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1901-10-10

House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

#### QUESTIONS

##### EXCISE ON MANUFACTURED SUGAR

Mr F E McLEAN

- I desire to ask the Treasurer whether the statement contained in the morning papers that the Government intend to collect the excise duty of £3 per ton on Australian manufactured sugar lying in bond at the present time in Melbourne, is correct? If so, will the duty also be collected upon Australian manufactured sugar that may be lying at the mills or that may be in the course of transit from the mills to any of the ports of the Commonwealth ?

Treasurer

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- The instructions given to the Custom-house officials are that imported sugar from outside the Commonwealth lying in bond will have to pay the uniform rate of duty under the Tariff. Australian made sugar will be charged excise duty if it is in bond or at the mills. "When sugar has once gone into ordinary consumption, it will be very difficult, indeed, to tax it, but the rule is that the excise duty applies not only to articles manufactured after the excise duty was imposed, but to all goods made before that time.

##### ESTIMATES OF CUSTOMS REVENUE

Mr REID

- I desire to know if the Treasurer is in a position to lay on the table the return I asked for yesterday. It would be of great service to me if I could have a copy here, and perhaps it would also be of advantage to other honorable members.

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- I can get a copy of the return for the right honorable gentleman, but it is not yet in proper order. The return is now being put in the same order as the Tariff, and will be circulated to honorable members to-morrow night. If the right honorable gentleman would be satisfied with a copy of the return before it is put in order, I shall be happy to furnish him with one. The sole object of the delay is to permit of the items in the return being placed in the same order as the items in the Tariff, so that they may be easily referred to by honorable members.

#### SUPPLY

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- I might take this opportunity of mentioning that I circulated late last night a list of items in connexion with which I propose to ask for supply. I had not an opportunity of checking the figures before the lists were circulated, as unfortunately the machinery in our Government Printing-office broke down, and I could not get a proof in time. I find that the departments have asked for more money than I think they ought to have between now and the end of the year for which period we are asking supply. Under these circumstances, I am revising the requirements made, with a view to reducing them to the lowest possible amount that I think the departments ought to have, and therefore I shall not be able to go on with supply to-day. I will have the list circulated as early as possible this evening, and will be prepared to go into supply tomorrow. I do not desire to ask for more money than is absolutely necessary.

#### QUESTION

##### PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS

Mr McCAY

asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice -

Whether men who have returned from active service in South Africa, and have been employed temporarily in the Postal department, will be given an opportunity this year of passing a qualifying examination ; and

Whether, if they pass, they will be appointed permanently in priority to other applicants ? '

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Minister (without portfolio)

Sir PHILIP FYSH

- The answer to the honorable and learned member's questions is as follows : - 1 and 2. The action to be taken in connexion with examinations to qualify for entrance into the public service both in the Postal department and generally, and also to priority after such examination, will rest entirely with the authority to be appointed for these purposes under the provisions of the Commonwealth Public Service Act.

#### POLLING AT THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS

Motion (by Mr. Crouch) proposed -

That a return be obtained and laid before this House showing the result of the polling, the names of the candidates, and the number of votes at each polling booth at the Federal elections for members of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr REID

- I shall oppose this motion, because the figures have been published in all the States, and I think that the return will involve a gross waste of money.

Sir William Lyne

- The information is all ready.

Mr REID

- If the expense has been already incurred I will withdraw my objection. My object was to save expense.

Mr CROUCH

- I may say, in personal explanation, that I knew that the information asked for had been prepared, and was in the hands of the Minister for Home Affairs, otherwise I should not have asked for it, because I am just as anxious as the leader of the Opposition to save unnecessary expense.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

#### PACIFIC ISLANDS LABOURERS BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from October 9th, vide page 5854, on motion by Mr. Barton -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr R EDWARDS

- I am sure that honorable members will realize that this question is surrounded by many difficulties. The Bill, as it stands, has a special interest for the people of Queensland because it deals with the restriction of the coloured labour which the sugar planters of that State have been allowed to employ ever since the sugar industry was started in Queensland. I am sure that honorable members by this time must know that that industry is one of the leading industries of the State, and I fear that the stoppage of the Pacific Islands labour traffic at such short notice will very seriously affect the future welfare of the cane-growing there. It has been stated on several occasions that Queensland has decided that the kanaka labour must go, but I deny that. The question of the expulsion of the kanaka was not before the people of Queensland during the federal elections, as distinct from the question of the exclusion of other alien races. It is true that Queensland is in favour of a white Australia. I am quite as much in favour of a white Australia as are honorable members belonging to the labour party, although we differ as to the method of bringing it about. It has also been stated that the electors of Queensland, by a very large majority, have decided that the kanaka must go, and that three-fourths of the representatives of Queensland in this Parliament are pledged to vote in favour of the abolition of that labour. That statement is not quite correct,, because the Queensland electors took very little interest in the federal elections. In some of the federal divisions less than 5Q per cent, of the electors voted, and upon an average not more than 60 per cent, of th«\* votes were recorded either for or against the kanaka traffic.

Mr Fisher

- That would be the percentage at any election.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Yes, in any of the States.

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Mr R EDWARDS

- I say, therefore, that the Queensland people have not declared that kanaka labour must go. The Prime Minister when introducing the Bill said that, like the Immigration Restriction Bill, it referred to the policy not merely of this Government, but of all Australia, and that the measure was designed to set an honest and just period to something we did not want, and at the same time avoid the destruction of the sugar

industry. That is where the difficulty arises. There always exists the danger of destroying an industry which has taken many years to build up, and which is of vast importance to this State. In my opinion this Bill, if it does not utterly destroy the industry, will very seriously check it. It will work injury and injustice to those who are directly occupied in cane-growing as well as to many others who are indirectly interested in that industry. I should like honorable members to know that the men who are occupied in sugar-growing were encouraged to lease land for the cultivation of cane because of the conditions of labour then existing in Queensland. They undertook that work with the knowledge that they would be allowed to employ a certain class of labour which they believed to be the most suitable for growing sugar. They invested the whole of their -capital, and spent the best years of their lives in making the industry a success. Now they are quietly informed by the Prime Minister that after two years hence they shall not indent any more coloured labour, because he is determined to bring about a "white Australia," and has resolved that none other than English-speaking people shall have standing room on this continent. That is the policy of the Prime Minister. Is that the policy of a broad-minded statesman? I do not think it is. Some of the legislation which has already been introduced into this Parliament tends to drive away trade and commerce from our shores, instead of encouraging it. It tends to destroy industries which have taken millions of capital, much energy, hard work, and many years to establish. I do not think we ought to do anything of that kind. I am in favour of a "white Australia." But will the expulsion of a few thousands of harmless but useful kanakas bring that about? These men are employed upon one kind of work only, and that is work which white men have described as unfit for slaves. Over and over again it has been said that when white men have attempted to do the work which is being performed by the kanakas, they have thrown it up in disgust, and declared that it was only fit for slaves. They have refused to do it at any price. The Queensland Government have taken every care that the kanaka shall not come into competition with the white worker. The regulations in that State are so strict that the kanakas cannot possibly do other than field work. Those who complain of the kanaka upon moral grounds are, I think, very much in error. They appear to lose sight of the fact that there are 2,000 or 3,000 other aliens in Queensland. I think that what they complain of ought to be placed at the door of these other races rather than at that of the kanaka. I do not regard the latter as perfect, but compared with the others he is certainly very harmless, besides which he has hitherto been very useful to the sugar planters of tropical Queensland. Speaking of other alien races, I am reminded that even if we got rid of the kanaka to-morrow, there will still remain in the Commonwealth something like 70,000 other aliens, who constitute a much greater danger in every way. It is somewhat inconsistent that we should aim at sending away a few thousand kanakas, when there are many thousands of other aliens of more dangerous races who will spread over the whole of Australia, and enter into keener competition with the white workers. I almost doubt whether the Prime Minister is sincere in his desire for a "white Australia." If he is, why does he not provide for the expulsion of the greater as well as of the lesser danger from our midst? I think that the driving away of a few harmless people, such as we have in Queensland, when they are doing special work which the white men will not perform, is a very great mistake, in view of the fact that there are 70,000 other aliens scattered over Australia. A few months ago, when speaking on the address in reply, I expressed the opinion that honorable members of this House were not competent to legislate upon such an important question as this, because of their lack of practical knowledge regarding the condition of labour on the sugar plantations in tropical Queensland. After five months' experience of honorable members, and many opportunities of speaking with them on this subject, I repeat that statement. I am more than ever convinced that more information regarding this matter is required, and should be forthcoming, as it is impossible for honorable members to do justice to it without that knowledge. Not one in twenty of honorable members of this House have any knowledge of sugar growing. Even the Prime Minister himself does not possess the least knowledge of the condition of affairs amongst the sugar cane plantations in tropical Queensland. Certainly he does not possess sufficient knowledge to justify him in bringing forward such a drastic measure as this. It is true that he went as far as Bundaberg, and that whilst there he saw one or two sugar plantations. He left the impression there that he would not introduce legislation which would tend to interfere with the industry until he had had an opportunity of again visiting Queensland. That State believed and trusted him. As soon as the Bundaberg planters came to know what the provisions of this Bill were the following telegram was sent to the Age :-

The Kanaka Labour Bill has caused the utmost consternation among sugar-growers. The measure is

regarded as drastic, and pointing at the speedy extinction of the industry.

That is the opinion of practical men who have been engaged in this industry for many years.

Mr Fisher

- I have heard nothing of it.

Mr R EDWARDS

- As honorable members are not possessed of a practical knowledge of the kanaka question and its relation to the welfare and success of the sugar industry, it would be nothing less than criminal on our part to legislate in the direction of interfering with what is of so much benefit not only to Queensland but to the Commonwealth at large. For these reasons I am still of opinion, as I stated four or five months ago, that in the interests of the Commonwealth as a whole a Royal commission or select committee should be appointed to secure more information before this House legislates upon such an important question. At a later stage, I am given to understand, that I shall have the opportunity of moving that the Bill be referred to a select committee, or that a Royal commission be appointed to inquire into this matter.

Mr Reid

- The honorable member cannot do it later on.

Mr R EDWARDS

- I have consulted some of the officers of the House, and have been advised that after the second reading of this Bill I shall be in order in moving that it be referred to a select committee.

Mr SPEAKER

- It is fully in accordance with the standing orders under which we are working for the course which the honorable member suggests to be taken. When the second reading of the Bill has been carried, it will be competent for him, if he so desires, to move that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

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Mr R EDWARDS

- It is my intention, after the second reading of the Bill, to move in that direction. On one day last week there appeared a sub-leader in the Argus which deals with this question from a common-sense stand-point, and I should like to read it for the information of honorable members. It says - If it should become law, the South Sea Islander will have vanished from Australia by the end of 1906. The right thing for Parliament to do would be to inquire into the conditions of the sugar industry during the recess and legislate next session. By voting for federation, as nearly all the sugar people did, the industry was trust fully placed under the control, so far as kanaka labour is concerned, of the Federal Parliament. That is a fact which should not be overlooked.

Had the sugar people been distrustful and voted the other way, as the anti -federalists urged them to do, Queensland would not now be inside the union, and the national Parliament would not be able to stop the incoming or order the outgoing of a single kanaka. Let it also be remembered that in no other State will a lending and distinctive industry be subjected in a similar way, for national reasons, to drastic legislation. Under prescribed conditions, State law has allowed the introduction of kanakas into Queensland. Upon this basis of statutory toleration the industry has expanded to its present proportions. Grant that the kanaka must go - that this is essential to a white Australia - still the time of his going should be determined after investigation has placed the details of what is an intricate matter in a clear light. Seeing that the national Parliament must interfere with a State industry, it should take every precaution to avoid unnecessary harshness. But if the measure now circulated is to be passed this session - and this, under obvious pressure, is apparently the intention of both parties - the question of whether five years, the proposal in the Bill, is a sufficient period, ought in justice to the industry to be thoroughly discussed. Deportation of the last kanaka within a reasonable time is what is wanted. It is not likely that the sugar people will assent to five years as a reasonable time. Why not say ten years, if that term will content them ? What are the extra five years in the life of the nation? But they may mean a great deal in easing the friction of unwelcome legislation, and in accommodating the industry to the new labour conditions. The kanaka must go, but care should be taken that the national decision shall not be discredited by packing him off in a hurry which is not called for and might be very hurtful to an important industry.

That is a common-sense way of looking at this very important question. I do not know who the writer of this article is, but I almost wish that he were the Prime Minister of Australia for some time to come. I prefer that a commission should be appointed to make inquiry and take evidence regarding the condition of

labour in tropical Queensland before any legislation is enacted. Whatever conclusion such a body might arrive at, I am sure that it would be accepted by the Queensland planters, who possibly might be satisfied. But if this Bill is forced through against the wishes of the State of Queensland, it will always remain a grievance against the Federal Government. That is not a desirable state of things to bring about. We ought not to do anything which will engender bad feeling at the beginning of our national life. The Government should strive to avoid even the appearance of injustice. Honorable members may say that Dr. Maxwell has made inquiries, and has reported to the Government. That is quite true, but I would point out that his report, to a great extent, supports the argument which I have been advancing. To strengthen that statement, I will, with the permission of the House, read the last report of Dr. Maxwell. Of course, honorable members will no doubt have noticed that last week when Mr. Philp first became aware of the provisions of the Bill, he asked Dr. Maxwell to, give his candid opinion as to the effect of the measure. A portion of Dr. Maxwell's report has already appeared in one of the Melbourne papers, but the report in full I received only last night after the tea hour. It is reported in the Brisbane Courier, of 7th October, as follows :-

On receiving the text of the Kanaka Bill now before the Federal Parliament the Premier immediately sent a letter to Dr. Maxwell, asking for an expression of that gentleman's opinion on the probable effects of the Act. Mr. Philp has now given us Dr. Maxwell's answer to this inquiry. The following is the correspondence :-

#### LETTER FROM THE PREMIER

4th October, 1901.

Dear Sir, - With reference to the introduction in the Federal Parliament of the Pacific Islanders Bill, a copy of which has appeared in Wednesday's papers, I should be glad to be favoured with your views as to the great importance of the sugar industry to the State of Queensland, and should also like you to carefully peruse the Bill, and furnish me with an unreserved expression of your opinion as to the probable effect of such a measure, if passed, on the industry. - Yours faithfully,

R. PHILP

Dr. W. Maxwell, Director of Sugar Experiment Station, Bundaberg

#### DR. MAXWELL'S REPLY

Brisbane, 6th October, 1901

To the Hon. Robert Philp, Prime Minister, Queensland.

Sir,- I have the honour to receive your letter of the 4th instant, requesting my views " upon the Pacific Islanders Bill now before the Federal Parliament," and, further requesting me to "furnish you with an unreserved opinion upon the great importance of the sugar industry, and upon the probable effect of such a measure, if passed, upon the industry."

The text of the Bill was set forth in the official telegram recalling me to Brisbane, and is before me.

#### FINANCIAL AID STOPPED

Concerning the measure, with its present provisions, if it is passed, I am persuaded it will paralyze the industry. One effect will be instant : A very large proportion of the cane-growers are depending upon the banks, and other financial sources, to aid them in producing and harvesting their crops, and in the permanent development of their farms. This aid will stop, and in many cases at- once. My relations with the growers, on the one hand, and with money institutions who seek my opinions, cause me to be painfully well aware of the situation, and of what must happen if given action is taken. A further effect will be that the industry

#### MOST STOP FROM WANT OF LABOUR

be made and harvest future crops if the time provisions of the Bill are enforced. Other kinds of labour are not in the country, and cannot be gotten within the specified time, and the sheer economic result that must follow is patent.

Putting the matter briefly, and assuming that it will be enacted that the Pacific Islander must go, then, in those districts which may survive the abolition of such labour, ten years is the minimum of time within which it will be found possible to adjust the industry to the proposed new conditions, and provide labour for its continuance.

Concerning the "great importance of the sugar industry," and the probable future effect of such legislation upon it, I do not require to reply by mere verbal opinion. The Sugar Experiment Stations Act, which

constituted my present advisory relation to your Government, and to the sugar industry, compelled me to formulate a policy ; and while my position justly requires that I shall be silent upon questions, in their political stage of development, the administration of the above Act, which the Executive leaves in my hands, requires me to think and act in view of possible legislative measures.

At this place it appears opportune to inform you that a few days prior to the death of the late Secretary for Agriculture (Chataway), I met him by special appointment in Maryborough, when he requested my opinion upon the state and future of the sugar industry, in view of impending Legislation.

In reply to the first inquiry he made, I had to reply that my experience in other countries, with my observation in this country, and the history of the labour experimentation in the State, forced me to conclude that, if the industry should be made wholly dependent upon white labour then

SUGAR-GROWING NORTH OF MACKAY MUST DIE OUT

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It will not be instant, but I consider it certain. It must be primarily understood that cane-growing is totally different to growing potatoes or maize. If labour is short, and the farmer cannot produce 2,000 bushels of maize, then he can grow 1,000 bushels, and find a market for it. But sugar is a manufactured article, and must be made where the cane is grown. If the mill requires 30,000 tons of cane to make it possible to open up and pay running expenses, and only 5,000 tons of cane are grown, then the mill is stopped just as effectively as though not one stick of cane were grown. I consider it certain that cane will not be grown solely by white labour north of Mackay to keep the mills in existence. In a more formal and reserved sense this view is expressed in my statement made to the Federal Premier.

In reply to the late Secretary for Agriculture's further urgent inquiry - " But WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR CANE FARMERS ?

We cannot leave them to rot on the ground, like the sheep in the West when a drought overtakes them," I stated that any enactment which involved the closing up of the Northern canefields, if passed for other than economic reasons, should, in common equity, provide compensation to mill owners and to the farmers for their vested interests, and by such means I considered it possible to remove the farmers to the more Southern districts, where cane-growing may be rendered possible by white labour, aided by scientific appliances.

At that time Mr. Chataway was in a dying state, and said that the policy of the department, in relation to the sugar industry, must be chiefly left with me.

The original proposal of the Bureau of Experiment Stations was to establish laboratories and an experiment station at Bundaberg, and a large Station at Cairns, and continue the present one at Mackay. The laboratories are now in use in Bundaberg, and the Mackay station is in active operation ; but in the place of large, permanent stations at Bundaberg and Cairns, involving large expenditures, I have determined upon several small experimental plats in the several districts, some of which are already in operation, in order to render the farmers the most immediate aid, in view of either leaving or remaining in cane-growing, and also to lighten the public expenditure.

I trust, Mr. Premier, that this brief statement of the policy of the sugar department of the Government will inform you more effectively than a verbal opinion upon the matters on which you request my views.

I shall, however, have to urge the most careful consideration of the Government in the interest of the cane farmers if legislation should render canegrowing impracticable. We have 2,610. of these men, the backbone of their districts, and they must not be lost. Yet the subjects which are matters of opinion and of divisions in Parliament are questions of life and death to those men in the fields. - I have the honour to be, Mr. Premier, your obedient servant,

WALTER MAXWELL,

Director of Sugar Experiment Stations

That is the opinion of Dr. Maxwell at the present day. He looks on this as a matter of life and death to the planters, who have spent the best years of their lives, and have invested all their means, in this industry. Dr. Maxwell is of opinion that without the assistance of coloured labour the sugar industry, at any rate for a certain distance north of Mackay, must go.

Mr Henry Willis

- Why does he think there should be compensation?

Mr R EDWARDS

-Because if their industry is destroyed, the men naturally ought to be compensated. If there were only planters interested in the industry, the matter would be very easily settled, because it would only mean a new expenditure of possibly £10,000,000 from the Federal Treasury. But there are many other industries dependant in the sugar industry. There are the coal miners in the north.

Mr Page

- And the ship-owners.

Mr R EDWARDS

- There is the shipping industry, and there are the farmers, not only of Queensland, but also of Victoria and New South Wales, who supply the cane-growers with farm and dairy produce to a very large extent. A telegram from Mr. Philp to Mr. Barton was published in the Melbourne Age of Friday last, 4th October -

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Mr PHILLIPS

-day telegraphed to Mr. Barton protesting emphatically against the Kanaka Bill, as, in the opinion of himself and colleagues, it would entirely destroy the sugar industry. Seven years at least should be given before recruiting was interfered with, during which period means might be devised for carrying on without coloured labour. In the State Parliament Mr. Philp said : - All they asked was that inquiries might be made before the sugar industry was drastically dealt with by the members of the Federal Parliament, who knew nothing of the industry. Ample time should be given to discuss the question. Mr. Barton had made no inquiries beyond getting information from an inspector employed by the Queensland Government, which, in Mr. Philp's opinion, he had ignored. If Mr. Barton had taken the advice of Dr. Maxwell, he would have gone slowly in his efforts to put the question on a satisfactory footing. No man was more anxious than he (Mr. Philp) to see the question solved, and in five years all the kanakas must leave, and that would only mean total ruin to the industry. He did not think Mr. Barton wished that, but, if Mr. Barton was sincere, why not give the industry a fuller trial. Mr. Barton should purchase a mill and a plantation, and allow the labour organizations to demonstrate that they could grow sugar profitably with white labour. Queensland had raised this industry above that of all other States. He (Mr. Philp) was confident that if the sugar industry had reached such a stage in the other States, Mr. Barton's Bill would be howled down. Men who sought to disturb an industry committed a criminal act, and were not true Australians. The planters voted for federation thinking that they would get justice, and this was the sort of justice they got. If Mr. Barton and Mr. Deakin, when they came two years ago to Queensland, had shown their true opinions and been honest with the people, there would not have been a majority for federation at the referendum - and dealing with Mr. Barton's speech on the second reading of the Kanaka Bill, Mr. Philp said Mr. Barton had maligned Queensland. There never had been a majority in Queensland who wished the industry treated as Mr. Barton treated it. He asked - Did Mr. Barton recognise the importance of the industry, or did he imagine that the people here knew nothing of their own business? They had had kanaka labour for the past 25 years. White labour had always failed, and if kanaka labour were abolished those northern sugar lands would be abandoned to aliens. The sugar industry was never on a sounder footing than at present,, and during the last five years the Government had spent half a million on it. The Premier, in conclusion, said he complained of Mr. Barton acting so hastily. What he should have done, and what Queensland wanted done, was to have an inquiry before introducing legislation.

That is what was expected from the Prime Minister, namely, that inquiry should be made before legislation was introduced on this question. The honest opinion of a man like Mr. Philp should have some weight with hono cable members of this House. He has lived in Queensland nearly all the days of his life, and has for many years been a prominent Member of Parliament and a Minister of the Crown in Queensland. I think that no one is more familiar with the industries and interests of Northern Queensland than is the present Premier of that State. He is of opinion that if the Bill is passed as it stands, it will entirely destroy the sugar industry in Northern Queensland, and do great injury to the whole State, because there are very many industries in the State which depend upon that industry. As I have said, the planters alone would be very easily compensated, but there has also to be taken into consideration the very large number of persons who derive their living from industries which are dependent upon the sugar industry. I stated in this Chamber on a previous occasion that the number of white men, women, and children obtaining their living in Queensland from the sugar industry was not less than 50,000, and my statement was cavilled at ; but I now hold in my hand official figures which state that, leaving out

two-thirds of the population of Townsville - Townsville is not looked upon as a sugar district - the number of white people employed in the industry is 48,246, and the number of aliens and other coloured people, leaving out of account the Chinese employed in banana growing and other pursuits, 11,000, so that I was not very far wrong in my original statement.

Mr McDonald

- The statement is a ridiculous one. The honorable member does not know the population of Northern Queensland.

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Mr R EDWARDS

- I think we may take it for granted that the figures of the Auditor-General are as correct as figures can be. In putting down, the number of persons directly connected with the industry at 50,000, no account is taken of the persons engaged in connexion with shipping, in coal mines, in foundries, and in other pursuits which are sustained by the industry. ' Seeing that so many persons are directly or indirectly concerned in its welfare, a reasonable time should be allowed to the planters to obtain other labour than kanakas to carry on their work. Queensland voted for federation by a small majority, but, without the northern voters, that State would have rejected the Constitution. The people in the north,, however, expected consideration, fair treatment, and justice at the hands of the Commonwealth Government. Most of the representatives returned by the State were returned to support the Barton Government, because it was never thought that they had it in contemplation to bring in a Bill whose provisions would ruin so many families. If this Bill becomes law, Queensland will have reason to regret having joined the union, and will look back upon referendum day as a dark and sorrowful one for them. Had the Imperial Government imagined that during the first session of this Parliament a Bill would be introduced tending to seriously injure one of the States of the Union, I am sure that the Royal assent would not have been given to the Constitution Bill, because I believe that it is a principle of Constitutional law that the Royal assent should not be given to any measure of the kind which is likely to injure an individual or a State. The Prime Minister, in moving the second reading, made what was, from his point of view, a very interesting speech. But, while he spoke of the legislation passed in 1885 to put a stop to the indenting of coloured labour after December, 1890, he omitted to say what the condition of the sugar industry in Queensland was in 1890 and 1891. He should have known that, because of the cessation of the coloured labour traffic, the industry almost collapsed at that time.. The planters ceased to put in cane because they knew that no labour would be forthcoming to harvest it. Mills containing; valuable machinery were abandoned, and many thousands of white workers were thrown out of employment. I do not know how the people of North Queensland speak-, of the Prime Minister now, but I know how they spoke of the then Premier, Sir Samuel Griffith, in 1891, when I visited the north. I felt glad on that occasion that I was not the Prime Minister of Queensland. He, however, saw that a mistake had been made, and that the time had not arrived for the abolition of kanaka labour. He recognised that if the sugar industry was to be saved something must be done to provide for the re-introduction of kanakas, and Queensland to a man agreed with him. The workers throughout Queensland rejoiced at his change of policy, and the result was that the industry went forward by leaps and bounds, and was never on a sounder footing than it is at present. I am afraid that the Prime Minister does not realize the magnitude of this industry, and its great importance to every part of the Commonwealth. I have here some- further figures, which are official, and which have been prepared expressly for this occasion, so .that honorable members may be fully seized of the position of affairs in Queensland. The statement is as follows : -

STATEMENT SHOWING THE AMOUNTS RECEIVED BY WHITES AND ALIENS OUT OF THE VALUE OF AN AVERAGE QUEENSLAND SUGAR PRODUCTION OF 150,000 TONS

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Basis of Calculations.

Auditor-General's Report of. 30th June, 1901, on the operations for the year 1900 of 13 Central Sugar Mills erected by money advanced under various Acts by the Queensland Government ; and amplified, in order to show the analysis of the total value.

Of the total value of an average Queensland sugar crop, seven-eighths is directly received by whites as against only one-eighth received by the alien.

Honorable members will have very little difficulty in understanding the "great importance of this industry -



to Queensland, particularly, and to the Commonwealth as a whole, and I hope these figures will to some extent convince them of the necessity of avoiding legislation that would have the effect of checking the very large enterprises that are now being carried on. . Charges of cruelty and ill-treatment have been made against the planters, and I am sorry to say that some members of this Federal Parliament have gone on to the public platforms in and around Melbourne, and made very serious accusations against the people engaged in the Queensland sugar industry. The Argus of August 26th last contained a report of a meeting held on the previous Sunday afternoon, at which Senator Stewart is reported to have spoken to the following effect -

According to the regulations they (the kanakas) were supposed to get tea, bread, sweet potatoes, and meat. He had tasted some of the tea, and found it the "foulest poison possible for any man to put into his stomach." The bread was "sodden damper," the potatoes "not fit for pigs," and the meat "scraggy and wretched," and even worse - "rotten." Continually goaded on at his work by the overseer, the kanaka was also frequently booted and taken into a quiet place and soundly cuffed. That, he explained, was the "average" treatment, such as only a swagman might ascertain, for, on visiting and inspection days "everything was to be seen at its best."

Mr Page

- That is quite true.

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Mr R EDWARDS

- There is not a word of truth in it. Is it likely that the planters would treat their workers in a way they would not treat their horses? The planter has to pay for his horse, it is true, but he also has to pay for his kanakas, and he has to keep him in a fit condition to do a certain amount of work, or else his expenditure and trouble will go for nothing. Therefore, it is to his own interest to see that the kanaka is not underfed or badly fed. In reply to these statements of Senator Stewart, I desire to read a letter which was published in the Argus of September 7, under the heading of "Treatment of Kanakas." The Argus says: -

We have received a letter from Mr. F. J. Stevens, vice-president of the Pioneer River Farmers' Association, Mackay, Queensland, in which, referring to the statements made at a public meeting in Melbourne by Senator Stewart on the treatment of kanakas in the north, he says: - "We are accused (I use the word advisedly) of bringing the 'boys' here to make large profits by their labour. They cost us about £25 per head for passage-money and Government fees landed here, and we kill them off as fast as possible by inhuman treatment when we get them! Now, the simple facts are these: - The beef is either killed daily on the plantations or furnished fresh every day under yearly contracts by licensed butchers, and, while not professing to be sirloin, roast, or rump steak, is sound, wholesome food. Bread is likewise furnished daily by contract or baked on the spot, and is in every respect as good as that found on any white man's table in the land. If you take the small farmer, common sense will tell you that he cannot keep a separate larder for his two or three 'boys,' and you will find in every instance that their meal, whether meat, bread, potatoes, rice, or tea, comes off the same dish, the same batch, and from the same caddy as his own. Beside the impelling motive of self-interest, which makes a man take care of his own, there is a vigilant inspector in every district to safeguard the 'boys' welfare, and they very quickly appeal to him if they fancy they are being imposed upon. But I believe I am safe in saying the police records will not show one case in five years where complaint has been made of the quality of food supplied to kanakas."

I believe this letter is perfectly true. I feel that this question is one of the greatest importance to the welfare of the State in which I have been residing for the last 32 years, and in which I hope my bones will some day rest. It is a comfortable land, and I would prefer to be there rather than in this beautiful little garden of Victoria, which Queensland could carry in her waistcoat pocket without feeling at all uncomfortable. Perhaps I ought to say that I have no interest in sugar-growing, or in sugar property of any kind - not one shilling's worth - nor have I any interest in the kanakas, or any other aliens. Further, I am not acquainted with any of the sugar planters, except one - the Honorable Angus Gibson. Therefore, it cannot be said that it is from personal interest that I am taking up my present stand in connexion with this Bill. I believe that I am acting in the way best calculated to secure the prosperity and welfare of Queensland. I hope that, if this Bill is referred to a select committee, honorable members will be afforded an opportunity to thoroughly understand the position, and come to a just and righteous conclusion. A letter, written by Mr. George Crespin, J.P., of 20 Queen-street, Melbourne, was published in the Argus of

7 th October. Mr. Crespin says -

Being interested in the Queensland sugar industry for seventeen years, and at present representing some of the largest planters in Bundaberg, I have to enter my protest on their behalf against the drastic legislation proposed in the Pacific Island Bill now under consideration. I have received the following messages : - "The Kanaka Bill one-third returned each year is equivalent to immediate and total stoppage." "Kanaka Bill is abominable and unjust." As one knowing something about the industry (visiting Queensland sugar districts annually) I can confirm these remarks, and I submit that the proposal to abolish the labour within five years is simply a monstrous injustice to Queensland, who entered the federal union believing that her industrial rights and privileges would receive just recognition from southern legislators of the Federal Parliament. The planters all voted for federal union, relying on the good faith of federal rulers as to proper and systematic regulation of labour in the Northern States, whose conditions of climate, &c, are so different from the other States. Queensland is the only State possessing tropical industries. She is differentiated from the other States by her necessities, and possessing the only colonial labour legislation in Australia shows how with what extreme care she has guarded the interests alike of the white labourer and black.

Only last summer " the chairman of the Geraldton Divisional Board reported that all contracts had to be stopped, as the men could not work on the roads owing to the heat. " The contractor for the Mourilyan railway tried to get on with white labour, but the mortality was so great that he had to give it up, and employ Chinamen. I say, without hesitation, that when the kanaka goes the sugar industry will go also. Now, sir, the planters know full well that it is the expressed will of a section of the Commonwealth people that the kanaka must quit Australia, and those whom I represent simply ask that common justice, equality, and honour shall be done to men who have spent the best of their lifetime, their brains, and money in building up an industry a credit to the Commonwealth, and one so wide and beneficial in its influences upon labour and the trading community. They view the provisions of the proposed Act as far too drastic, with a strong tendency to evil consequences, and they ask for moderation, which they are justly entitled to. I have been authorized to make the following proposition to the Federal Government, which I consider very fair and which ought to meet with favourable consideration and support even from the most extreme member of the labour party, viz.: - That on December 31 , 1 90S, all kanaka labour shall cease ; that for five years ending December 31, 1906, the kanaka labour shall continue untrammelled, but conducted consistently with the Queensland Act for supervision, &c. That from 1906 to 1908 shall be the period of deportation. It is pointed out that to commence deportation of 1901 expired for boys in 1902 is an unexpected injustice. To remove such a high percentage in two years, as is proposed, with no prospect of replacement, must end in disaster. No planter will attempt to recruit for one year's service, and this is a great fault in the Bill. Fix definitely the term when licences are cancelled, and growers will know what they have to face. Five years is but a drop in the ocean of time of this great Commonwealth.

As Queensland has placed its destiny, to a large extent, into the hands of men who know little of its requirements, and under the belief that its interests would be conserved, the proper course for the Federal Parliament to take, if my recommendations are not accepted, before doing a great injustice to a large section of the Commonwealth, is to appoint a Royal commission of inquiry, and then abide the issue.

If an inquiry were made I venture to say that the planters of Queensland would accept the conclusion arrived at by the commission whether in their favour or against them, but it would be unfair and unjust to the large number of people who have invested every shilling they possess, and who have spent the best years of their lives in connexion with the sugar industry, to pass a Bill such as this, which would tend, if not to utterly destroy the industry, to very seriously injure it and put it back a number of years. I hope that honorable members will consider very seriously the arguments which I have advanced. I fear that I have not been able to place them before the House as well as I should have liked, or as well as some other honorable members would have done. I am very anxious, however, that everything should be done to promote the welfare of that sunny land of which I am so extremely fond, and whose interests will be dear to me till the day of my death.

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Mr PAGE

- I am sorry that the Prime Minister is absent from the Chamber, as I wish to congratulate him upon the

very able speech which he made, from my point of view, upon the second reading of this Bill. He placed the whole position before honorable members as clearly and explicitly as any man could possibly do. He concealed nothing, but told us everything in connexion with the movement since the date of the introduction of the kanaka into Queensland. I am one of those who say that the kanaka traffic is a curse. The sooner we get rid of this curse the better. Perhaps my testimony will not count for much with the Prime Minister, as I am merely one of the rank and file of the third party, but nevertheless I honestly desire to congratulate him upon his very admirable speech. The honorable member for Oxley has stated that the question of the employment of kanaka labour was not made a test one at the last general elections. I deny that. I did not have the pleasure of hearing the honorable member for Oxley on the hustings, but I heard his opponent one night at South Brisbane. I was passing through Brisbane during my electioneering tour, and having an evening to spare, I attended to hear the views of the opponent of the honorable member. That gentleman particularly referred to the kanaka question. He was asked from the body of the hall - "Are you in favour of the immediate exclusion of all kanaka labour?" His reply was "Yes." I saw by the Courier, later on, that at the same place a similar question was put to the honorable member for Oxley, who replied that he was in favour of the kanaka going, but wanted to give him some time. Yet the honorable member comes here this afternoon and says that the kanaka is indispensable. This is the first time during my political career that I have ever heard the kanaka championed on the ground that he was indispensable. On every other occasion the plea urged has been for a continuance of this traffic for a few years. During the past seventeen years the same old cry has been raised. At the election which the honorable member for Oxley contested, the labour candidate secured 3,299 votes, whilst the anti-labour votes recorded were 3,753. The result, therefore, proves that the labour candidate lost by only about 480 votes. If these figures do not show that this question was made a test one at the election, I do not know what would. Furthermore, directly the Prime Minister had unfolded the Government policy at Maitland what happened? A pamphlet was published by the Hon. A. J. Thynne, who was disgracefully beaten in the Senate election in Queensland. It is useless for the honorable member for Oxley to come here and say that the question of the exclusion of kanakas was not made a test one. The leading paper of Queensland, the Brisbane Courier, threw down the gauntlet. It stated that the question at issue was a white Australia or none at all. The labour party took up the cry, which went throughout the length and breadth of Australia. What was the result? Only two men in this Chamber have advocated the retention of black labour. One is a Victorian and the other a Tasmanian. As far as I am concerned Victoria and Tasmania, can have all the kanakas. "We do not want one of them in Queensland, and I should say, from the way in which the Victorian representatives have voted, they are evidently not wanted here. But they want population in Tasmania, and therefore I say, "Send them over to Tasmania. They can make jam there, if they can do nothing else." I have in my hand Mr. Thynne's pamphlet, entitled, "Alien Immigration: The Truth about Queensland and Coloured Races. Sugar-growing in the Tropics." It was published directly after the Prime Minister's declaration at Maitland, so that if this question was not made a test one I do not know what was. I wish now to deal with the statement of the honorable member for Melbourne that the Prime Minister had introduced this Bill to placate the labour party. I would point out that the Prime Minister wanted a white Australia before he knew there was going to be a federal labour party. It is said that if the planters up north had known they were going to be treated in this manner there would have been no federation. I wish to tell honorable members that the desire for federation in certain quarters of Queensland was prompted by the idea that its accomplishment would enable them to dish the labour party, and send representatives to this Parliament to do as they liked with the kanaka traffic. But they were mistaken. The recent federal election was the first occasion on which representatives were returned upon the broad franchise of one-man -one-vote. All honour to those members of the Convention who introduced that provision. It gave Queensland a chance of saying whether she should be white or black. It was the power of our organization in Queensland which placed us in the position which we occupy to-day. I ask honorable members to tell me whether or not any of the "boodlers" have any organization? The labour party are without any money except what they collect from the individual workers. Every man is willing, however, to contribute his little mite to down the "boodler," and the very first chance that offered, what was the result? We have settled this question for all time. I am confident that, when the Federal Electoral Bill is passed, the franchise which it confers will be the broadest under the sun. I believe that we are going to have an electoral law which will give the labour

party a chance for all time. Of course I am aware that this is very unpalatable to one or two of my friends from Queensland.

Sir William McMillan. - We will all join the party.

Mr PAGE

- The honorable member is getting on very well, and if he travels at the same pace at which he has travelled since his advent to this Parliament, he will soon outstrip the labour party. More power to him. I shall be behind him, and push him forward, if he will support democratic legislation. It has been urged that the "white Australia" vote was a catch vote. But what was the voice of the Commonwealth upon that principle ? How is it that the cry of a white Australia caught on from one end of the Continent to the other ? The explanation is very simple. When the Premiers of the different colonies - on their return from the Jubilee celebrations in England, where they had conferred with Mr. Chamberlain upon the introduction of legislation for the exclusion of undesirable immigrants - made a compact to give us a white Australia, the Queensland Premier ratted, and made a secret treaty with the Japanese Government. The country at the time knew nothing about it. The fact had to be completely dragged out of him before the public knew anything about it. These are the sort of men who have been at the head of affairs in Queensland. If we revert to the recent election for the Darling Downs vacancy, we shall see what mean, contemptible tactics the Premier of that State adopted. Mr. Philp actually tried to influence the electors against Mr. Barton's nominee. When a Premier stoops to such petty things, what will he do in big things ? Yet we are asked why we have not freed Queensland of this black labour before ! We are here to do it. All honour to the Prime Minister when he says that he is going to give us a brand spanking new white Australia for a New Year's gift. How honorable members can advocate the retention of black labour I do not understand. The honorable and learned member for Parkes twitted a certain section of the House with fighting shy of the kanaka. There is an old saying that it is a dirty bird which fouls its own nest. We know that our nest is dirty, and we do not come here to foul the nest of Queensland. We came here to make that State white. If we could have done so without being taunted in this fashion, I should not have spoken. But, instead, we have been told that we wish to sneak this Bill through as best we can with the support of the Barton Government.

Sir Malcolm McEacharn

- Who said that ?

Mr PAGE

- The honorable and learned member for Parkes. I will show that we are not afraid of this question.

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- Is the honorable member aware that Mr. Philp denied those allegations?

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Mr PAGE

- Can he deny what he is reported to have said by interjection in Hansard ? He deliberately stated to the Darling Downs electors, that Mr. Barton's Immigration Restriction Bill aimed a blow at the Germans and Danes. "If you vote for Groom," he said, "you will not be able to bring out your German or Danish friends." That statement was scattered in pamphlet form broadcast throughout the Darling Downs electorate. What is the use of denying a statement which appears in black and white ?

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- It brought Mr. Barton to book.

Mr PAGE

- Not yet. Thank goodness we are above Philp's gag. He cannot gag the Federal Parliament as he gagged the State Parliament of Queensland. Nor can the honorable and learned member for Brisbane gag us as he did in Queensland.

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- I never tried to do so.

Mr PAGE

- The honorable and learned member not only tried, but he did it. I now want to refer to the voice of Queensland on this question. I suppose every honorable member of this Parliament has received a book entitled A White Australia, written by the special commissioner of the Melbourne Herald - one of the finest, straightest, and clearest accounts of the kanaka traffic that could possibly be published. The book was

sent out free, and if any honorable member will not read it under these circumstances, he does not deserve to have a copy. I shall quote largely from this book, because I know everything in it is absolute fact, and when I have done, if any honorable member can stand up and defend the traffic - well, God help him; so far as a "white Australia" is concerned. As to the voice of Queensland on the subject the writer says : -

During the general election campaign the planters were in a poor way. The only alternative to the policy of Mr. Barton was that of Mr. Reid, and behold ! the " same old George " was, or appeared to' be, even more strongly insistent upon a white Australia than Mr. Barton. Towards the end of the campaign Mr. Reid visited Brisbane, and there seemed to be oppressed with doubts.

That is what flattened him. The account continues -

He had not learned the rights of the question ; some new light had come to him - it came strangely to the more experienced Sir Samuel Griffith in . 1892 - he would inquire personally, and so on.

The right honorable member told the people that he would come back and inquire after the election. He must have taken Queenslanders for " mugs." He called one Queensland politician a " mug," and he must have thought they were all political " mugs " when he threw a bait of that kind. But we were not " taking any," and the consequence, we are told, was that Queensland, in electing six senators, elected four who were anti-kanaka, and two who were pro-kanaka. But these figures are wrong, because every one of the senators had declared for a white Australia. The only man who did not address a meeting in Queensland during the election was Mr. Ferguson.

Mr McDonald

- He issued a manifesto.

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Mr PAGE

- I will come to that. When Mr. Ferguson came back he was given a dinner at Rockhampton, and he there declared in favour of a " white Australia," so that the whole six senators from Queensland are pledged to that object. Those who have traced the history of four or five of those senators ever since they took an active part in politics, will know what their belief is, so far as the kanaka question is concerned. Senators Dawson, Higgs, Drake, Stewart, Glassey, and Ferguson all declared for a "white Australia." The only man there was any doubt about was Senator Ferguson, hut he made it clear at Rockhampton that he also was for a " white Australia." These facts are pretty emphatic, and I do not see how honorable members can continue to say that the voice of Queensland is against a " white Australia." What did the voice of Darling Downs say 1 All the influence it was possible to bring to bear was directed against the Barton Government candidate. Every means was tried to defeat his return, and kanaka labour was made a test question, with the result that the Barton Government candidate beat Mr. Philp's candidate by a majority of nearly 2,000. If that is not emphatic, I do not know what is. The book to which I have referred, goes on to say -

The State had also to elect nine members of the House of Representatives. The figures were -

Anti-kanaka ... .. 7

Pro-kanaka ... .. 2

Majority against the kanakas ... 5

The honorable member for Brisbane and the honorable member for Oxley are the only two whom I know to be in favour of kanaka labour, and if that fact is not emphatic as showing what the voice of Queensland is, I do not know what honorable members want. It is said that many electors who ought to have voted did not vote. But are we to stand still because men will not go to the poll?

Can we drag them to the ballotbox? The electors knew what was at stake, because politicians were going through the States addressing public meetings. The whole of the press was "bouncing" the labour party with the idea of ending its existence. As I said before, the reason the press were so anxious for federation was that it was thought the labour party could be "bounced" out of existence in the Federal Parliament, and that their opponents could do with the sugar industry just as they thought fit. But they sharpened the knife to cut their own throats. The cry of the sugar-planters now is that the term of five years is too short, and that further time should be given. But we know that ten years would be declared to be too short. What did the sugar-planters say in 1892 when Sir Samuel Griffith brought in his Polynesian Labourers Extension Act? They then said that in ten years everything would be right, because in that time they

would be able to look round and fix things up, and the industry would be placed on a stable footing, with the result that everything would go swimmingly, and there need not be any more kanaka traffic. On the eve of 1902 the self-same arguments are being used by the self-same men, who urge that unless kanaka labour is allowed the industry will be killed. The longer time we propose to give them the more time they want. The honorable member for Melbourne quoted the evidence of a ganger given before the Royal commission on this question. But he did not quote the whole of the evidence, and I shall give the balance. This quotation is from the pamphlet to which I have referred, and reads -

Now the position of ganger in a colliery is an honorable and useful one. It is not very agreeable; neither is it agreeable to work in a ship's hold discharging coals, nor to stand up to your knees in water at drainage and reclamation works. Does anybody seriously argue that because all men prefer agreeable work to disagreeable that therefore the disagreeable cannot be done by white labour? The answer can only be in the negative, and yet it is hardly an exaggeration to say that this is the effect of the argument based on that ganger's evidence during the discussion in the Queensland Assembly.

That brings me to the argument that white men are not able to work in Queensland. Let me tell honorable members I was employed for sixteen months on the Cairns line. First, I went out west to the Drummond range, and from there to Mackay, Townsville, Cooktown, and then back to Cairns. I was there two years, and worked every day, without being sick for a single day. I worked up north as a ganger, having previously been employed as a labourer. The first start I got in life I got in a country where it is said white men cannot live because it is so hot. I have known it 120° in the shade in December and January, and have seen not one man, but hundreds of men, working in a cutting with the sun pouring down upon them continuously day after day. What is the use of honorable members saying that white men cannot work there? I will give honorable members what was said by Mr. Angus Gibson and the late Mr. Knox, chairman of the Colonial Sugar Company; and I suppose the honorable member for Oxley and the honorable member for Melbourne will accept the authority of these gentlemen as of some value. As to white men saying they cannot do the work there, I should be ashamed if I were one of them. In a letter in the Australian Star of 3rd June, 1899, Mr. E. W. Knox, late manager of the Octopus Sugar Company, said -

His company would be prepared to produce the sugar required by the Commonwealth, in the sub-tropical districts of Queensland and New South Wales by white labour exclusively if the Federation so wished. Well, the Federation wishes it.

Mr McDonald

- Not only sub-tropical.

Mr PAGE

- Mr. Knox was the chairman of the sugar company, and surely he will be accepted as an authority. He was interested in the industry financially, and I would like to know what the honorable member for Melbourne thinks of his statement.

Mr Higgins

- May I ask whether that statement was made before the Bill was law or afterwards?

Mr PAGE

- It was in 1899.

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- The honorable member said "sub-tropical."

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Mr PAGE

- I am giving facts, and the honorable member for Brisbane knows they are facts, because we have "slung" them at him often enough before. At the intercolonial conference of Chambers of Manufacture held in Melbourne, Mr. Angus Gibson said -

The sugar planters had come to the conclusion, however, that they would have to employ white men for the cultivation of sugarcane.

The honorable member for Oxley states that the kanaka labour was not a test question, but here we have the utterance of Mr. Angus Gibson in November, 1899. Mr. Gibson is one of the largest sugar-growers, and has a plantation at Bingarra. Mr. Gibson continued -

While they were driven into that corner, and while they had fought against Queensland influence bringing

them to that condition, they thought the Commonwealth would be able to recoup them in a fair spirit.

Then we have in italics-

He dared not say that it would be impossible to cultivate sugar with European labour. He knew that his countrymen could work any where under the sun.

That is the straightest thing I have ever heard a man say. We all know what white men can do. So long as there is gold they will go in the sun for it; they have gone to the other extreme and opened up gold-mining at Klondike. I do believe that if there was a chance of getting gold out of the sun itself, white men would find some means of getting there.

Mr Sawers

- But white men die at Klondike.

Mr PAGE

- That is the fortune of war - many men die in their beds. Mr. Gibson proceeded -

Climate or other conditions did not seem to have anything to do with them, if they were well paid.

This is the secret.

It was necessary that the men who worked in the fields should be well paid. These are undoubtedly the highest authorities on the point at issue in Australia, and both agree that it will be possible to produce all the sugar required for Federal Australia by white men exclusively.

These are planters engaged in the industry. These are the men we hear honorable members raving about as having millions invested in the industry, and as being about to be ruined by the Federal Government.

These men say that white men can work at the industry, and the Barton Government have solved the question as to how it can be done. I am as sure as that we are in this chamber that this problem can be solved by the Barton Government under existing conditions. If white men are paid to work, they will do anything. It is said that the climatic conditions are against white men doing this work. Let me tell honorable members what the Governor-General has said about this unhealthy spot Cairns -

Lord Hopetoun, Governor-General of Australia, at Cairns last week, knocked the stuffing out of the pro-kanaka rot about the terrible northern climate. He said to the Cairns people : "I came among you a month ago feeling very weak and very unwell, but a month's stay in your lovely climate has, I hope and believe, entirely set me on my legs again. When I go back to the southern States my appearance will be so improved, and I shall be so robust to look at, that I shall form an excellent advertisement for the virtues of the northern climate. " His Excellency then read the text of a wire he was despatching to Mr. Barton, wherein he suggested that if the Federal Parliament persisted in sitting in winter no better climate or more charming place could be selected for sitting than Cairns. The rout of the pro-kanaka push is complete. Cairns is the place where they say men are dying by thousands, and yet the Governor-General wants the Federal Parliament to sit there ; so that these statements which we have heard about its unhealthy climate are mere moonshine. The honorable member for Oxley spoke of the kanaka as a good, kind, dear creature, who never did anything wrong, and who could not do wrong if he tried.

Mr R EDWARDS

- I did not say that.

Mr PAGE

- The honorable member has said so, though perhaps not in those words.

Mr Watson

- He described the kanaka as harmless, though useful.

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Mr PAGE

- I intend to show honorable members where his harmfulness comes in, by referring to the moral aspect of the question, which has not been entered into by other honorable members ; but before doing so there is another point upon which I wish to put the House right. I have been told that the Honorable Angus Gibson, when he made his statement, had something up his sleeve. He wanted the industry brought south of Mackay, because he thought that if that happened things would prosper. That was the idea he had in his head when he was speaking at the conference. The morality of the kanaka is not what the honorable member for Oxley would have us believe. Honorable members will have a different opinion of this dear, nice creature when I have quoted Charles Powers' denunciation of him. Charles Powers was Minister for Education just before he issued a manifesto, prior to going to the country at Maryborough,

and that manifesto created a great sensation throughout Australia. I will read the account of his views - Before Mr. Charles Powers followed the lead of some more distinguished public men, and affected the belief that the Queensland sugar industry could not be carried on without black labour, he delivered a notable speech, in which he asked - "Is the social and material status of the community lowered by the introduction of servile labour?" His answer is apposite here. "Those who read history," he declared, "will at once say 'Yes.' But, unfortunately, the employer does not read history, or does not take to heart its lessons. Poverty, and despair that is bred of long-continued poverty, lead at last to callousness and the extinguishment even of the desire for better things, and a degeneration sets in as courage and hope die. More young girls have been driven to prostitution by poverty than by evil desires, and it is sad to think that our white population is now providing prostitutes for our kanaka population. The planters who introduced the traffic would be horrified with this phase of the traffic if their class had to supply these for their kanaka employes.

They would get rid of the kanaka very quickly then. It is the wives and daughters and sisters of such as me, of those who are labouring hard and who do the pioneering work of Queensland, that will come under the lash. It is the easiest thing in the world for those who are reared in the lap of luxury, and have a good home, to remain uncontaminated by these alien docile curses. I can call them nothing else. Yet they are the men with whom the honorable member for Oxley wants to flood Queensland. Shame on him to get up in this chamber and say that they are so good, and kind, and nice. I leave him to reflect upon this matter. He knows the condition of things as well as I do, and the statements which have appeared in every paper in Queensland.

Is it such a little thing that the girls of the white workers - the children of the poor - are the victims of the dreadful sacrifice? It is to me a horrible thought that one single child growing up in our State schools should be destined for such a fate; but then we rarely bring the black women from the islands with the men. A planter, to whom I lately mentioned this objection, said - "Oh, yes, but if there were no white prostitutes none of our women would be safe."

What does the honorable member for Oxley think of that? I think as much of my darling child as any wealthy squatter or planter thinks of his, and God forbid that any friend of mine should be degraded in this way. I have said time and again that these women, although they have fallen so low, were once somebody's darlings - some one has pressed them to their breast and called them "my darling." Let honorable members think of that. Let them imagine what their feelings would be if one of their family was brought to this degradation, and they saw them in the arms of one of these black, docile curses. It is enough to make my spirit rebel to think that an honorable member should advocate in this chamber the cause of these dear, docile creatures. They are ruining us morally and socially. All honour, I say, to the Prime Minister for the speech he made at Maitland, and for facing this problem in the way he did. He is going to emancipate Australia. We are threatened with a curse which they have in America, though to a lesser degree, but, thank God, the day has come when the kanakas must go. I wish the honorable and learned member for Parkes were here this afternoon to hear what I have to say. It is he and his class who are afraid of the kanaka, and they want to make prostitutes of those of my class, so that they may make all they can on the plantations out of their flesh and blood. The writer of the Herald articles says that the kanaka business is infamous, and this is the conclusion he comes to with regard to its moral phase. This is the best part of the whole book -

In my own opinion the situation at Cairns supplies in itself, and apart from everything else, an unanswerable condemnation of the kanaka traffic. It will be remembered that it was deemed necessary in the town mentioned to retain Japanese prostitutes for the use of the kanakas, because it was considered that otherwise white women would not be safe. We are, therefore, led to the following reflections: - The kanaka is brought into a highly civilized British country in order that he may help to bear the white man's burden.

The kanaka, being a mere savage (even though you occasionally find a hymn-book in his bunk), becomes a menace to the white man's wife and daughters.

Japanese prostitutes are provided with a profitable field.

The white man's wife and daughters are virtually required by the said white man himself to live under the "protection" of the Japanese prostitutes.

Daughters of civilization, offspring of British fathers and mothers, the sweet school girl of the years that



have gone, afterwards, may be, the beloved of some honest British man's heart, yields to the embrace of a filthy savage.

All this in a Christian State under the British flag. Surely it is at this point in the affairs of the kanaka traffic that young Queensland, "made a gazing stock both by reproaches and affliction," may wring her hands in very shame, and raising her contrite voice, exclaim with King Claudius, "Oh, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven."

That is my colony. I hope, as the honorable member for Oxley has said, that my bones will rest there ; but, while I have a voice, it will be raised against this traffic, and my vote will always be given for a "white Australia." I am afraid of the kanaka, and of every black man, because I do not want my race to be contaminated with theirs. They may say that their race is pure, and I have reason to believe from what I have read that it is ; but, while I am willing to believe that ours is a mixed race, I say that we should not mix it any further, except with those of our own colour. Who dares to say that the Anglo-Saxon race is not the finest under the sun ? In the heat of the torrid zone, and in the cold of the frigid zone, there they are to be found. The Honorable Angus Gibson dare not say that the white man cannot work in Northern Queensland. I have proved it by practical example. The first rise I made was by working on the railways there, and honorable members can see that it has done me no harm. And, as I told the honorable member for Northern Melbourne some time ago, the stock in Queensland is just as good as the sample. If we look at the men in the southern parts of Queensland, and compare them with the men in the north of the State, we shall see that the northern men come out on top all the time. There is another phase of this question I desire to touch upon - and I may as well sheet it home to these kanaka lovers - and that is the dire disease that these coloured races bring amongst us. Ever since I saw a leprous kanaka working in the cane-fields up north, at Port Douglas, I have never touched sugar, and when I read the figures I have in my hand I do not think other honorable members will touch sugar either. Now this furnishes proof that leprosy originated amongst these aliens. In Queensland, in 1889, there were eleven lepers all Chinese. Three years afterwards, three Europeans were found to be suffering from the disease. From the 30th June, 1898, to 1st July, 1899, there were 22 cases of leprosy reported, made up as follow : - English, 3 ; Danish, 1 ; Queensland, 1 ; aboriginals, 2 ; Chinese, 1 ; Pacific Islanders, 14. This was taken from the journals of the Parliament of Queensland, October 1899. Sixteen of these lepers came from the sugar districts of Queensland.

Mr Higgins

- It is only when these islanders come to Queensland that they contract leprosy - they do not get it before they come there.

Mr PAGE

- I do not know that they bring it from the islands, but they certainly show it in Queensland. I suppose that the Chinese first brought it in. I was personally acquainted with one of these lepers to which I have referred - the Dane. He was an honest hard working fellow out west at the town of Isisford, and we can see from his case how the disease may spread, and how it, perhaps, is spreading unknown to us. The avocation he was following was that of a fisherman, on the Barcoo River, and he used to go round from house to house selling the fish. Every one knows that fish practically produces leprosy - living on fish diet brings it on. Dr. Munro, the great authority on leprosy, says that the seeds of leprosy sometimes take half a century to mature, so that the fact that people do not show any signs of leprosy, is not convincing evidence that the seeds of the disease are not developing in their systems. Half the people in the town of Isisford may be lepers and not know it. The Queensland Government brought this Dane down from Isisford to Ilfracombe on the Central Railway line, and took him to Peel Island. They conveyed him through the streets, and in the public railway carriages. Now is not that a fine state of affairs, and do not the facts I have mentioned thus afford a further reason why we should vote for the Bill? The number of lepers officially recorded in New South Wales was as follows : - In 1883 there were five Chinese; in 1884 two Chinese, and one Javanese; in 1887 one Chinese; in 1888 four Chinese; and in 1889, six years after, one European. So that honorable members will see that the disease is coming south. In Victoria out of eight recorded cases of leprosy, one was that of a European.

Mr Higgins

- That is due to the association with Chinamen.

Mr PAGE

- Yes, perhaps so. But leprosy is a vile Eastern disease, and we should get rid of all Asiatics. I am not in love with any of them - we do not want them, or any of their diseases, whether they be Chinese, Javanese, or any other " 'ese." In the Sandwich Islands, in 1853, there was only one case of leprosy; in 1859, there were a few cases; in 1864, 230 cases; and at the end of 1888, there were no fewer than 1 1,000 lepers suffering from this disease, out of a population of 67,000.

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Mr Watson

- Those lepers are mostly Pacific Islanders, too.

Mr PAGE

- If we had the same proportion of lepers in Queensland, they would number 70,000. Our numbers are increasing every year, and the example of rapid increase in the Sandwich Islands should be sufficient, leaving everything else out of the question, to induce honorable members to get rid of these aliens. Are we going to allow the whole of the white races to be contaminated by the introduction of this scourge amongst us? I say, "No."

Mr Higgins

- What causes the kanakas to contract leprosy more than do white people ? .

Mr PAGE

- I do not know, but possibly weakness of physique.

Sir Edward Braddon

- Do the kanakas eat more fish than do white people ?

Mr PAGE

- Yes, the kanaka eats fish pretty liberally when he can get-it. There is one matter to which I wish to particularly refer. It is a statement which I clipped out of the Sydney Morning Herald of 5th October, a telegraph message from New Zealand, published under the head of "Parsee Workmen in Fiji."

In the House of Representatives Mr. Millar asked the Minister for Labour if his attention had been drawn to a report that the Colonial Sugar Company were importing Parsee fitters, blacksmiths, and carpenters, to take the place of Britishers at present employed in their sugar mill's at Fiji.

We have heard a great deal of talk about loyalty, and if that is not enough to make any man loyal, I do not know what would be. These Parsees are British subjects, but they belong to a subject race, and I hope they always will do.

Mr. Seddon replied that he had received a communication on this subject, and while regretting very much that in Fiji, so near our own colony, these Parsees should be introduced, at the same time, so far as this colony was concerned, we were not entitled to interfere, Fiji being a Crown colony. It was not desirable to disturb the relations between the Commonwealth and this colony and those intrusted with the control of affairs in Fiji.

This opens up another phase of the question, and I would ask honorable members whether they would like to see the white men now dependent upon the sugar industry supplanted by such people as these ? It is my ambition to see the whole of the coloured labourers supplanted by white men. I come now to the question of pay. The Honorable Angus Gibson was quite satisfied that sugar could be grown by means of white labour, so long as the planters would pay for it. Now, I would ask any honorable member whether he would work in a tropical climate from sunrise to sunset for less money than he could get in Sydney or Melbourne ? If the sugar planters will pay the wages they will get the men. How does the squatter get his shearers ? If the planters make it worth the while of cane cutters to go round in exactly the same way as the shearers travel round to shear sheep, they men will go soon enough. When I was working in Northern Queensland on the railways I was getting £7 a week.

Mr Higgins

- As a ganger ?

Mr PAGE

- Yes ; and when I was contracting for myself I sometimes made £10 a week. They made it worth my while to do the work, and I stopped there until I got a little money together. If the planters paid good wages, they could get plenty of men to take the employment they have to give. It is only a question of wages. There are as fine and healthy-looking men in Northern Queensland as in any part of the globe. I was very much amused to see a statement in the Age as to some threatened rebellion in Queensland.

The very people who were talking about law and order to the rouseabouts and shearers in 1891 are now going to take up the same attitude as we did then. The Prime Minister answered the question that was asked him on this subject very well. These white men in Queensland are now going to fight for the black man ; but they brought white men from Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania to "down" us in Queensland, and take the bread from our mouths ten years ago, and that is the sort of thing that the men I have the honour to represent in far western Queensland would very much resent. They only wish that those, who are dissatisfied with this Bill would rebel. We should then give them a dose of their own physic. There is nothing that would give me greater pleasure than to take up one of those magazine rifles that the Minister for Defence has asked us to practice with, in defence of a white Australia, and there are many thousands more who would do the same thing. We should very soon settle the kanaka business. I only wish they would rebel, but talk is cheap.

Mr Fisher

- It will never come to that.

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Mr PAGE

- I wish it would. We should settle things quick and lively, but, on the face of it, the whole suggestion is amusing.

The very tiling for which they condemned us, they are resorting to themselves. When my friends in Queensland learn this, it will make them laugh, because we were told at that time that we should use constitutional means and not bullets to effect reform. We have used the constitutional means. What is the result ? The honorable and learned member from Brisbane and the honorable member for Oxley are still howling against us for having used those means.

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- The honorable member is the only one I have heard howl in the chamber.

Mr PAGE

- I know that the honorable member does not like it. I can quite understand his talking like this. Up in Queensland he was a " little tin-god," but down here he is only a small tin bucket. On the floor of this Chamber the labour members are treated with the same respect as is meted out to other honorable members. In Queensland they are called robbers, thieves, fire-brands, the associates of thieves, and everything else that is bad. The honorable and learned member for Brisbane was one of those who helped to put them in gaol. By putting them in gaol he assisted to put them into Parliament. Fancy the honorable and learned member having to associate with criminals in Parliament.

Mr Fisher

- Not one of them was a criminal.

Mr PAGE

- No; they were heroes, every one of them, during the 1891 strike, when the Government patched up a George III. Act in order to convict them.

Mr SPEAKER

- Order. I do not think that the honorable member's reference has anything to do with the Bill.

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Mr PAGE

- The same men who suffered from the kanakas are now sitting in the Queensland Legislative Assembly. I am satisfied that I have put my side of the case quite as clearly as did. the honorable member for Oxley, and the honorable and learned member for Brisbane. I am content to leave it to honorable members to decide whether the kanaka is the docile, good, and nice person he has been represented to be. Are they prepared to have in our midst the filthy wretch whom I have depicted? It is easy enough to be virtuous, chaste, and good on £10,000 a year, but it is people of my class who have to suffer. On 30th March of this year the electors of Maranoa emphatically recorded their desire for a " white Australia." I am here, not only to vote for that, but to fight for it, and fight for it I will as long as I live.

Mr. HENRYWILLIS (Robertson).We have heard two very excellent speeches this afternoon upon the kanaka question. That delivered by the honorable member for Oxley, appeared to me to be a most serviceable one. It was full of information, and I should gather from it that the honorable member is a very strong supporter of those persons in Queensland who desire a continuance of the kanaka traffic, although

he, as well as the honorable member for Maranoa, believes that it should be discontinued at the very earliest possible date. The effect of the speech delivered by the honorable member for Melbourne also was that the traffic in this class of labour should be discontinued. The point at issue appears to be whether it should terminate in five, seven, or ten years. That is really the crux of the question. I think the honorable member for Maranoa made it very clear that that is only a "stall." Ten years ago next year, it was stated that if the planters were allowed to employ kanakas for another decade, they would be able to recoup all their out-of-pocket expenses, and the loss on the wear and tear of machinery, and that they would be in a position to continue the manufacture of sugar with European labour. That period has arrived. It is always an extension of time which is clamoured for by other people, who have had the opportunity of conducting their manufactories with white labour. In the early history of Australia we know that the people had an opportunity of engaging cheap convict labour. Later on, an outcry was raised against the discontinuance of that class of labour. Wherever alien inferior coloured races have been employed, it will be found that there has been an agitation against the abolition of the traffic. I take it that the form of labour which is employed in North Queensland is not dissimilar from that which was employed in the cotton plantations of America. When the agitation for the abolition of that slavery began, there was just as strong an outcry for compensation as is heard in Queensland to-day. Any person reading the articles of the special commissioner referred to this afternoon, who reported upon the sugar industry in Northern Queensland, must be convinced that they are faithful to the very letter, and that the traffic in Polynesian labourers is one that should be discontinued at the earliest possible date. The writer had no personal interest to serve, and he tells a plain and unvarnished tale of the condition of things in that locality. He has brought forward the evidence of no less a person than Dr. Maxwell to show that the white man can do the work required of him in Northern Queensland; and surely if there is any point in dispute at all in connexion with this question, it is as to whether the white man can work north of Mackay. According to the testimony of those who are most familiar with this matter, and who have the welfare of Australia at heart, this work can be done by Europeans. But the question is one of cost. I find that the difference between the employment of the kanaka and of the European is just the difference between £35 and £80 a year. Whilst the kanaka is very much cheaper than the white man, it is admitted that the latter can do very much more work. Consequently the difference of cost between the employment of white labour and of the kanaka is not the difference between £35 and £80, but is actually a proportion between those figures. If the planters were to introduce European labour they would, of course, make a very much less profit. The large corporation which is carrying on its work in Northern Queensland and Fiji is paying dividends at the rate of 10 per cent., and setting aside immense sums every half-year to its reserve account, thus clearly showing that it is making immense profits out of the traffic in coloured labour. This fact lends weight to the statement that the industry can be successfully conducted by the employment of white labour. The fact really is, that there is so much to be gained by the employment of cheap labour that persons are very loath to part with it. If we come closer home, we find that no black labour is employed upon the plantations in New South Wales. The planters there pay their employes about 40s. a week, and turn out with white labour sugar which is quite equal to the Queensland article. It is really, therefore, a question of price. It is a question of profit between the planter and the labourer. I understand that a telegram has been received from Bundaberg in which one of the largest planters of that district says that the sugar-growers of Queensland would rather accept a continuance of the kanaka traffic for three years than the Government proposal as foreshadowed the other evening. It thus becomes evident that, if the planters cannot get an extension of their right to employ coloured labour for ten years, they will accept seven, and if they cannot get the right of continuing this labour for seven years, they will agree to a term of five years, whilst if they cannot obtain the right to a five years' extension, they will agree to three years. Ten years ago they said, "Give us the right to continue to employ this labour for ten years, and we shall then be prepared to abolish it." The Government have been very liberal in their proposal to the planters of Northern Queensland. It seems to me that honorable members on this side of the House are prepared to give the Ministry large support in connexion with this matter. If I had been called upon to vote for the immediate discontinuance of the kanaka traffic, I should have been ready to do so. A limited time might be allowed the planters in which to deport these Pacific Islanders, but their engagement under indenture should cease at the earliest opportunity. It appears to me that one question which must arise in the mind of every honorable member is, "Will the people of the Commonwealth tolerate the state of slavery which

prevails in Northern Queensland?

Mr Macdonald-Paterson

- No.

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Mr HENRY WILLIS

- The honorable and learned member is, I am sure, well acquainted with the traffic. He has heard all the arguments to be advanced in favour of its continuance as told in the clubs of Queensland. But as a politician of large experience I think he will admit that there is strong argument to substantiate the contention that a state of semi-slavery prevails in Northern Queensland. In the pamphlet which has been largely quoted this afternoon, I find the following passage : -

It is not only a traffic in living flesh and blood, but in human life. The death rate of the kanakas in Queensland, as I have shown in these articles, is not so high as it used to be, but it is still very high. It is estimated that up to the end of 1891, about 50,500 kanakas had been imported into Queensland, of which number no fewer than 10,000- some say 11,000- had died.

Roughly speaking, therefore, 10 out of every 50 kanakas shipped into Queensland die off like flies. We find that they readily contract the worst forms of disease that European flesh is heir to. The explanation is simple enough if one reads carefully the books of Louis Stevenson, who lived amongst them. That author states that as soon as the kanaka takes to the consumption of European food, dons European clothing,, and conforms" to the customs of. Europeans - which are always the vices of the Europeans - he will contract their diseases, and die. That is the experience in Queensland to-day. It was also the experience there 30 years ago. It is the experience in the islands when the kanakas are returned to their homes. I have travelled amongst some of those islands, and can bear testimony to the fact that many of the statements made by Mr. Louis Stevenson and the Rev. J. G. Paton, who was referred to yesterday, are absolutely true. I think that we should pay the greatest respect to their testimony. We should also be guided by the records contained in the two valuable volumes of the latter's experiences in the New Hebrides. I am inclined to think that had we Sir Henry Parkes in the Chamber, we should find him speaking out boldly for a discontinuance of the traffic at the very earliest date. Sir Henry Parkes, at the time Sir Samuel Griffiths recanted, wrote to the daily press, putting on record his protest against the action taken by that statesman. It has been stated here time and again that Queensland protests. But I contend that I am here to-day as a representative of Queensland, seeing that I am a representative in the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. When the Premier of Queensland speaks, he speaks for a section of the community and should be heard ; but honorable members are sent here for the purpose of legislating on this question, and I, as one of the representatives of the Commonwealth, desire to speak on it. Sir Henry Parkes used these words : -

There is a higher tribunal than the Government of Queensland - the tribunal of civilization. If our neighbours have not the status for active interference -

That was before federation - - they have the right and the duty to remonstrance and the right and duty to let the world know that this diseased passion for degraded labour is confined within the borders of Queensland.

It is not now confined within the borders of Queensland, and it is our duty as legislators to see that the traffic is stopped at the earliest opportunity. I consider the Government proposal too liberal to the sugar refiners. The honorable member for Oxley, who has spoken. out -so fearlessly on behalf of the planters who desire another ten years, may be complimented on his courage; but I do not think he can expect much support in his contention. All that has been said by the honorable member for Maranoa as to the amount of disease that is contracted from the kanaka, the amount of degradation caused by his mingling amongst white people, and the immorality which prevails in Northern Queensland, is most appalling. I have it on the testimony of a gentleman who has come down here from the State to represent the interests of the planters, that the kanakas live in a state of prostitution or immorality with European women in that part of Queensland, and subsequently marry them. I do not wish to enlarge on this phase of the question, for other members who directly represent those districts will have something to say concerning it. But I think that in the interests of the kanaka himself he should be sent back. If his agreement were terminated immediately I do not think the kanaka would raise any objection, even if he were able to do so. His island home is as sweet to him, and I think sweeter, than his home in Northern

Queensland. Before he went to Queensland he had his living provided at hand, and when he returns he has little trouble in again gaining a living ; but his period of existence is a short one at best when he does return. In a large proportion of cases these returned kanakas have to go to the lazarette on the island where Father Damien died, in the Hawaiian group. Many of the kanakas who have returned to the Solomon and Samoan groups, as well as the Society Islands and New Hebrides, have contracted leprosy, and have had to be removed to the island I have mentioned. We not only find them contracting leprosy in Northern Queensland, but also in the Hawaiian group, especially at Honolulu, where the Japanese and Chinese form about half of the population. The kanakas have, in many cases, contracted leprosy before going to Queensland, and those who have not already contracted it by adopting European customs and European food, appear to develop it very readily in tropical Queensland. However, I am prepared to give support to the Bill, and only regret that it allows so much time for the continuance of this labour. If Ministers will change their mind in committee, and propose the discontinuance of the licence system, and complete deportation within three years, of the kanakas now there, I shall be amongst their supporters.

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Mr BAMFORD

- In addressing myself to this subject it is hardly possible to avoid, at any rate, crossing the lines which have been traversed in the most able and comprehensive speech of the Prime Minister. Especially is that so in treating of the history of this question, and I purpose just to glance at that history, without taking up too much time, because when a question is being debated from only one side it becomes rather monotonous. The opposition to this measure is so slight, that I am sure that even now members have decided how they are going to express their opinions by their votes. The honorable member for Maranoa, in a Niagara of eloquence, said that there is a curse attached to this black traffic. I will say at once that the word " traffic " is very suggestive of the way in which this business has been conducted. So far as I have been able to learn, the first kanakas landed in Queensland were landed at Bowen, Port Denison. Whether it be that there is a Nemesis which pursues the persons or community which traffics in the flesh and blood of fellow creatures, or whether it is simply the long arm of coincidence, I cannot say ; but from that day to this that place has been blighted. Notwithstanding that it has one of the finest harbors on the Australian coast, a magnificent back country suitable for pastoralists, and a very fertile agricultural country, and that it has the lowest death rate in Australasia, from that time to the present, Bowen has been practically extinct from a business point of view. I am sorry that that is so, because Bowen is one of the nicest and most beautifully situated little places I have seen in Australia. Unfortunately sugar has always been grown by blacks. There has hung over this business, as somebody said, the " trail of a hateful usage." It is simply because in the West Indies and other places it has been the custom to grow this particular product with the aid of black labour, that it has been deemed impossible to carry on the industry in Australia with any other kind of labour. But I say advisedly, notwithstanding what has fallen from the honorable member for Oxley, that no honest attempt has been made to grow sugar otherwise. It was so profitable to grow it with coloured labour, and as the Government of Queensland have always been in sympathy with that particular kind of labour, there was no desire to change the system. In 1885 we come to the most important epoch in the history of the sugar industry. That was the year in which Sir Samuel Griffith tabled a resolution to do away with licences for recruiting at the end of 1890. A great deal of capital has been made of the fact that shortly after that resolution was submitted there was a considerable diminution in the amount of acreage under cane. But that diminution can be explained as due to other causes. At any rate, in 1890 there was a considerable increase in the area under cultivation over the previous acreage, and from April, 1892, when recruiting had absolutely ceased for a period of two years, the acreage still increased, thus showing conclusively that notwithstanding that black labour was denied to the industry for that period, it was possible with the altered conditions to cultivate a larger area and produce considerably more sugar. The figures on which I rely are those of the Registrar-General of Queensland, and they may be considered undeniable. Much capital has been made out of this phase of the question, and altogether without foundation. In 1892, we know that Sir Samuel Griffith " recanted, " as it has been termed ; but what was the reason ? As we all know, in that period of our Australian history, Queensland, with the other colonies, was drifting along to a gulf of financial ruin, into which she afterwards stepped. There is no doubt that at that time pressure was brought to bear on Sir Samuel Griffith and the Ministry - the same kind of pressure that is now being brought to bear on Queensland sugar planters who are agitating for the

kanaka traffic, namely, the pressure of the financial institutions. We know that in 1893, when Queensland went to the English market for a loan of £2,500,000, she got only something under £400,000. That was the result of the extravagance of Sir Samuel Griffith himself, in his loan policy in Queensland ; and, in my opinion, it was to find a scapegoat for his own maladministration, that he put forward the fact that the sugar industry was somewhat depressed, as the reason for the depression in Queensland. There is no evidence whatever to establish the position that Sir Samuel Griffith adopted, and although he did recant, he himself said at the time that he was really doing it against his will. He expressed opinions at the time that incontestably proved he was driven to what he did by some influence stronger than himself. The honorable member for Melbourne last night quoted from a speech of Sir Thomas Mcllwraith in 1893. I should like to call attention to something that was said during the election of 1893, by one of Sir Thomas Mcllwraith's colleagues, who entered the Parliament of Queensland under the cegis of Sir Thomas himself. That gentleman was Mr. Kingsbury, who told the people of Bundaberg that "every brick and stone in the buildings of their city was cemented with the blood of slavery." That was a gentleman who stood side by side with Sir Thomas Mcllwraith as a colleague in the representation of North Brisbane, and yet Sir Thomas is quoted here as being in favour of the continuance of the black labour traffic. I know that the remark which Mr. Kingsbury made is not original, but was used at Manchester some years ago in the anti-slavery agitation by Mr. G. V. Brooke, the tragedian. However, the words lose nothing of their force on that account. There was an attempt made to grow sugar by white labour with the aid of central mills ; but it proved futile, as in the nature of things it was bound to do. It was urged that the growers were simply growing the cane for the benefit of the mill-owners, receiving only 8s. to 8s. 6d., and that, if there were central mills, higher prices would be obtained. But the temptation was so great that it was not to be expected that men would sacrifice themselves on the altar of their principles simply to establish the fact that cane can be grown by white men. "When a man who was successfully growing cane by white labour found that his neighbour on the other side of the fence was employing kanakas and other aliens, as he was allowed to do by the law of the land, is it surprising that he felt tempted to adopt the same methods, and thus obtain larger profits? That is why men grow cane by black labour even for the Central Mills. It was thought that they should not do it, but there was no law to prevent it. In 1892 it was assumed, though, unfortunately, it was not made part of the law of the State, that in ten years the traffic would absolutely cease. The late Mr. W. H. Groom, who was one of the three Royal commissioners who investigated this subject, in a separate report gives six reasons for the depression in the sugar industry which then existed. Among those reasons was the pressure of financial institutions, but he does not mention the difficulty of obtaining labours. What is more important is a statement made by one of the witnesses examined - Mr. Villiers Brown, a very influential man in Northern Queensland. He is a large shipowner and merchant, and has been dealing in sugar for some years; and, I may add, I had the honor of beating him at the recent federal elections. Mr. Brown, in answer to question 5,220, confirmed the opinion of the late Mr. W. H. Groom that it was the pressure of the financial institutions, and the enormous interest which the planters had to pay, which was the cause of the then depression in the sugar industry. When he was asked as to the period within which the employment of kanaka labour should be abolished, he said it should not be less than five years. That statement was made nearly thirteen years ago, and the planters are still asking for another five, or another seven, or another ten years. Evidence coming from a man of that class is of very great importance. He is one of those who are now advocating the retention of the kanaka as indispensable. From the very beginning the cry has been raised that the planters only want a little more time. At no time, until the present, did they ask that the traffic should be made permanent. They were all willing that it should terminate at the end of some indefinite period, but now they say that its existence is indispensable to the industry. From the district which the honorable member for Oxley represents, the cry comes that black labour cannot be dispensed with. Something has been said in regard to the inspection ; but no one knows better than those who have been in Northern Queensland that this inspection is an absolute farce, and means nothing whatever. Although an inspector does not give a formal notice of his visit, the planters and those interested are perfectly aware that he is coming within no distant date, and consequently everything is in apple-pie order when he arrives. I have known cases in which an inspector has come to a district only once in three years. People have been summoned for illegally employing kanakas, and have been fined 3s. 6d. and costs. Of course, the fine has been paid, and the kanaka has been at his work as usual the next morning. There is a case on record - and I mention it with very great

diffidence, because it is a delicate subject - which goes to prove that the kanaka is illegally employed all over the colony. The case to which I refer is that of a late member of the Federal Cabinet, who was fined 10s. for illegally employing a kanaka as a coachman. I do not say that the employment of kanakas is slavery, but the line of demarcation between it and slavery is not so broad nor so well defined as it should be. A little while ago, in a Mackay newspaper, there was an account of a meeting held- at a place called Marion, a large sugargrowing centre - where nearly all the growers are small farmers--

Mr Deakin

- What is the difference between a farmer and a planter 1

Mr BAMFORD

- The planter is the big man, and the farmer the little man. During the proceedings it was elicited that some men had been into Mackay looking for kanaka labour. The man who gave the information said that he had been acting for others, and he had found that the price of one of the agents was £22 10s., and of another £18. He asked what was the reason for the difference in price. Honorable members will see that they were treating the question as though they were dealing with a bale of wool or a ton of sugar. He was told that the reason of the difference was that one man obtained a larger commission than the other.

Mr Henry Willis

- They get so much a head.

Mr BAMFORD

- Yes. There is in Mackay a gentleman named Croker, who advertises that he is taking orders for kanakas.

Sir Edward Braddon

- Kanakas for sale !

Mr Fowler

- It is easier to hire them than to buy them, or they would be bought and sold.

Mr BAMFORD

- The traffic commenced with the Kidnapping Act of 1ST 2 - a very suggestive name for such a piece of legislation - and was conducted in a horrifying way until it culminated in the case of the Hopeful, when all Australia and England was roused to indignation. It was not because of the humanitarian principles of those engaged in the traffic that the law was altered. If public opinion had not been so strong, and had not been wrought to white heat by the accounts which were published, the same conditions would prevail to-day. It is not those who are engaged in the traffic who have made it cleaner - because it is cleaner than it was - it is the force of public opinion. It is usual now, though somewhat in contravention of the law, to indent a number of islanders to a plantation, or even to the Central Mills which have been built by Government money. These men are brought over in bodies of 100 or 200, and are farmed out to the small growers in the neighbourhood. I have been told, on the best authority, that if a small cane farmer finds himself in financial straits - I am speaking now of farmers who lease land from planters who cut up their estates - and he goes to the planter and says, " I have a dozen white men who are willing to do my work; will you advance me the money to pay them wages?" the planter will say " No." The farmer will be told, " Here are so many kanakas. I am willing to pay them, and to give them their rations, if you like to take them ; but you cannot have an advance to pay the wages of white men." The planters farm out the kanakas, and it is openly stated that they make a profit upon the traffic. In the districts in which the cane is grown it has become an established custom to farm out kanakas to small growers.

Mr Higgins

- Do the regulations allow it to be done ?

Mr BAMFORD

- Honorable members must be acquainted with the fact that, where the Government closes its eyes to breaches of regulations, these breaches will take place. Under an amendment of the Act of 1884 a penalty of £10 was imposed for a breach of the regulations ; but very few people were prosecuted, and it was found that the Justices Act overrode that Act, and gave magistrates power to impose any fine they chose. Of course, the fine now is merely nominal in nearly every case. The honorable member for Brisbane has himself stated in the Queensland Parliament that magistrates have sat on the bench and dealt with cases in which they themselves were the defendants. The matter was thrashed out in the Queensland Legislative Council, when the honorable member for Brisbane was Postmaster-General of



Queensland.

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Mr Higgins

- Does the honorable member mean to say that magistrates have tried cases in which they were the defendants?

Mr BAMFORD

- Yes. That statement is published in the Queensland Parliamentary Debates for the year 1885.

Sir William McMillan

- The same thing has occurred in regard to other matters in some of the other States. I knew it to occur in New South Wales within the last twelve months, in a coal-mining dispute

Mr BAMFORD

- It is said that the kanaka spends most of his money in Queensland. I do not think that he does, or that Queensland would get a great deal in any case ; but I wish to prove the fallacy of the statement. In February of the present year, when looking for information upon this question, I spoke to one of the largest storekeepers on the Lower Burdekin. He has been dealing with the kanakas directly and indirectly for the last 25 years. I asked him how the Japanese compared with the kanakas as customers, and he said, "I get nothing from the Japanese. They bring everything from Japan." As to the kanaka, he said that he did very little with him as compared with what he used to do. This gentleman has been a very long time in the trade, and has made a fortune.

Sir William McMillan

- Where do they get their supplies?

Mr BAMFORD

- He explained to me that the kanakas, on being paid off from one of the plantations, only a few weeks previously, withdrew the savings that they had in the bank, amounting to perhaps £600 or £700, and went away with about £10 per man. This they took with them to their homes in the South Seas.

Sir William McMillan

- Of what use would the money be to them there ?

Mr BAMFORD

- They can get all they want from the French traders in the Islands who, not having to pay customs duties, can sell at lower rates than the Queensland storekeepers. In addition to that the Queensland law prohibits the kanakas from buying arms or ammunition but they can get as much as they want from the French traders, and that is the reason they are now " tumbling " to the business, and buying all they want in their own islands. The kanaka, therefore, is not of so much benefit to the State from a business point of view that he is generally supposed to be.

Sir William McMillan

- All the rations and everything he eats and wears during the time he is in Australia must be bought here.

Mr BAMFORD

- Yes. But I am speaking with regard to the kanaka's savings. A return furnished by Mr. Paget gives the average bank savings of the kanaka depositor at something like £7 per head, and when they go away they draw that money and take it with them. Now we come to the question of the ability of the white man to work on sugar plantations. In my opinion, there has never been an honest attempt made to show whether the white man can do the work or not. It has been the policy of the planter to make the work as degrading as he possibly could, because he wanted to use the white man as a lever to keep the other man in his place - not to displace him, but to keep him there. If the planters can make the work so distasteful to the white men that they will not do it under ordinary conditions and for the mean wages that are offered, they are able to say that the white men will not do the work, and that they must have the blackfellows to help them to carry on their operations. I have seen white men engaged in doing the dirtiest work that could be found for them about a mill, whilst the Japanese and kanakas were doing nice light work, such as repairing tram-lines and that sort of thing. These things were done with the deliberate intention of getting the white men to refuse the work.

Sir William McMillan

- I think the law prohibits the employment of kanakas at certain work on the cane-fields.

Mr BAMFORD

- The law avowedly does that, but it is not enforced. The inspection is so lax that the law is evaded, and the Government wink at the evasion. It is the desire of the planters, and to their best interests, to evade the law, and, no doubt, if we were placed in like circumstances we should look at the matter in the same way.

Sir William McMillan

- Does the honorable member think that the white man can do all the work in all parts of the sugar-growing districts?

Mr BAMFORD

- Yes ; they have done it.

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Sir William McMillan

- Even the trashing ?

Mr BAMFORD

- Yes. That is a question of which a great deal of capital has been made, but trashing is not absolutely necessary, and the price many of the cane-growers get for trashed cane does not represent the actual cost of the work. The fact is, that when the planters have a number of kanakas on a plantation . for whom there is a slack season, when the cutting is over and the clearing-up after crushing has taken place, they put them on to do trashing. On the Herbert River the Colonial Sugar Refining Company have cut up their lands into small farms, and they have a number of tenant farmers. They also grow a certain amount of cane themselves. They make it a condition of the leases that the farmers must trash their cane, and for this work they give them from 6d. to 8d. per ton. But they do not trash their own cane. They pay for the percentage of sugar in the cane, which is judged by their own analyst in their own laboratory at the mill. "When the cane is being crushed they mix their own untrashed cane with the trashed cane of the farmers, and if, as is generally supposed, the untrashed cane is slightly lower in density than the trashed cane, they get the benefit of the reduction in density caused by the mixing. That is in one of the districts in which they say cane trashing must be done, but there is no absolute necessity for it. They give 6d. to 8d. per ton extra for trashing the cane, but the farmers declare that the increase in price is not equal to the amount they have to spend in labour for trashing. Mr. Thos. Mackay, of Cairns, a man who has been engaged in the industry for 21 years, and has now made a competency and retired, told me that he has seen girls of 12 years of age trashing cane and doing it without any injury to themselves.

Mr Deakin

- White or dark girls?

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Mr BAMFORD

- White girls. He holds that it is not absolutely necessary that the trashing should be done, and that in time trashing will be dispensed with altogether. In some cases they do not trash the cane at all, but they burn the leaves off a few days before crushing, and that answers the same purpose. I would like honorable members to know that the crushing always takes place at the coolest time of the year. The cane-cutting which has been so much spoken of, commences usually in June, and, as was stated by the honorable member for Maranoa, who read an extract from a letter written by Lord Hopetoun, the climate in North Queensland in June, July, and August, and well into September, is simply perfect. It is a pleasure to be alive, and any man can work outside then. have worked outside myself, and the honorable member for Maranoa has told us he has done the same thing ; and although I am not quite so robust as he is, I do not think I have suffered much from it. Reference has been made to? the humidity of the climate, but during the six months from June to Christmas we have what we call our dry season. There may be a few showers, but no rain to speak of. The crushing is always finished by Christmas, because, with the new year we have the commencement of the rainy season, when all outdoor work is stopped ; so that the argument that men would be incapable of working in the cane-fields owing to the humidity of the climate in these particular regions, is greatly discounted by the fact that at that particular time of the year there is no outdoor work done at all. They, perhaps, do a little planting and ploughing occasionally; but the rains are usually so heavy that work is almost entirely suspended. I dare say the honorable and learned member for Brisbane will say that he would be very sorry to see the white man reduced to working in cane-fields, but that work is positively ennobling compared to some of the work that I have seen done in

the streets of Melbourne. If there is anything degrading in work - - I do not say that there is - it is some of the work that is done in the factories and elsewhere around Melbourne that is degrading, and not the cutting or trashing of cane. Mr. Paget has given us some figures with regard to the death rate among the kanakas, which he [puts down at 30.2 per thousand for the last 10 years. Now we have the testimony of Dr. McDonald, of the Herbert River, who gave evidence of a very startling character before the Royal commission. He said in reply to Mr. King, one of the commissioners, that in 1887 - that was sometime ago, and no doubt the conditions are much better now - the death rate amongst the kanakas rose as high as 12 per cent., or 120 per thousand. Most of the deaths were caused by pneumonia and other kindred chest diseases, and by dysentery. The figures as to the mortality amongst these kanakas are absolutely appalling when they are compared with the death rate amongst whites which was less than 14 per thousand. In any case, even 30 per thousand would be a high death rate for these islanders - who are picked men of the best physique - young men who are examined medically in order to see that they have no organic complaints or diseases. Taking these facts into consideration and also remembering that they bring few women and no children with them, I contend that the death rate of 30 per thousand is something astounding.

Sir William McMillan

- Is that due in any way to the manner in which the kanakas are domiciled or herded together ?

Mr BAMFORD

- Possibly. The evidence which was given a little while ago at the Fairy mead plantation in the Bundaberg district, proved that it was bad water, and the treatment the kanakas received after being attacked by disease that had hastened their death, and had in every case accentuated the disease. No doubt these men, when they come here, are affected by the change of food and climate, and possibly by the change of water. I desire to point out that it was not for employment in sugar planting that these kanakas were originally brought here. It was the greed of the pastoralists which resulted in the kanaka being brought here originally. I saw kanakas in the Darling Downs district in the middle of the seventies. There has never been a single stick of sugar cane grown on the Darling Downs for commercial purposes ; but I saw men being brought there in batches of 20, 40 and 50. They were put into a railway carriage, and around every man's forehead was a piece of calico on which was printed the name of his destination - in some cases Clifton, in other cases Felton, and other places, just as if they were bales of calico. The season of the year at which they should arrive from the South Sea Islands was never chosen. They were brought to Queensland at any time, but usually they came at a cold, damp, period. I know of one case in which it was intended to place a number of these men upon the Felton station, which is familiar to honorable members as the residence of the late Mr. James Tyson. They were detained at a place called Cambooya. The drays from the station, which were to have been awaiting them, did not arrive. It was a cold night, and they had to camp under a bridge, with the result that 70 per cent, of them died. Possibly this will not be found in any of the statistics, because at that time a kanaka here or there was a matter of very small account - and I do not suppose that under the regulations which then existed there was any need to report their deaths. Those deaths were caused by the difference in the climate, and the difference in the food and water. The same influences produce the extraordinary mortality which exists amongst the kanakas at the present time. It is frequently asserted that the kanaka is taking no part in our social or civic life ; but as a matter of fact he is taking such a part. He is induced to do so by other people, to whom his support is valuable. I know as a positive fact that in North Queensland, kanakas are to be found who are Divisional Board voters. They are paying their rates and they have a vote which they exercise at the Divisional Board elections.

An Honorable Member. - Are they freeholders i

Mr BAMFORD

- They are lease-holders; there is no necessity for them to be freeholders. If some one else pays the tax in the kanaka's name the latter gets the vote.

Mr Crouch

- Are they allowed to hold land themselves!

Mr BAMFORD

- Oh, yes.

Sir William McMillan

- Could a kanaka have these rights without being naturalized 1

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Mr BAMFORD

- The kanaka has not a vote for the Legislative Assembly, but he has a vote for the Divisional Board, which he exercises. The honorable member for Melbourne read an extract last night from the Queensland Hansard, in which Mr. Philp is reported to have said that white men would not work for a reasonable wage. As, however, that matter has been very effectively dealt with by the honorable member for Maranoa, the honorable member for Parramatta, and the honorable member for Robertson, I shall not occupy further time in discussing it. I merely wish to say that we cannot expect men to undertake the toil and drudgery so vividly depicted by the honorable member for Maranoa and others for the low rate of wage that is offered. I know myself of one mill where the men work ten hours a day for 6d. an hour, out of which they have to pay for their own board. They receive no rations whatever. Wages may be raised by the duties which I hope to see imposed under the Federal Tariff, and I trust that not only the farmer, but the man who works for him will receive a fair share of the benefit. If the Commonwealth is going to tax itself for the purpose of providing higher returns for the farmer, the cane-grower, and the mill-owner, I hope that the men who do the hardest work in the fields and other places, will participate in the advantage. There is just one other item to which I should like to refer. It has been said by some honorable members that an extension of the time during which planters shall be able to employ kanaka labour should be granted, because Queensland has recently suffered from drought and ticks. That argument seems to me like a man objecting to be hung on the ground that he has a sore throat. If such an argument were to be regarded as effective, it might be used at any time and for any purpose. I have had the honour of laying before the Prime Minister a telegram from various local authorities in Queensland in reference to this matter. Concerning that telegram, I wish to say that these local authorities have no mandate from the people to take any such action. During the municipal elections, the question of the employment of kanaka labour was never raised. I want to state emphatically that the whole of this agitation has emanated from one man, who is actuated by the most sordid motives. That gentleman is a member of the Townsville Municipal Council. He had some land on the Herbert River, near which a central mill was to be built. The Queensland Government refused to grant the loan which they had previously promised for the erection of that mill. The individual in question was so disappointed at not being able to sell for £5 or £6 an acre the land which he had taken up, probably at 5s. or 6s. an acre, that he started the present agitation. That man has never grown one single stick of cane. Several local bodies, I am aware, have indorsed his action, but it is not a very difficult matter for a man to secure that sort of support. I repeat that the whole of this agitation from the local bodies of North Queensland has really emanated from that one individual, who is actuated by the most selfish motives. I indorse the statement of the honorable member for Maranoa that there was no hesitation whatever during the federal elections on the part of the majority of the candidates who were returned by the State of Queensland.

There were no side issues in that contest at all. The one plain question put before the people was whether Australia was to be black or white, and the electors gave a most emphatic vote for a white Australia. That vote has been indorsed in several elections which have occurred in connexion with the Queensland Parliament, and also in the election for the Darling Downs vacancy, in which Mr. Groom secured nearly a two to one majority over his opponent, who is a most influential man, a practised politician and speaker, and is generally respected.

Mr Fisher

- And he had the State Government behind him.

Mr BAMFORD

- I wish also to say that federation was accomplished by the democratic vote of North Queensland. In and around Brisbane the vote cast was against federation. The reason why federation was carried there is that the workers of North Queensland, who are most affected by the employment of kanaka labour, had been for years endeavouring to reduce the evils connected with that traffic. They had only partially succeeded. Certainly they had secured legislation of a somewhat more drastic character than had been upon the statute book of that State. But they could not get the absolute prohibition of this immigration, which is what they desired. Accordingly, they said, "If we stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of the southern States, there is no doubt that prohibition will come sooner or later, and in all probability

sooner." It was for that reason alone that they stood in as federationists. Possibly, they may have been actuated to some extent by sentiment, but certainly that was their dominant idea. They believed that they would get allies in the southern States to assist them in accomplishing their object.

Mr Higgins

- So they will.

Mr BAMFORD

- I am pleased to have the opportunity of indorsing that sentiment. I believe that it will be indorsed in this House, with not more than three or four dissentients. I intend to support the Bill as it stands.

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Mr G B EDWARDS

- Honorable members have heard this afternoon three characteristic speeches from Queensland representatives. In those speeches we have a complete and final answer to the contentions of Mr. Philp and other Queensland statesmen who are raising their voices against the probable action of the Federal Government. The speeches of the honorable members referred to I consider an epitome of Queensland opinion upon this question. There are two to one in favour of the action contemplated under this Bill. We have had - notably in the speech of the honorable member for Herbert-a very full account of all the details of this traffic, which - if this House had not been previously informed - must have added materially to our information. The address of the honorable member for Maranoa was an insight into the feeling of a great body of people upon this question. The speech of the honorable member for Oxley was very characteristic as representing those who are opposed to this legislation. The honorable member, I believe, put the case of those who are opposed to the legislation contemplated in the best possible way that it could be put. He read copious extracts to show the magnitude of this industry, the large amount of money which has been invested in it, and corroborating figures, which go to prove that it is of colossal proportions, and that it behoves us to be very careful how we deal with it. - that we must approach it with ample consideration, and with every desire to give more time lest we ruin the industry. That has been the way in which the opponents of this desirable reform have faced the question in the past. ' They have always held forth figures and statistics gathered by the class who are interested in retaining the trade. If the arguments we have heard in this Chamber, and the arguments we have read elsewhere, are all that can be used, they are sufficient to crush any figures which can be shown. The honorable member for Oxley says that this House is not well informed on the subject, and ought to pause before taking action and interfering with such an important industry as the sugar industry of Queensland. But there are few subjects of such great magnitude on which this House and the Commonwealth have been so fully informed. It is a subject which I can recollect as being under controversy for close on forty years. It originated in disputes between those carrying on missions in the South Sea Islands and the politicians in Queensland, and the subject is one in connexion with which many political reputations were made and lost.

The question has been studied by English writers, by colonial statesmen, and other thinkers, and the facts on both sides have been put before us by the press, while parliamentary letter-boxes have been filled with literature on the subject. I do not think any Royal commission or any select committee would be better able to deal with the question than is the House at the present time. We know that this traffic has a dark and disgraceful past, and that it is in a most unsatisfactory state at the present time. In the future there is inevitable danger, which will grow larger day by day, both to the unfortunate coloured classes who are employed, and to the European employers - a danger which will grow to such proportions that we had better now devise means of stopping the traffic and preventing the evil which menaces us. The honorable member for Oxley has made out no case at all why Parliament should stay its hand. The federation, on which we have now entered, was brought about mainly with the object of dealing with such questions as these. Queensland herself has already, over and over again, attempted to deal with this question, but she has always been hoodwinked and bamboozled over the matter of delay - she has always been asked to wait a bit, and give a little more time. Legislation has been passed to stop this traffic at some future date, but before that date has arrived, under the influence of certain wire-pullers and of class interests, the operation of that legislation has been stayed. Further batches of kanakas have been allowed to be introduced, and the trade has gone on from time to time, until the people of Queensland have looked forward to this federation to enable them to put an end to it. It was certainly one of the gravest questions

referred to in the Commonwealth at the recent election. I noticed that throughout the whole of the Commonwealth this question of a "white Australia " was most manifest - the question whether the kanaka should be kept out of Queensland in pursuance of such a policy. I noticed that in Queensland, in particular, this question, like Aaron's serpent, swallowed up all the rest. It was the main question on which the appeal was made in that State, and Queensland gave an emphatic and noble verdict, and returned, as has been pointed out, four senators out of six in favour of a " white Australia."

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Mr McDonald

- The whole six.

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Mr G B EDWARDS

- The whole six were in favour of abolishing this traffic ; and to the House of Representatives, seven members out of nine were returned similarly pledged. It is now useless for Mr. Philp or any one else to raise his voice against such a definite expression of opinion as we have already had from the people of Queensland. The people of the Commonwealth are one in a determination to abolish this black labour. The people of Queensland, who are more intimately interested in the question of Pacific Island labourers, are almost unanimous in their" desire to get rid of such labour. No argument has been advanced for staying our hands in the legislation which we are now considering. I do not think we can gain anything, while on the other hand we have much to fear, by delay. Looking back on the history of the question, we see that every time the opponents of the reform have proved strong enough to stay it for a still further period. The Bill is one which I think meets with the general approval of the House. It is a short and simple Bill, and effects its purpose in an admirable way. If it had been introduced before the Immigration Restriction Bill, I believe that the character of the latter measure would have been very much altered. This Bill aims simply and directly at the end we all have in view. No doubt it will accomplish that end perfectly, and to that extent it is one of the best measures that the present Government have introduced. The Prime Minister introduced the measure in a statesmanlike speech, which was clear and dignified ; and he justified the measure in every particular. He did not take the ground that the labour must be stopped because of certain political reasons, but he mentioned broad grounds. He showed the provisions he proposed in order that no injustice should be done to those who, under the State Acts, had been induced to engage in the industry. Although a free-trader, and one personally interested in cheap sugar, I would sink to some extent my political principles and my private prospects and make some concession of a fiscal nature if that would assist to pass a measure like this, doing justice to all concerned. I do not mean to say that I am totally in favour of the proposals of the Ministry in this direction, which are to accompany the Bill, and which the Prime

Minister invited us to consider with it. These proposals are not fully before us, and I do not know that I should fully support them in the form in which they are put forward ; but I am prepared to make a great deal of sacrifice to ensure the passage of a measure like this, which will end a dark and disgraceful page in our national history. As I said before, if this Bill had come first, as an illustration of how to deal with a difficulty of this sort in a direct way, we might have had another result in the Immigration Restriction Bill. But' Ministers, for some good reason known to themselves, introduced the latter measure first. That Bill has now received our consideration, and all we have to do - I think we are practically unanimous, and ought not to waste too much time in discussion - is to set to work to get this Bill through as rapidly as possible. This is not a labour question, and I object to what the honorable member for Melbourne said last night, when addressing the labour party. He said this was a piece of legislation brought in as a sop to the party, who sit in the Opposition corner. I say that it is no such thing. This is a broader question than that. There are people who, like myself, have a great deal of sympathy with the objects of the labour party. But outside of those people, there are many people of eminence in the community - educated and professional people - who have not one atom of sympathy with the political aspirations of the labour party, but who are quite at one with them on this question. It is something more than a labour question - it is a national question involving the preservation of the purity of our race. It is rather a mean piece of criticism to try to stay this legislation by stamping it as proceeding from only one section of the community. The Bill has, I believe, the approval of the vast majority of all classes, and of the masses also. Many solutions of this question have been put forward. Before this Parliament met IT know there were advocates of drawing

a line across the continent, dividing off tropical Australia, and keeping black labour north of that line. That is the sort of line, which was known as the Mason-Dixon line in the United States, north of which a man could not keep slaves. It was proposed that we should reverse that process, and permit black labour north of the proposed line. It is a curious coincidence that in that respect, as in many others, comparing small things with great, this traffic in kanakas from the South Sea Islands has very much in it to remind us of the American slavery question. In a minor degree it is of the same character and nature, and I was still more convinced of that when I heard the honorable member for Herbert speaking to-night. Seeing that, and knowing as we do the immense difficulties that the people of the United States have had in consequence of their original sin, it is one of the strongest arguments why we should pass this legislation, and prevent the trouble which undoubtedly will come in the future if we encourage the bringing of a black, race or black races into the community. A gentleman like the honorable and learned member for Parkes thinks there is no possible danger or trouble. He and his, he feels sure, will not mix with the black population. His blood may not be contaminated ; but I contend that the contamination will proceed, from the lowest strata of society and filter up until it comes to the highest, permeating the whole nation. That is what we have to fear. I do not fear that my people or my friends will mix with the inferior races, but I do fear that my descendants, in the future days of the Commonwealth, may be largely contaminated with them if they are allowed, to enter now. Although I hold that all men are equal before God, and equal to one another in respect of certain civil rights, there is a distinction between one race and another, and it is a good thing to let each race develop on the lines of its own civilization, in its own way. It is better for us to pursue 'Our civilization in the direction of Anglo-Saxon development, and not to mix with any other race which, even if superior to us, will give us bad results. The honorable member for Herbert, speaking to-night, said that already kanakas had exercised a civil right by voting in road boards elections and municipal elections in Queensland. As a democratic community, with the ideas that are dominant in our political development, we cannot look forward to having a class amongst us to whom we must refuse the franchise. We should not have any class amongst us to whom we have to deny that privilege ; and if we are to allow these people here we shall ultimately have to give them the franchise. That is one point we ought to consider very seriously before we decide the question. The effect on the kanaka himself is also one of the factors. These people in their own islands are most interesting, and I have no doubt that if they were left alone under the civilizing influences that have already reached them, or are trickling in slowly to them, they might ultimately develop a higher civilization, notwithstanding the vices of the whites. But I am certain that to bring them into Australia, and subject them to all the contamination they would meet here, would do no good to the kanakas themselves. The facts and statistics recorded in the history of this trade show us that in very many instances the kanakas have been treated scandalously and as a servile class. They come here and die like flies in summer. Their death rate amounted at one time to 120 per 1,000, and there is an average death rate of 30 per 1,000. That cannot come about unless there is some scandalous method of treatment, in their feeding, housing, or otherwise. It can result only from a Legree style of dealing with them, and of civilizing them off the face of the earth. To the kanaka himself it is a bad thing. It is of no use to bring him into contact with our civilization before he is ready for it. At present he absorbs only what might be called the worst elements of our civilization ; the best are incomprehensible to him ; and he goes back tainted rather than improved by his contact with us. Therefore, I say that to the kanaka himself it is better that the "trade should cease. But to the white races inhabiting those parts of the continent where this traffic exists, it is equally an evil. Every nation having in its midst a servile- or lower class, has ever existed without becoming degraded by its contact with that class. It is well known that in the southern States of America, the lower classes - the working men, the proletariats - did not exist. When a white man ceased to belong to the slave-owning class, he became a rascal and a rogue, while the members of that class acquired the highest vices of civilization, by reason of the full control they had of their slaves. To introduce a lower standard of living and morals amongst us is to lower the tone of our society, and will react upon us, the masters of these unfortunate blacks. The statistics which have been placed before us to-day show, that the female kanakas who are imported do not number 10 per cent. of the whole importation. One does not want to go into this subject in detail, but the effects of such a disproportion between the sexes is well known, and must be disastrous both to the kanaka and to the European who brings him here and uses his labour. If the Queensland Government had been humane and just in this matter, they would, when, legislating for the feeding and housing and

returning of the kanakas, have required that a certain proportion of females should be brought with the males. I look upon Queensland as one of the most magnificent States in the Commonwealth. We have been accustomed in the past to regard New South Wales and "Victoria as the great States of the Federation, but I do not think that it is improbable that Queensland will ultimately become the greatest State in the union. The resources of that State are immense, and I do not think we can overrate its possibilities. . When it is argued that the sugar industry is vital to Queensland, I am prepared to admit that it is a great industry, and as a commercial man I should never be in a hurry to do anything to cripple or break down such an industry ; but I have good reasons for holding that the legislation which we are now considering will have little or no effect upon this industry, while it will give a great stimulus to many other industries which Queensland is fitted for, and which will help her on in the path of progress which, I believe, she is destined to follow. I am willing to admit that the importance of the sugar industry cannot well be magnified, but I do not think its preservation is so much a question of the employment of black labour. To the planter, the only point in the controversy is that black labour is cheap. I do not think, however, that the industry depends so much upon the continuance of this cheap labour as upon other questions of method and means, and economic legislation, which will procure a market for its produce and increase its price. As I interjected when the Prime Minister was speaking, it is largely a question of manure, mechanism, and a market. We have heard during the discussion, and I have read in the literature on the subject which has been disseminated so freely, that there are certain operations connected with the harvesting of the cane that can be performed only by tedious hand labour, and that in a hot climate this labour can be effectively performed only by black men, I have never believed that there is anything which a black man can do which a white- man cannot do, and I was therefore glad to hear the honorable members for Herbert and Maranoa say that there are white men who are performing the severest kind of manual labour in Northern Queensland. That statement has been made, too, by Sir Samuel Griffiths in the Queensland Parliament. I do not admit that there is any work required to be performed in Queensland which cannot be done by white men. We can get white men to do this work if we pay them the wages which white men would naturally demand under the circumstances. Men who have been in Northern Queensland doing this work have gone further north, to the hotter and more dangerous climate of New Guinea, in search of gold. They have gone, too, to the Far East, where the climate and surroundings are in every respect worse. But if the work cannot be made fairly remunerative to white men, we may be certain that white men will not do it. I pin my faith more to the intellect than to the muscle of the white worker. If the white man has to solve the difficulty of planting, trashing and cutting the cane with white labour, his intellect will eventually enable him to invent machinery which will do the work better than he could do it by his unaided physical strength. I believe that if slavery had continued . in America up to the present day we should not have obtained from that country the wonderful mechanical inventions which she has given to the world. It is only when the necessity arises, and men are forced to face difficulties, that their inventive faculties are brought into use, and machines are made to do their work for them. When we get rid of the kanaka we shall find intelligence at work to invent machines to trash and to cut the cane, and eventually machines will be invented which will do the work more speedily and better than it is now done by black labour. I know of many operations in factories which, it has been said, it would not pay to carry on ; but inventive geniuses have set to work and given us machines which have thoroughly solved those problems. I heard recently from one of my partners, that in Canada, at one of the canning factories, they found the fish coming in so rapidly that they could not make and fill the cans fast enough. The trouble was put before a cute Yankee, however, and within four or five weeks he had invented a machine which would make the tins and close them up as fast as they could put the fish into them. It has been said that, if you take away the kanaka, the Queensland farmers will plant no more cane, that her mills will have no more cane to crush, and that the Colonial Sugar Company will have no more sugar to refine. But neither Dr. Maxwell nor any other authority on this question has half so good a knowledge of it as the investors in the Colonial Sugar Company. Those who have put their money into that concern know more about the effects of doing away with the kanaka than Dr. Maxwell or any member of any Royal commission knows. They have studied the circumstances, and, having invested their money, they must get a return for it. The Colonial Sugar Company is the centre to which all the rills and streams of the sugar industry flow. It is indeed the embodiment of the sugar industry of Australia. When the first movement towards federation was made, the doom of the kanaka was sounded. The abolition of kanaka



labour was one of the first questions discussed in connexion with federation, and one of the chief reasons urged for federating. To my mind, the active campaign for the securing of federation commenced with the Parkes' convention in 1891, when the Colonial Sugar Company's stock, £-20 paid up, and returning a dividend of .10 per cent., stood at £25 10s. On the 29th January, 1895, the Premiers' conference was held at Hobart. This was another move towards federation, and probably the investors in sugar company's shares had begun to be a little doubtful as to what would be the ultimate condition of affairs, and the price of the shares shrunk to £24 10s. Then many of us came to the conclusion that federation would never be consummated so long as it was left exclusively to the politicians, and the Bathurst Popular convention was held on the 26th November of the following year. The effect of the holding of that convention was to show that a great many people, who took no interest in politics generally, took an interest in federation, and were determined, despite the politicians, to bring about its consummation. Nevertheless, after the holding of the convention, the Colonial Sugar Company's shares rose to £26 10s. Then, after the meeting of the elected convention at Adelaide, on the 22nd March, 1897, they rose to £28 10s., notwithstanding the fact that federation, and the abolition of the kanaka, were getting nearer and nearer. After the meeting of that convention at Sydney, on the 2nd September, 1897, they rose to £29 10s; but after the meeting of the convention at Melbourne they fell to £28 15s. The next step was the referendum, which was taken on the 3rd and 4th June, 1898, when the Bill was rejected because of the statutory limitation imposed by the New South Wales Act. On the 1st June, 1898, a few days before the referendum, the sugar company's shares stood at £30, and on 8th June, a week later, they still stood at the same amount. The next referendum, when the Bill was accepted, took place on the 20th June, 1899. On the 16th of that month, four days before, the sugar company's shares stood at £38, and on the 24th at 37 10s. When the Royal assent was given to the Constitution Bill, on the 9th July, 1900, these shares stood at £39 15s. Upon the inauguration of the Commonwealth, on the 1st January of this year, they were at £40, and on the 1st of the present month their price was £40 10s. Seeing that the shares of this great institution, in which is centralized the whole of the sugar industry of Australia, have been steadily rising ever since an advance was made towards the realization of federation, and the consequent abolition of the kanaka, it is evidently the opinion of investors that there is no reason to think that the sugar industry is about to suffer. On the other hand, there can be no democracy, no majority rule, if we further postpone the oft-repeated determination to abolish the kanaka once and for all.

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Mr KNOX

- I have only a few words to say on this important subject. When we had a measure before us recently framed with the object of keeping out coloured aliens, I indicated that I considered that kanakas were a manageable quantity, presenting infinitely less difficulty than did the Chinese, Japanese, or any other of the numerous coloured people who are represented among us. I am still of that opinion, although I have listened closely to the various speeches which have been delivered by honorable members, some of whom have expressed their views very justly and very strongly. The Prime Minister himself dealt with the subject exhaustively and in a very convincing way. That is to say, he showed that Queensland, prior to joining the federation, had had clearly before her the possibility of legislation being passed by this Parliament to keep out the kanakas. That being so, it could not be urged that people in that State who are dependent upon the kanaka labour had not the most distinct warning that legislation of this character was likely to be brought into force at an early date. I have declared distinctly for a white Australia, and I have left no room for doubt as to my position on that question; but I have also made it clear that I do not wish to see white slaves in Australia - or black slaves either. Further, I have distinctly stated that the absorption into our race of any alien blood should be resisted with all the powers of the Commonwealth. While I stated that, however, I said I believed that there were interests in the north of the continent which had been created and supported by black labour which deserved proper consideration. If the white man can do the work to be done in the tropics without injury to his constitution and to the race, it should not be given to outsiders; but I hold the view that I have previously expressed that the white man cannot, in those tropical regions, work without detriment to himself. It is all very well for my esteemed friend, the honorable member for Maranoa, to put himself forward as typical of the men who have worked in the tropical regions of Northern Queensland. He is a man of exceptional strength, and I believe that men of his type are raised and supported in the inland areas of Northern Queensland, which have a climate

entirely different from that of the coastline, where the kanaka has to work in the cane-fields. The white man, in his effort to do this class of work, which is so debilitating and which so undermines the constitution, is doing great and permanent injury to the race that we all wish to maintain in its full strength and vigour. I have before referred to the fact that evidence could be produced, upon medical authority, to show that the children of people living in these tropical regions become an millie, and that the third generation have within themselves no generating powers ; and our own knowledge of what takes place in tropical regions gives support to that view.

Mr Fisher

- Is the honorable member speaking of India 1

Mr KNOX

- Portions of India.

Mr Fisher

- They bear no comparison at all to Queensland.

Mr KNOX

- I am quite prepared to admit that tropical regions vary in different countries, but I ' would ask my honorable friends to allow me to commend to their notice a work which is called TheControof the Tropics, and is written by Benjamin Kidd, the author of a work in which I am sure my honorable friends of the . labour party will admit they are specially interested, namely, " Social Evolution."

Mr Fowler

- Those theories are now largely discredited.

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Mr KNOX

- I am glad to hear that the honorable member is acquainted with the theories I have mentioned. .This book, from which I propose to quote, was published in 1S98, and the author endeavours to show that the black races were originally generated in the tropical areas where living was easiest, whereas our British races are the product of men who, by evolution, brought about by the harder work they had to do in the temperate and colder regions, became stronger and stronger, and gradually established a hardier, more robust and vigorous constitution. This work very clearly shows that those who support the position that white men can go into the tropical regions, and do the work that black men have hitherto done, are acting in a manner calculated to result in injury to their race, which we desire to maintain in its fullest vitality and strength. This writer says -

In the first place the attempt to acclimatise the white man in the tropics must be recognised to be a blunder of the first magnitude. All experiments based upon the idea are mere idle and empty enterprises fore doomed to failure.

After a long and logical explanation, the author goes on to say -

AVe come, therefore, to a clearly defined position. . If we have to meet the fact that, by force of circumstances, the tropics must be developed -

Of course, I am aware that there are honorable members - notably one honorable and learned member - who say that if our tropical areas cannot be developed by white men, they should not be developed at all until we can devise machinery which will enable us to do it. I have no answer to make to honorable members who take up that position. To resume the quotation, Mr. Kidd says - and if the evidence is equally emphatic that such a development can only take place under the influence of the white man - we are confronted with a larger issue than any mere question of commercial policy or of national selfishness. The tropics, in such circumstances, can only be governed as a trust for civilization, and with a full sense of the responsibility which such a trust involves. The first principle of success in undertaking such a duty seems, to the writer, to be a clear recognition of the cardinal fact that, in the tropics, the white man lives and works only as a diver lives and works under water. Alike in a moral, in an ethical, and in a political sense, the atmosphere he breathes must be that of another region, that which produced him, and to which he belongs. Neither physically, morally, nor politically can he be acclimatized in the tropics. The whole book deals exhaustively with this question.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Is that Mr. Kidd's opinion which the honorable member is reading?

Mr KNOX

- Yes ; I would not venture to express my own opinion against that of a man who has made a lifelong study of this question.

Mr Mauger

- How does the honorable member account for the fact that the white people are in such a vast majority in the north at the present time ?

Mr KNOX

- I venture to think that the white man with his daring and determination will face alike the greatest heat and the most extreme cold. I believe that he is able to do the work which is at present being performed by the kanakas in the north of Queensland, but I hold that by doing so his issue will be impaired. It is thus to the disadvantage of our race that he should work there.

Mr Mauger

- Surely that is an argument that we should not go there at all.

Mr KNOX

- I have other authorities with which I do not care to trouble the House. I could quote the opinions of men who have made a careful and lifelong study of this subject, and who desire to view it from a broad standpoint, and not from the stand-point of the influence of a few kanakas upon whom the most rigid restrictions have already been imposed.

Mr Isaacs

- Are we to surrender for ever to the black man the management of that portion of Australia?

Mr KNOX

- I am not suggesting that. We must always keep that portion of Australia under our own control.

Mr Page

- What labour is employed at the Chillagoe mines?

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Mr KNOX

- The strong brawny British workman is employed there, and I believe that he is not materially disadvantaged by the class of work in which he is engaged, although I am sorry to think that his children may be disadvantaged. At the same time, I would point out that most of the work is done on land which is elevated, and every precaution is taken to guard the workmen from exposure. Where they are employed in the open every effort is made to protect them from the heat of the sun. I recognise that this country, whether for good or for ill, has decisively and distinctly declared in favour of a white Australia. That is the verdict of the last election, and anyone who would attempt to argue anything to the contrary would not be just to himself. But I desire to point out that we introduce an element of danger to our race if we allow white men to work in opposition to the laws of nature, and to the conditions under which they have been brought to their present standard of muscular development. I am satisfied that there is no honorable member of this House who desires to do the State of Queensland any injury. We have before us the report of the Queensland Commission which investigated this matter, and which was presided over by our late esteemed friend, Mr. W. H. Groom. The only other authentic information available is that which came from Dr. Maxwell the other day. It is true that we also have a lot of newspaper statements and the testimony of the honorable member for Maranoa, who speaks from the bottom of his heart upon this subject. His testimony is of the most valuable character. But we want testimony which comes from a body which is properly constituted to obtain evidence, and to inquire into this subject, in order that additional information may be laid before this House. The honorable member for Oxley suggests that the matter should be remitted to a Royal commission. I am aware that Royal commissions are usually appointed-either for the purpose of defeating some motion or in order to secure delay. If any commission were proposed with either of those ends in view I should strongly oppose it. But I favour the honorable member's proposal in fairness to the State of Queensland, and in order to avoid heart burnings there. I favour it in order to demonstrate that the Commonwealth has no desire to trample upon vested interests, but is anxious to do justice to the sugar industry of Queensland. I therefore support the suggestion of the honorable member upon the condition that the commission is required under the terms of its appointment to submit its report by 1st June of next year, in order that upon a specific date- definite information may be forthcoming. I believe that all interests in Queensland would be met by the recommendations which such a commission would make. I hope, therefore, that the House will be prepared to give reasonable

consideration to the proposal. I rose merely to emphasize the fear which I entertained that the cry for a white Australia, if carried too far, may permanently injure our own people in a way in which we do not properly appreciate at the present time.

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Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I am sure that this House will be sufficiently generous to recognise the straightforward attitude of the honorable member who has just spoken. In a question where there is an overwhelming majority upon one side, I am sure that, as a deliberative assembly, we should welcome all criticism of a clear and straightforward character. In order that my subsequent remarks, which will be very brief, may not be misunderstood, I desire to say that I regard this Bill, to a very great extent, as the complement of the Immigration Restriction Bill. We are indebted to many people in Queensland for a perfect mass of literature which has been placed in our hands. We are also indebted to the Prime Minister for his very able and historical speech upon this question. He traversed all the ground from the introduction of the kanaka into Queensland up to the present time. I believe, with the honorable member for Kooyong, that it might have been better if an unprejudiced and independent inquiry had taken place, because, although the result might have been exactly the same, it would have been a generous attitude on the part of the great democracies of the south, in dealing with a question which affects one industry in one State of the group. I was in hearty sympathy with the Immigration Restriction Bill, because I believe that of all kinds of coloured immigration, unrestricted, irregular immigration is the most vital danger to the white interests of Australia. But I recognise, as far as this Bill is concerned, that it must be considered under some what different circumstances as compared with the Immigration Restriction Bill. The Government, by making it a separate measure, have recognised that position. I am willing to admit at once, to avoid any misunderstanding, that I believe, if a plebiscite were taken in the State of Queensland, the people, by an overwhelming majority, would declare against kanaka labour. Running through the whole of this legislation, both that which we have closed and that which we are considering to-night, there is one principle. I do not think that the most rabid member in the House, if I may use the term, will say that we, in the cradle of this Constitution - in the cradle of our Commonwealth life - can know all the future with regard to the destiny of that great part of the continent. There is running through the whole of this legislation the principle that, whether right or wrong, we must first get rid of all this alien labour throughout the length and breadth of Australia, so that in the future those who follow us, if not ourselves, will have what we might call a clean political slate, without any vested interests or complications of the moment to in any way throw a side light on the question - in other words, that when the accomplishment of our intention is complete Australia will be entirely white, and that if there is to be any scheme in the future - any regulation of this great tropical part of Australia - it must be done with absolute independence and without anything to complicate the consideration of statesmen. That I believe to be the honest desire of Australia. Further, it is now too late for a Royal commission. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that this House intends that the Bill shall go through in some shape or other, and there is no doubt that it must include some finality with regard to this traffic. But having said so, we must deal very fairly and very generously with this interest. Honorable members will not be surprised that as a commercial man - and I do not see why the same sentiment should not apply to all men in Australia - I cannot, without a great deal of misgiving, see the possible destruction of a great industry which feeds more or less, directly and indirectly, 100,000 people on this continent. Every great industry we build up - every legitimate industry - is a proof of the enterprise of the British people in Australia. We feel that there is nobbing against this industry itself - it is only the unfortunate climatic conditions which affect the labour of white men.

Mr. Fisher - How does the honorable member reckon that 100,000 people are fed by this industry ?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- When we take the figures, and consider that £7,000,000 of direct capital have been devoted to this industry, and that 30,000 people, more or less, are directly employed in it, and when we take the whole host of concomitant industries, and include the steamship companies and everything else, it is probable that 100,000 people are directly and indirectly interested in the business.

Mr Barton

- That illustrates the danger of destroying an industry which has grown up, as this one has done, under a duty.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- It does not matter whether we say that a sixth or a seventh or an eighth of the people in Queensland are interested in the industry. I know that may be reduced by the number of people interested in it in the less tropical parts, where some people contend the white man can easily work. It does not matter how we look at the question. Here is a great industry which has employed a number of people, an industry in which capital has been invested under the law. When we have determined that we will deal with it in the most drastic manner, we, as a Commonwealth Parliament, ought to be generous to a fault in considering the interests of the people who are interested in it. There is an argument underlying this discussion which I think is scarcely fair under the circumstances. Honorable members who have studied this question historically say - and from their point of view, rightly say - that time after time it has been proposed to do away with the traffic, but that time after time some excuse has been seized in order to continue it. We must recollect this difference. We know that the vested interests in Queensland are much larger in proportion to Queensland itself than they are in proportion to the whole of the interests of Australia. We may depend upon it - and I am sure the Prime Minister will agree with me - that when once a Bill passes this Parliament with finality, it is never likely to be disturbed, except by further knowledge brought to bear on the subject. I do not think any honorable member will say for a moment that any law we pass must be an eternal law, if the wisdom and knowledge of the people, expressed through proper means of legislation, favour an alteration. The whole legislation of the century is the doing away with the legislation of the previous century. Therefore it is not quite a fair argument to say that if we do not stamp this thing out at once, there will, without doubt, be a reaction which will cause us to reverse our steps. But we have not the mere local influence of Queensland to deal with. We shall have, when this measure is passed, the verdict of the democracy of the whole of Australia. Therefore, I plead for generosity with regard to this industry, and I plead with honorable members to put away the fear that when finality is placed in the Bill the question will never be tampered with again.

Mr Higgins

- Must we not be generous to those who suffer from this intrusion?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I know all about that. Nobody is more seised than I am of all the evils connected with this business. I believe the great State of Queensland made a very noble attempt to establish this industry, and that her best men did all they could to restrict this kanaka traffic within reasonable bounds. But, as has been said here this afternoon, with such an enormous area, and with nine thousand or ten thousand people involved, no restrictive measure of Government could properly control such an industry. I am perfectly aware that the conditions under which these kanakas live are not conditions under which we like to see any human being, and that once men are contracted into a state of this kind - though I do not think it should be denominated slavery - it does create a relationship between man and man hurtful to both parties. I quite allow, following the speech of the Prime Minister, that at different periods in the consideration of this subject in the Queensland Legislature, there was an opinion expressed by most of the public men in that State that all these measures with regard to kanaka labour were purely temporary. I believe that during all these years there never was an absolute statement made, except by a very few, that kanaka labour was to continue for ever. For myself, I believe that this labour would die out ultimately. I do not believe that the system can last beyond a certain number of years, but that the same circumstances which affect the life of and destroy these island people elsewhere, will affect them to a larger extent in a traffic like this.

Mr. Fowler. - The honorable member does not advocate their extermination?

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Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I am not proposing their extermination, but we know very well that other races in the Pacific, which are brought into contact with white influences, exterminate themselves. What I want to say is, that although that may be a fact, we have to legislate on this question as we find it. We find that it is not a question tabooed by the Legislature of Queensland, but that a certain state of affairs has been legalised by the local Parliament. I am of opinion, notwithstanding this Bill, that there ought to be a period given in which there will be no alteration in the absolute status of the present moment. I do not think that, making every allowance, the Bill is fair in its details to the industry. In the very first year we begin to reduce the men who

can return by 25 per cent., and in the next year we reduce them by 50 per cent., and after that everything ceases. We may say that we give five years to the industry.

Mr Barton

- It is not correct to say that everything ceases, because there will be 9,000 or 10,000 there still.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- That may be, but the system of recruiting ceases.

Mr Barton

- Yes.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- In other words, we practically stop the system in two years. I take it for granted, though I do not pretend to know as much as honorable members for Queensland, that many have a right to go back to the islands every year.

Mr McDonald

- That is after the end of the engagement of three years.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- So that for the first two years we drastically reduce the number to whom we give a licence, and then in two years we stop the licences altogether. That state of affairs has continued for many years. Does anybody mean to say that by a little more generous treatment, so long as we keep in the Bill the principle of finality within a reasonable period, we can do any great injury either to the people of Queensland or anybody else? While I recognise the fact that a large majority of Queensland members have been returned here with a mandate from their people to do away with kanaka labour, still we must not lose sight of the fact which is shown in the following quotation from the speech by the Prime Minister on the second reading -

It is to be looked at by federated Australia, not as a question affecting only one State, but as a question which belongs to the Federation which we have succeeded in establishing, and one which cannot with justice to the continent be relegated wholly to a State.

I believe absolutely in that principle. This is not the verdict or the action of the federal members for Queensland ; this is the action of the Parliament of Australia.

Mr Page

- More power to them !

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I am pleading for fair play, and for a recognition of what I still think should be a principle of this legislation. When we consider that out of 4,000,000 people, more or less, in Australia, at least 3,500,000 are working under good climatic conditions, does any honorable member mean to tell me that when those 3,500,000 take upon themselves to do a work which may seriously affect the interests of 200,000 or 300,000- because that cannot be denied, though our action is taken as a matter of high public policy for the benefit of all - we ought not to be as generous as it is possible for men to be? I say we ought to be. It would be a disgrace to us if we were not generous. Does the honorable member for Maranoa or any other honorable member for Queensland imagine for one moment that, if a little more generosity were put into this Bill - a short extension of time given - there would be any chance of wrecking the finality of the measure. I am sure no such thought is entertained. Therefore I do say that I think there ought to be at least five years allowed, during which there should be no interference whatever with this traffic, and that then there ought to be a gradual reduction, according to the terms of the Bill, for another five years.

Mr Isaacs

- What practical advantage would that give to the planters ?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- It would at any rate show a greater amount of justice in dealing with this great industry.

Mr Henry Willis

- Have they not had ten years already in which to prepare for this change ?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- They have not had ten years ; that is where honorable members make a mistake. There has been continual agitation and legislation on this question, but it never came home to the planters as it will come home to them now under this Bill that this matter would be drastically dealt with.

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Mr Barton

- In 1885 they were granted five years : at the end of 1904 they will have had nineteen years from that time. Is that too much or too little?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I have read very carefully the comprehensive speech made on the subject by the Prime Minister, and I think it is a magnificent contribution to this debate. It is well that it is recorded in Mansard, as a resume of the whole historical and political features of this question. But that does not affect the fact that we have to deal with this industry as we find it at the time it is relegated to us.

Mr Isaacs

- What would the planters do in five years in order to soften the blow?

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- That is all very well. The honorable and learned member might apply the same reasoning to anything else. My point is simply that this is a great industry established under the law. We must recollect, in fairness to these men, that in bringing kanakas to Queensland they acted under the law.

Mr Crouch

- But they have been living under the shadow of the scaffold.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- That is a very clever epigrammatic expression by my honorable and learned friend, but I do not see anything else in it.

Mr Crouch

- It is very true.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- While I have read everything that the Prime Minister has said, while I understand entirely from his speech the trend of legislation on this subject, still we have to take up this question exactly where the States have left it. If, for the sake of example, there had been no legislation of this kind during previous years, should we have attempted to deal with it in this way ? No. We should have said that while we have determined that this alien labour shall cease, we will deal with it as generously as possible.

Mr G B EDWARDS

- Has the honorable member considered the fiscal proposals connected with this question.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- That is perfect nonsense. We are talking now of a question of climate. I quite agree with views expressed in the literature- that we have had placed before us, that probably up to a considerable point there is no reason why a white man should not do the work connected with this industry in Queensland; but I say distinctly - and it is only fair to say so in this discussion - that I have had no literature placed before me yet which proves that beyond a certain point the white man can do the work. I accept the position taken up by Australia, that we will take the chance ; that if no white man can do it, we shall not in years to come have any such industry in existence. That is the position of the democracy of Australia, and I accept it. But it is useless to debate this question before this great Parliament of the Commonwealth in any hypocritical spirit. I listened with great pleasure to the honorable member for Herbert. He said, according to his own view, that, no doubt, the white man can work in the sugarcane industry in any part of tropical Australia. I have read very carefully the literature on this subject, and I have come to the conclusion that whatever machinery or improved methods may do in the future, at the present time, and under present conditions, there is a point in Queensland, north of which the white man cannot work in certain parts of this industry. At the same time, however, that is a chance which we have to take. It may be well worth the while of Australia, in order to be absolutely free from alien labour, to take the chance of leaving unfertilized a certain portion of her territory rather than create this evil.

Mr O'Malley

- Hear, hear. She should do so, and breed the white man to do the work.

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Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- There is no necessity for me to say much more on this subject. I have not risen to resent the cry for a white Australia, or the demand that we should not do away with coloured labour of all kinds. I do believe

that there is a great and essential difference between the insidious coming in of aliens to all parts of Australia, which we have tried to suppress, under the Bill that has just passed this House, and a possible system of regulated coloured labour. But I recognise the fact that that policy is for the future; that we Australians have said that we must have a clean slate politically in this matter, and that we must deal with the question untrammelled by vested interests or complicated conditions. We must not, as the first Parliament of Australia, in the very beginning of our national life, commit ourselves absolutely, and for all time, to any question with regard to Northern Australia. The only thing we do commit ourselves to is this : that we will never allow, under any conditions, to come into Australia any alien population which we shall not have a right to deport after they have been used for a purpose. That, of course, is a very difficult question which statesmen in the future will have to decide. This industry exists in a portion of our continent enormously rich in agriculture. I hope that there may be some other kinds of agriculture which we may pursue in these great northern districts, and which the white men will be able to carry on without any alien labour. That is a matter which must be left for the future. In the meantime, on behalf of the weak, as against the strong, I do plead for a more generous consideration than this Bill gives to the sugar industry of Queensland. This evil has existed for a certain number of years, and even allowing all that the honorable member for Indi may say - that it makes no difference in the long run - still, if we can find by expressions of opinion among those men who are particularly interested in this industry that they would consider we did an act of justice if while dealing with this question we increased the limit of time under which this traffic has to disappear, I think it would be better for us as a Commonwealth Parliament, and as representing the great democracies of the South, who have, of course, no immediate interest in this question, to give them a fuller and a larger portion of justice while carrying out our final and inevitable policy.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- I had intended at an earlier stage of this debate to address myself to this vast question - vast in its importance to Queensland interests, as well as to New South Wales and Victorian residents, financiers, shippers and others. My health, however, would not permit of it. I am sorry to say that, even now, I do not feel in the humour to speak. It has been hinted to me, however, that this debate will be closed to-night - I shall not be sorry if it does - and I hope honorable members will bear with me while I endeavour, principally from memory, to summarize the subject matter as it presents itself to my constituents ; as it is approved of by them, and voiced by me as their spokesman. I promulgated the programme that for a period of ten years we should allow the kanaka labour to remain in statu quo, and that at the end of that time we should begin to reduce it at the rate of 10 per cent. ; so that in twenty years - which is a very short time in the history of a nation - it would be extinct, if it had not previously become extinct for other reasons. That was my programme, and I hope honorable members will remember that, in proposing the retention of the kanaka, I am not howling for it, as the honorable member for Maranoa accused the honorable member for Oxley and myself of doing. I wish to appear before this Parliament as one who is as strongly in favour of abolishing this labour as is any honorable member. But, as my honorable friend, the member for Wentworth, observed, we should extend justice to those engaged in the industry. We are here to endeavour to do modest justice to those who have invested their capital and inherited the capital of others invested in this industry during the past 36 years. Honorable members will please note that when I first went to Queensland, as a lad, there was not a teaspoonful of sugar grown in the country, and that I have been intimately associated with squatters, woolgrowers, timber getters-

Mr Henry Willis

- And explorers.

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Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. And explorers. I was quite a lad when Captain Mackay, who is now harbor-master at Brisbane, met me while on his exploring expedition, and I gave him bullocks with which he was able to continue his journey up North. Mackay found the stream now named after him, and called it the Pioneer River. So grateful were the people for the discovery of the fertile country through which the river flows, with its suitability for agriculture, and with its splendid rainfall, that they begged the Government to change the name of the river from the Pioneer to the Mackay, and that was done. I merely quote this incident in my early experiences to show that I could not possibly have lived in the country for practically 40 years



without observing the history of the kanaka question in its relation to sugar raising, and to the now defunct cotton industry, which at one time was much more prosperous, and gave promise of far greater results than did the growth of sugar, I live in the tropics - I do not know whether the honorable member for Maranoa was born when I began to do so. I lived in the tropics of Capricorn for twelve solid years, and Rockhampton was my headquarters. I say from that experience, that men can work in the tropics, in the canefields and out of them, and in the railway cuttings, and in the clearing away of timber and scrub as was done in connexion with the Cairn-Herberton railway line, which I am glad to say I succeeded, when representing the Government in the Legislative Council, in getting carried through the State Parliament for the purpose of opening up one of the finest territories in Australia. The climate on the coast is very hot, and white men, if they are wise, will not work there in the middle of the day, but sometimes that John Bullism which makes a man eat plum pudding and drink bottled stout or his dinner on Christmas Day will induce him to take up the spade, or go to the plough, or saddle up his horse in the middle of the day. However, if men are so foolish as to do that they will have to take the consequences. I have seen men go down during the last 40 years not by the score, but by the hundred, simply because they were foolish enough to ignore the natural conditions of life in the tropics, and to take food, and wear clothing unsuitable to the climate. What is my position here to-night as a representative in this Commonwealth Parliament? I have told the House that I informed the electors whom I have the honour to represent that I was going to retain kanaka labour if possible for ten years. Now, of what is my electorate composed? As the honorable member for Kennedy knows, it comprises five or six State electorates - Fortitude Valley, entirely a labour constituency, and returning at present to the State Legislature two labour members ; Brisbane itself, that is the metropolis, returning myself and the Honorable E. B. Forrest; Enoggera and Toowong, labour constituencies ; and Toombul. Every financier, every representative of the banks and public companies, who represent interests all over' the country, whether in mining, sugar planting, sugar milling, or dairy farming, storekeepers, or drapers, told me that I had made a mistake in proposing to do away with the kanaka so soon. I said, however, that I desired to know what was the real feeling of the most important constituency in Queensland, and whether the electors desired that the kanaka should live for ten years, or be guillotined at once. The consequence was that throughout the whole of that democratic constituency. none is more democratic in Australia, I had a majority. I had to fight a three cornered fight, and labour was staggered as the result. The other candidate wept labour killed him, while he thought it would kill me. I, however, killed both my opponents, and I have come here to preserve the kanaka as long as I possibly can, in the interests of common justice and in the interests of humanity. I have received a letter from a representative man in Queens land, who says -

There would have been no federation for us if we had known they meant to treat us like this.

Another writer says -

There is a feeling of consternation throughout the State regarding this drastic measure, which means, if passed, the extinction of the sugar industry in Queensland.

The honorable member for Maranoa said the kanaka, is the curse of Queensland, and with the honorable member it was always " curse," " curse," " curse." I tried to remember where I had heard the word "curse" before, and I found out. It occurs in a passage which applies to the Prime Minister, to the press, and to the people of a large part of Australia. It reads as follows : -

The curse of the scanty knowledge,

That fancies it is great,

And flatters fools with the notion

That they can rule the State.

The curse of scanty knowledge is what we have to face now. We are attempting to legislate upon a topic upon which there is the curse of this scanty knowledge. By all means Let us have this Royal commission that has been spoken of. The Prime Minister has lost a grand chance in not giving us a commission to inquire into this question. The matter would not be hung up. We should not accept the conclusions of Dr. Maxwell, who is comparatively a new chum. He is an expert, but an expert from another climate, and I quite agree with the honorable member for Wide Bay that there is a great deal of difference between the climate of Northern Queensland and those of other parts of the earth where sugar is grown. Dr. Maxwell has yet a great deal to learn of Queensland, and we who are practically natives of that State know that.

Mr Sawers

- He has said that ten years in the minimum for the kanaka.

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Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- I said that before he did. I have kept faith with my conscience and my experience, and with the solemn deliberations that I have had solitarily. I have gone into the country to think out this great question, in order that I might not be disturbed by anything beyond the breath of the wind passing under the spreading gum trees, and I come here and tell honorable members that I represent the concrete common sense, not only of Queensland sugar growers, but that quality of character as it exists in Victoria and in New South Wales in relation to this great industry. We have many cognate enterprises resulting from the operations of the sugar industry. We have the shipping along the coast, consisting of several splendid lines of steamers, running direct from Melbourne up to Cairns, which are mainly supported by the sugar traffic. It is true that they carry bananas in the season, and also, I am glad to say, tourists. Many people, however, would not go there at all if it were not for the kanakas. One lady told me that she would not be content unless she could see some blacks. She saw the kanakas in their homes, and gave a most excellent account of them and of their cleanliness. She said there was soap in every hut, and plenty of water, and that there was no such thing as rotten beef or rotten mutton. What nonsense it is to talk about rotten meat being given to these kanakas - rotten meat is what no employer would dare to give to a dog.

Mr McDonald

- It has often been eaten on stations.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- I have never seen it eaten on stations, and I have had a great deal of experience in connexion with the growing of both beef and mutton.

Mr McDonald

- I have seen it in towns and cities.

Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. - What nonsense it is to suggest that any one would buy rotten meat. Would not a man's appetite vanish the moment he tasted a piece of rotten meat? A telegram from Brisbane which was published in the Argus says -

A sugar contractor who arrived recently at Cairns with white labour to feed the cane carriers has relinquished, the contract. After a week's trial at 4d. per ton his men struck, saying that the work was not fit for white men, although there were nineteen whites employed for the same work which fifteen Hindoos were accomplishing. Ten of the white men were the sons of cane farmers at Bundaberg, and were used to handling cane.

Mr Fisher

- I do not believe it.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- The important point is that ten of these men had been accustomed to the same kind of work at Bundaberg. Bundaberg is just as different from the Johnson River cane-fields or from Mackay, Cairns, or the Mosman River - with which places I am familiar, having been there during the summer - as Gippsland is from Wagga Wagga in midsummer. Now comes the question of other races, and I am very sorry that I shall have to make reference to another point of policy which was adopted by the great constituency of Brisbane. They gave their imprimatur to the policy of excluding all Asiatics. They said - " We do not want any Chinese, Syrians, or Hindoos, but we are content to keep the kanaka for ten years and let him go gradually, according to the business of the plantations."

Mr Isaacs

- Why for ten years?

Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. - I shall explain that in a minute or two. What I wish to point out is that no speaker has paid the slightest attention to the immorality or social aspect of the life of the Asiatics in this country.

Mr Tudor

- We did that when discussing the Immigration Restriction Bill a fortnight ago. The honorable member was absent.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- As the Age said, I am an irregular attendant, like the right honorable and learned member for East Sydney. But I was an irregular attendant because I was ill, and at death's door. If a man is ordered by his medical adviser to absent himself from all responsibilities - both private and public - in order to preserve his health, no newspaper should cast a slur upon him by stating an untruth. But I am digressing. I believe that the Government might very well appoint a commission to report upon the kanaka question next year, and devote the whole of their time in the interim to the expulsion of the Asiatics who are already in our midst. Let them clean out Little Bourke street, Melbourne, and Lower George street, Sydney. Let them sweep away, at the same time, all those evils to which the honorable member for Maranoa so eloquently and impressively referred. The kanaka is by no means the human beast that he has been depicted. Many evils undoubtedly did exist years ago. For example, the inspectors who visited the Pacific Islands were guilty of bad conduct up to the time of the Hopeful case. But from that time onward - and I was very intimate with the circumstances of that case, because I was a member of the Cabinet at the time - we did everything in our power to eliminate all the evils which we could discover, and to punish the transgressors. We succeeded. We established a limitation of labour for the Polynesians, saw to their comfort, and insisted that they should have medical superintendence and inspectors. What is the result to-day? I am as anxious as the honorable member for Maranoa that white labour should be employed all over Australia. But we ought not to deal with the kanaka traffic to-day as though the evils which existed 25 years ago in connexion with it still exist. The conditions are altogether changed. No harm can possibly come, and good will undoubtedly result from allowing the Pacific Island labourers to be retained for a reasonable term of years. Let us maintain the status quo, and begin after a period of years to diminish their numbers by so many per cent, each year.

Mr Isaacs

- What will the planters do in the meantime?

Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. - They will shut up if this Bill passes. It is not so much the planters who are concerned as the bankers. There are men in the banks in Melbourne who are much more interested in the sugar industry of Queensland than are some of the Queenslanders themselves. I desire that the Asiatic shall be got rid of immediately. But the kanaka hurts nobody. He does not take a penny piece out of the country, whereas the Asiatics hoard their money, and take it away in gold.

Mr Henry Willis

- What does the kanaka do with his money ?

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- He spends it with the white storekeeper in the purchase of flour, sugar, tea, calico, neckties, and finery for his wives, aunts, and cousins.

Mr Ronald

- They cannot spend much money when they get such small wages.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- I guarantee that the kanakas have more money in the Savings Bank of Queensland than have all the members of this Parliament put together ! I am perfectly satisfied that one important authority is watching this debate, namely, the money market of London. I venture to say that if the Queensland loan had been postponed till this Bill had received the treatment which it is apparently about to receive, it would have made a vast difference to that State's finances. I wish to point out that a large amount of New South Wales and Victorian capital is invested in the Queensland sugar industry. An enormous amount is also invested in the shipping on our coasts, from Melbourne right round to the Gulf of Carpentaria. The maintenance of that shipping communication is dependent primarily upon the sugar product. Therefore I say that we ought not to disturb the present labour conditions for a reasonable period. At the end of that period we can see how many white men will rush in to do the work of the Polynesian labourer.

Mr Isaacs

- They will not get a chance.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- Has. it not been alleged that the white man can do the work; as cheaply as can the kanaka plus the duty? I heard every speech which the Prime Minister delivered in. Queensland, and I also made it my business to hear the leader of the Opposition. I am bound to say that the best speech, from the sugar planter's point of view, having regard to a possible remedy for kanaka labour, was delivered by the leader of the Opposition at Toowoomba. The right honorable and learned member was asked what substitute the planters were to have for black labour. He said that, as in the back blocks we had produced a type of man short or long, thick or lean, who is called the bushman, so he believed that in the years to come the white race would produce a man fitted to undertake the work of sugar-growing in any part of this continent. What is the inference? We cannot produce this type of man in five minutes or five days. The right honorable and learned member was cheered. Where was the lesson which his remark conveyed? Doubtless he meant that the vista was in the future. Perhaps we shall get in 33 years a generation of men who will be able to do the work which is now performed by the kanakas. But I ask only for the right to retain the services of the kanakas for ten years. That was the grain of comfort which led many thousands throughout the coastal region - and in the west, too - to vote for candidates who intended to support the honorable and learned member for East Sydney, who otherwise would not have done so.

Mr Reid

- I made that speech a year after federation was accomplished.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- The kanaka is as comfortable as any man of that type can desire to be.

Mr Fisher

- The honorable and learned member has omitted to mention about the William Manson business in 1894.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- In the opening up of new country the kanaka has been a blessing to Queensland and to Australia. He was not at first imported for the mere trashing and cutting of cane, to which employment he is now limited by law. At the present time he cannot drive a horse and cart or an engine, or throw a piece of timber into a furnace, without rendering his employer liable to a penalty. But he has performed good service under the management and enterprise of some of the best men who have ever lived in Australia. Most of these men are now dead. They were determined to make the sugar industry a successful one, and many of them were ruined financially in the attempt. I have in my mind five men in Melbourne who have lost tens of thousands of pounds in their endeavour to make this industry a success, plus the kanaka. The kanaka has not been injured in any way. He dresses as well as some of the mashers whom one sees about our towns. They carry silver-mounted canes, wear straw hats, have savings -bank accounts, and smoke cigars.

Mr McDonald

- And ride bicycles.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- And ride bicycles. That represents the disgrace to our civilization which we have created by raising these blacks up to this standard. The honorable member for Maranoa said a great deal as to the special influence which is alleged to have been exercised by the Premier of Queensland or the Government of that State in the Darling Downs election. I took great interest in that election, and the honorable member for Darling Downs knows very well that my sympathies were always with him. I prognosticated to his brother exactly what would take place, excepting that the honorable member obtained a much larger majority than he or his family ever expected. I am confident, from what transpired between Mr. Philp and myself, that that gentleman did not take any special action whatever to influence the result of the election.

Mr Page

- How was it that he got Ransome to withdraw if he did not influence the election?

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- Because he wanted either of the two other candidates to get in. Mr. Ransome had no show whatever. I should have liked to see Mr. Bell here.

Mr Page

- Hear, hear.

Mr MACDONALD-PATERSON

- No one would have liked to see Mr. Bell here more than the honorable member for Darling Downs - of course, for another constituency.

Mr Page

- In the place of the honorable member for Brisbane, for instance.

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Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. If this Bill goes through, and the Tariff is not altered a little to the liking of myself and my constituents, any one can have my seat. I take the opportunity of saying - and I do not say it in any sense of brag, but as a public duty - that I have never desired to do other than to help the Prime Minister. I put the Prime Minister in the balance with the leader of the Opposition, and the scale went down in favour of the Prime Minister. The political aspect of the matter was - which honorable gentleman would do best for Australia and Queensland? I am beginning to think I shall have to put them in the balance again. My friends of the labour party have twitted me to-night and on other occasions with being a " button-hole " or something - with being a king in my own country, but only a " button " here. But I would rather be a button on the Commonwealth garment than a private member in Queensland on this great occasion. I fought for federation, though I had the great misfortune to have a serious illness and to be in hospital when I should have been on the battle-field. Probably my next illness will prevent me from coming here or anywhere else ; but, be that as it may, we should not indulge in boyish observations that do no credit to the heart, and certainly do not promote good feeling. I may be guilty of an interjection now and then, but my Celtic blood is responsible for that ; and if I am thanked for my interruption as having put an honorable member straight, I get my reward. If the labour party think that they have won the approval of Queensland in their advocacy of the immediate annihilation of kanaka labour, I am prepared to resign my seat to-morrow, and to fight the battle of " labour versus kanaka," on condition that neither candidate speaks nor distributes any printed matter. I am perfectly certain that in the most democratic constituency of Queensland, the mercantile community, the working men, the respectable wage-earners, and those engaged in the shipping industries would support my candidature.

Mr Page

- Come out West, and I shall resign in the morning.

Mr McDONALD

- PATERSON. - This Bill represents a combination of labour against capital. This combination of the lawyers and labour is calculated to bring about a Commonwealth cataclysm. It is said that nearly everybody in the Ministry is a lawyer, but I have pointed out that neither the Minister for Defence nor the Minister for Home Affairs belongs to that profession. It is sometimes said that I am a lawyer myself, but I am afraid that, if I were to declare myself as such, I would never make a living in the profession. Labour and law are applying the lash to the best State of the group. New South Wales has lost 35,000,000 of sheep, and Queensland has lost 16,000,000 or 17,000,000, during the drought. All the trade of supplying the people engaged in the pastoral industry has been lost, and the railway revenue has decreased from 31/4 per cent. to 11/2 per cent. ; and now that Queensland is down, it is desired to strangle the only remaining great agricultural industry she has left. Kill the State which is the brightest of the lot - that is the sentiment. Men in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne are crying out for the introduction into the Cabinet of common-sense and commercial experience, find the diminution of the legal influence there, because the domination of law and labour is bringing a curse on one of the finest States in the group.

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Mr McDONALD

- I hope it will not go forth to Australia that Queensland is in the deplorable condition that she has been represented to be as a consequence of the recent drought. To say that so large a number as 15,000,000 or 16,000,000 of sheep have been destroyed is a very damaging statement, which I hope will not be taken seriously. When the honorable member for Brisbane comes to think over it, in his calmer moments, he will see that he has made a great error, and committed an injustice to Queensland. After the many speeches which have been made, I feel great difficulty in finding anything new to say on the Bill. I do not think I should have spoken had it not been for the fact that I think it necessary we should, as far as we are able, place the true facts of this particular industry, in all its ramifications, before the people of Australia. Like others, I think that the possibilities of Queensland are probably greater than those of any one of the

States which now form the Commonwealth. Western Australia has magnificent mineral resources ; but I think the mineral resources of Queensland are even greater. The large area of tropical and sub-tropical agricultural lands, together with her enormous pastoral lands, places Queensland in the first place on the Australian continent. Her pastoral lands are not stocked up to nearly their full capacity, and the time is not far distant when Queensland, if it has not the largest population of the group, will be one of the greatest producing States in the Commonwealth. I do not wish the House to think for a moment that I have any practical knowledge or experience of the sugar industry, but though I never worked in the industry, I claim, like other men who have taken part in public life, to have as keen an interest in it as any man in Queensland. I have had the opportunity of going through quite a number of the sugar districts from time to time. Long before I got into Parliament, I was engaged, along with others, in an agitation against the employment of kanakas in the sugar industry, and it was only natural that when I obtained a seat in the legislature, I should make keen observation of what was going on in that industry. I make this statement because I do not wish anybody to believe that I am speaking with any practical knowledge or personal experience of this business. I claim, however, that I have a very fair idea of the desires of the people of Queensland. It must be recognised that an industry in which there is £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 invested is a vast one. An industry which turns out produce worth £1,500,000 every year is one of great value to the States. But I have taken up the position that it would be far better, in the interests of Australia, that the tropical lands of Australia should revert to their virgin state than that we should continue to cultivate them with the aid of coloured aliens. I would much rather see the magnificent mineral resources, which we know exist in the northern portions of the State, go, than have a colour line drawn across the continent. I hope that a colour line will never be drawn across Australia. From time to time efforts have been made by interested parties here and in England to have such a line drawn, and we have had gentlemen occupying high and responsible positions here advocating that course. My opinion is, that if once such a line be drawn, there is no power in the southern portions of Australia which would be great enough to keep the coloured aliens to the north, of it. Many statements have been made in regard to the killing of this industry. I will deal with those statements later on. Before doing so, I must compliment the Prime Minister on the very clear and lucid way in which he laid before the House the various opinions expressed by statesmen of Queensland, relative to this industry, and on his effort to show that the employment of the kanaka was resorted to purely as a temporary expedient. The right honorable gentleman might have emphasised that fact even more strongly from the speeches that he quoted, and from what is known now in Queensland, as the famous manifesto issued by Sir Samuel Walker Griffith in 1892, when legislation for the reintroduction of the kanaka took place. Sir Samuel Walker Griffith distinctly stated in that manifesto that the return of the kanaka to Queensland would be only temporary, that he did not wish the people to believe for one moment that his opinions concerning the employment of the kanaka in the sugar industry had changed. He went on to say that the proposal was made really in order to tide over a temporary depression which had arisen at that period. That depression, however, was not due, as many would have us believe, to the stop put to the employment of kanakas in the sugar fields of Queensland. It was a world-wide depression. It did not start in Australia, but at the other end of the world, and it only reached a climax in Australia in 1893. It existed in Queensland from about 1889 until the final catastrophe attending the closing of the financial institutions in 1893. The difficulty in regard to the sugar industry prior to that was not that there were insufficient kanakas on the fields. It is well known that from 1890 to 1893 there were thousands of kanakas unemployed at

Bundaberg and at the coastal towns where large sugar operations are carried on. Therefore the statement made from time to time that the depression in the industry at that period was due to the withdrawal of kanakas is not in accordance with facts. The true cause of the trouble was that the sugar industry was largely over-capitalized ; that a number of people had taken up large areas of land ; that from time to time they had erected expensive machinery, a large portion of which had become obsolete ; and that they were paying from 8 to as high as 12 per cent., in some instances, on the money borrowed. When we take into consideration that at that time the earning power of capital throughout Queensland was only about 6 2 - which, by the way, was somewhere about 2 per cent, above its earning capacity in the other States - it must be seen that only an industry of an exceptional character could have withstood such a heavy strain. That was the real<sup>3</sup> cause of the difficulty at that juncture. The depression was used as an argument to show that it was absolutely necessary to reintroduce the kanaka. So far as the

treatment of the kanaka is concerned, I do not wish to say that in all cases he is used badly. I know of many cases in which he is ill-treated ; but I do not wish to say that, because a number of unscrupulous employers use the kanakas in that way, all engaged in the industry do the same. There is a great deal of truth, however, in what has been said about the ill-treatment of these men. We have only to look at the early history of the introduction of kanakas into Queensland to know that is so. What could be more disgraceful and better calculated to bring dishonour on any State than the incidents which took place in the early stages of their introduction into Queensland ? The commission which inquired into the matter distinctly stated that at the outset of the traffic most of these islanders were kidnapped. Even as late as 1894, a case was tried in Queensland in which a number of islanders were said to have been- kidnapped in connexion with a boat called the William Manson. It is generally believed that even at the present time, a large number of the kanakas brought to Queensland are kidnapped. It is said by many of those who have taken an interest in this matter - and especially by missionaries who have lived on the island - that in spite of strict regulations many of the kanakas brought to Queensland are practically kidnapped. That in itself is another reason why we should put a stop to this traffic. It may well be asked why we bring these men to Australia. Is it not, as some would have us believe, purely from philanthropic motives that they are introduced? In my opinion it is not.

Mr O'Malley

- It is done in order to Christianize them.

Mr McDONALD

- The kanaka is brought here neither to be Christianized nor to be benefited in any other way. He is brought here purely for the benefit of those who employ him, because economically he is cheaper than the white man, and a greater profit can be made out of him. Another matter which we have to take into consideration is the fact that out of some 50,000 or 60,000 of these unfortunate people who have been brought to Queensland, some 10,000 or 12,000 have died. Questions have been raised as to where those who died during the early stages of the movement were buried. Many have said that their bodies were used to manure the cane fields of Queensland. I am quoting merely the statements of others. I am not speaking from personal knowledge. I do not say that this has been done in all cases, but it is said that in a large number of instances the bodies were used for the purpose I have indicated. The planters themselves are responsible by their boasts for a great many reports concerning the treatment of kanakas. Reference has been made to the death-rate. I will say no more on that point than that it is a well-known fact that the new-chum kanaka - who has never been in Queensland before - dies off at a rate that is abnormally high. It has been said to-night that the death-rate has gone up as high as 150 per 1,000; but in the early history of the traffic it reached 180 per 1,000. That the kanaka should be allowed to come here under such circumstances is an act of cruelty on the part of a civilized community. There are many matters that I should like to refer to in relation to the moral aspect of this question. The honorable member for Maranoa this afternoon drew a very graphic and vivid picture of the deplorable condition of these people in certain parts of Queensland. He also gave us pathetic details of the statement made by the Hon. Charles Powers, at one time a Minister of the Crown in Queensland, concerning the moral aspect of the kanaka question. There are just one or two extracts upon this aspect of the question which I should like to read. I propose to read them, not for the sake of having them published, but because I think that on an occasion like this it is absolutely necessary that we should have all the facts before us. Considering the agitation that is going on in Queensland at the present time, and the efforts that are being made by certain interested parties to smother up the real facts, I think it is desirable that the country, and those who have to legislate upon this matter, should possess the fullest knowledge on this subject. In such circumstances, I am not going to make any apology for taking up the time of the House in reading these extracts.

Mr O'Malley

- There is no provision in our Constitution for either black or white slavery.

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Mr McDONALD

- I have a pamphlet here, written by the Rev. William Gray, who was stationed as a missionary on one of the islands from which a large number of kanakas came to Queensland. I certainly think he should be some authority on this question. He has not only given us the result of his experiences on the islands, but

the result of his investigations in Queensland. When the opportunity offered, he came to Queensland, and made the fullest investigation of the unfortunate condition of these men. Before I quote from his pamphlet, I would remind the House that the kanakas are in the prime of life when brought here. Their ages range from 16 to 30 years, and to my mind it is one of the worst features of the whole traffic that a large number of these men in the very prime of life are imported, but that few of the women of their race are brought with them. It is only natural to suppose that the kanaka will fall into the various vices into which he may be led by the white races more readily than if he were in his island home. The Rev. Mr. Gray says - The immorality takes place in the Chinese dens, where immoral white women are provided by the Chinese shopkeepers. Some features of this part of the kanaka's life abroad are more revolting than anything of island life that has come to my knowledge. Further, I would like to say that the kanaka is not a citizen of the class we should particularly care to have amongst us. "We have been told to-night that the kanaka is a nice, docile, amenable creature, who will not interfere with anybody. Yesterday we had a telegram from Mackay published in one of the newspapers, contradicting many of the statements made concerning the kanaka, and also stating that he was a very desirable citizen. On looking at the Brisbane Courier, a newspaper which is now advocating the retention of the kanaka, I find the following headings : - " Riot at Rockhampton - Kanakas and Salvation Army - Police and others wounded - 150 Kanakas engaged - Children violently assaulted I am not going to read the details of this matter, because I do not think it is necessary. That was published in 1895. The Observer, the evening newspaper published from the Courier office, made some very strong comments upon the occurrence, and urged that drastic measures should be taken to prevent the kanakas from going about in the way they were then allowed to do. The Daily Telegraph, -another influential Brisbane newspaper, referred to the matter in very strong language, and, above all, the municipality of Mackay passed certain resolutions, which, I think, it is desirable should be placed on record, more especially when we take into consideration the telegram I have just referred to. This telegram states - A largely attended special meeting of the -Chamber of Commerce, at Mackay, has passed resolutions to the effect that the continued introduction of Polynesian labour in connexion with "the sugar industry, subject to the restrictions of the Queensland laws, did not involve social, moral, or other dangers to the Commonwealth. Now we shall see what the Mackay municipality says on the matter. The report says - At a public meeting held in the School of Arts, Mackay, on 10th August, the Mayor presiding, the following resolutions were passed - (1) That in the opinion of this meeting, in view of the murderous outrages recently committed by "kanakas, the time has arrived when the Government should be called upon to take the necessary steps to prevent such dastardly attacks on the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. There are two more resolutions which go on to say that the Government should enforce the law relating to the carrying of firearms, and that they should also compel kanakas to be in their homes by a certain time at night. I wish to refer to another incident in connexion with this aspect of the matter which occurred at Cairns not such a very long time ago. There were a large number of Japanese women in Cairns who were trading upon their charms. Some of the inhabitants thought that they were undesirable, and petitioned the municipal council to have them removed. A special meeting of the council was called, and on the casting vote of the mayor, it was decided that these undesirable women should remain in that town. When subsequently asked for an explanation, the mayor and aldermen who had voted for the retention of these women, said that if they were to be done away with, the wives and daughters of the townspeople would not be safe. When we find men in responsible positions prepared to allow women of undesirable character to remain in their midst in order to satisfy the lusts of these semi-savages, I think it is about time that we made an effort to rid the country of such a curse. The honorable member for Maranoa was quite right in saying that the kanakas are a curse. From a moral point of view, it is desirable to get rid of these people at the earliest possible moment. Whilst I have thus been speaking in condemnation of the kanaka, I realize that I should be doing him an injustice if I did not say one or two words in his defence. I have done it before on the platform, and I shall always do so. I think that the kanaka in his island home is just as good as any of us. His moral life there is just as good as ours here, but when we civilize these people, and take those in prime of manhood away from home, and bring them here without their women, we can expect nothing else than that they will commit outrages. The fault lies with those who are responsible for bringing the kanakas here. In his island home the kanaka is in fairly comfortable circumstances, and he has his own plot of land and his own household arrangements to look after. It has been said that if the kanaka was not very well treated, and



the conditions were not agreeable in Queensland, there would not be such a large number of islanders re-engaging for service, and coming back to Queensland. It must be considered, however, that the kanaka, before leaving his home in the first instance, had certain tribal and communal rights. On going away he loses these rights, and on returning, probably finds his relatives are dead or dispersed, and having no longer any tribal rights, he has no interest in his old home, and is practically a stranger. Under these circumstances he is willing to engage to go back to Queensland. There is no doubt that the climatic conditions in Queensland are not suitable to the kanaka. That has been proved again and again by the enormous death rate amongst the islanders. On the moral ground and on the ground of humanity, and in the interests of the kanaka himself and of the community generally, it is a good thing that such legislation as is now proposed by the Government should come into force as early as possible. I do not want to go into the past history of this matter at any length. I have my own opinions as to why Sir Samuel Griffith changed his opinion in 1892.

Mr Isaacs

- He did not change his opinion very much.

Mr McDONALD

- I am wrong in saying that he changed his opinion. He said that he had not altered his opinion, but was only acting as a matter of expediency. I have my own view as to why that kanaka legislation was introduced into Queensland in 1892, and any one who takes an interest in the political history of Queensland will agree with me that that session of 1892 was one of the most discreditable in the records of the Parliament. In 1888, when the Parliament was returned, Sir Thomas Mcllwraith said that he was not going to be kept out of Parliament on the score of the land grant railways. He promised the electors that he would not be the means of introducing land grant railways during his term of office, and said that if he did he would be scouted from one end of the colony to the other as a public liar. Sir Samuel Griffith distinctly stated that the question of black labour - and this was also emphasized by Sir Thomas Mcllwraith - was settled for all time. But what do we find - that without consulting the electors in any shape or form, Sir Samuel Griffith, in order to obtain power, was prepared to form a coalition with Sir Thomas Mcllwraith. Land grant railway measures were introduced, and kanaka legislation was re-introduced, and immediately afterwards, when Sir Hugh Nelson, the leader of the Opposition, introduced a Bill giving another £1,000 a year to the Chief Justice, Sir Charles Lilley was, through the action of the Government, compelled to resign, and Sir Samuel Griffith took his place. Under those circumstances I do not think there was any great credit attaching to those who were mixed up in that legislation. That is how it was that this legislation for the re-introduction of the kanaka took place. The influence of big financial institutions was very strong, and it was because of their strength at that particular period, and their connexion with the sugar industry, that the Bill was introduced.

Mr Isaacs

- Was it not also a time of depression?

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Mr McDONALD

- Yes. The depression commenced about 1890, but that was only one of the causes. To me it was a surprising thing; that Sir Samuel Griffith - the gentleman with the keen and powerful intellect, who had written that famous pamphlet, "Wealth and Want," which pronounced him to have the greatest economical knowledge of social conditions in Australia at that time, and probably at the present time - was prepared to renounce the whole of these principles owing to certain pressure which was brought to bear upon him. Passing away from that, we come to the assertion, which has been made from time to time, that, the white man cannot do the work in the cane-fields. When we attempt to find out what is the particular work which the white man cannot do, it is narrowed down to two operations in the cane-fields. Even the strongest advocates, for the retention of the kanaka narrow themselves down to only two operations which they say the white man cannot do. What are they? One is the cutting of cane, and the other the trashing of cane. So far as the cutting of cane is concerned, they are not very strong on that argument; they generally fall back on the other argument as to the trashing of the cane. No one will argue for a moment that the cutting of cane, is such work as cannot be performed by any white man. It is done in an open face. The man who works in a railway cutting, with a tropical sun over his head, and without the supply of air which is generally very refreshing in the warmer climates, is working under

conditions more laborious, and more calculated to enervate him, than he is ever likely to do in cutting cane in an open face. But they will not keep to that ground ;. they back down and come to the question of the trashing of cane. That operation is. done in the cooler portions of the year. It is. done anywhere from May up to about August, when the climate in Queensland is the most delightful to be had in Australia. On this question we should have the fullest information. When you speak to those who are practically interested in the industry,. they state that cane trashing, in nine cases out of ten, is not necessary; it is less necessary in the tropics than it would be in the sub-tropics. Wherever the atmosphere is dry, there is not so much need for the trashing of cane as where it is moist. I propose to allow a gentleman who is interested in the industry to explain the matter in his own way. In an interview with a reporter a farmer said :-

Trashing is work which is being continually pointed to as not being fit for white labour, but as a matter of fact it is work which in nine cases out of ten need not be done at all ; and even if it had to be done it is best done in the cool weather. Again, when trashing is carried out it is invariably performed after the wet season, when the. weather is cool. On some plantations where there is plenty of black labour it is generally very hard to find work for the boys during the rainy season, so they are put trashing cane if there is any fit to trash. In reading the report of the two Royal commissions on the sugar industry, 1885, I find that many managers state that trashing cane is of little, if any, benefit. I have heard Mr. McCulloch, a Government inspector of Central Mills, say that trashing is unnecessary. I have asked one of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's managers if trashing was of any benefit. His answer was that in a dry climate like that of Cairns he considered it of no advantage, and we know that Cairns, next to Geraldton, has the wettest climate in Queensland. Further, I have been through the Mackay district on two occasions at crushing time, and I did not see any cane that was trashed. However, if trashing were necessary the proper months to do it are April, May, and June, when we have cool weather, and white men can do it as well as black. I have seen little girls trashing cane, and it did not hurt them. That, I think, is very clear on the point that a white man cannot do the work. Here we have conclusive evidence from those who have worked in the industry - and I could quote a dozen similar instances if I desired - to show that it can be done by the white man. When you meet the friends of the kanaka on this ground, they will meet you with the argument that the white man is unreliable, that he is a unionist, that wild agitators go round and get him to strike for better conditions, and further, that he is lazy. On behalf of the workers of the north - and I think I can speak for the whole of Queensland - I deny those allegations. I deny that the white man is lazy. I deny that he is a loafer or a drunkard. The white workers of Queensland are just as honest, steady, straightforward, and willing to perform the necessary work which is required of them as are any men in any part of the civilized world. I hope that we shall not continually hear these insulting remarks about the unreliableness of the workers of Queensland or of any other part of Australia. It appears, to me that a large number of planters and others who are interested in the sugar industry, in their wild excitement for the retention of the kanaka, are prepared to hurl insults at every person except those whom they desire to have employed.. The report of Dr. Maxwell proves as clearly as anything can do that the white man is. just as capable, putting it even on that low level, as the kanaka to work in the cane-fields. He shows that the kanaka has only worked two or three hours more per year than the white man has done. When we take into consideration that the kanaka, is not in the same position of independence as the white man, is it any wonder that he may have worked two or three hours- longer in the year ? That only proves that the kanaka is more under control, and if I may use the term, under the whip of the overseer or employer, than the independent white man is. When we take into consideration, the reliability of the white workers of Queensland, and of Australia generally, in connexion with the various industries in the Commonwealth, they compare very favorably with any other workmen in any part of the world. On our huge wheat fields in some of the States, the wheat has to be taken off within a given time, sometimes within a few days or a week, to prevent a large amount of the crop going to waste or spoiling - but the wheat-growers can depend upon getting a regular and serviceable supply of labour year after year, as the crops are required to be taken off. think the same thing can be done in Queensland. But there has been an attempt in. that State, as Sir Samuel Griffith has said,, to get the white workers to believe that it is degrading to work in its cane-fields. That belief has been largely cultivated by the planters. They have never made any honest attempt to try and get the white workers to work in the industry. For various occupations which require casual labour at particular periods of the year men can always be found. If there is employment to be had

at reasonable wages, and under reasonable conditions, the planters will find all the necessary labour to carry on the sugar industry within the State at the present time. But the white worker of Australia is not prepared to accept that work under the same degrading conditions as are meted out to the kanaka. He will not work for the same wage as the kanaka, or under the same degrading conditions. Give the white worker a fair opportunity, good conditions, and a reasonable wage, and all the labour which is required for the sugar industry of Queensland can be obtained within the State without inconvenience to any industry. We all know that throughout the Commonwealth there is always a surplus of labour. At the present time in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and other States, you will find agitation more or less, as the case may be, in connexion with the unemployed. I think there is labour available within the Commonwealth - -and certainly within Queensland - to perform the necessary work in connexion with the sugar industry. If the argument is sound which is advanced by a number of those who advocate the retention of the kanaka, and even by Mr. Philp himself, that the industry will be ruined if we pass this legislation, because, as they say, the white man cannot possibly do the work, what is the use of them advocating an extension of time? If it is only a matter of time, it means that the industry, will be killed in ten years instead of in five if their statement is correct. I deny that. As I have already stated, I believe that a white man can perform this work. I should like to point out that there is no agricultural industry within the Commonwealth which is so profitable as is the sugar industry. In support of this statement, I wish to direct the attention of honorable members to the following table, which has reference to the profit accruing from the cultivation of 50 acres of cane by white labour : - Cost of cultivating, say, 25 acres of plant cane and 25 acres ratoons : -

If we substitute black labour for white, we find that there would be a saving of 5s. per acre in the planting of 25 acres, which represents an amount of £6 5s., and a further saving of 10s. per acre in weeding 25 acres, which means a sum of £12 10s. Thus the total saving by employing kanaka labour would be £18 15s. The sugar industry, it is therefore apparent, is a very profitable one. Of course it may be argued that certain individuals have invested in the industry and have lost their money. But people who have either little knowledge or poor methods of management engage in any business with the result that they frequently go down, whilst the energetic man who thoroughly understands what he is about succeeds. Instances of this are to be found in all industries. It was my intention to have dealt with various statements which have been made by those who advocate the retention of the kanakas. They have said some very harsh things of those who are opposed to that traffic. I am not going to question the motives of those who differ from me. I credit them all with a sincere desire to save the sugar industry. But I wish to point out there is not a member of the labour party who entertains any desire to injure it. We simply wish that the kanaka labourer shall no longer be employed in it, because his presence in Australia is not desirable. It would be wise to get rid of him as early as possible. Personally, I am of opinion that he should go at once, but I am prepared to waive that opinion and accept the Bill as it stands. I think that this measure is a very fair and honest attempt to deal with a difficult problem. I recognise the difficulties that exist by reason of the fact that certain legislation has permitted this particular traffic to be carried on. I should like to see clause 9 amended by the insertion of a minimum fine of £20 in lieu of the penalty there inprescribed which is one "not exceeding £100." That, however, is purely a matter of detail. It has been urged that the representatives of Queensland in this House do not accurately reflect the opinions of that State. I do not claim to reflect the opinions of the whole of Queensland ; but I claim to reflect those of the people who sent me here. I was returned to this House with a majority of which any man might be proud. It certainly was the desire of the constituency which I represent - a constituency which embraces a very large area in Queensland - that the kanaka traffic should cease.

Mr Fisher

- What were the figures?

Mr McDONALD

- I was returned by a majority of about 1,700. I obtained nearly 5,000 votes, whilst my opponent secured a little over 3,000. The honorable member for Herbert also received a substantial majority. Other honorable members who were returned in the labour interest were returned by very large majorities. I think the honorable member for Brisbane was probably the only successful candidate who dared to advocate the retention of the kanakas for any considerable time. I wish further to point out that in connexion with the Senate elections every candidate who advocated black labour was placed at the bottom of the poll, whilst

those who opposed its continuance, and urged the exclusion of other coloured labourers were returned. It has been said that Queensland would never have entered the Federation had it been known that such a Bill as this would be introduced. I venture to say that if a poll of Queensland were taken to-morrow, owing to the action of the Government in introducing the Immigration Restriction Bill and the measure which is now under discussion, there would be a larger majority for federation than there was on the day the referendum was taken. I may mention that the labour party itself was divided upon the question of federation. Only six or seven of its members, out of a total of twenty-four, were prepared to go upon the platform and openly advocate federal union. One of the strongest points put before the electors in the State of Queensland, especially in the north, was that, given federation, it would be the means of putting a stop to black labour throughout the State ; and it was on that ground that we got such a magnificent majority as practically carried federation in Queensland. That majority of 8,000 that was obtained, practically from the votes of the people in the north of Queensland, was due to this cause. I certainly feel confident that the action we took on the black labour question during the time of the referendum was a strong incentive to the people of Northern Queensland to vote in favour of coming within the fold of the Commonwealth. Under such circumstances, it was only fair, in the interests of the party, and in the interests of Queensland - especially in the interests of the north - that their case should be fairly laid before the people; and I have no hesitation in saying, for one, that I would rather see the magnificent tropical agricultural and mineral lands of Queensland revert to their former state than see any attempt to develop the northern portion of that State by means of coloured labour.

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Mr L E GROOM

- I intend to support the Bill as it stands. I came to this House pledged to support a Bill of this description. I took up that position at the time of my election, because I believed in the principles of such a measure. Although I do not believe that honorable members come here as delegates, but to a certain extent ought to give utterance to their conscientious views, yet when an honorable member makes a formal declaration on a subject, he is in duty bound to give effect to that opinion by his vote. That is the position which I occupy in this House. I firmly believed in the principles of a Bill similar to this when I was before my constituents, and I have heard no reason for altering that opinion. Consequently, I intend to do all I can to have the Bill passed through Parliament in its present form. It has been argued that this matter is one which should be left to the State Parliament, and that the Federal Parliament should not deal with it, because the subject is one with which it is utterly unacquainted. It has been said by Mr. Philp that the Government should have consulted with the Government of Queensland before they dealt with the matter. But in my opinion that would have been utterly wrong, and subversive of the principles of federation. When this Parliament was constituted, full powers were given to it to deal with this subject, and I hold that it is our duty to deal with the matter in that spirit ; and while having due regard to the interests of persons in the various parts of Australia, we must at the same time pay regard to the national interests of Australia. At the time federation was accomplished, it was clearly understood that this subject would be handed over to the Federal Parliament. Let me draw the attention of honorable members to a statement which was made by the late Sir J James Dickson, when he was dealing with the question of the adoption of federation. These are his words -

The Queensland Government were too much prejudiced to consider the question fairly. He, for one, would readily accept the verdict of federated Australia on the subject. He wished that to be distinctly understood.....

It was better for the sugar planter that this great question of coloured labour should be settled by federated Australia. He believed it would be done in the interest of the planters ; done more equitably and more conclusively than by the local Parliament.

There we have one of the principle advocates of federation stating clearly that in his opinion it would be better for this matter to be dealt with by the Federal Parliament. That is the spirit in which Queensland voted in favour of federation, It entered the Federation in the belief that the Federal Parliament would deal with the question, and it is quite prepared to leave this Parliament to do its duty in the matter. It is not only a question that concerns the Queensland members, but it is one to which attention must be given by the whole Parliament. Each individual member is bound to make himself conversant with the case. It is because the people of Queensland believed that the members of this Parliament will do what is right

between all parties concerned, that they entered into federation. Then, again, it is stated by Mr. Philp in his protest that in this matter the Government are not carrying out the true opinions of the people of Queensland. It is stated that the question was not properly raised and put before the electors. I submit, with all due deference to Mr. Philp, that the matter was properly put before the electors, and I will read a statement made by the Prime Minister himself on the eve of the federal elections in Queensland. He put the matter as plainly as could be desired -

If a further term of years was added on to the term of ten years which expires in 1902, what complaint will those have to make who said ten years was enough for them and had got more ? Let them not make any mistake about the matter. He did not wish for one moment to say that the Federal Government intended to deal in a harsh or destructive way with the sugar industry, for it was like the other great industries - an asset of the Commonwealth.

It was thus clearly stated by the Prime Minister, when he was in Queensland, that he intended to introduce a measure that would have the effect of preventing, after a certain time, the introduction of kanaka labour into Queensland. There can be no doubt about that ; and it is idle for Mr. Philp, or any one else, to say that they did not expect that the Federal Ministry was going to introduce such a measure as has been brought in. Then Mr. Philp says that public opinion in Queensland is against it. All I can say in answer to that remark is this : that at my recent election I took up the same position as I am advocating tonight, and stated that I believed five years to be a fair and reasonable time to allow before prohibition started. I stated then that if the Government adopted that limit the people of Queensland would make no complaint, because that was the period which Queensland herself fixed on a previous occasion. My opponent at that election, although he was undoubtedly backed up by, or had the sympathy of, Mr Philp and his supporters, clearly stated that he also was in favour of the ultimate abolition of kanaka labour. He first started off with the advocacy of a period of ten years ; subsequently during the election campaign he reduced that period to seven, and before the election took place he agreed to advocate five years as the limitation. Therefore, as regards the recent election it is quite clear that the electors had firmly made up their minds that the time had come when some limitation should be imposed with regard to the introduction of kanaka labour. But it was never intended to abolish kanaka labour in the spirit of the destruction of a national industry. The principle which was acted upon was this - that a certain time should be given to allow the sugar planters to place themselves in such a position that this industry might be preserved for the white race in Australia. And that is the proper position - the position that the Government themselves take up". They do not believe that a large industry like this, which is really one of the great national interests of Australia, should be destroyed by means of any hasty legislation; and it certainly would be to a great extent injured if there was an immediate abolition of coloured labour. But the Government believe in granting a proper time for the abolition of that labour, in the expectation that at the end of the period named the industry will be placed in a state of prosperity, which will be for the benefit of the whole Commonwealth. It was stated by Mr. Philp that Queensland did not expect a Bill of this description to be introduced But there are authoritative opinions upon that subject, which I will quote to the House. I refer honorable members to the two Rockhampton newspapers, which really represent the whole central portion of the State of Queensland. The Rockhampton Bulletin of the 3rd October stated - Kanaka immigration is to be brought to a close, but five years is to be allowed in order that the industry may adapt itself to the new conditions. This is pretty much what was expected. Some people would have excluded kanakas from the very passing of the Act, others would have given three years' interval, and others again seven years.

We have this leading journal of Queensland stating distinctly that the Bill is just what is expected. The articles went on -

Mr. Philp and his colleagues are furious at the Bill. But it must be remembered that Mr. Philp and the members of his Government are pronounced black labour men, and the time would never come when in their view kanakas should be excluded. Mr. Philp talks of allowing recruiting to go on for seven years, presumably unchecked in numbers, and then, no doubt, to permit all the kanakas at that date in the country to remain till they left of their own accord or died. This would give us kanakas in Queensland for the next twenty years. That is Mr. Philp's wish, or rather the wish he expresses at the present juncture, for his real wish is that there should be no restriction in the immigration of kanakas, and that no time should ever be set when this immigration should cease. In this Mr. Philp has been quite consistent, but in this he

is not only quite out of touch with Australian, but also with Queensland opinion.

The article clearly states that Mr. Philp's protest, about which so much noise has been made, is absolutely out of all touch with Queensland opinion. On the 4th October the Bulletin thus described Mr. Philp's conduct -

The hysterical action of the Government, and particularly of the Premier, in the Assembly last night would be laughable were it not so deplorably undignified.

Then, in conclusion, the newspaper said -

Mr. Philp may rave as much as he pleases in Brisbane, but the men whom the Federal Government will listen to, and whom it is alone entitled to listen to on this question, are the representatives of Queensland in the Federal Parliament.

The Rockhampton Record, the other leading paper, said -

The racial colour question is invariably provocative of fiery discussion, and in Australia, judging by present indications, it will hardly be settled without bloodshed. The extreme heat exhibited by Mr. Philp since the publication of the Kanaka Bill is most regrettable, and reminds one of the controversy in the United States prior to the abolition of slavery. For on reference to American history it will be seen that the arguments used by and on behalf of the Queensland sugar-growers bear a curious resemblance to those used by United States pro-slavery advocates.

Then the newspaper added -

This condition of affairs may possibly account for the philosophic calm with which our local politicians view Mr. Barton's kanaka legislation. At the same time, there is something like a consensus of public opinion against black labour of any sort, and Mr. Barton's proposals, and especially his thoughtful mode of arguing the question, appeal far more to the judgment of the electors than does the hysterical language of his opponents. Let us hope that in his calmer moments Mr. Philp will resolve to abandon his threatened life and death struggle with the Federal authority.

I venture to state that these extracts very clearly reflect the true opinion of the people of Queensland on this important matter. The people of Queensland have no desire at all to abolish the sugar industry, but what they do firmly desire is that this industry shall be carried on by the people of a "white Australia." It is impossible, in reviewing this matter, to avoid the historical aspect of the question, because from the very inception planters have taken up the position that it is essential to have coloured labour of some description. As early as 1860 an agitation was started in favour of the introduction of coolies, and a petition was presented by Sir Charles Nicholson, the President of the Legislative Council, asking the Secretary of State to allow the introduction into Queensland of certain classes of coolies. When this petition was sent home the petitioners were informed that they could have it granted on the same conditions as coolies were introduced into the Mauritius. The result was that the matter came before the Legislative Assembly, and a statute was passed, but the conditions laid down were so stringent that coolies were not introduced. Then the planters turned their attention to getting labour from another source, and South Sea Islanders were introduced into Queensland, not for the purpose of growing sugar, but for the purpose of growing cotton. They were introduced by the Hon. Robert Towns, of Sydney - so that Sydney people have something to answer for - and were employed by him at first to grow cotton. The South Sea Islanders were afterwards shifted up north and landed at Townsville. The first person who really succeeded in growing sugar in Queensland, I understand, was the Hon. Lewis Hope, and he was granted 2,000 acres of land for his good services rendered to the colony. In 1863 regulations were passed, known as the Sugar and Coffee Regulations, which enabled land to be taken up at 5s. an acre by lease and selection, for the purpose of growing sugar and coffee. After that a boom started in the sugar industry, and the kanakas were transferred from cotton growing to sugar growing. Subsequently we find the kanakas were introduced very freely, and the same abuses arose as subsequently. The only thing was that there were no statutes to deal with them. In 1871 a case came before the Court of Queensland, and ultimately got to the Full Court. This was the case of Regina v. Coath, known as the Jason case, which is reported in the Queensland Supreme Court Reports, second volume. Certain ship-masters had seized a number of kanakas, and brought them to Queensland, where they set them free. These masters were charged with kidnapping, and the question was raised whether at common law such an offence had been committed. The argument set up by Sir Charles Lilley at the time was, that instead of doing these kanakas a wrong, the defendants had done them a benefit, by taking them from a

lower state of civilization and setting them at liberty in a higher state of civilization. The Full Court, however, held that a charge of kidnapping had been made out, and the defendants were sentenced accordingly. After that, it became necessary to have some statutory enactment on the subject, and certain laws were passed having in view the restraining of this traffic. The boom in sugar continued, and large sums of money were invested in the industry, a good deal of which money came from Victoria and other places. But the supply of islanders was becoming limited, and on one occasion a raid was made on New Guinea and adjacent islands. It was in this connection that a Royal commission was appointed to inquire, and it came to the conclusion that out of 400 kanakas imported not one really understood the nature of the contract - that it was utterly impossible for them to understand the agreement or the labour they were to perform. As a result of that finding, Sir Samuel Griffith introduced a Bill in 1885 to compensate the employers, because the Government had sent the kanakas back to the place whence they came, with the exception of about 80 who elected to stay. I mention this incidentally to illustrate how difficult it is to make a kanaka really understand the nature of the agreement he enters into. In the debate which took place in the Queensland Parliament, a letter was quoted by Mr. Black, who always stood as a pro-kanaka advocate. The Polynesian Inspector, in 1884, wrote, in connexion with certain islanders : -

In connexion with this subject I have also the honour to bring under your notice the constantly recurring desertions on the part of labourers recently landed. It is beyond doubt that the late arrivals from strange lands have come in here with very imperfect notions of the nature of the work required from them; it is difficult - impossible - to convey to an untutored savage precise ideas of the novel conditions of life that he will be called upon to encounter on his arrival in this colony ; and there is nothing surprising in the spectacle of an islander who has been used to pass the greater part of his time lying under the shade of the nearest rock or tree, exhibiting a tendency to relapse to his natural mode of life rather than adapt himself to the steady continuous drudgery enacted from a labourer on a sugar plantation. On the grounds, therefore, of the excessive mortality amongst these people, and the frequency of desertions, the result of an absolute ignorance of the work they bind themselves to perform, I would protest.

I venture to suggest that very much the same condition of affairs exists at the present time. I do believe that an honest attempt is made to cause these men to understand the regulations. We have a clause in the Immigration Restriction Act preventing the introduction of labour under contract, one of the reasons being that even a European himself may not really know the conditions of the labour which he has to perform, and that it is better that he should come free into the country, and enter into his contract afterwards. If that applies to an educated man, it applies with still greater reason to the untutored savage, because he cannot possibly understand the conditions under which he is to perform his contract. At the general election of 1883 it was decided, by a very large majority that the Government should provide at the earliest possible date for the complete cessation of this traffic. Accordingly Sir Samuel Griffith introduced his Act ; the Coolie Immigration Act was repealed, and the time within, which Polynesian labourers might come into the country was limited. During 1886, 1887, and 1888, continual agitation went on in the colony. Although Queensland as a whole accepted the principle that this labour should cease, the planters refused to do so. The planters kept up their agitation in the belief that they would ultimately gain their point, and compel the Parliament of the day to go back on its action, and allow them to freely introduce kanaka labour into the country. The Government of the day made an honest effort to secure more white labour for the industry, but the planters themselves took up a very strong position. They sent out emissaries to different places to get up an agitation with the object of counteracting the work of the Government. Their action was thus described by Sir Samuel Griffith in a speech made in the Queensland Legislative Assembly in 1889, and reported at page 170 of Hansard -

What did the planters do? I speak of them collectively. Instead of trying to do anything to take advantage of the facilities the Government were to offer them, they set themselves deliberately to work - to spite the Government I suppose - to prevent any labour being obtained from Europe, by causing statements to be made throughout various continental countries, representing that the labour in Queensland was not fit for Europeans ; that they would be reduced to a condition little better than slavery, and warning them on no account to come to Queensland.

That clearly was the attitude they took up. It was one of rank hostility to the measure. During 1886-7-8 they continued to agitate for the repeal of this statute. They said they wanted an extension of the time, but in reality what they were fighting for was unlimited power to introduce coloured labour into Australia. In

1888 Sir Samuel Griffith emphasized his objection to the introduction of kanakas to the country, and Sir Thomas McIlwraith, when twitted at the time with the statement that he was in favour of the introduction of coolies and kanakas into Queensland, wrote a letter to the press - I believe it is to be found in the columns of the Brisbane Courier - in which he gave practically a guarantee that as long as he was in power he would be no party to -any alteration of the existing conditions. He published that statement throughout the land in order to counteract the influences which were at work in favour of his opponent, Sir Samuel Griffith. As soon as the Coalition Ministry was formed in 1892, both Sir Thomas McIlwraith and Sir Samuel Griffith went back completely upon the promises they had given to the electors, and they were instrumental in passing the legislation with which, we have to deal to-day. At the time a very strong protest was made. They were asked why they did not go to the country and allow' the people to decide, and a word of warning was uttered that if an extension of ten years was granted the problem would be ten times more difficult to solve at the end of that period. That proved to be perfectly true. Money was invested in the industry; a large number of persons became interested in these various concerns, and vested interests had to be considered. These interests have been at work throughout the States with the object of securing the continuance of this traffic which I believe Parliament will say shall cease. When Sir Samuel Griffith gave his opinion on this matter he set forth the reasons which really actuated him and which really were the opinions held by the electors in regard to coloured labour. In 1889, during the debate which took place in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, in connexion with the Royal commission, he made this statement, which is to be found at page 171 of Hansard for 1889- There is another thing which is manifest in the report of the commission, and that is that the result of this black labour is to lower the dignity and reputation of labour. Working in' the fields is considered as a degrading and dishonouring occupation, and only fit for a mau with a black skin. But the greatest objection is that, accord to the spirit of our Constitution, every man in this colony is equal, and is entitled to a share in the government of the colony. That is a fundamental objection. If we intend in Australia to govern on the principle that we shall be a free community, and an English-speaking<sup>1</sup> race, we cannot afford to admit men of an alien race amongst us whom we cannot allow to enjoy the privilege of having a share in the governing of the country. Those are the reasons which are, I think, conclusive in the minds of the people of this colony against black labour, and I am sure they are not prepared for a rediscussion of the matter.

In 1892, when he issued his famous manifesto, he reiterated these views. He did not go back one iota upon the objections, which he considered were absolutely conclusive against the re-introduction of the kanaka into Queensland. The objections which he stated were as follows : -

. It tended to encourage the creation of large landed estates, owned for the most part by absentees, and worked by gang labour, and so discouraged actual settlement by small farmers working for themselves. It led to field labour in tropical agriculture being looked down upon as degrading and unworthy of the white races.

The permanent existence of a large servile population amongst us, not admitted to the franchise, is not compatible with the continuance of our free political institutions. " I recognise," he said, " the force of these reasons as fully as ever." He was prepared to put them on one side on the grounds of expediency only, because there was not sufficient reliable labour in the country. He was quite prepared to erect what was called at the time a "kanaka bridge," to pass the planters over that period which must elapse before they could get a sufficient number of reliable persons to carry on this work. He did not propose it on the ground that white men could not do the work, but simply because white labour could not be found. These were the things which operated to induce him to change his mind upon the subject. This matter has been constantly discussed in Queensland, and has always formed the subject of hot political debate, but I believe that the Queensland people decided at the general election for this Parliament that the time was ripe for passing decisive legislation - that the planters had practically had their ten years term of notice, and that the whole question should be settled once and for all. The reasons given by Sir Samuel Griffith are still the fundamental reasons which should guide us in passing our legislation. The sugar growing industry has assumed enormous proportions, and, therefore, it should not be dealt with in a hasty or reckless manner. The Government have dealt with the subject fittingly by expressing their intention to treat the industry as one of the national assets of the Commonwealth to which they will give every consideration and care. They are proposing to give it certain opportunities of adapting itself to the new



conditions, and, further than that, they propose to provide a very handsome bonus in the form of a rebate of £2 per ton upon the sugar. In reference to the objections that are urged against this Bill, we have to inquire what is really at the back of the agitation against the measure. In order to understand the position, it is just as well that we should look back at what was the condition of the sugar industry at the time the report of the Royal commission was presented in 1889. Let us inquire into the causes of the depression and see what remedies were suggested by those who gave evidence, and by the commission itself. If we do this we shall obtain a very fair idea as to how we should treat the matter at the present time, and we shall be giving the industry that fair consideration and attention which is its due. At page 53 of the report the causes of the depression of the industry are set out by the commission which was appointed to inquire into that subject, as follows : -

The unnecessarily large areas held by planters compared with the small areas actually cultivated, and the consequent payment of interest on the large unproductive area.

The erection of mills quite disproportionate to the area of cane under cultivation.

The sudden and continuous fall in the price of sugar arising from the keen competition of sugar produced from beetroot.

The financial embarrassment of many of the planters owing to their working on borrowed capital bearing a high rate of interest, which, with the working expenses, is entirely chargeable to the small area of cultivated land.

The disastrous drought of the last two years, which has seriously diminished the production of sugar, the export for 1888 being not more than one-half what it was in 1887 ; and the prospect of an equally diminished output for the present year, owing to the continued drought, the rain having come too late to insure a full crop for the coming season.

A general want of confidence on the part of monetary institutions in the sugar industry arising from the foregoing circumstances, and the probability of the keen competition of the beetroot sugar continuing for some time to come.

Those were the causes of the depression, as summarized in the minority report, and a further alleged cause was the want of cheap coloured labour in order to enable the parties to carry on the industry. The suggestions made with a view to improving the conditions of the industry are given at page 47, and of course we have to consider these in connexion with our own position in regard to the industry : -

The repeal of the 11th section of the Pacific

Island Labourers Act of 1880 Amendment Act of 1885, and its extension for a further period of five years.

A reciprocity treaty to be entered into with the Australasian colonies for the admission of

Queensland-grown sugar duty free, upon certain conditions, to be arranged with between the contracting parties.

The adoption of a comprehensive irrigation scheme ; and

That the Government should take the introduction of Polynesians into their own hands, and establish depots at the various islands, to be managed by Government agents, and that on the arrival of islanders in Queensland they should be conveyed to the immigration barracks, and there be open to engagement in the same way as ordinary white immigrants, the planters to be responsible for the whole cost of the scheme.

A further suggestion was added in the majority report, namely, the establishment of central mills. These were the remedies suggested by the planters themselves to the commission, some of which were recommended by the commission is being calculated to put the sugar industry upon a sound financial basis. However, at that time Parliament deliberately decided not to take any steps in the matter, and the whole subject was allowed to stand over until the year 1892. Now we have to face the question, and ask ourselves what is the present condition of the industry and what remedies we are going to suggest to put it upon such a footing that it can be carried on under the conditions of a white Australia. We are all ready to admit that there are very large sums of money invested in this industry, and that a great many people are dependent upon it for their support. We are also prepared to admit that if the industry were abolished, the country itself would suffer considerable loss, but I am inclined to think that the magnitude of the industry affords till the greater reason why we should try to give it every assistance by way of bonus, or rebate, by affording it the widest possible market, and by giving it every other encouragement within our power. The objections urged against the Bill are these : In the first place, it is stated that we are really

legislating against nature ; and that the country is divided into two parts, and that in the tropical , country we must always have coloured labour, or otherwise we shall never be able to continue the production of sugar. It is contended, in the second place, that whilst the white man can do the work, white labour is unreliable, and that we shall destroy the industry unless we make full provision for obtaining reliable workers. The position is most strongly put in a paper which was read in London by Miss Shaw, who says - This brings us at once face to face with one of the problems in the solution of which the statesmanship of tropical Australia is likely to be forced to differ from that of temperate Australia. The business of the politician of temperate Australia will be to regulate the working of a Constitution based upon universal suffrage, in which every member of the community, women probably as well as men, will exercise the rights and responsibilities of self-government. The business of the politician of tropical Australia will, on the contrary, in all probability, be to find means by which the affairs of a large servile population may be justly administered by a relatively small and consequently aristocratic body of white men. In fact, the place of servile races in the world is one of the big questions of future history which temperate Australia may refuse to consider, but in which tropical Australia must join with Africa, Asia, and America in finding an answer. 17 o

This lady puts the position very clearly, and that is practically the position which the planters themselves take up. They say that white labour cannot possibly do the work, and that therefore we must look upon this northern part of Australia as a country fit to be tilled only by the servile races, with the white races as masters over them. That is a proposition that I do not agree to. In the first place a great many of these so-called servile races do not accept that position, but claim that they are entitled to rise to the rank of masters, and they will then claim that they are entitled to have a voice in the affairs of the country. Mr. Philp, the Premier of Queensland, himself practically takes up that position, because in his speech in the Queensland House the other night, he said -

It was all very well to get up at election time and say that they want to make Queensland a white State. He hoped that that would be so, however - that there would not be more than the small percentage of coloured people which we had at present ; but he said that under proper conditions it would not hurt the white people, but would do them good. There were many things we could grow in Queensland if there was a small amount of coloured labour, not only sugar and coffee, but tea. We ought to grow all the tea for Australia in Queensland, and why should we not do it, and let the people drink it instead of that grown by Chinese or Hindoo labour - why not grow it in Queensland with their aid, too ?

He really contends that if we are going to have tropical agriculture carried on in Australia we must have it with a percentage of coloured population - that we must have coloured labour in Australia. That is practically the position that is taken up by the planters and by Mr. Swayne, who, in a paper read at the recent Bundaberg conference, said : -

The utter unreliability of white labourers in the tropics, which is often adduced as the cause why the industry cannot be successfully prosecuted, if dependent entirely upon them, is wrongly so termed. It is simply the effect of a cause, the primary reason being the natural repugnance of the men to work under conditions to which they are not constitutionally adapted. Many of the same men who, in the northern cane-fields are a constant source of anxiety and loss to their employers - through their habit of knocking off work on the slightest pretext, getting on the spree, falling sick, or clearing out of the district just at the time their services are most required - would, on a southern farm, work contentedly enough ; but they were not intended by nature to work in a sweltering heat, surrounded by tropical vegetation higher than their heads, the work itself generally requiring to be performed in a stooping position.

So that, now that the Federal Parliament comes to deal with this matter distinctly, we see that the position really taken up by the men who carry on this business is that it must be a permanent condition of the industry for all time that they shall have a limited supply of cheap labour. It is as well for us to know that that is the position they take up. In regard to it, the people of Australia say- - " Carry on the industry if you can, and by white labour, and if you cannot carry it on without the introduction of coloured aliens, it is better that you should not carry it on at all." I think that is a proper position to take up. I do not think it is necessary to weary the House with other authorities to the same effect. Another position they take up now is as to the unreliability of white labour, and that is practically the position taken up by Sir Samuel Griffith ten years ago. He believed that the labour would become reliable as the industry developed, and he only wanted a certain period for its development, when he believed it could be carried on by white

labour. I do not believe that Sir Samuel Griffith ever, at any time, in his heart gave up the belief that Australia should be settled by white people only. I give Sir Samuel Griffith credit for altering his opinion, because at that time the colony was in great financial straits, and he believed some relief was necessary. I believe he acted conscientiously in the position he took up, and he believed that if they had another ten years for development they would be able to deal with the trouble - that it was probable that during that period there might be some labour-saving invention discovered, or that labourers might become more reliable, and there might be less agitation. But with regard to the class of labour really desired for the industry, I do not believe that in his heart Sir Samuel Griffith ever held the views that are practically held by Mr. Philp, that one of the conditions for the development of Australia is that there should be permanently in our midst a certain, though it may be a small, percentage of coloured labour. I venture to say that at the bottom of the question of the unreliability of labour is the fact that the wages offered have never been sufficient to make the labour reliable. In other words it is purely a question of wages. That is clearly shown by the opinions expressed by the planters themselves. I particularly refer the House to the opinion expressed this year in the conference held in Bundaberg by a Mr. W. C. Miller. He says - A cane farmer deprived of his labour,, and placed at the mercy of an unreasonable labour union, would be absolutely ruined.

We can see that what was troubling him was the unreliability of labour, and the belief that white labour, properly organized, would demand a reasonable rate of wages, and if the white labourers did not get those wages there might possibly be some social trouble. He then goes on to state what he supposes are the absolute essentials to the carrying on of the sugar industry. He says -

Sugar planters are, from their experience, satisfied that they cannot profitably work without abundance of low-class, and, above all things, reliable labour. " Low-class " and " reliable " seem to go hand in hand. As it was when previously attempted, so will it be again if the labour be withheld - the industry will be driven elsewhere, and the State be the loser.

When our Queensland Sugar Commission took evidence in 1889 similar opinions were expressed, and I venture to think that the value of the evidence taken by the commission is as great now as it was then. When they took their evidence they were dealing with the natural conditions of the country, and upon that point the evidence they gathered is of considerable value to us in dealing with the labour question. At page 82 of the report of the commission it will be found that Mr. Smellie gave this evidence on the question of having white labour -

Then it was not because they could not do the work, but because they thought they were not getting sufficient wages? - That was it. They would not work for less than the ruling wages of the colony, and there is no sugar plantation in the colony that can pay the ruling' wages of the colony, and grow sugar at a profit. I have no doubt that sugar can be grown by white labour up to a certain state. But that is not the question to be solved. The question to be solved is whether it can be grown at a profit. If it cannot be grown profitably, and to compete with the world, it must cease to exist.

He has clearly shown there that it is purely a question of wages. The implication is that if we could not get standard wages for white labour prevailing in the colony that labour would not be available for this purpose. At page 28 of the report it will be found that a Mr. Thomas gives similar evidence, showing that really the question of wages is at the hack of it -

Areyou of opinion that, as far as the Port Douglas district is concerned, tropical agriculture cannot be carried on by a European population ?- I am sure it cannot be done by white labour - that is, at the present rate of wages.

We see that both these witnesses clearly state their opinion that the industry could be carried on by white labour, but not at the existing rate of wages. In other words, if there could be some means devised by which the wages could be raised to a higher rate, they seem to contemplate the fact that undoubtedly the industry could be carried on by a white Australia. An argument alleged against it is that the climate is utterly unfit for white people, and that they really cannot exist in this northern country. But on that point. I refer the House to the evidence given by Mr. John Trezise, a selector in the colony. It will be found on page 26 of the report of the commission -

What labour do you employ in cultivation ? - Myself and a boy. You can get nothing but Chinese here, and we have some difficulty in getting them.

Practically you work your homestead by yourself and family? - Yes.

How does the climate affect your health ? - The climate is very good as far as we are concerned.  
And you are able to do your work on your farm without any bad effects? - Yes, and my children also.  
From your nine years' experience do you consider this district favorable for a European population ? - Yes, I do.

That is the evidence given in the district in which we are told that Europeans cannot exist. On page 20 it will be found that similar evidence is given by a Mr. Walsh, in which he states that Europeans can work in that district. There is this evidence from him -

Do you think that the cultivation of oranges, lemons, and limes can be carried on by European labour ? - Yes.

Profitably ? - Yes ; it is being done now by Montgomerie and Robbins on the Mowbray, about 7 miles from town, and by J. Trezise, who takes oranges to Herberton.

He also gives evidence to show that Europeans are clearing the scrub and doing other work of this character in these tropical districts. There are other witnesses to whose evidence I might refer, but I shall refer specially to the evidence of a Mr. Cowley, a name very much connected with the industry. The chairman of the committee elicited this evidence from Mr. Cowley in the Herberton district -

Speaking generally from your experience as sub-manager for five years and manager for two and a half years on Gairloch Plantation, do you consider that European labour can be employed profitably in the cane-field to do the work that kanakas are now doing ? - I do not.

Do you think that such work is injurious to the health of Europeans ? - No.

Then why do you think they are not physically capable of doing the work that a kanaka can do ? - I think, they are physically capable of doing it, but they require such high wages that we cannot afford them.

I think we can take it as proved beyond a doubt that the European races can thrive in these districts, and can do the work which is required of them. I do not believe they will deteriorate in working in these districts. I think the cry raised is simply a cry raised by the planters because they want to get cheap labour. But, inasmuch as they have had this cheap labour, and sugar is produced by cheap labour in other parts of the world, I do not think we can consistently ask them to grow sugar with high-priced white labour, and at the same time throw our markets open to the cheap labour of other parts of the world. It becomes necessary when dealing with this question to look at the other proposals which have been made by the Government. If we want the farmers to grow the sugar with white labour it is necessary to protect them by putting up a fiscal barrier. I believe that is the only way in which we can secure them in their industry. I think that the two matters have to be taken together. I believe it will give them all the assistance they require. The reasons which have been alleged, and which I believe are conclusive against the planter's policy are first-- the fundamental reason which was given by Sir Samuel Griffith secondly, the degradation of labour; and, thirdly, that it has a moral side as well. I believe, with reference to the moral side, it is not only the welfare of Australia itself, but the effect of the traffic on the kanakas that we have to look to. On this matter various opinions have been expressed, and it has been suggested that we have been doing very good work for the kanaka in bringing him to Australia. I do not believe for a moment that we ever introduced the kanaka for his own good. He was introduced merely because we believed that we were going to make money out of him. We wanted to get a cheap reliable low-class labour, and he was introduced for the purpose of supplying that labour, and for no other purpose. We had no regard for his moral condition, otherwise we should have taken care that the married men brought their wives with them. I think we can honestly say that for the last ten years the white people of Queensland have given considerable attention to them. I know that the churches have shown a great deal of careful consideration, and missionary societies have done a great deal to keep the kanaka from falling into a lower state. At the same time we cannot suddenly transplant a man from a state of heathendom and hope in a few months to convert him to a state of Christianity. It takes a period of time, and I believe that the process of education can be best given to the kanaka in his own country. On this matter I would like to read a letter which was written to the Sydney Morning Herald, setting out & the sugar-planters' case. Contending that if you want to grow sugar in Queensland you must have cheap labour, and referring incidentally to the effect of the traffic on the islands themselves, the writer says -

The islands from which these natives are recruited are fast being depopulated, and only in a minor degree by emigration to Australia, though this has certainly assisted in the general result. In the New Hebrides, from which nearly all the kanakas employed on the Queensland plantations are recruited, this is

especially the case. On one island of that group, Aneiteum, where a few years ago the population was between 4,000 and 5,000, it now numbers something like 3,000, and is declining. The Island of Malo, in a few years, will be without an inhabitant. Disease has swept off vast numbers in every island, and the birth rate has rapidly declined. As with the Australian aborigine, so it is with the kanaka. When the white man comes, he goes. The problem, so far as he is concerned, is settling itself, and that without the aid of legislation. The South Sea Islander will soon cease to contribute his share to the vexed question of coloured labour in these colonies ; even his native islands will know him no more.

In other words, the contention is that the kanaka is dying out ; that by our contact with him we are practically killing him or wiping him out of existence. The writer goes on to say -

So we see that not only is there no danger of the kanaka establishing himself on a permanent footing in Australia, but that it is necessary that the Queensland planter should speedily look to some other source for his labour.

When they take up the position that there should be a further extension of. time granted, the question which we may very reasonably ask the planters is - " When the kanaka is wiped out, as you say he really is by reason of his contact with the white race, what races are you going to get in order to carry on your industry 1 If you say that cheap labour is an essential condition, what races are you going to have 1 " The only answer which they can possibly give is that they hope at some future time to get Asiatic labour, or perhaps African. When you come to the root of the question you see that they are advocating this extension of time only as a sort of stopgap. Just as in the early days they advocated it as a stop-gap in the hope that they were going to get coolies, so now they are asking for an additional extension, in the firm belief that in the future Parliament will repeal the statutes, and allow the free introduction of coloured labour from all sources. I do not believe that that is the sentiment of Australia, or the sentiment of Queensland. I believe that the true sentiment of Australia is expressed in the opinion which was given by the Prime Minister when he visited Queensland, and which is really registered in the Bill before the House. I can see no reason why we should grant an extension. We are told that we should grant a further extension so as to give more justice. The argument, if carried to its extreme, would be to give them an infinite extension, and thus do infinite justice. We have to approach the matter impartially and carefully. We have to look at both sides, and, while trying to prevent suffering on the part of the kanaka, we have to take every care to see that we do not cause suffering to our own people. In other words, it becomes a question of compromise. I think the Prime Minister has made a very happy compromise in his proposals. He has given ample time to the planter to accustom himself to the conditions of a white Australia, and I think he has laid down the conditions by which we may really get a permanent establishment of the industry in Australia, and that is by his fiscal proposals. I do not see how we can separate them. I believe that if the House carries this Bill, it must also, to complete the measure of justice, carry the other proposal. I shall do all I can to assist the right honorable gentleman in that object, because I believe that in so doing we are giving justice to both parties, and are acting impartially and fairly, and at the same time carrying out the national sentiment of the Commonwealth.

Debate (on motion by Mr. Watkins) adjourned.

PAPER

Mr BARTON

- I wish to lay on the table a letter which I have received since question time from the Premier of Queensland on the subject of the Pacific Islands Labourers Bill.

Mr Page

- Has the Minister only got it to-day?

Mr BARTON

- I have only received it to-day.

Mr Page

- The Courier has published it already.

COST OF COMMONWEALTH PRINTING

Ordered(on motion by Mr. Mahon) -

That there be laid before this House a return showing -

Number of copies printed and published of each issue of the Parliamentary Debates up to and including No. 20.

Total cost of same, specifying in detail the outlay for - (a) type-setting ; (6) proof-reading and revision ; (c) correcting proofs ; (d) stereotyping, if any ; (e) machining ; (f) paper ; (g) binding ; and (A) publication. Revenue from sale of Parliamentary Debates, reprints of any portions thereof, and from sale of all other Commonwealth publications up to 30th September, 1901.

Total cost up to 30th September, 1901, of printing, producing, and issuing -

All Papers, Petitions, Returns, or other documents presented to both Houses of the Parliament and ordered to be printed, the charge for each document to be set out.

Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day (the House of Representatives).

Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day (the Senate).

Weekly Report of Divisions in Committee of the Whole.

All Bills and proposed amendments to bills presented to the Parliament.

Total cost of all other printing executed for the Commonwealth by the Victorian Government

Printing-office to 30th September, 1901, specifying separately value of work done for -

The House of Representatives,

And for the departments presided over by -

The Treasurer.

The Minister of Trade and Customs.

) The Postmaster-General.

Total cost (inclusive of stationery) of all other printing executed for the Commonwealth (specifying in each case the department served) by any other State Government Printing-office, or by any private firm or company to 30th September, 1901.

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23:12:00

House adjourned at 11.12 p.m.