruit by train for the seven months, 5th January to 30th July, are of special interest. During that period about 140 special trains were run. These conveyed 12,016 tons of fruit, of which 7,881 went to Melbourne, and 4,135 tons to Sydney."

As probably some hon. members know, during the past twelve or eighteen months three special trains a week have been run from the South Coast to the border, and the Currumbin district has sent a considerable quantity of fruit which has been transhipped here. I am satisfied that very few people in Queensland realise the enormous quantity of fruit that is being sent from the South Coast. The following will show the value of the fruit-growing industry to the Railway Department—

"The freight paid to the various railway departments was £53,000, and the total value of the fruit amounted to about £335,000. The total number of cases carried was 319,367, of which 214,841 were bananas, 85,801 pines, 17,286 citrus, 367 papaws, 245 custard apples, 284 passions, together with innumerable small lines of other fruits and vegetables. These figures speak eloquently, but they are only small to what will be handled in a few short years."

I consider that the figures I have collected for the first seven months of this year will be somewhat startling to the majority of the public of this State. I would like to emphasise another point, reference to which has been made by the hon. member for Albert, that a lot of these men are able to obtain a fairly large amount of revenue from side lines; many of them grow papaws, custard apples, and some put in a quantity of beans and tomatoes, which, in most cases, have found a ready market in Brisbane. One case came under my observation in the early part of last year, where a grower obtained 15s. a sugar-bag for his beans. This industry is of very great importance, and it will be of far greater importance in the future. The State is to a very considerable extent involved in the industry. Last year or the year before a large area of land was opened up on the Highlands Estate. I suppose from fifty to one hundred returned soldiers have taken up selections. Several districts have derived benefits from this very valuable industry. I want to emphasise the point that the white growers have very considerable apprehensions as to the possibility of Chinamen getting into the [5.30 p.m.] industry. On the North Coast, Chinese companies, it is said, have bought up a considerable area of land, and at the present time are utilising the services of white men in working it. I hope when this Bill comes into operation that every effort will be made to keep the industry in the hands of the white people.

*Mr. Barber.]*

I know young men who used to knock about the streets of Brisbane, and march in procession with the unemployed who have been engaged by banana-growers up the North Coast. Although they could not get a permanent job, full time could be made amongst the various growers. That was much better for them than going down to Kedron Park. The bananas need a lot of cultivation, and for that reason will give a lot of employment. I give my hearty support to the Bill.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): With the previous speakers I congratulate the Government in bringing this measure forward. I intend to support every measure which the Government bring forward which will lead to settlement in Queensland. No doubt banana-growing is coming to the front in Queensland. Some years ago bananas were not grown extensively, but the area under bananas is increasing every year now. In New South Wales the area under bananas increased from 255 acres in 1914 to 2,853 acres in 1920. I hope the Federal Parliament will impose a heavy import duty on bananas so as to prevent the importation of bananas into Australia, and allow the white people in Australia to grow them. The figures show that in 1914 bananas to the value of £241,137 were brought into Australia, in 1916-17 £213,118, in 1917-18 £137,140, and in 1918-19 the value of bananas imported dropped to £82,529. So if the Federal Government impose a heavy import tariff it will be of great benefit to our people. It is a good thing to know we are going to prevent Chinese from cultivating bananas in Queensland, because in New South Wales they practically monopolise the growing of bananas and also the marketing. Nothing is going to do more for closer settlement in Queensland than the cultivation of bananas. We have many returned soldiers on the land and they are enabled to make a living from growing bananas on small areas; they require the very best of soil, so the growers must get a decent return for their investment in banana land. I will have something further to say at the Committee stage. I congratulate the Minister on introducing the Bill.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*): I recognise that this Bill is going to do a great deal of good for the banana industry. I recollect that two or three years ago the Premier was waited on in connection with this particular matter, and it is unfortunate that the introduction of this legislation has been delayed until the present time.

Mr. GLEDSON: Well, don't delay it any further.

Mr. WALKER: A great deal of injury has been done in Queensland because they have got in the thin edge of the wedge regarding coloured labour engaged in this industry. One of the principal arguments used in the Senate was that many Chinamen were engaged in the banana industry in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That statement made in the Senate is not true.

Mr. WALKER: This Bill will rectify the harm to a great extent, and I am glad the Minister has seen his way to bring it forward, even after this long delay. I represent a district which has suffered more from the number of Chinese engaged in this industry than any other. In the Kin Kin scrub, to the north end of the Blackall Range, large

areas of land formerly owned by white men, taken up purely for speculation, are now held by Chinese. The Chinaman is a good cash buyer, and now they have a monopoly of that land. They employ no one but Chinese, except a few white men to fall the scrub, because a Chinaman cannot use an axe. They are of no use to the pioneers of the district at all. They do all the work with Chinese, all of whom live on rice which is imported. They do not spend any money in the district at all. They send their stuff through the Chinese in Brisbane to Chinese merchants in Sydney. They are not married—perhaps, that is fortunate—but it is bad for the district. If there were white men in the industry they could share many of the troubles now experienced by the pioneers. I notice from this Bill that it is proposed to impose a dictation test. There are many white men engaged in the industry now who could not pass that dictation test. I know the Governor in Council has discriminatory powers under this Bill, and he can exempt those growers; but the time has come when we want to do away with government by regulation. (Hear, hear!) We are elected by the people and surely to goodness we can pass the legislation in the way we require it. It may take a little more time, but we are just as competent as the Governor in Council in dealing with these matters, because we have the local knowledge in regard to the prevailing conditions. I would like to see an amendment introduced to safeguard the men already engaged in the industry, whether they are white men or Chinese. When a man invests his money in land and complies with the law we have no right to interfere with him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We won't interfere with him.

Mr. WALKER: The hon. gentleman may not always be Minister for Agriculture. We may get a worse Government than the present one, although I do not think it is possible to get a worse one. (Laughter.) Still we might get a Government who will put this clause into effect. There are great possibilities for banana-growing along the North Coast. We should prevent the Chinese buying more land and keep it for our own people, particularly the returned soldiers. At the present time the soldiers in the Kin Kin district are battling for a road for themselves, and, incidentally, they are also battling for the big Chinese syndicate. Experiments have been carried out during the last three or four years on a large area of our coastal country, and banana-growing has been made a most profitable industry. Although we are not going to be able to produce the fine bananas that are grown in the best scrub lands in the North, we are growing a good banana, with a fine flavour, even if not quite so big as the other. We are settling that part of the country with white people. They may be able to take up some other work in the off season, such as fishing, for example. It would be a pity if the Chinese were allowed to get into the industry there. I hope the Minister will accept an amendment, making it clear that the Chinamen at present owning lands will be protected from any hostile Government which may be in power, and may be inclined to act harshly towards them. We must not stand for repudiation in any way; we must stick to any agreement we make with anybody. The Chinamen have given, in some cases, from £50 to £100 an

acre for their land, and it would not be fair to interfere with them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where have they paid that price?

Mr. WALKER: On the west side of Cooroy, where, I believe, there are about fifty Chinamen. They have invested their money in the industry, and if they are compelled to go out of it, under any law which may be passed, they should be treated justly, and not deprived of their lands unfairly simply because they are Chinamen.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): No one has taken a keener interest in the development of the banana industry than the company of which I have the honour to be a director. From the start, one of our big troubles has been with regard to the Chinamen who are employed in the industry. Although I agree with the opinion that we should not penalise them simply because they have a yellow skin instead of a white one, at the same time I stand for the policy of getting them out of the industry. The Chinese are very industrious people, but, owing to their standard of living being different to our own, they are undesirable people to have in our midst. It is unfair to expect our own farmers to compete with the Chinese, some of whom are at present engaged in and have a controlling voice in the industry. We know that they have nearly all the ripening chambers in their possession, about 90 per cent. of the ripening being done by the Chinese. We want to get the control of the industry for the benefit of the white man. I do not think that anyone wants to be unfair to those Chinamen who are already in the industry, and I trust that the Minister will accept any suggestion to deal fairly with them.

The HOME SECRETARY: What is your suggestion with regard to dealing fairly with them?

Mr. WARREN: The hon. gentleman has been two years considering this question, and he knows that, long before this Bill was contemplated, we put the matter before the Government and asked them to take action. I can tell him what I consider to be fair as a representative fruitgrower. I feel sure that the Secretary for Agriculture is desirous of assisting the fruitgrowers, who have so well organised their industry during the last three or four years. At the outset of our efforts to organise it, we had great difficulty to contend with. A company started operations, and afterwards became insolvent, causing a loss to the industry of about £13,000. I do not say who is to blame for that. There is an hon. member in this Chamber who is blamed for this disaster.

Mr. GLEDSON: Is that the company the hon. member for Oxley is in?

Mr. WARREN: That is the silly interjection I wanted somebody to make. The hon. member for Oxley was no more responsible for what happened to that company than I was, and I was not even a member. I want to see a little more fairness in this Chamber, and less hitting at a man behind his back by members opposite. I want to say, from a sense of fairness, that if the hon. member for Oxley had been allowed to manage that company it would have been the big concern that the Southern Fruit Growers' Association is at the present time. If hon. members would face this proposition as we have been facing it for the last two

and a-half years, they would do something more than make political capital out of it. These Eastern races are absolutely up against this organisation, and that is one of the reasons why I say they must go. The other reason is that we do not want them socially or industrially. We must co-operate in order to give to the public an article fit for human consumption. When we started this company, a considerable amount of fruit was being put on the market that was not fit for children to eat. I do not say that the Chinamen grow a poor quality of fruit, but our company insisted at that time on a better standard of fruit. (Hear, hear!) We insisted on certain improvements in handling the fruit. To a certain extent the Railway Commissioner assisted us in its carriage. He met us in a good many ways. But all the difficulties we have had to face to bring about the stabilisation of the industry will have been faced uselessly if we are to have this festering sore in our midst. The hon. member for Coorooa gave us certain figures, and whilst I think he went to the outside limit, we have certainly a few Chinamen in the industry. I do not know how many there are, because they are a growing quantity, but I believe there are hundreds in New South Wales, and I think the Minister for Agriculture will bear me out when I say that they are getting a very serious trouble on the Northern Rivers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is quite true.

Mr. WARREN: We want to see the industry safe for white men—for co-operators. There is no reason why we should not, with proper distribution, have sixteen times as much fruit grown in Queensland as there is at present. That would mean that the industry would be nearly, if not quite, as important as the dairying industry, but we cannot have it unless we have co-operation, and make it purely a white man's industry. When the tariff was going through the Federal Parliament the members who opposed a high duty argued that Chinamen were engaged in the banana industry in Queensland, and there was a certain amount of truth in it. I am assured by members of the Federal Parliament that if Queensland and New South Wales pass such measures as this there would be no difficulty in getting a duty of 1d. per lb. on bananas, which would bring the duty up to that on citrus fruits. In that sense the Government, by passing this measure, are helping to assist the grower by ½d. per lb.—that is, if the duty of 8s. 4d. per cwt. is carried on the present occasion, which I have reason to believe will be the case, because we are making strong representations. At the present time the banana market was never in a worse condition, but it is merely a slump, and it is not caused by Fiji bananas.

Mr. GLDAY: Is it not on account of the high freights for export?

Mr. WARREN: We are just as guilty in the matter of high freights as anybody else, but we are not complaining about the freights. The fact is that nobody has assisted us more than the people in New South Wales. On the last occasion when I went over in charge of the handling of the fruit, the department there met me in every conceivable way. The officer concerned put at our disposal the new trucks which he said would carry the fruit through New South Wales without any danger to it. We handle

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the whole of the fruit going to the Southern States, and we are also sending consignments to New Zealand. I am not here to blame anybody. I want to get as much as I can for the fruitgrower, and to make it a white man's industry; and when we do that, we have five times—twenty times—the amount of fruit land that they have in the South. I am convinced that we can grow fruit here, including the freight, more cheaply than they can in the South, and we can also grow better fruit. But we must have standardised fruit and put on the market an article that is attractive. At present fruit is going on the market which is fit only to give stomach trouble. We want to eliminate that practice, and give the public, who we know are reasonable, a fair deal, and we expect the Government to give us a fair deal. Nor are we unreasonable so far as the agents are concerned, but we want them to be our agents and not our masters. The only way we can do all this is by having organisation, and we demand that the department shall give us all the assistance it can in that organisation.

As far as the ripening process is [7 p.m.] concerned, it is solely in the hands of the Chinese. While we know that there is a certain amount of enmity existing between the white agent and the grower—and to a certain extent there is some reason for complaint—at the same time we look upon the white agent as an absolute necessity under the present system of distributing fruit. The Chinamen in the first stage captured the industry through the ripening of the fruit, and are now trying to make the industry a Chinese industry, and consequently we look on them as a far greater menace than the ordinary observer does. If the industry is going to succeed we must have more comprehensive control, and the growers and agents must come together better than they have done in the past. We can never deal with Chinamen, and, therefore, it is absolutely essential that we should get rid of them in the industry. The only way that any primary producing industry is going to succeed and be useful to the people and be a commercial success is by co-operation. We can get over difficulties so far as the white agents are concerned, but not so far as the Chinamen are concerned. This industry has a great future. The farmer is the happiest person in the world.

One hon. gentleman says that he does not receive proper treatment. He takes more ill-treatment than anyone and is more ill-treated than any person in the world. If the Government of the day treated the manual labourers in the same way that they do the farmers, there would be a hue-and-cry. The hon. member for Bowen would stand up in his indignation and condemn the Government in eloquent terms. The hon. gentleman only knows one primary producer—the sugar-cane grower. I am not saying this in an offensive way. I have no complaint to find with the canegrowers. They are a fine lot of men, and are battling in the same sense as the fruitgrowers are doing. We know how these people must feel when the Chinamen are coming and sitting down on their very boundary. We know how they must feel, not only from an industrial point of view, but from a social point of view. We do not want those people there. We want a white man's industry and we stand for a white Australia. When this

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matter was brought before the department they should not have lost an hour in dealing with it. As the old schoolmaster said, "It is better late than never, but it is better never to be late." Had the department taken the matter up when the deputation pointed this out to them, we would not be faced with the same trouble as we are in to-day. The trouble has been put off, and every trouble that is put off grows into a mountain. I ask why, in the name of all that is good and right, was this not dealt with before? If it had been it would have been 50 per cent. better than it is now. If it were left another two years we would have the same big trouble that they have in New South Wales. We are going to work the industry on a co-operative basis, and we are going to deal with coloured aliens. If the Government will assist us we are going to make the industry a success. No Government is going to make it a success. We do not expect them to. We have asked to be allowed to tax ourselves. We can make a success of the industry because we have the men and the brains. When we took the industry on, it was in an absolute chaotic and disgraceful condition. There was no organisation of any description in Queensland. We took the matter up, and to-day we have a board of directors comprised of gentlemen who are business men and who have managed this concern in a businesslike way. We have financed this company in a very simple way by putting a tax on our growers. We are not going to ask the Government for something for nothing. I am very sorry to say that the Government have not helped us as much as they could, but we are thankful for what they have done. We have brought this industry to a successful stage. I do not say that there was no great work done before. We have a board of directors second to no other in Queensland, and they are working out their hearts in these trying times to make this business a success. It is the duty of any hon. member who has any sympathy with the man on the land to give every assistance he can. While we do not expect to be spoon-fed in any way, I am sure hon. members will agree with me that reasonable demands should be complied with.

The people in the South are absolutely ignorant of the manner in which these things are produced. Gentlemen coming from the South are surprised to find there are white men in the industry. The Chinese question has been held up as a bogey to the people in the South, and it is right and proper that the Department of Agriculture should do something to dispel that stupidity. It seems to me there are unreasonable agencies at work, whose object is not only to slander Queensland but to slander this industry. If those people had kept to the truth instead of indulging in vile slanders, they would have been cutting real ice instead of beating the air. We all deprecate anybody casting a slur on an industry which can be made one of the principal industries of Queensland. While these people are allowed to do this sort of thing and to indulge in trickery against the fruitgrowers, the industry is going to have a brake on it which will destroy it in spite of the strong men we are putting forward to assist in bringing about better conditions for the man on the land. We are asking for reasonable things, and the Government should do all that they can. We recognise that the fruit industry is only in its infancy. We are the greatest fruit-

eating people in the world. We live in a climate where it is necessary to have a lot of good fruit; and while we are doing our best to supply it, we need the assistance of the department and of every member of this House. The only way in which we can make it a success is by the united efforts of the Government and the growers. The department, for years, have not devoted a sufficient amount of money to fruit culture. What experimenting has been done in regard to fruit? As far as the department is concerned, it is the meanest-treated industry that you could imagine; I believe other Governments have been worse than this Government. This is an industry in which ex-soldiers can do good if they are put on reasonably decent land. We have put thousands of soldiers on the land, and we are not doing half enough for them. Despite the revolutionary change in regard to production, there has not been an expansion as far as distribution is concerned. If we depend on Chinese as agents, we are going to depend on a rotten stick. Their business was to capture the industry, and it should be the business of the Government and of every individual to stop that. I regard it as a most serious thing—so serious, that our organisations, in season and out of season, have been trying to counteract the menace. I hope the Secretary for Agriculture will meet with reason any suggestion that is made to stop anything in the nature of repudiation. We should hastily get rid of these men: but let us see that they take out the money which has been put into those holdings. I do not think they should be considered to the extent of allowing them to make a great profit out of the land, but I hope they will not be robbed. It is bad enough to rob the squatters and make them squeal; we do not want to do the same thing to the poor, unfortunate Chinese. We must treat fairly an alien race—probably a very honest alien race. I hope the Bill will pass in such a form that it will be a fair, honest attempt to deal with the problem, and I trust it will prove effective.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): As the representative of an electorate which has a large area of banana cultivation, I desire to express my appreciation of the fact that the Government have seen fit to bring in a Bill which is going to be of great service to that industry. The banana-growers of Queensland also should appreciate the fact that they are having this legislation put through, because they have a large Country party sitting in opposition in the House, and although we do not possess the physical force, yet we possess the moral force to induce the Government to bring on legislation that is going to be of some benefit to the primary producer. Banana-growing, certainly, is in its infancy in Queensland. For many years Southern Queensland had not grown many bananas, the principal areas in which they were grown being in North Queensland. But since the advent of the sugar industry, bananas have practically become extinct in the far North, and Southern Queensland has enlarged its areas under banana cultivation to such an extent that it now is regarded as the principal locality in which this industry is thriving. Notwithstanding what the hon. member for Bowen may state, it is being proved that Southern Queensland can grow bananas of better quality.

Mr. COLLINS: The shipping freights killed the North Queensland banana trade.

Mr. BRAND: We know from our experience of the last couple of years that our bananas are considered to be the best quality of any in Australia. In my district there are large areas of fertile land which are being put under bananas that hitherto would grow nothing and that no people would think worth taking up, because there was so much stone on it. To-day those lands, although containing so much stone, are some of the best lands for banana culture. The banana industry, with sympathetic legislation, will become one of which Queensland can well feel proud. We can develop it only by ensuring that it be a white man's industry. I am pleased to know that in this Bill there is provision for eliminating the Chinese. Of late, the Chinese have been going into the banana industry. Certain members on this side have indicated that they desire the Minister to accept an amendment to allow the Chinese already in the industry to remain. We do not believe in going in for repudiation. I have sufficient confidence in the Minister, although he may be a Labour Minister, to know that he will not deal harshly with these men, but that he will proceed on lines similar to those adopted in connection with the black labour proposition in Queensland some years ago. I will support the Bill as it stands, but hope the amendment indicated will be accepted. The sooner we get rid of all the aliens in the banana industry the better it will be for the white population. If we have white farmers with their wives and families living on the banana industry, it will be much better for Queensland, and they will form a bulwark for the defence of Australia. It is particularly refreshing to hear a Labour Minister speak in favour of increasing the duty on bananas from 2s. 6d. per cental to 8s. 4d. per cental. We know, however, that in the Senate the great champion of Labour, Senator Gardiner, holds quite different views to the Minister for Agriculture. Members opposite make speeches stating that they are staunch protectionists, and that they are always in favour of protecting industries in Queensland, but the great champion of Labour in the Senate does not favour this increase in the duty at all. When the tariff was going through the Senate, Senator Gardiner made these remarks—

“A few years ago a protectionist Government said that 1s. 6d. per cental was ample protection for bananas. Then a protectionist Minister, representing a banana-producing State—I refer to the Minister for Trade and Customs, Mr. Greene—had an opportunity of introducing a tariff, and he declared that 2s. 6d. per cental was ample protection. But some irresponsible people in another place increased the duty to 8s. 4d. per cental. I believe that if the Senate decreased the duty to 2s. 6d. it would, perhaps, be giving more protection than the banana-growers expect.”

That is the opinion of the great Labour stalwart. Let us see what Senator Crawford had to say during the same debate. This is what Senator Crawford said—

“I ask the Committee to declare that if there is to be any difference between the treatment given to tropical products and that given to the products of the temperate zone, special consideration should be shown to the former, because of the cheap labour against which they

*Mr. Brand.*]

have to compete. We are all determined to uphold the white Australia policy, but we cannot maintain it and expect our products to compete successfully without substantial protection against the products of countries which do not pay a weekly wage equal to the daily wage we have to pay."

Senator Crawford was favourable to making the industry a white one; not so Senator Gardiner.

Mr. PEASE: Senator Crawford was not so particular about making the sugar industry a white one.

Mr. BRAND: Senator Crawford has always upheld the white Australia policy, and he is proving that by his remarks on the tariff. I know that hon. members do not like the reference to the attitude taken up by Senator Gardiner on this occasion, because that senator has made very extraordinary statements which are not in keeping with the statements by hon. members opposite. If this Bill will eliminate the Chinese, it will do a great service to Queensland. Senator Gardiner also had something to say in the Senate on the Chinese problem. He believes in the Chinese growing bananas, because he might get a few cheap bananas that way. This is what he said during the debate in the Federal Senate—

"I was surprised to hear Senator Cox say that Chinese are not engaged in the banana trade in the Tweed River district. Let me make myself clear on the question of Chinese. When they are allowed to come into this country I want to see them engaged in the most profitable occupation that they can engage in. I have no ill-will to any race once it has permission to associate with us. If I said that the Chinese had the monopoly of the vegetable trade in New South Wales, someone would probably indignantly deny it, on the ground that white men are growing vegetables, but the fact would remain. Their peculiar traits make the Chinese most efficient in that kind of work, and I can assure Senator Cox, not only that numbers of them are engaged in the banana trade on the Tweed River, but that in the Hay street markets in Sydney Chinese control and handle the whole business. This is not a question of one State against another. In fact, in speaking against the duty on bananas, I am speaking against my own State, because I represent the banana-growers of New South Wales as well as anyone else here does.

"Senator Sir Thomas Glasgow: Yes, but you are a free trader.

"Senator Gardiner: I believe in free trade."

Mr. FERRICKS: He is the only freetrader in the party.

Mr. BRAND: He is the only member of your party in the Senate, and he said that the Chinese were better able to carry on this work. I am in favour of carrying on the banana industry with our own Australians, despite what Senator Gardiner may say about the Chinese being better able to handle it, and able to do it more cheaply than white people. I sincerely hope that the Australian parliamentary representatives will not take up the line adopted by Senator Gardiner,

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and I hope they will retain the duty at 8s. 4d. per cental on bananas. The banana-growers in Queensland urgently need that duty. We desire to make this a white man's industry. If we allow the Chinese to come in now, it will only be a few years before it will be extinct as an industry. We know the conditions under which the Chinese live make it impossible for white men to compete with them. We know that in the banana industry you can expect a small return in twelve or eighteen months, and in three years the crop will be in a fair way to return sufficient for the farmer to make a living. There is another reason why we should make it a white man's industry. The Commonwealth Government have spent a large sum of money, through the State Government, to settle returned soldiers on the land cultivating bananas. Seeing that the State and Commonwealth are spending these large sums of money, it is necessary we should

[7.30 p.m.] pass this legislation, and do all we can to protect the industry.

I hope that the Bill will go through in its present form, as it will effectually assist the primary producer who is engaged in the banana industry. There is no reason why we should permanently retain the Chinese who are now in the industry. There are only a few of them who hold land, and I believe that the Minister will give them reasonable time to go out of the industry. I intend to support the Bill.

Mr. BRENNAN: The hon. member for Burrum was not fair in only quoting Senator Gardiner's remarks on this question. That gentleman has no interest in Queensland. We have to bear in mind that if the people in Melbourne had had their way we should have had no sugar industry at all. The hon. member for Burrum did not quote the remarks of Senator Plain, who said—

"What I have to say refers to the southern part of Queensland, from which most of the bananas imported into this State come. If one feature of it more than another impressed me, it was the system of closer settlement. We, in Victoria, have endeavoured for many years to establish a system of entire closer settlement, but have failed, because the conditions here are quite different from those which I am about to describe."

The division list was as follows:—

"Request (by Senator Pratten) proposed—

"That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty, per lb.,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

"Question put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	...	...	...	...	21
Noes	...	...	...	...	7

Majority ... .. 14

"Ayes: B. Benny, W. K. Bolton, R. Buzacott, E. A. Drake-Brockman, W. L. Duncan, H. E. Elliott, A. Gardiner, G. Henderson, G. H. Keating, P. J. Lynch, John D. Millen, H. J. M. Payne, G. F. Pearce, W. Plain, H. E. Pratten, J. Rowell, E. J. Russell, W. Senior, E. C. Vardon, R. V. Wilson; teller: H. de Largié. Noes: T. J. K. Bakhap, C. F. Cox, T. W. Crawford, J. Earle, T. Givens, Sir Thomas Glasgow; teller: M. Reid."

We, as a party, desire to do the best we can for all parts of Queensland, and not merely any particular district. I am interested in the banana industry as a Queensland, and not merely as the member for Toowoomba.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I am pleased that this Bill has been introduced, and I recognise that it is brought forward for the purpose of protecting and encouraging the banana industry in this State. It is a well-timed measure, and, generally speaking, it will have my support. The carrying on of the industry seems to be dependent on the growers passing a dictation test. Not only must the growers pass the test, but any employees working for them must do so, and failure to pass this renders both the employers and employees liable to a penalty. I hope that the discretion which is given to the Minister under the regulations to impose the dictation test will be reasonably used. I feel that it will be so long as the present Minister is in office, but the time may come when the power may be harshly used. There are many engaged in the industry who do not come within the category of the class of growers mentioned. Most of the remarks to-night seem to have been directed against the Chinese growers. In my electorate, we have other men engaged in growing bananas, who have blazed the track, so to speak, and made the place fit to live in. Many of these men will possibly not be able to pass the dictation test, and yet they will come under the Bill, and very great hardships may be inflicted in those cases.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: White men?

Mr. KING: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then they will be exempt.

Mr. KING: One clause of the Bill deals with persons who are carrying on business in the industry, and who in course of time will have to go out of the industry. I hope that nothing will be done with regard to these people which may savour of repudiation. I hope that, if they are deprived of their businesses, fitting compensation will be paid to them. We can deal with that matter in Committee. I hope that the class of grower I have mentioned will be exempted from the dictation test, which I suggest should only apply to Asiatics or persons of Polynesian origin. It will then not inflict the hardship which is possible under the Bill as it is framed at present. I hope that these matters will be taken into consideration by the Minister, and that regulations will be framed so as to provide that no undue hardships will be imposed on any of our hardworking settlers.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): A portion of my electorate is interested in banana-growing, but I support the Bill on the wider ground that banana-growing can be made an industry second only to the sugar industry. We see the tremendous business which has been built up in Victoria by the importation of Fijian bananas. Queensland is especially suited for banana-growing, and we shall be wise if we make it a white industry, like the sugar industry. I am not very much concerned as to the regulations which will be framed, as I have sufficient confidence that the Minister will not do anything

unreasonable with regard to Europeans. I am not as much concerned as some hon. members are with regard to the Asiatics. I have very strong views on that question. I believe that the time is fast coming when Australia will have to look to herself and not be so much concerned for these two races. I am sure that the Minister will find great difficulties in the administration of this measure, such as have been experienced in the past. He will find that there will be a large number of partners and very few employees, and, therefore, I suggest as my own personal view that the dictation test should be a somewhat severe one, because if we are going to endeavour to make this a white industry, let us be earnest about it.

Another reason why this Bill should be passed has been indicated by the hon. member for Burrum. The Federal House of Representatives increased the duty on bananas to 8s. 4d. per cental, but the Senate reduced it to 4s. 2d., largely on the argument that if it remained at 8s. 4d. there would be a large influx of Asiatics into the industry. Now that the Parliament of Queensland has shown that it intends to deal with that possibility, representations should be made to the Federal Parliament to the effect that, the Queensland Parliament having unanimously decided to make this a white industry, they, therefore, should recommit that portion of the tariff, and restore the duty to 8s. 4d. That should be done immediately the measure is passed, and seeing that the House appears to be united on the point, the Minister is quite justified in making those representations on behalf of the Queensland Parliament, as distinct from the Queensland Government—a circumstance which I think would carry more weight.

We can probably do something more than merely debarring persons disqualified by the dictation test from engaging in the industry. Banana-growing is profitable. Seeing that we have given the franchise to Chinamen, we cannot come along in an arbitrary way and simply throw them out, but since we are anxious to make it a white industry, we should buy them out on reasonable terms, and place returned men in their places. (Hear, hear!) The Chinamen would have been dealt with honestly and fairly, and could return to their own country, or do whatever they pleased. Nobody could say that the Queensland Government had treated them unfairly. At the same time, we could easily settle a large number of returned men and others in a business which would be profitable from the jump. I realise that nothing can be done immediately, but I commend the suggestion to the hon. member as a profitable proposition for the State.

I have pleasure in supporting the measure. Hon. members on the other side have often accused us of want of sincerity in respect to progressive legislation. All I can say is that, if they would pass more legislation of this class and less of that objectionable nature to which we have been accustomed, Queensland would be far better off, and the Government would stand higher in the public esteem.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): Though I have no banana cultivation in my electorate, I cannot resist the temptation to offer a few remarks on this Bill. I have been struck by the sudden conversion of hon. members opposite to the necessity for making the

*Mr. Kirwan.]*

banana industry a white man's industry. I can remember the time—and it is not so very long ago—when members of this party who stood out for the ideal of a White Australia were described as dreamers and visionaries. They were told that it was simply impossible to settle the Northern portion of this State with white men. The reason why hon. members opposite then stood for the Chinaman, or the coloured alien, or any other alien, so long as he was cheap and nasty, was that he competed with the white wage-earner. But when he challenges the position of the farmer of the North Coast, of the Burrum, of the South Coast and other places, it is quite a different matter. Hon. members opposite have become warm advocates of the White Australia policy.

Mr. BRAND: I always have been.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member's political education requires serious and immediate attention. Is he not aware that the Labour party first started the White Australia cry? I can remember the time when the first Barton Administration were compelled—because they held office by the support of the Labour party, who were able to dictate their policy—to bring in a Bill to abolish kanaka labour. Hon. members can look up the records of this House, and see what was said in this Chamber by two representatives of Northern constituencies, who more recently were members of the notorious delegation. Sir Robert Philp and Sir Alfred Cowley declared that the whole of North Queensland would be ruined, and they would adopt the same method as did the Southerners in America on the negro question. The Brisbane "Courier" said that even men of serious mind talked of revolution in North Queensland. That was only in 1901. It is pleasing to know that the men who launched that policy were members of this party, but—like everything else that this party have advocated—hon. members opposite abused it, and when it became an accepted principle of public policy, they turned round and swung behind them in an attempt to lead the people to believe that they had always been in favour of a White Australia. I trust that one of the immediate effects of the Bill will be a stimulation of the banana industry, and the total elimination of the coloured alien. I want to see the white man engaged, not only in industrial occupations, but in every other, commercial or otherwise, in the State. The hon. member for Logan expressed some fear—or was in a rather doubting mood—as to what treatment would be meted out to the Chinese under this Bill. The Chinese in the banana industry will be treated a great deal better than the German planters in New Guinea were treated by the party which the hon. gentleman represents.

Mr. KING: I did not say Chinamen; I said the people who would be deprived of their business.

Mr. KIRWAN: The Chinamen who have invested their money in the banana industry must be treated fairly. I am sure that is the view of every hon. member on this side of the House. It is amusing to hear the hon. gentlemen setting up a special plea for the coloured alien in the banana industry, when it is not many years ago since they advocated that an alien belonging to another country should be booted out of Australia and his property confiscated. They publicly advocated it on the platform. They believe

in confiscation, repudiation, and everything else when it suits them. As a young Australian, I have listened with a considerable degree of pleasure to hon. gentlemen who belonged to the old Black Labour party and who are now strong, and I trust will be permanent and continual, advocates of the policy of white Australia.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill. I congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture in bringing in this Bill for the preservation of this industry. Hon. members who have been up the coast will admit that there is practically an unlimited amount of land for banana-growing if we take into consideration what has been done in New South Wales. I was surprised to see the amount of land devoted to banana-growing on the Tweed. It was one of the grandest sights one could see down there. I do not know how the land is affected by frost, but our land around Mackay and Bowen, and I do not know how much further North, right down nearly to Brisbane, is more suitable for banana-growing than the land on the Tweed. On the Tweed, £200 an acre is being paid for small areas of land for banana-growing. Queensland has an asset in the banana-growing land up the coast on which we can scarcely place any value. I am glad to see the Secretary for Agriculture attaching so much importance to this industry, and I believe he will agree with me that it is time that every one of our industries was not only organised but protected in some way like this. It is possible we may have to go further into the marketing question. The fruit-growers' associations are, no doubt, doing splendid work, but there might come a time when they will want some assistance. An industry that is not organised is in much the same position that labour would be if there were no industrial organisations. A man who is hard up and in need of money is the man who will always cut down the price either of products or labour, and he will set a price for the whole community. The time has gone when the man who is hard up should be allowed to set the price. The people who go into an industry or work in an industry should be assured of at least a living wage. I have very much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I desire to mention a point that, so far, has not been mentioned during this debate. On a previous occasion in this Chamber, I dealt with the cultivation of bananas at considerable length, and the Labour party at that time endeavoured to get some such measure of restriction brought in against what was at that time a very pronounced danger—coloured aliens cultivating bananas. We were not successful, because the Liberal Administration viewed our arguments with disfavour. Following on that time the cultivation of bananas by Chinese in the North largely decreased, due mainly to deficient shipping facilities for the carriage of fruits to Southern States. Hon. members will remember that many years ago the shipping of bananas at many Northern ports was quite a big undertaking and a big business in itself, but the bananas were shipped from so many points that it suited the shipping companies better to go to Fiji and take their cargo in from large centres, and they provided well-ventilated chambers for the carriage of fruit

[*Mr. Kirwan.*]

from Fiji which was denied to the growers on the Northern coast of Queensland. The second and third handlings, which the fruit was subjected to in North Queensland militated against its worth. Following the failure of our efforts to get some protection for white growers, the cultivation of bananas by the Asiatics decreased, and has been decreasing ever since until the recent revival during the last year or two. I understand the Chinese are threatening to inroad the industry again, which makes absolutely necessary some such restriction. When we were unable to obtain any legislation on the matter, I took the view that the thing could be met in another way, and in a deputation to the Minister for Customs in Brisbane, as far back as 1910, I raised the point as to whether the same effect could be brought about by the imposition of the excise and bounty system in connection with the banana industry as applied to the sugar industry. I raised the point again in the Federal Parliament, but it was considered, in view of the Fijian competition, that the industry was not sufficiently stabilised for the operation of that system. The point which has been missed is this: It appears to me that, on account of the increased duty on bananas, there will be a great increase in production. Many new growers will embark in the industry, and the growers at present operating will extend their areas under cultivation, with the result that we might naturally look towards a fall in price and a slump. I am speaking from the growers' viewpoint. The producer of bananas thereby runs some risk, inasmuch as he has to pay an increased price for his land as a result of the increased duty on bananas. I wish to bring under the notice of hon. members that the banana, as is known, is one of the most valuable foods for its size or weight. There is no fruit that has the same calorific value for upbuilding the strength and energy of the human system. Bananas can be used in perhaps twenty different ways at the hands of a culinary artist. We have sampled the dishes, and they are very fascinating and tasty, but that will not work off a surplus production in bananas as is feared in Queensland as a result of increased activity in production.

It would be a very good idea for the Agricultural Department and those engaged in the industry, through their co-operative societies, to give some attention to the establishment of secondary industries for dealing with the banana products. I may

[8 p.m.] be looking a bit ahead as far as Queensland is concerned, but it is within the realms of possibility to establish an industry for the production of banana flour, desiccated or dried banana, and a dozen other products. That will have to be done if the industry is to be stabilised and carried on as a continuous system without any doubt as to the impending future or anything like that. The move proposed by the Bill is a good one. It has been very long delayed; it should have been brought into operation in Queensland years ago. I am glad that it has been reached at last. With regard to the strictness of the dictation test mentioned by the hon. member for Nundah, I do not think he need have any fear, inasmuch as the possibilities in regard to the dictation are sufficient. I feel sure, to prevent any member of this House passing that test, if the full possibilities of the provision were availed of. So the discretion in

that regard may well be left to the Secretary for Agriculture and the department. I feel no weakness on that score, nor do I feel that there is any mistake regarding the increase in the duty on bananas. The Fijian trade has captured Australia, and it is time the production in Queensland was brought to something like the position it formerly occupied. I give the Bill my support.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I also desire to record my appreciation of this Bill. We recently have had a good deal of debate in the Federal House, and this Bill should not go through without something being said to support the Queensland members. We know this is one of the most important industries, or will be, that Queensland will have to handle in the near future. A high tariff has been placed on imports so that bananas will not come from other countries. The trouble with most primary production is that the men have to wait three or four years and spend a large amount of money before they get any return. With banana cultivation a quick return is assured. With regard to the Chinamen, not so many years ago there were thousands in Stanthorpe engaged in tin mining. That has been worked out, and a lot of the Chinamen are going in for banana cultivation. It has been contended that the ripening process in regard to bananas is a task which can only be given to Chinamen. It necessitates a man being up very early in the morning and staying up late at night, watching the bananas ripening. If they ripen to a certain stage, they are useless for the market. White men can do it, but they happen to be in the position to say that the Chinaman is doing it to-day and why not let him continue. We must protect ourselves in that respect. In Jamaica the growers have the markets of practically the whole world to which to send their product—England mostly—and they have made a good deal of money. In regard to Fiji, we know that some of the boats have ceased running. Railways is practically useless for taking bananas from the North Coast line down South, and the Queensland Government should take action to divert those boats to Queensland ports, and utilise them for sending bananas from Queensland to the Southern States. The steamer freight is very heavy to-day, and the consequence is that when the bananas reach Melbourne they cost up to 1½d. to 2d. each. If we can reduce the freight, which is now about 4s. a case, we will have a far greater consumption, and that will give an impetus to the industry. The member for South Brisbane made reference to the establishment of secondary industries. Queensland has never yet given secondary industries anything like what they have been entitled to.

The Chinese have a monopoly, more or less, of market gardening in Queensland at the present time. There is a settlement at Bald Hill's where they are making a living through market gardening. My electorate is really a suburban electorate, but there are Chinamen there who are making a living from market gardening. A number of Chinamen in Queensland have blocks of land already, and I do not advocate that we should take that land from them. It is a matter for the Commonwealth to be more strict with the test that they apply to the Chinese in the first place. We should not allow them to come here. Unless the Commonwealth carry

*Mr. Kerr.]*

out their enactments properly, it will be hard to get rid of them. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. GREEN (*Townsville*): Before the Bill is passed I wish to express my pleasure as a life-long advocate of a white Australia in supporting it. We have white labour in North Queensland in every industry, and I am pleased to see that the Government are preserving banana-growing for white labour. There is a wrong impression in this House regarding the possibilities of banana-growing in North Queensland. I agree with my friend the hon. member for Bowen that North Queensland is the home of the banana industry. It was first established there. The hon. member for South Brisbane pointed out that in the early days of the banana industry facilities were not such as to enable the growers to send their bananas to the Southern markets in a fit condition. At that time banana-growing was in the hand of the Chinese. Anyone who knows anything about the Chinese know that they do their work cheaply and live on practically nothing, and they are satisfied to get a small price for their product. That is why they shipped the bananas in a crude manner and altogether the industry was not carried on properly. I was travelling along the Ingham railway line the other day, and I saw bananas grown by Messrs. Tealby and Macree, who were pioneers of the industry in that locality. In size and flavour those bananas were equal to anything grown anywhere. I have seen twenty-six dozen to thirty dozen bananas on a bunch grown on land along the Ingham Railway. I mention that to controvert the statement made by the Secretary for Agriculture. I know he did not say it intentionally to prevent anyone growing bananas up North.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Certainly not.

Mr. GREEN: We can settle a large number of settlers in North Queensland, and they could engage in this industry with profit to themselves and advantage to the State. That is made possible by the Commonwealth increasing the duty on bananas. We must give credit where credit is due, and we give credit to the Government for introducing the Bill when they realised that it was made possible to build up this industry. It was made possible by putting on the duty and keeping out the cheap grown bananas from Fiji. The extra duty may press a little heavier on the community, but every consumer of bananas in the Commonwealth should be prepared to pay a little more to establish an industry that is going to develop this State. It will also put this industry in the hands of white growers, and will enable their employees to get a fair living wage. I am sorry that the duty was reduced by the Senate, but, at any rate, the duty is higher than it was before. I am glad the Government have introduced the Bill, and I have much pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): I am at one with the Government in its desire to curtail the possibilities of the Chinese getting possession of the banana industry. It is essentially necessary that the Chinese should not be given a chance to compete on an equal footing with the white growers of bananas. I notice in the Bill that it is suggested that a dictation test is to be the means whereby a man is able to hold land for growing bananas, and the test may be given in any language that the Secretary for Agriculture decides. We are an English-

speaking race, and I think the test should be in the English language. We might make it compulsory for a man to write a certain number of words per minute and spell them correctly. Perhaps the Secretary for Agriculture could set a test in language that even the Treasurer does not understand. The Minister might even decide that a grower should be tested in the Chinese language. I hope that no alien will be allowed to hold land in the banana-growing districts. I do not believe in interfering with those who are on the land at the present time. We do not believe in repudiation, not even so far as the Chinese are concerned. I heard the Home Secretary ask the hon. member for Burrum what means he would suggest in regard to the Chinese holding the land.

I was surprised to hear the Home Secretary ask the hon. member for Burrum to express an opinion, because we are repeatedly told that all the initiative is on the opposite side of the House. It is quite unfair for the Home Secretary to suggest that we should give the Secretary for Agriculture a lead in this respect. The Government should see that no injustice is done. If the white growers are prepared to take over the land at a reasonable price, we should give power to the Secretary for Agriculture to get the Chinese landowners out of the industry as soon as possible; but we should not allow it to be inferred that the Government have power under the Bill to practically confiscate the land belonging to these people and hand it over to the white growers at a price far below its real value. We know that the Chinese work long hours and can live on practically nothing; so that as long as they are in the industry we shall be unable to bring about the co-operative system which we desire to see amongst the growers. One hon. member said that large shipments of bananas were going down south, and that to-day banana-growing is a more or less unprofitable venture. As long as the Chinese remain in the industry, I am of the opinion that it will remain, more or less, unprofitable. I hope that when the Chinese go out of the industry the Government will see that the necessary financial assistance is given to the white growers, on the most reasonable terms. Fruit should enter more largely into the food of Australians than it does at present. Some people are under the impression that it is necessary to eat a large quantity of meat; but that is a mistake. In a good season, it is unfortunate that an enormous amount of fruit is wasted, as there is no market for it. If, when it is plentiful, it were distributed amongst the people, the cost of living would not be so high. At Stanthorpe alone, large quantities of stoned fruit are destroyed every year. Steps should be taken to make fruit more accessible to the consumer. The fruitgrower would then be able to make ends meet, taking one season with another. I trust that everything possible will be done to encourage the production and the consumption of fruit in Australia. When you go to Stanthorpe you would expect to find the excellent fruit which is grown in that district sold in the shops, but I noticed when I was there that an inferior quality of fruit was sold. We are told that the reason for that is because the fruit grown at Stanthorpe is sent to Brisbane to be sold, and then sent back from Brisbane to Stanthorpe to be sold in the retail shops. What applies to the Stanthorpe district will

[*Mr. Kerr.*]

probably apply to the North Coast district, where softer fruits are grown. I hope the Secretary for Agriculture will do something to remedy that state of affairs. Fruit should form a larger part of the food of the people than it does at present, and something should be done to supply it to the consumer at as reasonable a price as possible, and so reduce the cost of living.

I do not know whether it is proposed under this Bill to prevent Chinamen engaging in market gardening.

The PREMIER: Have you read the Bill?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Yes.

The PREMIER: Then you ought to know.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Besides market gardening and banana-growing, Chinamen are engaged in other industries. Some of them are engaged in cooking, and I hope that the Secretary for Agriculture will look into that question. I trust that the Government will encourage the growing of fruit, not only in banana-growing districts, but in other districts. I congratulate them on their efforts to prevent the carrying on of this industry by yellow races, who work such long hours and live so very cheaply.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.)

[8.30 p.m.]

Clases 1 to 4, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 5—"Regulations"—

HON. J. G. APPEL: He would like some information from the Minister on the point raised by the leader of the Opposition as to the Government's intentions regarding persons of Asiatic origin who had become naturalised and acquired freehold land.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government would deal with each case on its merits, with particular regard to the interests of persons already engaged in the industry, and he thought he could say they would be guided to some extent by the regulations framed under the Sugar Cultivation Act of 1913, which provided, amongst other things—

"Nothing in the Act or these regulations shall apply to the following classes of persons, and all such persons shall be exempted from the operation thereof—

"(1) All native born residents of Australia of European descent.

"(2) All residents of Australia of European parentage.

"(3) All residents of Australia who are descended from any resident of the Continent of North America other than from any aboriginal native thereof or negro or aboriginal of African or Asiatic race.

"(4) Subjects of the Kingdom of Italy who are not of European race, so long as the treaty between His Majesty the King and the Kingdom of Italy, dated the 15th day of June, 1883, remains in force in Queensland.

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"(5) Subjects of the Empire of Russia who are not of European race, so long as the treaty mentioned in the last preceding paragraph hereof, and the treaty between His Majesty the King and the Empire of Russia, dated the 12th day of January, 1859, remains in force in Queensland.

"(6) Citizens of the Republic of Colombia, so long as the treaty mentioned in the last preceding paragraph but one hereof, and the treaty between His Majesty the King and the Republic of Colombia, dated the 16th day of February, 1866, remains in force in Queensland.

"(7) Any person not otherwise entitled to exemption under the foregoing provisions to this regulation who by reason of—

(a) The subsistence between the nation to which such person belongs and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland of a treaty conferring most favoured nation rights or

(b) Such persons' long residence within Queensland or the Commonwealth, or

(c) Such person having a lawful wife or family residing within Queensland, or

(d) Any other circumstances satisfactory to the Secretary for Agriculture— it is not considered necessary to examine under the Act and these regulations, and to whom the Secretary for Agriculture has granted a certificate of exemption."

No person who was at the present time cultivating bananas would be harshly treated.

Mr. WALKER: They will be fairly treated?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Every person at present growing bananas, no matter what his nationality or colour, would be fairly treated. He thought that was the wish of the Committee, judging by the speeches of members opposite.

Mr. WARREN: He felt it was the sense of the House that they should give the hon. member a wide scope in combating the difficulty. He did not anticipate that the hon. member would use his power in a wrong way.

Clause put and passed.

Clases 6 and 7 agreed to.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### ANIMALS AND BIRDS BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I make no apology for taking up some of the time of this House in dealing with a subject that has been so long neglected. I am not speaking altogether from the sentimental point of view of the naturalist or bird lover, but

*Hon. W. N. Gillies.]*

rather from the economic point of view. I feel pretty certain that while we may be able with impunity to break the laws made by this Parliament, we cannot go on breaking the laws of nature without paying the penalty, and I am satisfied that for the waste not only of our timbers but also of useful birds and animals, sooner or later we shall have to pay the penalty. Indeed, I think we are paying the penalty now. I will give some figures to show the tremendous destruction of opossums and bears and other animals that has taken place, particularly during recent years when the pelts of these animals have reached such fabulous prices. A Bill with a different title, but on somewhat similar lines, was brought in by my predecessor in 1913. The name, in my opinion, was objectionable. It was entitled the Game Bill, which title suggests game and shooting. This Bill is entitled "A Bill to protect Animals and Birds"—a title which will appeal to those hon. members who I know are in the majority, and who realise the time has arrived when some protection should be given to the fauna of this State. It is thirty-seven years since the last amending Act was passed dealing with the preservation and protection of birds, and the animal section of the legislation is dated 1906-1910. It is thirty-seven years since the amendment was made, and it is time that the legislation was brought up to date. Victoria, in 1915, passed an up-to-date measure, and in that State they spend about £2,000 per annum for the preservation of birds and fish, etc. An up-to-date measure was passed in New South Wales in 1913 to preserve the birds in that State, which is my native State. A few years ago I went to visit my old home, in New South Wales, on the upper reaches of the Hunter River, and it made me sad to see the great change that had taken place in regard to animal and bird life. I suppose I did my share, like other boys, in this destruction; in fact, I shot some of the most beautiful birds that were to be found in Australia in my boyhood days, but that is no reason why I should not reform at this juncture. It made me sad to realise how bird life had been destroyed in that particular district, and the native bear has practically disappeared altogether. The native bear is one of the most harmless animals in Australia, and causes no destruction to farmers' crops in any way that I know of, and I have had a pretty wide experience. The opossum, of course, is destructive, and will take on many things when hard-up. There is no reason why the native bear should not be absolutely protected for a number of years. It has disappeared altogether in a number of districts. When it is remembered that in the years 1913-1919 we have the recorded fact that 1,000,000 of these harmless animals were destroyed, in order that their pelts might be sold commercially, I think there is every good reason why this House should say that a halt shall be called, and an endeavour made to preserve the native bear, and to take some steps to preserve other animals. During the same year there were 3,000,000 opossums killed in Queensland. These figures are on record, and we know that at least that number has been destroyed. We know also that poison has been illegally used in the destruction of these animals, and hon. members can rest assured that there were some hundreds of thousands more destroyed

that have not been accounted for. During the years 1919-1920 there were 2,250,000 opossums killed in Queensland. Last year the destruction of the native bear was forbidden altogether, and I sincerely hope that, for a number of years, no one will have the right to destroy bears in this State. In 1919 opossum skins reached as high as 96s. 6d. per dozen, and bear skins 63s. 6d. per dozen. Last year opossum skins reached 160s. per dozen.

Mr. SIZER: Do you intend to close the opossum season for a while?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We have closed it. On those figures there is every justification for doing that, and ample power is given in the Bill. I wish to appeal to what is commonly called the hard-headed, matter-of-fact man of this State, whom I sometimes think should be called the "thick-headed man," who cannot see the necessity for protecting anything or doing anything that does not spell £ s. d. I want to show these men who have given no thought to the question that the experience in America has shown that the destruction of crops by various pests is largely due to the fact that they had neglected to protect birds—or "native police," as they have been called—whose special function it is to destroy these pests. I am satisfied that the same thing is taking place in Australia, and, although we are prone to condemn a bird because it destroys a little bit of fruit during a few weeks of the season, we do not, at the same time, give him credit for the number of parasites and pests he accounts for during the remainder of the year. Nature's laws cannot be disobeyed with impunity. The economic side of the question should be considered by the hard-headed, practical man, who has very little time to realise the importance of preserving birds for the sake of their beauty, and for the purpose of natural history. In America, natural history is a vital part of agricultural organisation. I wish to quote from an article given to me by Mr. Chisholm, who has given me a lot of assistance in the framing of this Bill from the viewpoint of the bird-lover and the naturalist. This is what it says—

"The chief loss has fallen on agriculturists, and tillers of the soil generally. Competent authorities have pointed out that of all the fruit, grain, and vegetables growing in the United States, at least one-tenth was annually destroyed by the ravages of injurious insects. Birds are the natural police—the natural enemies—of these pests. Insects attack the trees in various ways. In addition to the aphides, there are many that prey on leaves, some cut off the twigs, some bore into the trunks or limbs of the trees, and others attack the roots."

Queensland has a reputation for many things, and one of those at the present time is the number of its pests. We have birds in Queensland that do a great deal to keep down the cattle tick. All who take an interest in this matter have watched birds picking the ticks off the cattle. One of the things for which Queensland has a reputation is the alarming spread of its insect pests. That is a strong argument why we should not pass the death sentence on any bird until we are satisfied it is not doing useful work in the way of keeping down insect pests. We see destruction of birds on

farms and we resent it, but do we watch the general habits of the bird and learn his good points? The farmer will have the right under this Bill, if birds destroy his crop, to protect his crop by destroying those birds. But on many occasions, I feel sure, if the farmer studied the habits of those birds, he would find they were policemen doing some useful work in protecting the crops and keeping down insect pests. The article goes on to say—

“Even if these insects did not multiply at the astounding rate at which they do, they would still be more than a match for man. He may do what he can in the way of sprays, etc., but never can he hope to attain the efficiency of the birds. Recognition of these facts has caused every State in America to tighten up its game laws very stringently. Acting on scientific advice, each State in the Union has created laws more stringent than that now being introduced to Queensland.

“To take just one of the European countries. The Royal Hungarian Central Bureau of Ornithology has done a marvellous amount of work in the cause of bird protection, using humanitarian means to a sternly practical end. Its work is arranged on a regular scientific basis, and includes general observation of Nature's requirements for the maintenance of her balance and important researches into the food of birds. The bureau a few years ago had a collection representing the stomach contents of 9,000 different kinds of birds.”

The article points out what was found in the stomachs of these birds. It will appeal to the hon. member for Murilla and hon. members who represent stock-producing districts to hear that recently in the Press there was quite a stir—and there was a good reason for it—with regard to the number of stock which had died from licking the decomposing caterpillars. Mr. Tryon, the entomologist in my department, was called upon to make a report. He made out a very good case for the bird and the opossum. He pointed out that, in his opinion, the large amount of destruction which had been taking place with regard to birds had led the caterpillar to multiply to a greater extent than hitherto. He said he would leave the opossum to eat the leaves of trees, as that would probably keep down the caterpillar to some extent. That may be drawing on his imagination; but I am quite convinced that what he said was true in regard to the destruction of the birds. Many of those birds which exist in the Western districts do keep down caterpillars as well as other pests. I want to quote from an article which Mr. Chisholm supplied to the “Farm Bulletin,” which has some bearing on the Bill before the House. He says, amongst other things—

“In laying it down that there are few, if any, native birds whose services do not counterbalance any harm they may cause, I merely state a fact that is becoming more firmly established as research work proceeds. On the broad point—that is, the value of birds generally—an observant man can gain evidence for himself. Watch the wagtail at work on an animal's back, on its legs, or about the nose. In this tick-infested State the familiar little bird is even more persistent in its attendance on cattle than it is in the South. That other common black-and-white bird, the magpie-lark, or

‘peewee,’ is scarcely less energetic. Previously, the value of this bird was chiefly based on its destruction of the mollusc host of the iniquitous sheep-fluke. Now, Mr. H. L. White, a well-known New South Wales pastoralist, finds it to be also a direct enemy of the tick. ‘The magpie-lark,’ he records, ‘did not attempt to fly on to the sheep's back (always the part freest of ticks) but worked from the ground. It sprang up and took the insects from the sheep's side and brisket of the neck. On several occasions it rested for a few seconds on the animal's hocks and fed from there.’ Scientific evidence adds to the magpie-lark's menu plague locusts, grasshoppers, cockchafer larvæ, etc. And yet I have found men near Brisbane whiling away the Saturday and Sunday afternoons in shooting at these and other highly insectivorous birds! Queensland would be better served if an accident occurred with the second barrel in such cases.”

After referring to the great mass of birds whose usefulness is undisputed, the writer goes on—

“Of fifty-five of those birds examined by Dr. Cleland, thirty-two contained insect food. And what an array it was.”

He describes the various kinds of insects found in the stomachs of those birds and proceeds—

“Is there anyone who will say that a bird which executes service of this kind for nine months of the year is not entitled to consideration when it helps itself to a little soft fruit during the warm months? Incidentally, it is worthy of note that the native mina (another unprotected bird which is sometimes troublesome in orchards), was found, at the blowfly experiment station at Uralla, to catch blowflies around the camp, as well as to eat maggots in carcases.”

He then deals with the control of the blowfly, and says—

“In connection with the control of the blowfly—that pest which has caused, and is causing, inestimable loss to Queensland—it is not necessary to enumerate the birds which are recognised as enemies to the fly in its various stages, but I do want to stress the point that the quail is a little-known factor in this regard that merits consideration. Mr. F. C. Morse, R.A.O.U., of Moree, Northern New South Wales, kept a little quail (*Turnix velox*) in captivity, and found that it would eat insects only. It delighted in large brown and green blowflies, and kept its hosts going all day in supplying these creatures. In a few minutes it ate eighteen earwigs, and in fifteen minutes was just as hungry as ever. Mr. Morse notes that it is easy for quail to catch flies in the dampness of early morning, and that in years when quail are plentiful the pest decreases remarkably, and vice versa. Yet these birds, as well as plain turkeys (a great enemy of grasshoppers) are destroyed by shooters with utter recklessness! Was there ever a stronger argument for a limit to be placed on gamebags.”

I am not going to take up time by quoting further from these very interesting articles, but there is something from an eminent authority from America which I would like

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to quote before I finish. This is a quotation from Dr. W. T. Hornaday, an eminent American, who sets out the position with equal force for all countries. This is what he says—

[9 p.m.]

“It is undeniable that the welfare and happiness of our own and all future generations are at stake in this battle for the preservation of Nature against the selfishness, ignorance, and cruelty of her destroyers. We no longer destroy great works of art; they are treasured and regarded as of peculiar value; but we have got to attain to a state of civilisation where the destruction of the glorious work of Nature. . . . is regarded with abhorrence. . . . I am now asking the true sportsman, and people who do not kill wild things, to awake and do their plain duty in protecting and preserving the game and other wild life which belongs partly to us, but chiefly to those who come after us. . . . Our object should be:

“1. To save valuable species from extermination.

“2. To preserve a satisfactory representation of our once rich fauna, to hand down to posterity.

“3. To protect the farmer and fruit-grower from the enormous losses that the destruction of our insectivorous and rodent-eating birds is now inflicting upon both the producer and consumer.

“4. To protect our forests, by protecting the birds that keep down the myriads of insects that are destructive to trees and shrubs.

“5. To preserve to future sportsmen enough game that they may have, at least, a taste of the legitimate pursuit of game in the open that has made life so interesting to the sportsmen of to-day.”

I think that is a reasonable proposal put forward by that eminent American, and one that might well be endorsed by this House by passing this Bill. The measure I have the honour to speak on this evening is, in my opinion, only granting the minimum amount of protection that a wise Legislature should grant to the native birds and animals of this State. The Bill is largely one for Committee, and, as I have already said, it is an amalgamation of the existing laws, repealing the existing legislation and bringing it up to date. There are many things that could be said on its second reading, but as the time for adjournment has arrived, I will explain anything members may require in Committee.

Mr. MORGAN: It is taken from the Victorian Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. I found it my duty, on going through the Bill prepared by my predecessor, to remove some of the objectionable features of the Victorian Act, which one member of this party described as including some of the worst features of the English game laws. I also changed the name of the Bill. It was called the “Game Bill,” and that suggests shooters. The Bill is not to give greater power to anyone to shoot birds and animals, but to preserve, as far as possible, our beauti-

ful birds and natural fauna. It has been said that in Queensland there are birds that are not found in any other part of Australia. We have many beautiful birds belonging to this State, and it is due to this Parliament, notwithstanding all the troublous times we are passing through, and all the important legislation we have on our programme, to do something, after thirty-seven years, to preserve to posterity some of our beautiful birds and native animals before it is too late. I do not think I need go into details in regard to the Bill. There is very little new in principle. We have only tightened up the law and brought it up to date, and made it more drastic, giving the Minister more power to protect the native birds and animals of this State. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

### CORRECTIONS IN “HANSARD.”

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*): I desire to make a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. gentleman be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNSTAN: In “Hansard” No. 8, at page 490, the hon. member for Kennedy is reported as having said—

“The hon. member for Gympie, when speaking the other night, said—

Why do these men who have spent their whole lives in the bush want to come into this House? Why should they not leave it to the professional politicians?”

I am assured by the hon. member for Kennedy that he did not use my name in that regard, and I wish to say, not only did I not make that statement, but I do not subscribe to those sentiments, and I hope the statement will be corrected.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I desire to make a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FRY: On page 602 of “Hansard” I am reported as having said—

“and Mr. Storey, Premier of New South Wales, told us the Americans were buying up all the hides they possibly could,” etc.

This should read—

“Mr. Tudor, leader of the Federal Labour party, told us that Americans were buying hides and paying double what the Australian tanners were giving,” etc.

The House adjourned at eight minutes past 9 o'clock p.m.

[*Hon. W. N. Gillies.*]