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1901-11-22

Senate

The President took the chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

PETITION

Senator CHARLESTON presented a petition from the moderator and clerk of the Presbyterian Church of Adelaide, South Australia, praying the Senate to reject the Matrimonial Causes Bill.

QUESTION

SUGAR DUTIES

Senator HIGGS

- I wish to ask the Post-master-General, without notice, whether he will invite the Government to hold over the consideration of the Sugar Duties until the Pacific Island Labourers Bill has been dealt with. I notice that this question was raised in another place, but that it only elicited an expression from the Minister for Trade and Customs, that he thought the matter ought to be postponed.

Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

- I shall consult my colleagues on the subject.

PAPERS

Senator DRAKE laid upon the table

Papers relating to supply of meat by Australia and New Zealand to the Admiralty and War Office.

Correspondence between the British and Japanese Governments relating to immigration and the Postal Bill.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTION

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY : BASS STRAITS

Senator KEATING

asked the Postmaster-General, upon notice -

Is it true, as reported in the Tasmanian press, that the Government Of Tasmania has recently conceded or is about to concede to Lloyd's Agency the right to install a system of wireless telegraphy between Tasmania and certain of the islands of Bass Straits ?

Will the Postmaster-General cause to be laid upon the table of this Senate full particulars of the nature and extent of the concessions referred to?

Is the Tasmanian Government acting in this matter with the knowledge and approval of the Government of the Commonwealth ; and, if not, will the Postmaster-General take steps to prevent the control of telegraphic communication between Tasmania and the islands referred to from being vested in private persons ?

Senator DRAKE

- The answers to the honorable senator's questions are as follow : -

The Postmaster-General is not aware that the Government of Tasmania has conceded or are about to concede to Lloyd's Agency the right to install a system of wireless telegraphy between Tasmania and certain islands of Bass Straits. He is, however, making inquiries on the subject.

As stated in reply to question 1, the Postmaster is not in possession of any particulars of the concessions referred to.

The Postmaster-General is not aware that the Tasmanian Government have taken any action as reported in the Tasmanian press. If they have taken such action it has been without the knowledge and approval of the Government of the Commonwealth. Should it become necessary he will take steps to prevent the control of telegraphic communication passing into any unauthorized hands.

Senator Clemons

- That does not answer the last question.

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Senator DRAKE

- I think it does, but if it does not I would ask the honorable and learned senator to give notice of a question.

MORTALITY OF KANAKAS

Ordered (on motion by Senator Glassey for Senator Dawson) -

That a return be laid on the table of the Senate showing the mortality of the kanaka population in the State of Queensland during the past ten years, also the mortality among the white population for the same period.

PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed (from 21st November, vide page 7607) on motion by Senator Drake -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Senator GLASSEY

- I heartily welcome this Bill, for which I and others in Queensland have been contending for very many years. I heartily rejoice that the time is approaching when a measure so loudly called for is likely to find a place on the statute-book of the Commonwealth. The Government is to be congratulated upon giving effect to the undoubted will of the people on this question as expressed at the federal election in March last. I am aware that it is contended that the majority of the people in Queensland at the federal election did not by their votes demand this measure. But I think I shall be able to produce some evidence that, not only at the federal elections, but on previous occasions, the people have expressed themselves in favour of such legislation. It has even been contended that the Government of Queensland should have been consulted before it was introduced. That contention has been set up in the name of the Government by the Premier of Queensland. But that is a contention which honorable senators are not likely to support or to sympathize with. It is a demand which no self-respecting Government of the Commonwealth could for a moment give heed to. The demand, in my opinion, is not only extravagant but presumptuous. It is said by some honorable senators that the people of Queensland did not give a majority of their votes in favour of this legislation, and that in consequence of such failure, the Government of the State have put forward the contention that they have a right to be consulted by the Commonwealth Government. It would reflect seriously on the representatives of Queensland, if they who are sent here charged with a distinct and important mission to represent its interests in all matters, were set aside. It is not creditable that the Government of the State should set aside or ignore its representatives, and say that we who speak in the name of its people are not their representatives. I, as a representative of the people, resent any such proposition. I resent very strongly any such assumption by the Government of Queensland, not by the Parliament or the people of Queensland. We voice the opinions and the aspirations of the people, not only on this labour question, but on every question, until such time as we are displaced by other representatives with a different mandate. What are the facts? Out of Queensland's nine representatives in the other House, no less than seven were returned pledged to the very hilt to endeavour to pass this legislation, and that pledge has been faithfully kept by them. I pay every possible deference to my worthy colleague, Senator Ferguson.

Senator McGregor

- He proclaimed himself in favour of a white Australia.

Senator GLASSEY

- Every man has the right to alter his will, and if Senator Ferguson has thought fit to alter his will, though he denies it, that is his business and not mine.

Senator Millen

- Did the other two Queensland representatives in the other Chamber stand as open advocates of kanaka labour ?

Senator GLASSEY

- Speaking from memory, I think that Mr. R. Edwards, the member for Oxley, was very strong against any interference with the kanaka question, but I am not quite so clear that I can say the same in regard to Mr. Macdonald Paterson, the member for Brisbane.

Senator Staniforth Smith

- At the Chamber of Commerce dinner, the other day, Mr. R. Edwards said that he would sooner see the industry stopped than the employment of kanakas continued for all time.

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Senator GLASSEY

- That may be true, but speaking from memory I think I am correct in saying that Mr. R. Edwards, representing the Oxley division,' said he would not be any party to disturbing the existing law. Mr. Macdonald-Paterson was not quite so explicit upon the point. That gentleman was a member of the Griffith Ministry of 1885 which passed the restrictive measure to stop the introduction of kanakas at the end of 1890. It has been said that these two gentlemen represent large districts in Queensland, and if any inference is to be drawn from that remark, it is that, owing to the largeness of their respective districts, special attention should be paid to their opinions on the subject. But though their districts may be large, they are no more important than other districts which return members entirely opposed to the continuance of this class of labour. Out of fifteen members returned from Queensland to the Federal Parliament, twelve are in favour of the abolition of kanaka labour - namely, seven in the House of Representatives, and five in the Senate. If they do not voice the opinions of the people of Queensland upon this question, what evidence can the people of Australia want in regard to the will of that State? It is perfectly idle and nonsensical to say that, when twelve members out of fifteen are returned to this Parliament pledged to support a particular measure, they do not represent their State upon this question. It is also stated with great emphasis that if the people of Queensland had known that this question was likely to be dealt with by the Federal Government it is doubtful whether that State would have joined the Federation. I think I know something about the people of Queensland, and I state without hesitation that there is no subject which had such a great influence in inducing the great mass of the people of Queensland to accept the Commonwealth Bill at the referendum which was held on the 2nd September, 1899, as the fact that the Federal Parliament was likely to deal with the exclusion of kanaka labour in a much more effectual manner than could possibly be hoped for from the State Parliament. Therefore, the contention that the people of Queensland have been misled - indeed, some have gone so far as to say that they have been deceived - is a statement which I absolutely deny. Queensland was throughout cognisant of the fact that this subject would be dealt with by the Federal Parliament in a manner satisfactory to the whole Commonwealth. Let us see what some of those in authority in Queensland said upon the subject. The late Sir James R. Dickson - then Mr. Dickson - at that time Premier of Queensland, speaking at a large public meeting in the city of Brisbane on the 7th August, dealt with this question. His speech is reported in the Brisbane Courier of the following day. He dealt with it because it had come so prominently before the public. I myself took some share in the controversy, endeavouring to induce the people of Queensland to accept the Commonwealth Bill, and one reason which I gave was that the Commonwealth would deal with the kanaka question at an early date. In this speech Mr. Dickson said - He held that the sugar industry could not do without kanaka labour - at least, he said subsequently that the growers raised this contention. However, he would not for a moment advocate it if it could be shown it could be done without. But he was prepared to leave the question to the Federal Parliament for decision; our own Parliament, he thought, was too prejudiced. It was very necessary, in the interests of the planter, that the matter should be settled, and not left to changing of Governments.

That is what was stated by the then Premier of the State. Subsequently, on the 12th August, he said to a meeting of his own constituents -

I have no individual interest in the kanaka, or desire to have him here. What I say is, let federated Australia determine whether the kanaka, or any other coloured man, shall be allowed to remain.

Senator Fraser

- He had faith in justice.

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Senator GLASSEY

- And justice is going to be meted out - that justice which the people of Queensland have demanded, and which united Australia expects. Mr. Gibson, a gentleman interested largely in the sugar industry of Queensland, and who has been for a few years a member of the Legislative Council, also discussed the question with which we are now dealing. In a letter to the Courier on the 8th August, 1899, he urged the people of Queensland to accept the Commonwealth Bill, and gave as his reason that federated Australia would deal with the subject. He used these words -

In this assurance we have no faith, as at every election we are brought face to face with the statement from labour and Opposition candidates that the kanaka must go when they reach power, and the cane-growers feel that the system is gradually drawing to a close.

Let me quote Mr. -Gibson once more. Gibson Bros., I think, are the largest planters in the whole State. In addressing a meeting of the Chamber of Manufactures in Melbourne in November, 1899, that was after federation had been adopted by Queensland, he said -

From one end of the Queensland sugar-growing districts to the other, however, federation was accepted well knowing that it meant that black labour would be done away with.

There is further proof that the sugar growers recognised that a prominent feature in connexion with the establishment of federation would be the dealing with kanaka labour, and there we have Mr. Gibson, voicing the opinions of the planters - nay, even speaking as the representative of the planters - stating that the sugar-growers knew well that the question was going to be dealt with by the Federal Government. In addressing a public meeting at Bundaberg, which town I then had the honour to represent in the Queensland Parliament, I myself dealt with the question of federation very fully, and put forward certain reasons as an inducement to the people to accept the Commonwealth Bill. Speaking on the advantages of federation, I said -

I claim, when united, we can speak with a more powerful voice on the exclusion of coloured aliens, and, finally, I claim that in no previous period of our history was there such necessity for dealing with this momentous question, particularly with reference to the continued influx of the Japanese, as there is at present. .

I also said in a letter to the federal number of the Brisbane Courier, on the 8th August - ' ' Why we should vote ' Yes.

Because I am anxious for a white Australia. This can be much more easily and effectually brought about by a union under federation than we can possibly hope to attain if Queensland remains isolated.

At the meeting at Bundaberg to which I have referred, I had on the platform some of the most influential planters in the town. They were familiar with my opinions, for I had expressed them on many occasions, and I had been returned by the people of Bundaberg, on this particular question above all others, upon more than one occasion. Amongst those on the platform were Mr. O'Connell, a member of the present Queensland Ministry, and a strong kanakaite, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Turner, a planter,, and Mr. Buss, one of the most influential planters there. There was also on the platform the manager of the largest sugar mill in Queensland, who was a strong supporter of kanaka labour, as well as a number of others. This tends to show that the planters had come to the conclusion that federation would lead to the question being dealt with in the way I have described. To say now that the people of Queensland have been misled is perfectly idle and childish. I have expressed my opinions upon this matter on many occasions in Bundaberg, and I was returned to Parliament on this question in 1896, 1899, and again in the year 1900. When I had some little dispute with my party and resigned my position as member, and sought re-election in that year, I, as well as the gentleman who opposed me, held strong views upon this question, but I was returned by a large majority, the people of Bundaberg thus again affirming their opinion in favour of the abolition of this class of labour. I shall deal presently with the votes cast at the senatorial elections in Bundaberg for candidates who stood on the white labour ticket as compared with the number of votes given to those who stood on the black labour ticket. At the opening of the federal election campaign I said this -

One of my chief reasons for advocating so vigorously the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill during the federal campaign two years ago, was because I believed that by federation alone would this question be effectually and satisfactorily settled, and at an earlier period than I could possibly hope for from our State Parliament. My attitude on this question, and that of those who were associated with me, and even occupied the same platform, was never for a moment challenged by the Courier -

Which is very strong now on the other side of the question - - or any other journal in Queensland. On the other hand there was a general consensus of opinion at that time that black labour would be abolished under federation, and that, too, within a reasonable time.

That speech was delivered on the 5th March last, and the Brisbane Courier, in criticising it on the 7th March, wrote as follows : -

Let it be distinctly understood, first, that we have no wish to appear as Mr. O Glassey's opponent with regard to the general argument in favour of a white Australia. No one can study the development of difficulties in the Far East, the activity of Japan, the uneasy movement of the millions of China, and the general low standard of living prevalent among the masses of alien humanity to the north of this continent, without feeling that the Federal Government must grapple the question with firm hands. We are

heartily on the side of those who are fighting for the white man's privilege of choosing his company. Notwithstanding its wailings now, that was the attitude taken up by the Courier newspaper then. I shall give further evidence of the knowledge of this question possessed at that time by the people of Queensland, as well as by the Brisbane Courier, and I shall read an extract from that journal of the 1st September, 1899 - the day before the referendum - urging the people to accept federation. The editor was appealing for the labour vote of Queensland, and he wrote as follows : -

The Bill places under the control of the Federal Parliament certain matters eagerly sought by labour, which are not so likely to be favorably dealt with by the State Parliaments, with their less democratic Constitutions, and which will certainly not for many years be granted throughout Australia, apart from federation. These are such as naturalization and aliens, invalid and old-age pensions, conciliation and arbitration.

And now, let honorable senators observe the appeal which the Courier makes -

The truth is that to-morrow offers to the democracy of labour an opportunity of advancement and security unique in the history of notions. To-morrow, for the Queensland democrat, the tide is at the flood, and such a flood as the world never saw outside of Australia. Let him miss the opportunity, and for him and Queensland the flood ebbs under the reaction, not to come round again, perhaps, for a generation, and never to come again with such freshness and fulness of promise as it is coming now. Take it at the flood, and it will lead, to fortune as surely as it leads to great and honorable nationhood.

This was the Brisbane Courier appealing to the democracy to accept federation, because this question was going to be dealt with by the Commonwealth Parliament. Now we are told that if this class of labour be abolished ruin and disaster to the sugar industry will follow. -I believe that Senator Eraser shares that opinion. I have heard it expressed for many, many years, but, as the result of my experience and observations, I attach very little importance to it.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- How would the honorable member like the proposal if he had money invested in the industry ?

Senator GLASSEY

- I would reply in the words of a Member of Parliament, who, when asked what he would do if he were in power, replied - " It is time enough for the physician to prescribe when 'he is called in.'" I have not got the money to go into this industry. There are very few men who have examined this question more carefully than I have done. I have travelled through the sugar-growing districts, and so far as my means and my intellect have permitted, I have looked into the question thoroughly. I know of no part of Queensland, or of any branch of industry there, in which white men cannot do the work, provided they are paid properly and work under fair conditions. ' We have long heard the same old wail, that if the kanaka is abolished the sugar industry will be ruined, and the interests of 20,000 white men. directly and indirectly engaged in the industry seriously affected. Are these 20,000 white men who labour in connexion with the industry or in the sugar fields ?-

Senator Fraser

- They do not work in the fields.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I do not say that the 20,000 work in the fields, but undoubtedly some of them do. Are not these men the best judges of what will happen, and how they are likely to be affected if this labour is to be abolished ? Who were the parties who voted most strongly for the abolition of kanaka labour ? The men who are associated with this industry, and whose very existence, industrially speaking, depend upon it. It has been rightly contended that Northern Queensland was primarily responsible for the acceptance of the Commonwealth Constitution by that State. It was by their votes that we were able to carry federation there. In the very districts supposed to be most affected by this question, the largest majority cast their votes in favour of the abolition of kanaka labour. Is it not idle then to say that ruin and disaster is going to overtake them ? Have they not a better knowledge of the facts than outsiders ? Our friends in Bundaberg now shift their ground in regard to the colour line. If I had time to obtain from my home newspaper criticisms upon my own attitude on this matter, honorable senators would be startled by the foul and vituperative abuse heaped upon me because I said that white men could do this work in Bundaberg. If the measure does not go through committee at an early date, I certainly shall be able to show honorable

senators how I was abused in the press because I dared to say that white men could do the work in Bundaberg. Now they shift their ground and say that it can be done there by white men. I am going to show that the work can be done not only in Bundaberg, but that even in the far north white men have been doing it, and will be able to do it. I have been returned for Bundaberg on three occasions, and I believe the people of that town know their own business fairly well. In 1896 I went up there to take the seat from the Government. The sitting member was a wealthy and thoroughly respectable man, but in my own judgment, he was absolutely wrong in his views, more especially on this question. I opposed him, and won the seat by a very large majority. I might mention that Bundaberg was my first home in Queensland. I went there in 1884, when I came out as an immigrant. I left the town, after a short residence, and returned in 1896 to become its member, although I had been in Parliament for years before that, but not for that district. I was anxious to win the seat on the white labour ticket, and to convince the people of Queensland and Australia that the wretched cry that white men could not do the work was absolutely farcical and empty - as empty as it was loud, and it has been loud enough for years past. I won the election by 736 votes to 521 - a majority of 215 - and it was fought on the white labour question. There was no equivocation on my part. That question was put before the people in the clearest and most emphatic terms I was capable of using. In 1899, despite the ruin and disaster which it was said was likely to take place if I were returned, I went back and again sought re-election, and had to contest the seat against one of the most powerful opponents whom the Government could bring forward - a gentleman who had shilly-shallied on this question for many years. He was returned to the Queensland Parliament in 1898 - I refer to Mr. Charles Powers - as a supporter of black labour, but in 1895 he swung right round on the question, and made one of the strongest speeches ever delivered in favour of the abolition of black labour. In 1899 Mr. Powers was out of Parliament, and had been since 1896, but he had some prospect of getting into office as Attorney-General if he could win the Bundaberg seat, and I say without hesitation that Mr. Powers was the strongest opponent who could have been brought against me at that time. What was the result? The voting for me was 771, and for Mr. Powers 506, so that my majority had increased by 55 votes over the 1896 election, and this gentleman did not receive even the same number of votes as his opponent had received three years previously. Again, in July, 1900, though my opponent and myself stood on the same platform so far as this question was concerned, my majority was 423. That is to say, three times in succession I was returned for this town, and upon this question above every other question. A good deal has been said with regard to the votes cast during the federal elections. I am going to deal now with the number of votes at Bundaberg cast for gentlemen aspiring to become senators on the white labour ticket, as compared with the number of votes given to their opponents, and to show how- they come out so far as the town of Bundaberg is concerned. The point is that this district depends for its existence almost exclusively upon the continuance of this great industry. The place has flourished and prospered during the last few years. Some people say that that is entirely due to black labour, but I deny that, and I believe that it would have prospered even more if there had never been a black man there. The federal elections took place, I think, on the 30th of March last, and the official declaration of the poll was made in April. In comparing the votes polled by the white labour candidates with those polled by the strong opponents who were against them, I take first the case of Senator Drake, our Postmaster-General. He topped the poll in the town of Bundaberg with 784 votes, while Mr. Thynne, an old politician of many years standing, and for several years a Minister of the Crown in Queensland, and one of the strongest advocates on the other side of the question, received only 396 votes. My own vote was 676, as compared with 377 polled by Mr. Cowley, the ablest advocate of black labour in the State of Queensland. I say that unhesitatingly, although the gentleman was a strong opponent of mine. I beat him by nearly two to one. Senator Higgs polled 630 votes at Bundaberg, as compared with 377 votes polled by our honorable friend, Senator Ferguson. Notwithstanding all that our honorable friend has said, Senator Higgs beat him at Bundaberg by nearly two to one.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- Senator Ferguson was not there.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I venture to say that if the honorable senator had been there, and had advocated his own cause, he would have secured fewer votes. Senator Dawson polled 564 votes as against 346 votes polled by Mr.

Bartholemew, a local man, and an influential man in the town of Maryborough. Senator Stewart polled 474 votes as compared with 295 votes polled by Mr. Hamilton, the Government whip in Queensland, and a strong advocate of black labour. Even my friend Mr. Hoolan polled 300 votes. Now, let us take the case* of the man who, next to Mr. Cowley, and above all others, was most pronounced in support of kanaka labour, and how many votes do honorable senators think this gentleman received in the town of Bundaberg, which, according to himself, he was going to save from ruin and disaster by preventing the abolition of kanaka labour 1 That gentleman was Mr. Murray-Prior, and he received only 125 votes. Dr. Ahearne a most intelligent and well educated man, and a strong advocate of coloured labour, also came to the town of Bundaberg, and how many votes did he get for his efforts to save the district? He got 61 votes. I will now compare the aggregate vote received by the white labour as compared with the black labour candidates. Those representing the white labour ticket polled 3,428 votes, and all the candidates advocating black labour combined secured only 2,361 votes. There was, therefore, a majority in favour of the white labour candidates of 1,067. Were not those people the best judges as to what was best for themselves, and as to the class of labour necessary to carry on their industry, the preservation of which was going to maintain their homes, to safeguard their property, to prevent their families being injured and scattered, and to prevent ruin and disaster overtaking them all round.

Senator Charleston

- But it has been proved that in Bundaberg sugar can be grown by white labour.

Senator GLASSEY

- Of course, that is admitted, but the vilest abuse that has ever been offered to me because I urged that white men could do the work came from the very people in Bundaberg, who make that statement now. It is only lately that that statement has been made, and it is only lately that they have shifted their ground. I could refer honorable members to the criticisms, abuse, vilification, and slander I had to endure even so late as 1899, when contesting the election against Mr. Powers. But when it is found that this question is going to be dealt with, and that- too at an early date, they shift the colour line, and they say this industry can be carried on at Bundaberg with white labour, but it is impossible for it to be carried on with white labour further north. I say that it is positive trash and nonsense to talk in that way. There is no part of the State in which the industry could not be carried on by means of white labour. On that point I will call to my aid as a witness even the Brisbane Courier, the newspaper which is now so loud in denunciation of -all those who support this measure. I find that the Courier actually takes to task Mr. Coghlan, the New South Wales statistician, for expressing the opinion that it was almost impossible for sugar to be grown in Queensland by means of white labour. Only on the 15th of January of this year, in replying to Mr. Coghlan's assertion, that the climate of Queensland rendered the employment of white labour in the sugar industry of the State almost impossible, the Courier said -

Mr. Coghlan's own figures prove him to be in error. From 1891 to 1898 the number of kanakas decreased by 9 per cent. , while the area under cane more than doubled in the same period. . . . Why then assume that sugar planting in Queensland without black labour is an impossibility ?

Let honorable senators now mark the plea that was put in, a plea put forward by myself on many occasions in Bundaberg and at other places -

All that is asked is that this matter of black labour shall be dealt with by evolution and not by revolution.

Senator Fraser

- That is reasonable.

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Senator GLASSEY

- That is reasonable, and that is the very policy adopted by the Government to-day - the gradual abolition of this class of labour. The Government, in addition, have proposed to give a substantial reward, in the shape of a bonus .and a high protective duty to the planters, to enable them to carry on the industry successfully rather than expose them to undue competition from abroad. Not only is the Government policy an evolutionary policy, but in the most generous way and supported, to their everlasting credit, by the free-traders, it is proposed to provide a high protective duty and a bonus for planters who employ white labour. Coming to the question as to whether Northern Queensland is likely to suffer in consequence of the difficulty of procuring labour, and to the alleged impossibility of white men being able to do the work in Northern Queensland I think I have some evidence to show that that is not so. 'The

question was raised by Senator Dobson, not for the first time, and the honorable and learned senator told: us how he was influenced, as other honorable senators and other people have said they were influenced, by the action taken by Sir Samuel Griffith in 1892 in reversing his policy of 1883 - a policy adopted by the country at a general election held in that year, when an overwhelming majority of the people of Queensland returned an overwhelming number of members to the Queensland Parliament of , 1884 to settle this question. Sir Samuel Griffith did settle it in 1885, by enacting that after 31st December, 1890, no more kanakas should be introduced into Queensland, but, ultimately, that policy was reversed, notwithstanding that it was again confirmed by the general elections in 1888, when the Postmaster-General (Senator Drake) and myself entered Parliament. Then the leaders of both parties, on behalf of their followers and of the country, pronounced most emphatically in favour of the continuation of the policy of exclusion adopted by the Act of 1885. Senator Dobson said that he had been greatly influenced by the action which Sir Samuel Griffith and his Government took in 1892. The honorable and learned senator and others said that the industry was in a desperate condition for the want of labour.

Senator Fraser

- Through the panic; not from the want' of labour.

Senator GLASSEY

- We shall deal with the question of panic ; we shall cover the whole ground so far , as we can. I happened to be there and to go all through this controversy. Let us see the reasons which Sir Samuel Griffith advanced for the adoption of the 1883 policy and the final enactment of the measure of 1885, and, mind you, he has never withdrawn those reasons, which were very good and cogent ones. When he was addressing the people in 1892 he stated the reasons which he had advanced in the first instance, and then he went on to give reasons why he had reversed his policy. In his manifesto to the people in March, 1892, he said -

You are aware that I have been for many years one of the most determined opponents of the introduction of servile or coloured labour into Queensland. My objection has not been on account of the colour of men's skins, but I have maintained that the employment of such labour under the conditions to which we had become accustomed was injurious to the best interests of the colony regarded as a home for the British race, and principally for the following reasons : -

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.

To these reasons was added, so far as Polynesian labour is concerned, the discredit that had been brought upon Queensland by the abuses, that for some years prevailed in the South Sea. Island trade. I recognise the force of those reasons as fully as ever.

Then he went on to give other reasons.

Senator Fraser

- He . recanted all the same.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I challenge the honorable senator to find the slightest recantation in the manifesto, which I have read most carefully, not only now, but many times previously. What did he say t -

It was, however, answered that tropical agriculture could not be performed by white men, and that the employment of coloured labour was therefore inevitable. This statement I always doubted, and careful inquiries made from time to time led me to reject it altogether.

My objections to Polynesian labour were, however, from the first less strong than to the introduction of Asiatics. The people of the Pacific islands are not so numerous as to be a permanent danger to our social or political institutions, and I have always regarded their employment as a temporary and transitional expedient. It was not, therefore, until 1885 that I was induced, under circumstances to which I need not now refer, to propose to put a limit upon the time within which they might be introduced. And this proposal, which was accepted by the Legislative Assembly without division, though ' not without dissent,

was, I believe, supported as much on the ground of the scandals which had attended the labour trade as for any other reason.

Let me now invite your attention to what has happened since that time. I will state results only. But I promise that these results are, in my opinion due, in great part, to the legislation to which I have just referred, as well as a general conviction on the part of the planters, as well as the people generally, that a radical change was necessary in the system of sugar culture.

In the first place, the system of large estates worked- by gang labour has fallen into disfavour. The owners are not only willing but anxious to sell or lease portions of their estates to farmers who will themselves grow the cane and sell it to the manufacturers. And it is recognised, I think generally, that .in future the cultivation of the cane and the manufacture of sugar must be in different hands.

In the second place, it has been established by actual trial that sugar is a profitable crop to be grown by small farmers if they can command a sale for it to the manufacturers at reasonable prices. And this system is already carried on with great success, notably in the Bundaberg, Mackay, and Herbert River districts.

In the third place, it has been proved that in Queensland cane can be grown by white labour. I am aware that this position is still disputed, but it is admitted by most of the more liberal minded planters with whom I have been in communication.

I remember very well that, when the question was first raised, it was alleged emphatically and without qualification that it was impossible for white persons to grow cane without the aid of coloured labour. Of course that contention was exploded years ago, and the fact is admitted on many sides, except by the most prejudiced persons who, I am sorry to say, are not a few, that white men can cultivate, trash, cut and handle the cane, manufacture it into sugar, and place the product in the market without the slightest aid from coloured sources.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- What did Sir Samuel Griffith say in the Governor's speech of the 29th March, 1892?

Senator GLASSEY

- I shall leave the honorable member to refer to that speech, but I promise honorable senators that if that question is pressed too far I shall be obliged to give the country some information which perhaps it does not know.

Senator Fraser

- We do not wish anything to be kept back.

Senator GLASSEY

- I am satisfied that if it were all stated there would be very interesting things which some persons would not care about being said. I do not wish to be driven into taking that course.

Senator Fraser. - Tell it all.

Senator GLASSEY

- Before the Bill gets through committee, honorable senators will hear abundance of evidence. I shall give the reasons alleged by Sir Samuel Griffith for his change of policy.

Senator Fraser

- Then the honorable senator does not take his word.

Senator GLASSEY

- Let me put my own case in my own way. I am too old a hand to be drawn off the track by these little interruptions. Talking about the results and the consummate success of growing cane by white labour, Sir Samuel Griffith gives his reasons for the reversal of policy -

These results have not, however, been attained without the troubles which invariably attend the trying of new experiments. Successive Governments have endeavoured to assist the enterprising experimenters by giving facilities for the introduction of European labour of various kinds, and by aid to central mills. But these endeavours have been counteracted from two different directions. While some of the planters have loyally tried to make the best of the altered conditions and prospects - and I am glad to know, in many instances, with conspicuous success - others for a long time set their faces against any change, and did all in their power to compel a return to the old objectionable state of things.

Senator Charleston

- It did not help the Government.

Senator GLASSEY

- No, I was an actor in all these transactions, but I endeavoured to sustain the honour of the country and to vindicate the integrity of all those who took the other side of the question as against Sir Samuel Griffith. What did Sir Samuel Griffith do with the view of finding a feather bed to fall upon when he changed his policy? He went on to blame another set of persons. He said -

On the other hand, amongst the working population, whose interests I had, perhaps, too exclusively in view, there has arisen a body of men, claiming to be leaders of thought, who have by their speech and action rendered it impossible that the experiment of the employment of white labour in tropical agriculture should be fairly tried.

I was there at the time. I took a very strong interest and action in connexion with the labour movement in Queensland, but I do not know anything of this -

There are not at present in Queensland a sufficient number of Europeans able and willing to do the necessary work, and to take the place of the Polynesians, who are gradually leaving the colony, and of whom no more can be introduced under the existing laws. Yet' every opposition has been offered to the introduction of any additional labour, the opinion having been promulgated that field labour in tropical agriculture is degrading, and the employment of white labour in that industry has been denounced, except at rates of wages which the industry cannot pay.

What rate of wages ? A reasonable living rate of wages was sought, and, will I hope, always be sought - In short, these men will neither engage in the work themselves nor, so far as they can prevail, allow any one else to do so.

As one who took part in that business, I declare that statement absolutely to be unwarranted and unfounded. In my place in Parliament I said without the slightest qualification that that statement was absolutely unwarranted and unfounded, and could not be - it never has been - justified by facts.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- He is a very unreliable man, then ?

Senator GLASSEY

- On questions of public policy he is most unreliable.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- The honorable senator is proving too much.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I think not.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- The honorable senator laid great stress on his evidence in the first instance, and now he is discounting it.

Senator GLASSEY

- It all shows the unreliability of this gentleman as a statesman, not when he was surrounded by men wishing to promote the best interests of the country, but when he was allied with a man who dipped his hands into the public Treasury to the extent of £250,000.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- Who had this cash ?

Senator GLASSEY

- The late Sir Thomas Mcllwraith dipped his hands into the public Treasury, through the Queensland National Bank, as is proved by the report of a commission, to the extent of £250,000.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- I do not believe a word of it.

Senator GLASSEY

- That was the finding of a commission.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- The honorable senator is slandering a dead man. I do not believe a word of the statement.

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Senator GLASSEY

- The honorable senator can please himself. Sir Samuel Griffith went on to say -

In the meantime the planters as well as the smaller farmers already engaged in sugar culture do not know where to turn for the necessary labour to cultivate and take off their crops, while the many others, who are anxious to engage in the industry on the new conditions, are deterred from doing so for the same reasons. The immediate prospect is that many of the mills will be closed, and some removed, and the productiveness of the lands of the colony, instead of being largely increased, will be seriously diminished. We are then in this position : - On the one hand, it is proved that the sugar industry offers a field for the settlement of numberless families upon the land, where they can live and bring up their families in comfort. The danger of the aggregation of large estates is past ; and it is shown that Europeans can engage in the industry with success when certain preliminary work has been done. The only form of labour that is, under existing circumstances, immediately available for this purpose, seems to be Polynesian labour. And I think, as I have said, that this labour is less open to objection than any other form of coloured labour.

Unquestionably, kanaka labour is the least objectionable form of coloured labour that can be employed. That has been our experience in Queensland for many years. If it were imperative that this class of labour should be continued, which I absolutely deny, then, unquestionably, the kanakas are by far the least objectionable of the coloured races. I do not wish it to be inferred that I desire to encourage the retention of this class of labour, because, judging from observation and inquiry, it can unquestionably be done without. Sir Samuel Griffith further says -

If, then, the system, now happily inaugurated, of small farmers, is to be carried on to a final success, I can see no alternative but to permit for a time, at any rate, the resumption of Polynesian immigration. Adequate provision must of course be made, and they can be made, for preventing abuses in the introduction of the labourers, and for preventing them from entering into competition with white labourers in other occupations, and it should be provided that the immigration shall continue (unless, of course, otherwise determined by the Legislature) for a definite but limited period, of, say, ten years. By that time I have no doubt that such further developments will have taken place as will enable the sugar industry to be carried on without fear of our reverting to the former system, with its dangerous incidents and consequences, and in the meantime I believe that a valuable impetus will be given to the producing industries of the colony.

I need not repeat that under that policy of the establishment of central mills, and the subdivision of great estates, a great success has been attained. Now I come to the reversal of this policy, and I shall show the Senate that both parties in the State of Queensland were, at the 1888 election, absolutely pledged not to re-open the question of coloured labour, and further that the re-opening of that question was again discussed in Parliament in 1889 on a motion brought forward for the purpose of promoting legislation to give assistance to the planters. I will show, in order to emphasize the point made by the Postmaster-General, that the policy of excluding the kanakas was at that time regarded as the settled policy of the country, if there could be a settled policy in any country at all. In 1888, Sir Samuel Griffith, as Premier, issued a manifesto to the country. I was elected to Parliament as one of his supporters, reserving to myself a perfectly free hand on certain labour questions. Sir Samuel had an idea that if Sir Thomas. McIlwraith and his party were to get into power at that time, they would reverse this exclusion policy, and he informed the country of what ' would happen if that were done. I referred to this subject in the Queensland Parliament of 1892, and what I am about to read can be found in the Parliamentary Debates for that State, vol. 67, page 148. In this manifesto Sir Samuel Griffith refers to the policy adopted in 1883. He says -

First of all comes the coloured labour question, on which, indeed, depends our very existence as a free people. Every year that passes deepens my conviction that a free, self-governing population and a servile population, not admitted to a share in the Government, cannot possibly exist together in the same country. You will, no doubt, be told that the question is settled. I wish I could believe that it is settled, but I cannot forget that it is only a few months since the champions of coloured labour, in the prospect of the coming general election, discontinued for a time their unmeasured abuse of the Government for their action in this respect. I am unable to believe in the genuineness of their conversion, and think it more likely that if the opportunity offered they would act upon the principle which they have always consistently followed, and let the future take care of itself, if only for the present they can make money for themselves and their absentee allies. Is this apprehension not supported by the fact that only a few days ago we were

informed that a recent distinguished visitor has been proclaiming in England, as a settled and admitted fact, that the north of Australia must in future belong to the coloured races ? I believe, on the contrary, that all Australia will be needed by the white races. And I am convinced that the agricultural lands in the tropical parts of the colony can be successfully and profitably cultivated by European settlers, working with their own hands, but as their own masters.

What did Sir Thomas Mcllwraith say in answer to this? He made a reply in a document signed by his own hand. It can be found quoted in the Queensland Hansard of 1892, page 148. He said -

Gentlemen, - With a view of showing the absurdity of the statements made by my opponents, I now pledge myself to the following, if I am returned to power : - Not to allow the introduction of coolie or other coloured labour ; not to allow the introduction of Chinese ; not to pay the survey fees of the transcontinental syndicate ; not to introduce or support a Transcontinental Railway Bill or scheme ; to oppose a land tax ; to encourage local industries by protection. I am gentlemen, your obedient servant, Thomas Mcllwraith

That was Sir Thomas Mcllwraith's reply in writing. At that election Sir Thomas Mcllwraith was returned to power by a large majority. Both parties were pledged up to the hilt not to re-open the kanaka labour question. Several honorable senators have stated, and it has also been stated elsewhere, that the opinion of Sir Samuel Griffith ought to be considered on this question. What was his opinion at that time? As soon as the election was over, and Parliament was fairly established, and as soon as there was a favorable opportunity Mr. Cowley and a few of his friends introduced this question. Mr. Cowley brought forward a motion, by way of a feeler, that Parliament should give some assistance to the sugar industry. The assistance they wanted was the continuance of kanaka labour. Previous to that there had been a Royal commission appointed. Of the three members of the commission, two were favorable to the continued introduction of the kanaka, whilst one, the late lamented Mr. Groom, the member for Darling Downs in the House of Representatives, reported adversely. Mr. Cowley's motion was debated at great length, and I am now going to give a few extracts from the speeches delivered by the Premier of the day, the Hon. Mr. Morehead, in confirmation of the policy that had been previously adopted. I am also going to quote from the speech delivered by Sir Samuel Griffith on that occasion, expressing his pleasure that the question was not to be reopened. These extracts will be found in Hansard for June, 1889. Mr. Cowley moved - That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable early next session to adopt some means of encouraging the sugar industry.

Upon which Sir Samuel Griffith moved the following amendment -

After the word " means" to insert "not involving the re-opening of the coloured labour question."

What did Mr. Morehead, the Premier of the day, state on that occasion ? It is reported in Hansard of 1889, pages 168 and 169. He said -

With regard to this particular motion, I do not see that the Government are called upon to express any opinion whatever. But they will do so all the same. I will say at once what the intentions of the Government are. The Government do not for one moment intend to meet the difficulty in the way in which it was, attempted to be solved by the leader of the Opposition some years ago. That is to say, they do not intend to meet the wants, or the supposed wants, as some honorable members ' might call it, of the sugar planters by introducing cheap European labour. Nor do they propose to extend the existing provisions of the Polynesian Labourers Act. Those are two distinct propositions taken up by the Government. But the Government are prepared in any way they can, to meet, the sugar planters, by way of assisting them as regards irrigation, or in any other way by which such a great industry can be protected and preserved, and not destroyed.

What did Sir Samuel Griffith say in answer to the Premier's speech ? It is in Hansard, page 171. Sir Samuel Griffith said -

While the House is perfectly willing to commit itself to the encouragement of the industry in some way, I do not think we ought to be asked to walk into a trap, or to pass some resolution which can be referred to afterwards when the planters may say - "We trusted to you ; you said you would do something, and you must now do something; and if you cannot do anything else, you must give us some special facilities as to labour." I think all that should be precluded. We should tell the planters exactly what we mean. It is better for them, and better for us all to know exactly what we do mean. We have been told by the Government what they mean.

I want honorable members to pay particular attention to the prophetic words of the then Premier as to what would be done by Sir Samuel Griffith -

The Premier. - And they were told before by the Act.

The Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith. - Yes, but that Act might be repealed, or its provisions might be extended by the Government.

The Minister for Mines and Works. - We are not going to do it.

The Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith. - But some other Government might.

The Premier. - Some other Government might be your own.

Was ever more prophetic language used? That was in 1889, and in 1892 the very thing Mr. Morehead predicted came to pass -

The Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith. - We have seen cases of getting out of obligations before now. I think this resolution should be so worded as to show exactly what we do mean, and I shall propose that we insert some words which will have that effect, and which I am sure no member of this House who considers this question as I do will have any difficulty in supporting. I propose that, after the word "means," in the second line, the following words be inserted: - "Not involving a re-opening of the coloured labour question."

Honorable senators will thus see that that was a confirmation of the policy adopted in 1885, and confirmed at the general elections in 1888, the House being elected almost unanimously on that ticket.

The Courier, in criticising the action taken by Mr. Cowley and others in Parliament in regard to the re-opening of this question, wrote as follows in April, 1889: -

No Government dare re-open the black labour question, even in the attempt to save a doomed industry. The present Government are pledged to the hilt to have no more to do with coloured labour, and political tergiversation of so black a kind as would be implied in the adoption of the recommendation of a majority of the commission is not possible. Honour would not permit it; an all but unanimous people would not suffer it. The Queensland sugar industry is not doomed to extinction; the possibilities of science and invention are endless; and if only the planters were manfully to face their losses as other speculators have had to do, instead of dolefully appealing for help to the State, they would in time surmount all difficulties, and see a fair good arising out of a past evil.

Senator Fraser

- Parliament unanimously revoked all that.

Senator GLASSEY

- Parliament had no right to do so without appealing to the people.

Senator Ferguson

- There was a fresh election before that was done.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I shall come to all that presently. In further confirmation of what I have alluded to, Mr. Cowley, speaking in the Queensland Legislature in 1890, said, according to Hansard for that year, page 1,063 -

The people of the whole of Australia are pretty well satisfied that black labour is doomed, and must cease, and I say this much: that the people who have been interested in black labour up to the present time are prepared to accept that decision. They have sense enough to see that they cannot fight against the inevitable, and therefore they submit. I do not say they have changed their opinions, because those opinions are founded on many years' experience and very careful consideration; but at the same time, they can see clearly and distinctly that the people of Australia are determined this shall be a white man's country, and they bow to the inevitable. Therefore, I think that honorable members should take this in all sincerity, and not bring this cry in, because I believe it is once and for all settled.

I need hardly go any further, with regard to this being the settled policy of Queensland, for if ever a question was supposed to be settled beyond all doubt it was the policy of a white Queensland, as a branch, I am glad to say, of a white Australia. It was affirmed by the general elections in 1883, adopted by the Parliament in 1885, confirmed again by the general election in 1888, confirmed most conclusively by "the same Parliament voting for the purpose of not re-opening the policy in 1889, and confirmed by a Minister speaking on behalf of his Government in 1890. It is therefore idle to charge the Federal Government with upsetting the supposed black labour policy of Queensland. It was never the true policy

of that State. The change was brought about in the most treacherous manner possible, in 1892, and perhaps in some instances for corrupt purposes, by a Parliament pledged up to the hilt against the change. The people of Queensland trusted these representatives, who were in honour bound to allow the question to rest, or else to go to the people and seek their suffrages upon their reversal of policy.

Senator Fraser

- How was the change brought about ?

Senator GLASSEY

- By the combination of both political parties in a Parliament four years old, and as I have said, the members of that Parliament were pledged up to the hilt against black labour. Let two big parties come together in any Parliament in the most treacherous manner, contrary to all rules of honour and parliamentary usage, and what can be done ? The most dastardly thing that has ever occurred in political annals, was done by the Parliament to which I refer. It violated every pledge of honour.

The PRESIDENT

- I do not think the honorable senator should use such strong language in regard to any Parliament.

Senator Higgs

- It is quite right.

Senator GLASSEY

- It is justifiable.

The PRESIDENT

- I do not think the honorable senator ought to use it

Senator Fraser. - He would not be allowed to do so in the Queensland Parliament.

Senator GLASSEY

- I have used as strong language in the Queensland Parliament under the very noses of the people I am condemning. I say the people of Queensland were most grossly betrayed at that time. Supposing that both parties in the Federal Parliament came together to-morrow, and agreed to adopt a line of policy entirely different from that which they were pledged to carry out, what would the people be able to do ? If in two or three years time honorable members went to the country, they might, by reason of their influence, succeed in inducing the country to agree to that reversal of policy. I know of no country in the world where such a coalition as that to which I refer would not succeed for a time.

Senator Barrett

- It kills party government.

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes. It is all very well to say - "Why do not the constituents reverse that policy?" It takes years to build up another party to counteract the influence of the party which has brought about the change.

Senator McGregor

- Did Sir Samuel Griffith go to the people after that ?

Senator GLASSEY

- No; he was appointed to the Chief Justiceship.

Senator McGregor

- Who appointed him ?

Senator GLASSEY

- The same Government of which he was a member, and of which he was the head up to that time ; and the same Parliament granted an increase in salary of £1,000 a year in order that he might go on the bench as Chief Justice of the State.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- Is he not a good man ?

Senator GLASSEY

- A first-class lawyer and a good Judge. I have nothing whatever to say against him in his official capacity. He is a man of great intellectual capacity, and an eminent Judge, but he, with those who acted with him, did a great injustice to the people of Queensland.

Senator Barrett

- He was an awful wobbler in politics.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I will not deal with that. Let us now consider the question of the alleged scarcity of labour at the time when this change was made in 1892. I have grown tired of listening to that cry. I have been endeavouring to combat such nonsense in my own State for many years past, and I believe we have still to combat it here. Sir Samuel Griffith alleged as a reason for the change that there was not sufficient labour available at the time. It was said there was a scarcity of coloured labour, that the industry was in a languishing and desperate condition, and there was general ruin all round. Let us see what one of the leading newspapers in Bundaberg had to say on this question at the time. Bundaberg is a large sugar-growing district, and the newspaper I refer to would certainly not go against the interests of the town with regard to the labour question at that time. I should mention, by the way, that there was a great agitation for the reversal of the policy to which I have alluded, and large petitions were being signed both in Bundaberg and in Brisbane, and indeed in many parts of the State. The Star newspaper wrote on that occasion - and this will be found in my speech on the Kanaka Bill in 1892, as reported in the Queensland Hansard of that year -

It is a striking commentary on this line of argument which is going to bring back this previous prosperity when we state that the industry has not been deprived of coloured labour yet. There are more Polynesians in this district than ever there were. The plantations are full to overflowing, in anticipation of the stoppage of the traffic. Further, there are numbers of kanakas walking the main streets, fishing on the river side, or sitting in and about the kanaka shops, - having no employment.

Yet it was said there was an actual dearth of labour. Not only were white men walking about in idleness, but coloured men were unemployed. The Star put the matter very fairly. It continued -

We are informed that 200 might be hired at once if they could find employment, but, evidently, no one wants them ; at least, no one engaged in cane cultivation or sugar manufacture. Or is it because they ask 4s. or 6s. a week, whereas the new chum boys can be had for less ?

For 2s. 6d. I add ; therein lies the secret. Plenty of men could be obtained. The kanaka, however, wanted 5s. and 6s. per week, but the planters desired them to work for 2s. 6d. per week.

Senator BEST

- Do these conditions in regard to coloured labour still exist ?

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes. The kanakas are landed in Queensland under engagement for three years, and, generally speaking, their wages are at the rate of 2s. 6d. per week with ' food, clothing, tobacco, and so on. The 200 boys to which the Star refers, were free kanakas, and would not be employed by the planters because they were asking too much. The cry that there was a scarcity of labour was a mere pretence raised in order to obtain a reversal of policy.

Senator Charleston

- The honorable senator is answering Sir Samuel Griffith.

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes. Let me show by a quotation from my speech in the Queensland Parliament in 1892, what Mr. Gibson, the largest planter in Bundaberg, said at this time. It will be found at page 220 of Hansard for that year, and also in the Brisbane Courier -

He would take the testimony of Mr. Angus Gibson, of Bingera, owner of a very large plantation a few miles out of Bundaberg, its given by him in an interview appearing in the Brisbane Courier of ' the 21st January last- That gentleman stilted that there was no scarcity of labour, as many kanakas came to the Bundaberg district from the north. ' He went on to say: - " During the past year the pay of the annual kanaka labourer was raised from £15 to £20 per annum, the reason being that the planter did not wish the labourer to leave. There was no dearth of labour."

Senator Millen

- As showing that Mr. Gibson, at least, does not think that the proposed legislation will damage the industry, I may say that he has just ordered a very extensive irrigation plant for his plantation.

Senator GLASSEY

- That is so, and I may say that. Mr. Gibson has put before the people of Queensland, in the clearest and most explicit terms, the statement that the industry can be carried on by means of white labour if the "Federal Parliament will grant a reasonable protective duty. Further, he put it before the people of Queensland -that this question was going to be settled, and before federation was adopted the sugar

growers of Queensland knew that after federation the Federal Parliament was going to deal with this question and that black labour must go. We were then told that the industry was in a very deplorable condition and almost beyond the hope of recovery,, unless it could get this class of labour. I had to deal with that question in the Queensland Parliament, and I was able to show, as I shall show again, that at no previous period of its history had it been in a more prosperous condition than it was in at the time this agitation was going on. In 1890 there were 50,922 acres of land under - - cane, and 68,924 tons of sugar were produced. In 1891 there were 50,942 acres under cane, and there was a good deal less sugar produced that year,, but why ? It was - - in consequence of an adverse season, a condition of affairs which' is constantly recurring. The production in that year was. 51,219 tons. In 1892, the year before the reversal of the policy of exclusion, there were 55,520 acres under cane, and 61,368 tons of " sugar were produced, or within a few tons of the production of the record year of 1890. Is not that some proof that the sugar industry was not in the paralyzed state it was alleged to be ?

Senator Fraser

- They were then working under the altered conditions. The honorable senator has referred to 1892.

Senator GLASSEY

- I have referred to- 1890, 1891, and 1892, but they did not work under the altered conditions until the beginning of 1893. If the honorable senator is under any misapprehension upon the matter it will not be my fault.

Senator Fraser

- Quote the next year.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I am dealing with the time when it was alleged that there was a scarcity- of labour, and, in consequence, a terrible crisis in the sugar industry - when it was alleged that the industry was in a state of paralysis and collapse. When I come to deal with other matters, I shall deal with them under other circumstances. I am now going to give the real reasons for this alleged condition of paralysis and collapse, and I think I shall bring evidence, which will be conclusive on these points to the minds of most honorable- senators. The reasons will be found in a. speech of .my own, reported at page 219 of the Queensland Hansard for 1892, in answer, to. these criticisms. I was speaking in reply to remarks made by Mr. Philp, the present Premier of Queensland, a gentleman who is, perhaps, as well up in information respecting the sugar industry, as any man in Australia. He is a gentleman for whom personally I have the greatest possible regard. He is perfectly honorable, so far as I know, in all his dealings and transactions, but in my. opinion he is entirely mistaken with regard, to this question, and he was, I thought, entirely mistaken in attributing the alleged depression in the sugar industry at that time to the withdrawal of this class of labour. On that occasion I said -

He would prove from the speech of the honorable member for Townsville (Mr. Philp) that it was in consequence of the keen competition in prices. What did the honorable member say on the subject in 1880, on the 3rd August ? Of course he was then urging a continuance of the traffic. But what was his reason? He said " The planters sent to Ceylon, Java, and all the countries in the world pretty well where they thought suitable labour was procurable, but in nearly every case all coloured labour, except kanakas, was found to be a failure. That cost a considerable sum. At that time a great competition from, beet sugar crept in on us. About that time the price of sugar was from £28 to £30 a ton, when the mills were in full operation, but the' price came down drop, drop, until the net value at the mills was only £11 or £12 per ton." "That surely is some evidence: The report continues - " Of course we know that, considering, the interest on the cost of these huge mills, which amounted to nearly double what they should have done, under ordinary circumstances sugar growing would never pay at that price." There was the statement which was the kernel of the whole matter - that it was in consequence of the low price of sugar. He (Mr. Glassey) contended that if prices had been such as they were in 1883 and 1884, there would have been a very large extension, and he had no doubt the labourers would have been procurable. Now, what did the majority of the Royal commission say in the same, year, 1889.

I shall make a short quotation from the report of the Royal commission, because it is just as well" that it should be placed on record. What do they say on the subject of low prices on page 30, paragraph 9 - Since 1883 .sugars of all classes have fallen in price fully 50 per cent. , and there can be no doubt that

tins fall, which is likely to be permanent, has been a principal cause of the depression of the sugar industry in Queensland. That is to say, that if sugar had maintained its price, the plantations in the colony would have well paid their owners instead of ruining them.

The fall of 50 per cent, in the price of sugar is confirmed by the Royal commission, and by Mr. Philp. They say that but for that fall in prices, the sugar industry would have been, prosperous, and I go further and say there would have been great extension. Speaking of the price of kanaka labour, the report of the commission on page 30, paragraph, 10, says -

At the present time, however, it must be borne in mind that the cost of black labour in the colony has increased by more than 50 per cent, since 1883, and we find that this increase in working expenses, concurring with the great fall in the price of sugar and unfavorable seasons, has caused the working expenses of the plantations generally to exceed the value of their produce; this result, with no better prospect, in the future, naturally alarming capitalists and causing them to refuse the accommodation required to carry on with.

That is the whole point.

Senator Millen

- Before the honorable senator leaves that part of the subject, perhaps he will state that the financial complications were intensified by the fact that during the sugar boom period, men went in with an overplus of borrowed money, and had no margin in which to turn round when a state of depression set in.

Senator GLASSEY

- Not only that, but the Royal commission say in their report that it was in consequence of borrowed capital, and the want of sufficient capital to carry on, that much of the mischief was brought about. It is still alleged on many sides, but not on all sides, that white labour cannot be procured, and could not work upon the plantations of the north if it could be procured. Cairns is particularly singled out just now as a district in which the work could not be carried on by white labour. I am going to refer to this matter, and I shall quote the statement of Mr. Swan, a planter, and a successful planter in the Cairns district. The .Trinity Times, Cairns, says -

As a successful sugar-grower in the Mulgrave Central Mills, we asked Mr. Swan, of Nelson - first, did he consider that sugar was protected sufficiently by the proposed duty to enable it to be grown by white labour. "Undoubtedly I do," replied Mr. Swan. "There is ample margin."

The reference then goes on to deal with the labour - "How many men will find employment in our local cane-fields?" - "Cane takes about one man to every 8 acres. There are some 3,000 acres in the Mulgrave Central Mill, and there are not now 375 men in the fields. There are about six weeks only of slack time, the rest of the year finds constant work." "You hold that whites can do the work all right?" - "Of course they can. There is a lot harder and more tiresome labour done by whites than field work, I can assure you."

Senator Harney

- That is capacity, not inclination.

Senator GLASSEY

- We shall deal with the question of inclination presently.

If the cane-grower is going to get 4s. per ton more for his cane immediately (sugar now being £22 5s. per ton, meaning £2 5s. over and above the excise), he ought to do very well for the next three years, during which time he will still be able to have kanakas.

Senator Clemons

- He cannot get 4s. per ton and have the kanakas too. His authority is not much good.

Senator GLASSEY

- It is good.

Touching the labour question again, Mr. Swan, what, in your opinion, would be the best method of organizing white labour on the fields? - "Well, as far as the Central Mill goes, it all lies with the directors. If they would organize the white labour as they do the block there would be no difficulty whatever. White cutters would come up and do the work. There would be ample margin to pay them big cheques. I think the cutting should go on simultaneously on every farmer's grounds, matters being so arranged that the mill is guaranteed the right quantity every day. This would extend the time of cutting for each farmer,

instead of crowding it into a few days. By this means I believe a great saving would be effected. But, as I said before, if the directors will not make up their minds to use white labour there will be endless trouble."

Senator Ferguson

- The extent of this man's farm is less than 100 acres.

Senator GLASSEY

- I would not care if it were only 20 acres. The average acreage of a cane farm is, in the Bundaberg district, 32 acres, and in the Cairns district 72 acres. Therefore if this man has 100 acres he has a good deal more than the average.

Senator Ferguson

- What acreage has he got ?

Senator GLASSEY

- I am not here to say what he has got. I am dealing with a question of fact - namely, whether this labour has done and can do the work.

But you are emphatically of the opinion, Mr. Swan, that the new duties provide ample margin to pay white labour, and that white men will do the work satisfactorily? - "Yes, I am perfectly convinced on both those points, and I hope the Central Mill directors will see the matter in a proper light, and not try to stick to aliens in the face of what the country has resolved."

Let us see now what two or three of the leading merchants of Cairns say, because it is time that this wretched bubble was burst, so far as Cairns is concerned. I have been in the Cairns district on several occasions, and from the information I have gathered, it is a mere "bubble. I shall quote a few extracts from an interview with Cairns residents, which appeared originally in the Trinity Times, and was re-published in Progress of 9th November last from the Gympie Truth. What has Mr. Boland, a leading merchant and sugar-producer in Cairns, to say in regard to the alien restriction laws and the sugar duties ? -

I am persuaded that nothing but good will result. I believe the effect on this town and district will be to give it an enormous impetus.

In answer to the query of whether he was satisfied that the sugar industry could do without black labour, Mr. Boland said -

Absolutely so ; and I may claim to have considerable knowledge of the industry. Our sugar will have £3 per ton advantage over the sugar manufactured outside the Commonwealth, and after July next white-grown sugar will have £2 per ton advantage more. That will be equal to 11s. per ton on cane. Under existing circumstances; Europeans, to my knowledge, have made comfortable livings-

Senator Playford

- " The existing circumstances" mean the employment of kanakas.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- The honorable senator is proving too much.

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Senator GLASSEY

- That is my loss. I put this information on record whether it proves too much or too little. - and now they should receive about 100 per cent. more for their cane, will have the daily foodstuffs of life cheaper, and will be in a better position to pay white men's wages. White men will do the work all right now that they will be adequately paid for their labour.

What did Mr. Mayers, a keen active politician, and thoroughly respectable man of long standing, state? - Mr. G.B. Mayers of the same town, a merchant, cane-grower, and central mill director, and hitherto a strong opponent of kanaka legislation, was asked if he believed that given a slight increase in the bonus and protective duty, the industry could be run with white labour. He replied : - " Yes I do, and I feel that the majority of those who are fighting for better treatment to the industry are very ill-advised in taking the stand they are doing, and attacking Mr. Barton for currying out the will of the people. Had their efforts been all focussed into getting better terms we might have succeeded better. Give us enough to pay real good wages, and there will not be any real labour difficulties that cannot be got over in time. That is my personal experience."

Senator Charleston

-Is he a planter 1

Senator GLASSEY

- He is a merchant, who is largely interested in the growth and production of sugar. I shall now deal with the supposition that the rainfall of Cairns is so great, and the heat so intense that it is impossible for white men to work in the cane-fields.

Senator Ferguson

- That is quite true.

Senator GLASSEY

- Does the honorable senator really know the heat or the rainfall of Cairns ?

Senator Ferguson

- Yes.

Senator GLASSEY

- I believe the honorable senator said last night that the rainfall is about 20 feet.

Senator Fraser

- Does the honorable senator deny that 1

Senator GLASSEY

- It is not a question of what I am denying. I am going to state some facts from a reliable source - the Meteorological department, which ought to be good enough evidence. What does the meteorologist say has been the highest, lowest and mean shade temperatures in the sugar districts of Queensland during the past few years ? In a letter I received from him on the 25 th February last, he gives the information in the following return : -

I think honorable senators will agree that the stories we have heard about the heat being so intense that it is impossible for white men to trash and cut the cane are not justified.

Senator Harney

- The Indian heat is only 90 odd degrees, and yet people cannot live in it sometimes.

Senator Playford

- It all depends on the atmospheric conditions.

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Senator GLASSEY

- We have been told' by Senator Ferguson that the annual rainfall is 20 feet. I have been supplied with a return of the rainfall in each year from 1895 to 1899, both years inclusive. What is the average annual rainfall for that period of five years? It is 52.41 inches for Cairns, 135.97 inches for Geraldton - which is the highest rainfall in the State by a long way - and 51.92 inches for Ingham.

Ingham, away up on the tablelands of the Herbert River, is a beautiful district. At Mackay, the average rainfall is 70.09 inches ; at Port Douglas, 67.28 ; at Bundaberg, 53.07 ; at Maryborough, 49.36 ; and at Nerang, 55.21. What then becomes of all those stories about the heat and the rainfall being so severe that the white man cannot work in those latitudes ? Those stories are shown to be mere idle baby tales, told to prop up a rotten cause. The whole argument on that ground falls to pieces.- I want to prick a few more of these bubbles before I conclude. We have been told something about the health of the white men who work in the sugar-fields, and that they suffer very much in Queensland. I have had to deal with this question before, and I am sorry to have to repeat myself ; but, as I said in this Chamber in the course of the debate on the address in reply, if the climate is so bad for white people, the inference is that it is comparatively healthy for black men. Let us see what the facts are. The number of deaths of kanakas for the last ten years was 3,642 out of the comparatively small number of kanakas, 8,000 odd, we have in Queensland at present. The rate is 364 per year on an average, while the death rate is 42.22 per 1,000. Surely that is an appalling fact. The average death rate for the whole State of Queensland, including kanakas, is a little over twelve per 1,000, and this figure includes aged people and infants, whereas the bulk of kanakas in that State are in the prime of life. Thus seven kanakas die for every white man of a similar age. The members of the Royal commission, which sat in 1889, were agreed that white men could do the work on the southern side of Townsville, but they thought that it was impossible for them to do it north of Townsville without detriment to their health. What are the facts ? Let us take the produce of sugar north and south of Townsville. In 1899, there were in round numbers 123,000 tons of sugar manufactured in Queensland. Of this quantity, 88,000 tons were manufactured south of Townsville, and 35,000 tons north of Townsville. Therefore, assuming for the sake of argument that it would be detrimental to the

health of white men to engage in the sugar industry in the extreme northern part of the State, it is seen that the production of sugar there as compared with the production in the southern part is. very small. I do not admit, of course, that it would be detrimental to the health of white people to work in the north, but. I merely make that admission for the sake of argument. Another argument which is advanced is that if white men were engaged in this work at the busiest period of the year, when the trashing and the taking off of the crops is going on, they would strike. Is it not marvellous that we are told that men are likely to strike in this particular industry, whilst we never hear of them striking in other industries that are going on in the same localities? "Why should they strike in the cane-fields any more than in the corn-fields ? Is it supposed that men will strike for the fun of the thing, or out of sheer wickedness, to hamper their employers ? I deny that statement %n toto, and I demand proof of it. Men do not strike in that part of the country any more than in any other part. I represented in the State Parliament a district north of Cairns, and am familiar with the conditions of industry there. I deny absolutely that the men of that district, out of sheer wickedness, or to do an injury to their employers, would ever think of striking.

Senator Harney

- Does any one suggest anything of the sort?

Senator GLASSEY

- It has been suggested time after time. Senator Gould said yesterday that white men were ?more unreliable in the north. A peculiar reason is urged in the Brisbane- Courier of the 19th October, this year, against the employment of white labour in the cane sugar industry. This newspaper says - The argument against the employment of kanaka labour is based on the assumption that, if given sufficient wages, white men will be found willing to do all the necessary field work of the sugar industry. There is no direct evidence in proof of this in the whole history of the industry in Queensland. Neither the constraint of hardship,, nor the compelling force of binding agreements, has induced white men for more than a short period to engage in the work of cane trashing or cane-cutting. In some cases the increased remuneration has been the very means of causing the worker to give up the hateful task all the sooner. Of all the arguments I have ever heard that have been painful to listen to, this is, I think, the most idiotic and nonsensical. Can it be imagined that a newspaper would actually urge that white men should cease working because of the high wages paid to them ? Yet it is really put forward in the columns of the leading journal of the State I represent, that high wages are an inducement to men to cease to do their work.

Senator Millen

- If that is the case, the planters have the remedy in . their own hands, because the less they pay the more men will work !

Senator GLASSEY

- Exactly. I am bound to confess that I have never read anything in all my experience so absolutely silly, childish, and nonsensical.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- And is that really from the Brisbane Courier ?

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes, it is. There is one little matter that. I did not make quite clear in the earlier portion of my remarks as to the statement made by Planter Swan at Cairns, with reference to the payment of a bonus on sugar. Of course, honorable senators are aware - and probably Planter Swan is also cognizant of the fact - that the bonus will be paid only on sugar grown by white labour, and not upon all sugar, whether produced by black or white labour. Prom interjections made by some honorable senators on the other side, I fancy they imagined I was urging that Planter Swan expected that this bonus would be paid irrespective of whether the sugar was produced by black or white labour.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- No; but the witness the honorable senator quoted was under a misapprehension.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I do not think so. Keeping as closely- as I can to the question of the alleged scarcity of labour, I wish to refer again to a statement made by the Brisbane Courier - the' leading journal in Queensland - on the 19th October last, respecting the evidence of the cane-growers, and the great difficulty experienced in securing white labour at Childers, which is in the south of Queensland. Childers is practically part of the

Bundaberg district. It has only been opened up during the last few years, but is a very important portion of the district, and has a large population depending on the industry. This journal, in order to make out a case for the continuance of the kanaka, published, on the date I have mentioned, the following statement -

The most careful investigation which has been made into the conditions of the sugar industry shows that in every district there is a disinclination to engage in certain kinds of tropical and sub-tropical field work. Even in the southern districts, around Childers and Bundaberg, the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient supply of workers has always been great.

If these statements were not contradicted by evidence obtained from authorities which cannot be questioned, it would be all right for those who make them. But they are not supported by any facts. I am going to contradict the statement absolutely, so far as Bundaberg and Childers are concerned, and I shall give facts. I have before me the report of the Government officer in charge of the Labour Bureau and Belief Department of Queensland, for the year 1900. It is the latest available, so far as I have been able to ascertain. The report deals with all districts. It shows where there has been any dearth of employment, and how labour difficulties, if any, have been met. In his report to the chief officer of the bureau, the local agent at Bundaberg, referring to the fact that labourers are sometimes landed direct from the old country, makes this statement -

No direct shipment of white labour was landed at this port during the past year, but over 180 new arrivals, principally Scandinavians, were sent up from Brisbane, and secured work; the bulk of them were of the desirable class. Owing to an unfortunate season, there being practically no rain when most needed, the sugar return has been very poor indeed, and crushing operations closed down very early. The adverse season experienced has been well met by the bulk of the tenant farmers, and very few have had to discontinue operations. The bureau has been instrumental in placing 407 applicants out of 705, being, as compared with 1899, a decrease of 243 and 445 respectively.

This shows that instead of any scarcity of labour, there was an actual surplus of 299 men there last year, whilst for the previous year there was a surplus of 243. Let us see how they fared at Childers, a district to which special reference is made by the Brisbane Courier, in order to support its case for the continuance of kanaka labour. The agent at Childers writes as follows: -

The labour requirements of this district throughout the year have been small, with the exception of about three months during the crushing season, owing to the excessive dry weather and short crops. During the crushing season, some 50 to 100 men found employment on various farms and plantations at cane-cutting and loading, the wages varying from 15s. to £1 per week.

This does not support the statements made by the Brisbane Courier in its effort to induce the Commonwealth Parliament to continue this supposed "reliable labour."

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- If we remove the kanakas, the Bundaberg district will require 2,000 labourers.

Senator GLASSEY

- That may be, but the number of kanakas to be removed from year to year is so infinitesimally small, that there would be no difficulty in securing white labour to replace them.

Senator McGregor

- That is, if the planters give them proper wages.

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes; and employ them for reasonable hours.

Senator Styles

- With fair wages and reasonable hours, would white men be as good or better than the black men there? I should like to know what proportion of white men would be required to replace the darkies.

Senator GLASSEY

- I should be very sorry to admit for a moment that the most ordinary white man was not infinitely better than any kanaka for this class of work.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- In Bundaberg?

Senator GLASSEY

- Or elsewhere; I do not care whether it is in the far north, the centre, or the southern part of Queensland.

Senator Styles

- How many white men would be necessary to carry out the work usually done by 1,000. kanakas ?

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Senator GLASSEY

- About 500, or, perhaps, less, whether the work was in the field or anywhere else. As an illustration, I would remind honorable senators that the Orient Steam Shipping Company are taking on coloured men to do the work in their steamers formerly carried on by white men, and they say that they are putting on two black men for every white man hitherto employed. We are often met with the statement - "Of course, we can find labourers in the south, but could white labour be procured in the north of Queensland?" Let me give the Senate some facts on this point from the Labour Bureau's report for 1900. At page 6 these words will be found concerning the important sugar-growing district of Mackay -

There were no applications or demand for labour at this office during the year, and no unemployed in the district. The meat-works started operations during February with about 60 men, and worked about half time, till the middle of June, when the works were shut down, owing to the want of cattle, which was and is very scarce. The men went north, and some south, in search of work.

Then the report proceeds to refer to the sugar industry -

During the early months of the year, only light rain was experienced, and the crops looked light, but turned out better than was expected. Men began to arrive from the west during June, for the crushing, which started in July and early in August, and lasted about four months. Homebush mill -

This is a large mill - employing about 170 men, and North Eton about 75 men. A good many large farmers' sons, and other local men and lads work at these mills during the crushing. About 100 men -

I wish to draw the particular attention of honorable senators to this point - were left over after the mills were supplied; these men went west in search of work.

Senator Ferguson

- That was in the winter.

Senator GLASSEY

- This is for the crushing season. We are being told continually that white men cannot do the work of cutting, and yet the report shows that after the mills had been supplied about 60 white men were still left.

It is idle to talk about this being in the winter. According to some honorable senators it is never winter at Mackay. They have summer there all the year round, some honorable senators would have us believe. I will now deal with the Geraldton district, which is in the far north, where they have the heaviest rainfall and the greatest heat. The local agent there states -

No applications for labour from employers, or from those seeking work, have been received at this office during the past twelve months. The supply of labour for the sugar plantations here is always equal to the demand, perhaps a little in excess of the demand.

That is at Geraldton, which is practically in the Cairns district.

Senator Charleston

- And the honorable senator says that the wages are from 15s. to £1 per week in that district?

Senator GLASSEY

- No. That was in the Bundaberg district. If the honorable member had followed me he would know that the extracts I have already referred to applied to the Bundaberg and Childers district. I am now dealing with the north, with a portion of the Mackay district, and with Geraldton, a portion practically of the Cairns district. I go back now to Mackay again, and I find this information given -

During the first four months of the year only three labourers were applied for, and during the same period the supply was seven. In May, June, and July the usual influx for the harvesting took place, but owing to the mills making a late start on account of bad crop, very many of the men became hard up, and represented themselves as destitute to the authorities. Some of these men were arrant frauds. Others were really decent men and were destitute. Any of the men who wanted it were found short jobs at small wages, in some instances and others gave two days' work for nine days' food. About 120 men passed through the bureau in this manner. Applications from employers were 98, applications from labourers were 187, or an excess of 89 labourers. The 89 were all found short jobs, or "tucker" to enable them to get further along.

I take now the Port Douglas district, and I find that at page 10 of this report the agent at Port Douglas

says this -

There are employed by the Douglas Tramway Company and the Mossman Mill Company about 80 - artisans 25, mechanics 55 - whose rate of wages is from 10s. to 12s. per day. The ruling rate for general labour at the mill is from £1 7s. lid. to £2 per week and found.

That is in the far north, right away in the Cairns district, and that will be some guide to honorable senators as to the rates of pay in that particular district, and as to whether there is any scarcity of labour or not. I think I have proved conclusively from these extracts that there is no scarcity of labour, but that the labour is in excess, and it cannot be contended for a moment that the wages paid are excessive or unreasonable.

Senator Ferguson

- There is such a supply of coloured labour in those districts that they do not require the same number of white labourers.

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Senator GLASSEY

- It has been contended by some honorable senators that there ought to be an extension of time given to the planters, but before I deal with that I wish to refer to another aspect of the question, and one which I think receives too little consideration. I refer to the moral question, of the mixture of the races. I am sure that most honorable senators are desirous of preventing the spread of that evil. It must be obvious that if we have, as we have in Queensland, nearly 24,000 coloured people, with the tremendous preponderance of males of about twenty to one over females, there must follow as a natural consequence some mixture of the races. Who are to find wives for these men? I suppose that like ordinary human beings in other parts of the world, they will want wives. Who is going to find them? Are the daughters of the rich going to become the wives or the female companions of these men? No; if they want wives, as they will in very many instances, they will likely be expecting to get them from amongst the daughters of the poor and the industrial section of the community. I do not want either the daughters of the rich or the poor to be placed in this position.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- Have there been many cases of that kind?

Senator GLASSEY

- I shall give the honorable senator a few instances directly. I do not want this sort of thing to go on. I am sure that particularly fathers of families do not want this mixture of races to take place. I cannot and I will not believe that they do. I wish honorable senators to rise to the occasion, and to deal with this question in a broader way than we are apt sometimes to do. What are the facts? We heard one honorable senator state that in Queensland we had had only 41 half-caste South Sea Islanders in 30 years. I want further details as to that statement. I decline for the moment to accept it. I do not wish to contradict the honorable senator, but I think I have evidence to the contrary taken from the most reliable authority - the census papers issued this year by the Registrar-General of Queensland. I have culled a few figures from those papers, and I give honorable senators the benefit of my labours. I find that of half-caste Chinese children, we have 355 males and 371 females, or a total of 726. Of half-caste Japanese, there are one male and one female, but as honorable senators know, it is only quite recently that this particular class of labour has found its way to Queensland. Of South Sea Island half-castes - and I want Senator Ferguson to pay particular attention to these figures, because I fear that the honorable senator's information is not of the most recent date-

Senator Ferguson

- I did not say it.

Senator GLASSEY

- But I am going to say it; I am going to put it on record. Of half-caste children of South Sea Islanders, we have 115 males and 66 females, or a total of 181. That is more than 41 in thirty years.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- Decidedly. Are those figures taken from the census?

Senator GLASSEY

- Yes, from the census papers issued by the Registrar-General this year, and from the census taken quite recently. Who are the mothers of those children? The daughters of the wealthy? Oh dear no; they are the

daughters of the industrial classes. I do not wish the daughters of the industrial classes or of any class in the community to be contaminated in this way, or to have any mixture like this. I am here in my representative capacity not for the purpose of abusing anybody, or in order to destroy any industry, but for the purpose of carrying on this and other industries by means of labour of our own colour, so that we shall not have this contamination of our people, and this mixture of the races. Although the results are small in number to-day, this mixture of the races will become a danger, a menace, and a disgrace to our civilization in years to come. The figures for other aliens who are not defined, but the term includes Javanese, Cingalese and others, show that we have 22 male and 17 female half-castes, or a total of 39. The figures show that we have a total of 948 half-castes of all these alien races. Is not that enough in a population of less than 500,000, including these same races ? I think it is enough and to spare, and I ask in the name of all that is good, holy, beneficent, wise, and prudent, are we going to continue this kind of thing? And for what ? Because it is alleged that this particular industry cannot be carried on without this class of labour ! I have given testimony and proof beyond question that that is not so ; but in addition to that, I say that we have this danger before us, and I ask honorable senators not to lose sight of this great question of the mixture of the races ; this question of the contamination of our own race on the assumption that this industry cannot be carried on, and that profit must be made by the people engaged in it even at the expense of the people of our race, and our own kith and kin being placed in this position.

Senator Ferguson

- Are there not 1,500 Aboriginal half-castes in Queensland ?

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Senator GLASSEY

- Does that mean ' that the honorable senator wishes to exclude the aboriginals ? It is only so much the worse, and even if we have them, is that any reason why we should have more ? Is it not only another strong reason why we should have less ? I am the father of a family ; I have my sons and daughters here, and I wish to have them protected here. They will be here when I am gone, and I have the greatest regard for their future welfare, for their happiness, safety, and protection. There is now this other aspect of the question, the health aspect, and this, too, is an element in the consideration of the subject which is not sufficiently recognised. We have some most loathsome and diabolical diseases, if I may use those terms, in our midst.

Senator Barrett

-Including leprosy.

Senator GLASSEY

- I am going to deal with that. Has that disease been brought here, or has it originated here in the white races ? It is brought here by the coloured races. But, white people must suffer. That is part of the penalty which we have to pay for the continuance of this class of labour. We must pay this penalty, however severe and costly it may be, so long as this labour is allowed to remain in our midst ; and even when the last of these labourers is gone, the seeds of this wretched disease will be left with us. What are the facts! Speaking of the establishment of lazarettes in our State, I quote from an article which was republished in Progress newspaper, containing some facts taken from other journals or Government returns, and presented in a tabulated form -

In Queensland -we have two lazarettes wherein we place those social pariahs. The first lazarette was established at Friday Island, in Torres Straits, being proclaimed on the 27th October, 1892 ; the second, at Stradbroke Island, adjacent to Brisbane, on 25th November the same year. Since the establishment of these institutions, no less than 98 persons suffering from this nauseous disease have been segregated, the nationality of the patients being as follows : - Pacific Islanders, 41; Europeans, 21; Chinese, 20; Aboriginals, 9; Cingalese, 2; Malay 1; Philipino, 1 ; Mia dr a se se, 1. The number of patients who have died is 56, of the undermentioned nationalities - Pacific Islanders, 27; Europeans, 12; Chinese 9; Aboriginals, 3; Cingalese, 2; Malays, 1; Philipino, 1; Madrasese, 1. Ten of the lepers belonging to the Mongolian Empire were returned to China, while there are still remaining in the lazarette no less than 30 who are victims to this pestilential disease, eighteen being at Friday Island and twelve at Stradbroke Island. These inmates comprise the following: - Pacific Islanders, 14; Europeans, 9 ; Aboriginals, 6 ; Chinese, 1. When we consider the difficulty of detecting this foul disease, and the conditions of life among the kanaka population, it is safe to infer that hundreds of coloured lepers are roaming the sugar districts

to the great danger of their countrymen and the white population. It is fortunate for the people of Queensland that this disease does not spread rapidly. Nevertheless, it is so insidious and mysterious that we may never know the moment it may be discovered in the mansion of the rich or the humpy of the poor. That is an element which honorable senators should not overlook. Just as the mixture will be not legs, but greater, so will this disease spread, and a time may come when some honorable senators who appeal to-day for a continuance of this class of labour may have bitter cause for regret, particularly if some of their nearest and dearest relatives should unfortunately be contaminated. It is alleged that it is impossible to carry on the sugar industry, particularly in the Cairns district, without coloured labour. Yet, notwithstanding that alleged impossibility, they ask for an extension of time. In the Queensland Parliament, in 1889, Mr. Cowley, on behalf of the planters, asked for an extension of five years, and any one who doubts my word can read his speech in Hansard. In 1892, Sir Samuel Griffith asked for an extension of ten years.

Senator Fraser. - What did the Bill say?

Senator GLASSEY

- Never mind what the Bill said. One hundred and one things we state do not find a place in our legislation, but we are responsible for those utterances all the same.

Senator Charleston

- And on his utterances he was elected.

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Senator GLASSEY

- On his utterances, in condemnation of that very reversal, he was elected. What is the use of asking for an extension of time if the industry in some districts cannot be carried on except by means of this labour? Taking the representatives of Queensland in this Parliament, five out of six in the Senate and seven out of nine in the other House oppose such an extension: What is the prayer of the petition presented to the Senate yesterday? Does it ask for an extension of ten years or five years? It asks for a perpetuation of the employment of the kanaka, and that is exactly the aim and object of those who want black labour in Queensland. It is not a mere temporary expedient they require, but an opportunity to continue the agitation with the hope that some change of Government will take place, and that finally there will be a reversal of this policy. I have seen that little game played before with great success too. I am determined that it shall not be played again. A great hope is entertained that some day there may be a coalition Government in the Commonwealth, the same as we had in Queensland, and that the Federal Parliament will have an opportunity of reversing this policy, and giving the planters the perpetual use of this kind of labour. I shall not play into their hands by giving a further extension of time. I hope that the Senate will rise to the occasion, and allow the planters reasonable time in which to adjust their affairs. The time prescribed in the Bill cannot be considered unreasonable. The Government are meeting the planters in a most liberal way. They propose not only to impose a high protective duty, which I shall support and which I have previously urged, but also to give a bonus to those planters who engage white labour. I have no hesitation in saying that a large number of planters will avail themselves of the offer. I should not be a party to the granting of this bonus except on the condition that the sugar must be produced by means of white labour. What do the planters and their friends want? They want both a high protective duty and the continuance of kanaka labour as well. Let some of our planting friends make their choice - are they prepared to open the ports of the Commonwealth to sugars from every part of the world, and continue this class of labour? or close our ports and get a bonus, so as to get clear of this class of labour? Open your ports and give the planters as many labourers as you like, kanaka or any other, and they cannot compete with the cheap products of the world. In all my advocacy of the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill I laid particular stress on the fact that we should secure the Australian market for our own growers by means of protection, and expressed the hope that a bonus would be given to those persons who would produce sugar by means of white labour. That policy, I am pleased to say, finds a place in the Government's programme, one portion in this Bill, and the other in the Tariff. I challenge the planters and their friends to step forward and say that in order to continue this class of labour they are prepared to throw open our ports to the cheap labour and cheap products of the world on free-trade terms. I am anxious to exclude this labour, but in a practicable and reasonable way - first, by protecting the Australian market from undue foreign competition with cheap products, and secondly, by the granting

of a bonus to those who use white labour.

Senator Harney

- If we produce more than the Australian market requires, we shall have no importation.

Senator GLASSEY

- That may be. In the meantime we should deal with the matter as it stands ; the future will take care of itself. All those who take my view of this question - the Ministry and their supporters - are charged with ignorance. We are actually told by some of the clergy of the various churches that we know nothing of the subject, and' by some members of the Queensland Ministry that we have never worked in the cane-fields in our lives. What presumption it is to suggest that we should not legislate except we possess practical knowledge and working experience of the subject with which we are dealing ! Must we be engaged in the liquor trade before we can deal with the licensing laws of a State? Is there any honorable senator who has followed all occupations, and can we have no legislation on a subject unless we possess practical training and knowledge? The proposition is absolutely nonsensical. Some of the finest social legislation the world has seen has been effected by men who have had no practical experience.

Senator Fraser. - And some of the worst.

Senator GLASSEY

- One of the finest Mining Acts the world has seen - and I speak as a practical miner of twenty years' standing - found a place on the statute book of Great Britain in 1872, at the instance of Mr. Gladstone. Was he ever a coal miner ? Some of the finest laws ever enacted for the protection of life at sea and the preservation of property were initiated - by whom ? By practical sailors and sea captains ? Nothing of the sort. Yet, sir, we are charged with ignorance of this subject, because we have not worked in the cane-fields. To come again to the colour line which is contended for - Senator Dobson wishes to draw one line at Bundaberg.

Senator O'Keefe

- He wanted some evidence, and yet he is not here to hear it.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I am sorry to say that he is not here this afternoon. At one time it was proposed that the line should be drawn at Bundaberg, another time at Mackay, and then again at Cairns. I have heard of this proposal of a colour-line for many years. At one time it was to be drawn at the Tweed, in New South Wales, and at another time at Nerang, on the Logan River, in the southern part of Queensland. Now it is proposed to be drawn at Bundaberg. Senator Ferguson, I believe, wants it to be drawn at Rockhampton. Mr. President, there is only one colour-line that the people of Australia will consent to have drawn, and that is the line of the sea - the coast line. The people of this country are determined that Australia shall be kept for the white man and his descendants. This wretched plea for a colour-line is played out. We want the total exclusion of coloured people within a reasonable time. We want the silvery sea that encircles this vast island continent to be our colour-line. It is said that the planters themselves should be the best judges of the class of labour that it is necessary to employ in order to carry on their operations. The slave-owners of America and their advocates used the same argument during the old slave days. It was then said that the slave-owners were the best judges as to how the cotton industry should be conducted. In the days before Factory Acts and Mining Acts were passed in England it was said that the factory owners and the mine-owners ought to be the best judges of the class of labour they should employ. But public opinion declared that the employment of boys and girls of tender years in factories, and the harnessing of children like horses to haul trucks in the mines, must cease. The people of Australia are the best judges as to whether coloured labour shall be employed upon this- continent or not; and nothing but total exclusion will satisfy them and the people of Queensland. We are charged with being unpatriotic, because we take up this position. Apparently it is considered to-be patriotic to advocate cheap coloured labour, irrespective of the consequences that may follow, the diseases that may be communicated to our own race, and the contamination that will ensue. "So long as we can make a profit, never mind what evil consequences may follow" - that is the plea of the " patriotic " opponents of this Bill ! But we have an example in the United States of America of the evil consequences ensuing from a perpetuation of coloured labour, and from an admixture of black and white races. We are a young community, just commencing our history as a Commonwealth, with only a small population.

Black labour has only obtained a small footing upon this continent.- But that is a beginning. The evil will increase with time unless a check is put upon the system early, and serious consequences will inevitably flow from it. Those who believe that it is unpatriotic to advocate a white Australia may reasonably charge me with lack of patriotism. But, sir, I believe that the highest patriotism demands the exclusion of black races from this continent, and that our industries should be conducted by white labour. I am satisfied that the people of the future will give us credit for attempting to free this country from the contamination to which I have alluded. I have been in Parliament for nearly fourteen years. My constant endeavour has been to humanise our laws and to assist in a wise,, just and prudent administration of them Everything tending to advance our interests, to promote the highest and noblest welfare of our people, whether by means of good land laws or wise administration, or the spread of education and the dissemination of knowledge - everything that could conduce to human happiness, and welfare - has been assisted by me; perhaps in a very humble way, but I trust earnestly and sincerely. I wish to continue that line of action. I desire that everything that can be done to promote the happiness and welfare of the people of this country shall be done, and that laws shall be enacted that will be for the benefit, not only of Australia to-day, but of our descendants. I wish that the foundation and the structure of the legislative edifice which we are erecting shall be solid and secure, and that the laws that we pass shall be elevating and ennobling, socially, morally, and otherwise. It is because that has been my ideal throughout my parliamentary life, that I support this Bill. I thank the Senate for the attention they have given to me. I apologize for taking up so much time; but I wanted to put these facts and arguments on record, so that they might be of some guide to the people of Australia in regard to this great question, and be helpful in guiding honorable senators to a conclusion in support of a measure which, if passed -in its-, present form, will not be injurious to the sugar industry, but will result in strengthening it, and developing it in the highest and best interests of the people not only of my own State, but of the whole of Australia.

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Senator FRASER

- -To follow closely my honorable i friend Senator Glassey, would be impossible. I commenced to take a few notes, but abandoned the task before he had proceeded far. From his point of view, he has made a good speech, and now I am going to attempt to put my own opinions before the Senate, as briefly as I can. I have been thirty years in politics, and can honestly and truthfully say that I have never given a vote except from conscientious motives. I have no interest in sugar, nor have I any interest in any one who is concerned in the industry, either directly or indirectly.

Senator Higgs

- The honorable member has plenty of " sugar " in the bank..

SenatorFRASER. - If I have, it has been earned by my own hard industry. I brought very little "sugar" to this country. The subject before the Senate is a very important one. It is most important to Queensland. I know Queensland intimately. I travelled the length and breadth of the State 30 years ago. I drove from Rockhampton to near the Gulf, when I was very much younger. I have had investments in Queensland since 1867, continuously, largely, and unfortunately; for I never made any money out of Queensland, except when I bought a property and sold it. I never made money out of that State by the legitimate investment of capital, as my books will prove. When I was on the hustings previous to the election I said that I was in favour of a white Australia.

Senator Higgs

- With a tinge of black in it !

SenatorFRASER. - Not a particle of black in it. I stood upon the hustings in Victoria more than any other candidate for the Federal Parliament. I spoke in nearly every city and town throughout the State, and I am going to tell the Senate now what I said then. I am for a white Australia.

Senator McGregor

- You are not going to be in a hurry about it.

Senator FRASER

- No, the exclusion of the kanakas from Queensland should not be hurried. Their employment has been going on for 33 years with variation, and what reason can there be for taking the extreme step of excluding this labour at the end of so short a term as five years ?

Senator McGregor

- If Deeming had had a couple of years more he might have killed a few more wives.

Senator FRASER

- On the hustings I said that I was in favour of a white Australia, and would support any Government to attain that object. I say that now. As to the supposed danger of an intermixture of races, I reply that there has never been any admixture so far as the kanaka is concerned. There was no intermixture on the part of the white population with the black population of Australia in the early days. The blacks of this country are nearly all dead now, with the exception of a few in Queensland. In the same way there has been no intermixture of the kanakas in Queensland with the white people of that State, Therefore, the position of the kanaka is not to be considered with the question of a white Australia. I desire once and for all to separate the two questions. The kanaka trade is under strict legislation, and to associate it with the question of a white Australia is to fail to do justice to the importance of the matter.

Senator Charleston

- What about the census figures quoted by Senator Glassey ?

Senator FRASER

- I have a number of figures here, but if I were to quote them I should occupy the attention of the Senate for several hours. Honorable senators have had the statistics bearing on this matter placed before them, and I feel satisfied that they have perused them for themselves. Therefore, it is unnecessary for me to give them, although by interjections I have sought once or twice to correct Senator Glassey in the course of some of his statements.

Senator McGregor

- To what statement does the honorable senator refer?

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Senator FRASER

- As I am challenged I shall refer to one matter to which reference was made by Senator Glassey, for whom I have a profound respect. Political opinions do not interfere with my private friendships. My honorable friend quoted from a press interview with Mr. Swayne, of Queensland, and in view of the interjection just made, I shall quote still further from that interview. Referring to the position of the kanakas and the suitability of white men for this work, Mr. Swayne said of the latter -

They are not intended by nature to work in a moist, sweltering heat, surrounded by vegetation higher than their heads, the work itself generally requiring to be performed in a stooping position. As to the payment of higher wages as an inducement to white men to do the work, Mr. Swayne said it was simply pitting money against nature, and he did not think it desirable in the interests of the community that men should be bribed for a few pounds to injure their constitution. The experience hitherto shows that when men have endured the work for a few days under the bribe of high wages, the higher the price paid the greater the incentive to the men to do as little as possible, and to get earlier on the spree. Such work seemed to drive men - previously sober men - on the spree. In many cases it has been noticed that steady men in receipt of good wages for field work on the plantations during the cooler parts of the year, have left us soon as the hot weather commenced, and when their services were most urgently required, declaring that the country was not fit for white men to live in.

Senator Glassey

- That is not Mr. Swayne's statement.

Senator FRASER

- I quote from the report of an interview with him, which appeared in the Queenslander, of 8th June last.

Senator Glassey

- It is not the interview I quoted.

Senator FRASER

- It is an interview with Mr. Swayne, a planter at Cairns, and I think my Swayne is the honorable senator's Swayne. The interview continues -

Mr. Swayne, in further conversation, directed attention to the honest efforts of the farmers to do without Polynesian labour, or in fact alien labour of any kind, at the time when Sir S. W. Griffith introduced legislation to prevent further importation of the kanakas. When the Colonial Sugar Refining Company commenced the subdivision of the Homebush Estate into small farms, the leases of those farms were chiefly acquired by men who, as ploughmen, &c, were well used to agricultural work, and were

thoroughly practical men. Most of them started firmly resolved to have no alien labourers about their farms. The land, being open forest, was well suited to the use of horse implements. With the assistance of their wives and children - the latter should have been at school - they managed to cultivate and get in their crops, but when the period of harvesting came round extra labour was, of course, absolutely necessary. A gang of white labourers was engaged, the resolve regarding black labour being still adhered to. The men were given contracts to cut and load the cane on the tramway trucks, the rate being 3s. (ki. per ton, horses and drivers being provided by the farmers to pull the trucks along the line as required. The crop throughout was fairly good, but there was a continuous harangue and dissatisfaction among the men for no apparent reason, but sheer chagrin at being subjected to such distressing work. As a consequence men were constantly knocking off : sometimes a strike of the whole . gang would ensue, and they had to be coaxed back to work through some further concession from the employer. . . . Then, again, whenever any money was paid- and so on.

Senator Higgs

- What was the money paid?

Senator FRASER

- It was paid under contract. This gentleman asserts that white men are not fit to do the work. We have before us statements made and resolutions passed on this question, by nearly all the municipal councils, agricultural societies, and chambers of commerce in Queensland. The Postmaster-General has been good enough to read many of these statements, although he is opposed to the view they represent. The Bishop of Carpentaria writes upon this subject in such a moderate way that it is impossible for any one to doubt his statements.

Senator Staniforth Smith

- Notwithstanding other evidence given by the missionaries ?

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Senator FRASER

- When we find men on the spot, such as the Premier and members of the Government of Queensland, members of municipal councils, agricultural societies, and chambers of commerce, all holding the same opinion, it should convince us that drastic and hasty legislation should not be proceeded with. In my opinion, there is no justification for dealing with this Bill in a hurry. I was a member of the Convention that framed the Federal Constitution, and at the federal election. I obtained a larger number of votes than any other honorable senator, on the distinct statement of my views which I made at the time. If this question were put before the people of Australia by means of a plebiscite, I am perfectly satisfied that they would not ask us to deal with the matter in the hurried way proposed by this Bill. I do not say that we should allow the kanaka trade to go on perpetually. I would not dream of that. But when the Government of Queensland have advanced over half-a-million of money in connexion with the industry, when the people of the State have invested millions of their own money in the industry, and when it represents a return of £1,500,000 per annum, I think we should be careful in dealing with it. There is more land under sugar-cane than under any other form of cultivation in Queensland, and while the plantations were at one time worked as large estates, they are now being cut up into small areas. I agree with Sir Samuel Griffith that it is not desirable to have large estates with servile races employed on them. I have been a large employer of labour during my life-time.

As a railway contractor I employed thousands of men in South Australia and elsewhere, so that I think I ought to know the feelings of the labouring classes as well as any. honorable senator. If a plebiscite could be taken on this question, and the truth put before the people of Australia, I am satisfied that they would not support this drastic measure. This Bill proposes that if 1,000 kanakas are deported next year only 750 shall be introduced. If 1,000 are deported in the following year only 500 can be introduced. This proposal is altogether too drastic.

Senator McGregor

- Be fair.

Senator FRASER

- I have no other motive than that of fairness. I have always sought to be fair. I hope that now that I am near my 70th year I shall not do anything that is unjust. I am pleading for the Government of Queensland, for the people who have, invested their thousands of pounds in the industry there ; for the farmers who

have purchased, blocks from the sugar company and other owners of large estates.

Senator McGregor

- The honorable senator might say a word or two for the kanakas ?

Senator FRASER

- The kanakas in Queensland are treated better than men of a similar class are treated in other parts of the world.

Senator Higgs

- That is not saying much.

Senator FRASER

-It is something. If the kanakas in Queensland are not treated well, it is not the fault of the State Parliament. That Parliament has passed most restrictive legislation in regard to the trade; therefore, isolated cases of ill-treatment are beside the question. There are white men who are treated badly under our own laws, but we do not come here and announce, because of that, that the white people are going to the dogs. We must view all these matters as the world looks at them. Sometimes they are of good and bad report. I might mention in passing that there are 4,000 of these kanakas attending Sundayschools.

Senator McGregor

- There is nothing much in that.

Senator FRASER

- I acknowledge that when forms of civilization are carried to these and all savage races the people deteriorate almost invariably. They nearly always adopt our bad habits, and neglect to observe our good ones.

Senator Playford

- The honorable senator was interrupted when he was about to tell us what the Bishop of Carpentaria had to say upon this subject.

Senator FRASER

- He says this -

Each farmer employs from five to fifteen South Sea Islanders, and, in addition, a considerable number of Chinese and Hindoos are employed by contract. All the farmers say the same- "If we are deprived of coloured labour, as things are at present we are utterly mined."

The Bishop of Carpentaria says much more than that, but I have too much respect for the time of honorable senators to read the whole of his statement.

Senator Higgs

- He must have a . share in some sugar plantation.

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Senator FRASER

- I have not such a low opinion of the Bishop of Carpentaria as to believe that if he had a few shares it would affect his opinion. I may say that the tone of these interjections is not very high, and they only prove that in this Senate a very cursory and trumpery view of the whole question is being taken. The question is momentous. The abolition of kanaka labour will deprive thousands of farmers of the results' of hard industry under a sweltering sun, and we should not hurriedly pass a Bill that will have such an effect at the instance of any Government. I may tell honorable senators that I was returned as a supporter of the present Government in many respects, but I never dreamt that this Kanaka Bill would be brought in so early. What have the people of Queensland done that in the first session of the first Parliament of the Commonwealth, and within a few months of our meeting, such drastic legislation should be introduced, and they should be given only a couple of years to put their house in order? We know what may be the result when a Bill like this is put forward. Even wealthy men in every part of the world are very much beholden to banks. Big men as well as small men are beholden to them, and the more they are beholden to those institutions the more important it is to them that things should not be suddenly turned topsy-turvy. There are thousands of farmers who have gone into this industry at the instance and by the encouragement of the Queensland Government. Splendid mills have been erected in many districts of Queensland with a view to the breaking up of large sugar estates. The breaking up of those estates has come about, and there is no such unique position anywhere where sugar is grown as that which we find in Queensland at present, where there are so many small farmers engaged in the industry. Do I not

delight in the establishment of small farmers anywhere ?I do not believe in cattle and sheep occupying country that can be more profitably occupied by farmers. In this case the Government of Queensland advanced large sums of money, built central mills, and encouraged the farmers in every possible way.

Senator Charleston

- Upon what condition? That they should employ white labour.

Senator FRASER.- I shall refer to that a little later on. They have succeeded to a great extent. The small farmer can go to work at four o'clock in the morning, or on a moonlight night; he can choose his own time for working, and in a sweltering week perhaps he may not work at all. Working in this way, the small farmers can do much.

Senator Higgs

- Can they not do it all?

Senator FRASER

- They can do a lot ; but my contention is, that north of Rockhampton, and at Cairns, 800 miles north of Bundaberg, the same system cannot be carried out. Eight hundred miles is a tremendous distance. Just imagine it. It is more than four times as far as from here to Echuca, and it must be remembered that Cairns is that distance nearer the equator than Bundaberg. "I have been round the world three or four times, and I am sure there are places where one could" not live in the sweltering heat with a temperature of only 90 degrees. When I was building the railway line in South Australia, we had a temperature of 117 degrees in the shade at times.

Senator Playford

- I think the highest has been about 115 degrees.

Senator FRASER

- I acknowledge at once that Senator Playford is the best authority on the point, but when I built the railway from Port Augusta to Government Gums, a distance of some 200 miles, and a great way north of Adelaide, the temperature was frequently 117 degrees in the shade.

Senator Playford

- It would be a dry heat there.

Senator FRASER

- Yes, it was a dry heat, and I found I could drive my buggy and pair in superintending that 200 miles of railway without any inconvenience ; but at Colombo, in Ceylon, where I spent a summer two years ago, I found a temperature of 90 degrees perfectly unbearable to a white man.

Senator Styles

- The honorable senator was much older when he was in Ceylon than when he was building that railway.

Senator FRASER

- Not much older. I say that the temperatures, which have been given by Senator Glassey are no . criterion at all.

Senator Glassey

- I gave the figures for six years.

Senator FRASER

- I might quote the temperatures for 60 years, but I am pointing out that a temperature of 117 degrees' was bearable in parts of South Australia, 102 degrees is bearable here, while in other places a temperature of 90 degrees or 100 degrees is perfectly killing. Senator Glassey, of course, was making the very best of his case, but if honorable senators accepted his arguments as intended, they would have a false idea of the whole thing. I am afraid that the whole of the arguments of my honorable friend may be challenged in the same way. I understand that a pleading barrister would say that if we break down the evidence of a witness upon one important point, we need not give very much credit to it in other respects. If we break down important statements made by a witness the whole case breaks down. I am not going to trouble about the whole case stated by Senator Glassey, but having given that instance in which the honorable senator's evidence is unworthy of credence, I submit that the rest of his statement may be open to question. I was very sorry, indeed, to hear Senator Glassey refer to the late Sir Thomas Mcllwraith in the way he did. I knew that gentleman for 40 years and was intimately associated with him, and I say that in business relations, in social relations, and in every engagement whereby a man of the world can be judged, I always found Sir Thomas Mcllwraith to be an upright, conscientious, and honorable

man. And so the world says, and Queensland, to-day, is proud of Sir Thomas Mcllwraith. He did more for Queensland than any other legislator, or any other Premier, who ever occupied that position in the State.

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Senator Glassey

- In what respect? I have been there for seventeen years, and I wish to know.

Senator FRASER

- In most respects ; pretty well in every respect. A very great many have been engaged in boom transactions, and how many people can afford to throw stones on that account ? Not many in this town, at any rate.

Senator Pearce

- Not many in Victoria.

Senator FRASER

- The honorable senator is quite right. I was in Victoria in the boom time, and I know there are precious few- in this State, from the highest to the lowest, who can throw stones in the matter of boom transactions. I know that some of the wisest and best men were mixed up in them.

Senator McGregor

- The honorable senator is giving himself away now.

Senator FRASER

- I am not, indeed; but I am showing that any man may be dragged willingly or unwillingly into that kind of thing. In 1885 Sir Samuel Griffith passed a law_ on lines similar to those upon which the Bill now before us is framed, limiting the kanaka traffic to five years. There have been many quotations from Sir Samuel Griffith's speeches, and I propose making a few from his speeches, and from other speeches made at the time, and from which I can only arrive at the conclusion that he went completely back upon what he previously did. This was Sir Samuel Griffith's statement in 1892 -

I have arrived at the conclusion that it is the imperative duty of the Government, and perhaps more especially of myself, to whom rightly or wrongly much of the blame or credit of the existing state of things has been attributed, to review the present position and to state plainly what we think is the right policy to be adopted by the country at this time. The urgency of the case induces me to adopt the present somewhat unusual method of declaring that opinion.

Now I shall quote some words of Sir Samuel Griffith, which have been quoted by Senator Glassey, but from which I think the honorable senator drew a wrong conclusion -

You are aware that I have been for many years one of the most determined opponents of the introduction of coloured or servile labour into Queensland. My objection has not been on account of the colour of men's skins, but I have maintained that the employment of such labour under the conditions to which we had been accustomed was injurious to the best interests of the colony regarded as a home for the British race, and principally for the following reasons' : - 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. To those reasons was added, so far as Polynesian labour is concerned, the discredit that had been brought upon Queensland by the abuses that for years prevailed in the South Sea Island trade. . . . Let me now invite your attention to what has happened since that time. I will state results only. But I premise that these results are, in my opinion, due in great part to the legislation to which I have referred, as well as to a general conviction on the part of the planters, as well as the people generally, that a radical change was necessary in the system of sugar culture. In the first place, the system of large estates, worked by gang labour has fallen into disfavour. The owners are not only willing, but anxious, to sell or lease portions of their estates to farmers who will themselves grow the cane and sell it to the manufacturers. And it is recognised, I think generally, that in the future the cultivation of ' cane and the manufacture of sugar must be in different hands.

That is quite true. What did the Government then do 1 They set about establishing central mills. They have established those mills, and have spent huge sums of money on them. They were most lavish and most wise in their encouragement to the farmers. Queensland wanted farmers, because it was cut up into

huge squatters' stations millions of acres being included in some stations. Of course the policy of Queensland was 'to encourage farmers because they wanted them so much. Even the Darling Downs was occupied by huge landed estates. Now the Darling Downs is being cut up and placed in the hands of small farmers, as any one who is abreast of the politics of Queensland must know. The Government of Queensland at this time stepped- in to take such action as would enforce the cutting up of huge sugar estates, and that has been brought about, for there are only three large estates in the sugar districts of Queensland now, and they are not very large. That was a laudable work, and one of which the people of Queensland approved. Sir Samuel Griffith and Sir Thomas McIlwraith together passed an Act, and it is not true to say that the Act passed in 1892 was revoked. Since that Act was passed there have been six or seven Ministries.

Senator Higgs

- A continuous Ministry.

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Senator FRASER

- No. The Ministry of Sir Hugh Nelson, who has gone to the Upper House ; Mr. Byrnes, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Dawson, who is in the Senate, and Mr.

Philp. All these Governments have been in power since 1892, and no statement worth talking about has been made in the press or in public to revoke the Act.

Senator McGregor

- Did the Dawson Ministry introduce a policy?

Senator FRASER

- No. It is not true that the opinion of the people of Queensland is as has been stated here. The Premier and the people of Queensland have been Hooding the Senate with papers and returns.

Senator Higgs

- Only a very small section of the people.

Senator FRASER

- It appears to be a very large section, including every municipal council, agricultural society, chamber of commerce, and other associations in the State. All I plead for is time to enable the people of Queensland to say, and the Federal Parliament to judge for itself, whether the bonus system which is so liberally proposed by the Government will be effectual. I know that, so far as Bundaberg is concerned, the sugar growers will coin money right and left.

Senator Keating

- They will practically get it all.

Senator FRASER

- Yes. Speaking approximately, there are only 2,000 or 3,000 kanakas in the south, to 5,000 in the north.

Senator Drake

- According to Dr. Maxwell, there are 4,228 in the Cairns district.

Senator FRASER

- The number of kanakas now employed in sugar districts south of Rockhampton is 3,100. Am I right there?

Senator Drake

- It is differently divided here.

Senator FRASER

- The number of kanakas now employed in the sugar districts north of Rockhampton is 5,600.

Senator Higgs

- The honorable senator says that Bundaberg will get all the money, and yet he states that the industry will be ruined.

Senator FRASER

- I may not be correct there. "What I wished to say, if I did not, was that Bundaberg would get most of the money.

Senator Charleston. - Will not New South Wales get a slice too ?

Senator FRASER

- New South Wales, for her small industry, will get a very large sum of money for doing positively nothing,

because, as honorable, senators know, the growers of Queensland and New South Wales have been competing against the world's sugar on even terms.

Senator De Largie

- £3 a ton.

Senator FRASER

- On even terms, and that fact cannot be controverted. I buy lots of Mauritius sugar, and I buy Queensland sugar more often than the other; because it is better.

Senator McGregor

- The honorable senator is not patriotic in buying Mauritius sugar.

Senator FRASER

- When I am buying goods, I do not very often ask where they have come from, and it is only by accident that sometimes I find out. At any rate I should like to help the native product if I can. The fact that the Queensland sugar industry has competed on equal terms with the world proves that it is a native industry able to hold its own against the world. It has been exporting to Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, and elsewhere on even terms. Of course the duty on foreign importations will be of immense monetary advantage to the sugar-growers in New South Wales and the southern part of Queensland ; but the Constitution prohibits any differential treatment between one part of a State and another part. I spoke of this matter to some members of the Government, but, of course, I did not get a reply. I am perfectly convinced that if the Government had been able to apply a differential treatment to the sugar-growers in the north of Queensland and those in the south and in New South Wales, they would have done so. But under the Constitution they had to make one condition for all. The sugar growers in the north, say near the equator, cannot possibly get on under the restrictions of this Bill. These men will be ruined, and disgrace will be brought upon the Parliament that passed the law. I have travelled Queensland since 1867. I hold interests in properties on the Flinders a long way north, and I know that on that coast it is impossible for a white man to live.

Senator McGregor

- How much of the sugar industry is north of Townsville ?

Senator FRASER

- According to the papers I have here, a very large proportion.

Senator McGregor

- Not a fifth.

Senator Glassey

- 25,000 out of 103,000 in a record year.

Senator FRASER

- I cannot lay my fingers on the papers just now.

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Senator Dobson

- According to the number of kanakas there must be a good deal.

Senator FRASER. - If the 5,000 kanakas in the north are doing the same kind of work as the 3,000 kanakas in the south are doing, surely the production in the north, as compared with that in the south, ought to be as five to three. I do not say that it is so. At any rate, there may not be so many whites. One cannot remember all these figures, but I know that 40,000 odd whites are engaged in the sugar industry in Queensland.

Senator Higgs

- Where does the honorable senator get those figures from ?

Senator FRASER

- I get them from the papers, and I make the statement with the full knowledge that my memory is not at fault. Will honorable senators risk the profitable employment of that vast army of men when they can allow matters to proceed for a few years, and time will unravel the problem ? I pray most fervently that the bonus system may be a success all over Queensland. As a man who has had some experience, I declare my honest conviction that it is not possible nor desirable for white men to be asked to work on the cane fields of Cairns. Will the Senate run the risk of doing an incalculable injury to the first industry in that State ?

Senator Staniforth Smith

- It is not the largest industry. The gold and wool industries are larger.

Senator FRASER

- In an agricultural sense the sugar industry is far and away the largest industry. The butter industry of Victoria was created by the grant of a bonus. If it were proposed to interfere with that industry there would be a howl. If it were proposed to interfere with any big industry of New South Wales or South Australia or Tasmania there would be a howl. The request of the planters is a reasonable one. Test the statements made by the Government. Do not be in a hurry to jump to conclusions which may prove to be wrong. Is it not right to satisfy me that my doubts are not well founded? When these representations come from the municipal councils of Queensland and all the various societies, when the Government and practically the Parliament of Queensland say the same thing, is it not fair to test the bonus principle before we pass this legislation? This is not a white Australia business. I am with honorable senators for a white Australia. The kanaka does not interfere with the white Australia movement. Grant this modest request. It is a State right. The Senate has been created for the protection of State rights. When I was advocating the Constitution Bill on the hustings, I pointed out that the small States would not enter the Commonwealth unless they were allowed to return six or eight men to the Senate, and" I gave the reasons for my statement. One reason was that the Federal Parliament might propose to do the grossest injustice to a State, might introduce too drastic legislation, or might propose to spend £5,000,000 of money on the Federal House of Parliament. It is for senators to see that their States are not drastically, but justly, dealt with. I am not saying that the kanaka should not ultimately be excluded, but I am asking for time.

Senator Higgs

-How many public meetings against this "Bill have been held throughout Queensland?

Senator FRASER

- I have here an account of a meeting held at the Town Hall, Brisbane.

Senator Higgs

- A ticket meeting.

Senator FRASER

- The resolutions passed were as follow : -

That, in the opinion of this meeting, the proposed Commonwealth legislation with respect to Pacific Island labour threatens the destruction of the sugar industry in tropical Queensland, and will prove disastrous to the trade, shipping, commerce, and wage-earners of the State.

That, having regard to the fact that special legislation already exists in Queensland dealing with Pacific Islanders, and restricting their employment entirely to tropical agriculture, this meeting is of opinion that it is desirable an exhaustive inquiry into all the circumstances connected with' tropical agriculture should be made before action is taken by the Federal Parliament.

Senator Higgs

- Were those resolutions carried unanimously?

Senator FRASER

- I cannot say, as I was not present.

Senator Higgs

- The mayor refused to take an amendment.

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Senator FRASER

- That, at any rate, was the result of a meeting held in the capital of Queensland. I will admit that even if there were a majority of meetings in favour of this Bill, I should not regard that as a complete justification for passing such hasty legislation, in face of the fact that the Government and Parliament of Queensland have urged us not to agree to it. Mr. Philp, the Premier of that State, was pressed to be a colleague of the Prime;

Minister in the present Federal Government. His views were well known at that time. They were just the same as they are now. Mr. Philp is profoundly respected all over Queensland, as well as wherever else he is known in Australia. He is not personally interested in the sugar industry, but he knows northern Queensland intimately, because he represents Townsville. His opinion should have some weight, and should induce us, I do not say to postpone the question indefinitely, but at any rate not to deal with it this

session. I remind the Senate that the Bill passed at the instance of Sir Samuel Griffith- in 1892 has never been revoked. No Parliament of that State has proposed to revoke it. Let me quote what Sir Thomas Mcllwraith said about the question at that time. Speaking on the 2nd March, 1892, he said - We saw plainly that there was one very prominent point in which we had failed in past legislation, and that we had by our legislation hurt an industry that might have been prosperous now. That was the sugar industry in the north. We saw that plainly. It was plain to any man who went north¹. He had only to go to the towns to see the effect, not because there were starving black fellows there, but because he would find starving white men in all the towns, although he would see evident vestiges of the towns having been much larger in past years. That can be seen from Brisbane right up to Cooktown. Then, if he went into the interior a little, and visited the plantations; he would find that what were formerly the scenes of industry now show a decaying industry, and an industry that is bound to go unless some means are adopted to keep it in existence. We had to face the position, and we did face it, and we came to the- conclusion that the first thing to be done, the best remedy at the present time, was, under proper restrictions, to give them black labour again.

The general election took place shortly after that, and the Bill which permitted the further continuance of kanaka labour was carried by 39 votes to 13. It is the law now. What is the use of quoting speeches against this law which has never been revoked ? Isolated speeches are of no avail. The people of a country speak through their Acts of Parliament, not through the utterances of any public man; however elevated or important he may be. What I contend is that we should have a five years' trial of the bonus system. If it proves to be a success; I pledge myself: - and I never broke a pledge in my life - that I will assist the extreme labour members to carry such a Bill as this, that is if the white man can do the work in northern Queensland. Another evidence that the opinion of Queensland is not in favour of this Bill is afforded by the fact that when those members of the Federal Parliament who were formerly members of the State Parliament vacated their seats, three out of four seats were secured by Supporters of the Philp Government, who advocate the continuance of kanaka labour. The fourth was only lost by four votes. That is a very notable fact. Furthermore, the Barton Government some time ago asked Dr. Maxwell to prepare a professional report upon this question. They paid him handsomely for his work. That was wisely and properly done. Dr. Maxwell is a gentleman who has had a wide experience. I never had the pleasure of meeting him until yesterday, and the opinion I formed of him was that he is a man of honour and experience. There can be no doubt about his knowledge of this subject. He is an expert in Sugar growing. Furthermore, he is a State officer, and it is no part of his business to express political views either pro or con. I thought we were on safe lines when the Government asked Dr. Maxwell to prepare a report on the subject. But has the Government accepted his opinion ? No. Dr. Maxwell says deliberately that the sugar plantations of Cairns and the northern districts will be ruined¹ if kanaka labour is abolished. Had I been a member of the Government I should have protested against introducing any legislation, except on the lines that his report recommends.

Senator DAWSON

- There are two reports.

Senator FRASER

- Both are practically the same in this respect ; and the statements made by Dr. Maxwell yesterday morning confirm the opinion that the sugar plantations of the north must go, if kanaka labour is taken from them. If the Government had made up their minds before asking for this report, what was the use of obtaining it? Having obtained it, the bounden duty of the Government was to go upon the lines- Of the report, at any rate so far as it concerned the sugar industry of the extreme north. When the Prime Minister and the present Attorney-General spoke at Brisbane before federation was accomplished, they gave no indication that such legislation as this would be introduced. It was all honey and smiles with them then.

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Senator DAWSON

- The honorable senator is entirely wrong; I was at the meeting.

Senator FRASER. - I am as right as a man can be about that statement. The people of Brisbane were previously bitter, and would not come into the Federation. They were wise in their generation.

Senator DAWSON

- The opponents of a white Australia were beaten, at all events, because we are here.

Senator FRASER

- Then honorable senators should not use their powers unjustly. Do not let us use brute force. If honorable senators are strong they should be merciful and just. The people of Northern Queensland forced the people of " the south, against their will, to enter the Federation, and it is well known that New South Wales would not have joined it but for their action. It is a poor and sad recompense to the people of the north - who have invested their all in the sugar industry that within a few weeks of the meeting of Parliament, and in the face of Dr. Maxwell's report and the protestations of nearly all the people of Queensland, this Bill should have been brought forward. The Government are trying to turn things topsy-turvy. They should do as little as possible in the first session.. They should launch the Commonwealth ship as easily and as gracefully as they can, and with the least possible friction. They should not, unless it is absolutely necessary in the best interests of the country, bring in legislation calculated to bring sad disaster and trouble upon the people of the north. There was no urgent necessity for bringing in the Bill this session, and it was not right or proper for the Government to do so. My honorable friend, Senator Millen, will agree with me, I think, that this measure might well have been allowed to stand over until next -session. Then we should have had more information. In the face of Dr. Maxwell's report, why did the Government refuse a Royal commission ?

Senator DAWSON

- We have had Royal commissions before.

Senator FRASER

- But the members of the commission which dealt with this matter disagreed.

Senator DAWSON

- Every commission disagrees.

Senator FRASER

- Rarely so. At all events, there is always a majority report. In this case, however, there was no agreement. I am pleading only -for a little justice ; for a few weeks delay. Surely that is reasonable. I entered the Senate as an honest supporter of the Government. I have always been independent of any Government, and always hope to be ; but I tell the Senate honestly that I did not expect this Government would propose to legislate upon this question so hurriedly. The people of Brisbane and Northern Queensland did not expect it.

Senator Glassey

- Yes they did.

Senator FRASER

- No. The statements made by municipal councils and other bodies show that they did not. I would give £1,000 to-morrow to have a plebiscite taken on this question in the State of Queensland, on the distinct understanding that the kanaka trade should be considered quite apart from the question of a white Australia.

Senator DAWSON

- The honorable senator would be disappointed with the plebiscite.

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Senator FRASER

- I think not. I know what the feeling of Australia is in regard to a white Australia, and I approve of it, but the question of kanaka labour is a different matter. Even now I hope that some little deference will be paid to the opinions expressed by the Premier of Queensland. ' The Senate will probably bear with me while I read what the Premier of Queensland says in his petition -

It is under a grave sense of responsibility for the welfare of the State, whose interests I represent, that I take the unusual course of addressing you upon a question of legislation which is now engaging the attention of the Federal Parliament. The Pacific Island Labourers Bill having passed through all its stages in the Federal House of Representatives, has now been submitted to your Chamber, and though the appeal against the proposed legislation made by this Government, and supported by the sympathy of the great majority of members of the Queensland Parliament, by the whole of our agricultural and commercial associations, and by the principal press in the State, has failed to make any impression upon a majority of representatives committed to the abolition of the Pacific Island labour trade, I have reason to believe that there is a disposition on the part of a considerable number of the senators to give due consideration to so

large a body of interested and expert opinion. It is under this impression that I take the liberty of addressing you, and in doing so it is not my purpose to present a full statement of the case for Queensland as against the proposed legislation. This has already been done in my letter on the subject to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, dated the 7th October ult.

It is of the utmost importance that this position should be clearly understood, and for this purpose it is very desirable that regard should be had solely, or, at all events, 'mainly, to the aspect of the case upon which the opponents of the Bill here are in unanimous agreement. I am quite prepared to admit that there may 'exist a differ- once of opinion among those who view the Bill with disfavour as to the indispensability of black labour to the success of the sugar industry in Queensland, the effects of climatic conditions on European labourers engaged in that industry, the reliability of white labour for the sugar plantations, the possibility of obtaining a sufficiency of such labour, the period of time which it is desirable to allow for the transition from the system of coloured to that of white labour, and various other aspects of the question. There is one point, however, upon which the opponents, of the Bill are in perfect agreement - the necessity, namely, for a thorough and searching investigation, preferably by a Royal commission, into all the circumstances connected with tropical agriculture in Queensland before any action affecting the sugar industry is taken by the .Federal Parliament ; and it is in connexion with this aspect of the question that the Government of this State make their appeal to the sympathies and to the sense of justice of the Senate. The position of the Government finds its full definition in this claim for inquiry, and in their protest against legislation undertaken in the absence of measures as special as the legislation itself for obtaining full information upon the subject to which it applies. They desire it to be recognised that this aspect of the question is separate from, and independent, any of the other debatable points, as it consists, not of an expression of opinion supported or otherwise by evidence, but as a claim, which, in the special circumstances, they have a right to make, and the refusal of which they will regard as a denial of justice to the State whose people and whose interests they , represent. In view of the understanding, that if a commission, composed of competent men whose position would be a guarantee of impartiality, is appointed for the purpose referred to, the report of their inquiry, to whichever view it may incline, will be cheerfully accepted here as a sufficient basis for legislation by the Commonwealth on the subject in question, they cannot deny themselves the hope that, after this explanation of their position, any discussion which may take place in the Senate upon any of the numerous points that have been debated will be regarded as relevant only in so far as it bears -upon the question of the desirableness of full investigation before legislation is passed which may possibly prove injurious. They cannot deny themselves the hope that all other questions will be regarded as subordinate to that of the justice of the claim, made through its Government by the State most concerned, that it is entitled to have its interests safeguarded by the adoption of the most effective method of inquiry, preliminary to any attempt by the Commonwealth to interfere with the conditions under which, with the sanction of its own and the Imperial Legislatures, its industries have been carried on. If the deliberations of the Senate -upon the subject are conducted under the clear recognition that the position of the Queensland Government in the matter is summed up in this SOle condition of preliminary investigation by a duly constituted commission, and if the question, viewed from that stand-point, is treated as a question of federal policy, I am unable to perceive how our plea can fail to be regarded by your Chamber as both just and reasonable.

The only considerations hitherto brought forward as selling against t this claim for inquiry are, first, that the Federal Government are already in possession of sufficient information regarding the conditions of the sugar industry in Queensland to justify their introducing legislation in the direction proposed, and, second, that Queensland has already been heard in the matter, at the election of her representatives to the Commonwealth Parliament, the large majority of whom are pledged to the abolition of - Pacific Island labour. In reply to the first of these arguments, it is sufficient to state that the large and influential body of Queensland citizens who represent the best knowledge on the subject, and also the responsible Government of the State, who still claim to represent the majority of the people of Queensland, are not at all satisfied that the information p possessed by the Federal Government and Parliament is sufficient to enable them to take a correct view of the industrial conditions with which they are dealing, or of the probable results of the contemplated interference with these conditions, and they hold that this portion of the community, and the Government representing the whole community, have a claim to be satisfied that then State is not being legislated against, and, as they believe, penalized, through lack of such enlarged

knowledge of the facts of the case as would be acquired by means of the investigation asked for. It is surely worth considering whether it is well to refuse this satisfaction, even if the right to it is denied.- It is surely worth considering, as I have already represented to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, whether it is wise at this early stage in the history of federation, to precipitate, without due inquiry, a policy which must necessarily alienate from the union a large number of those who were its most prominent advocates, especially when it is known that the concession of the desired commission, even if its findings should prove adverse to Pacific Island labour, would be sufficient to do away with the present wide-spread and undisguised animosity which is felt here towards the Federal Government, and which, in the event of further inquiry being refused, is likely to outlive the generation that so recently welcomed the union with the most sanguine anticipations of the common benefit which was to result from the recognition by the combined States of the unity of their interests.

It should be clearly understood that such bitterness of feeling as prevails here does not spring from the mere fact that it is proposed to legislate against Pacific Island labour. Had this movement for the expulsion of "the kanaka" been the result of a sudden awakening of the public conscience to the sense of a moral wrong existing amongst us, the haste might have produced less exasperation even if the agitation were believed to be the result of a mistaken view of the case.

If proof were required to show how inadequate is the information in the possession of the Federal Government to enable them to grasp the real conditions of the problem with which they have undertaken to deal, no better could be given than their proposal to solve the difficulty by imposing a duty on imported sugar. I do not refer to the terms of their proposal. The mere fact that they are still under the impression that the question is one of wages, and that the problem can be solved by a fiscal device, is of itself sufficient to show how meagrely informed they are as to the true nature of the difficulties which Queensland sugar-growers have to contend with in their endeavours to maintain the industry on a satisfactory basis. It is small wonder that they call loudly for inquiry, when the Federal Government itself furnishes them with such strong reason to believe that the industry with which their fortunes are bound up, is being legislated against under a total misapprehension due to lack of knowledge as to the actual state of the case.

With regard to the contention that Queensland has already been heard in the matter at the election of her representatives to the Commonwealth Parliament, the majority of whom are pledged to the abolition of Pacific Island labour, I desire to state that this representation of the case is altogether misleading. The real facts have been so often given that I am almost ashamed to repeat them. It has been shown again and again that at the Queensland elections for the Federal Parliament the total number of separate voters was not much more than half the number of electors on the roll. Or taking the actual number of votes¹ cast, instead of the number of voters, the number of votes for candidates for the House of Representatives opposed to black labour was to the number of votes for candidates on the other side, in the ratio (practically) of three to two; In the case, however, of the voting for candidates for the Senate, the majority of votes was in favour of the candidates opposed to the abolition of Pacific Island labour, the actual numbers of votes being 142,578 to 139,142. It is thus seen that not only was the majority, as far as concerns the House of Representatives, a majority of little more than half the number of electors, but it was also far from being "overwhelming," as has so frequently been stated. It is also a fact that the senators from Queensland represent only 29,000 out of 104,000 electors; or if allowance is made for plural votes, roughly estimated at about, 6,000, the ratio of actual voters to the number of electors was, in the case of the Senate, as 28 to 98. It is further to be noted that as regards the elections to the House of Representatives the two largest centres of population returned members who favour the continuance of Pacific Island labour. In view of these facts, and of the important consideration that, while the party opposed to black labour were thoroughly organized, and concentrated their efforts on the election of approved candidates, the operations of the other side were characterized by the entire absence of these advantages, the results of the late federal elections cannot be accepted by any fair mind as superseding any further necessity for ascertaining the actual state of public opinion in Queensland on the subject of the proposed legislation. When it is considered in addition to all this that since these elections took place, three of the seats left vacant through the election of members of the State Parliament to that of the Commonwealth, namely, those of Messrs. Groom, Higgs, and Stewart, have been gained by the Government from the labour and the other Opposition party, and moreover, that a fourth seat, that of Mr.

Fisher, was only retained to the Opposition by four votes, while on the other hand no seats have been won from the Government side by the parties favouring the abolition of black labour, it becomes still more evident that the results of the federal elections gave no true indication of the convictions of the electorates, which are now, in fact, only awakening to the disastrous results of their previous apathy. In this communication I have purposely confined myself to the question of the necessity for inquiry, as it is solely on that ground that our appeal to the Senate is made. The documents with which I am aware you have been supplied, together with the memorandum enclosed herewith, furnish you with the main facts of the case, but do not in any way supersede the necessity for special investigation. They do little more than show that a clear case for inquiry exists, and justify the demand that such inquiry be granted. They do not profess to have the authority which would attach to the report of a special commission, and it is the earnest desire of the Government of this State that information invested with such authority should be in the hands of the Senate before they come to a decision on the present Pacific Island Labourers Bill. There is no desire to dictate as to the constitution of the suggested commission, and I shall not venture further even in the way of suggestion than to state that I am satisfied that if a Royal commission consisting of two Supreme Court Judges and a gentleman with a practical knowledge of tropical agriculture were appointed for the purpose referred to, the people of this State, whatever might be the result of the investigation, would be unanimous in their recognition that the Federal Legislature are desirous to deal justly with the individual States even when interfering with their special industrial methods. I trust that the members of the Senate will perceive that it is a matter of vital importance to the stability of the Commonwealth that federal legislation be so conducted as to produce this impression upon the people of the individual States, and that no more serious error in statesmanship could be committed, than such summary and arbitrary interference with a special industry as must necessarily sow dissension in the Commonwealth in the very first year of its existence.

That is signed by Mr. Philp. It is now getting late, and as I have not yet finished I shall, perhaps, be consulting the convenience of honorable senators if I move the adjournment of the debate.

The PRESIDENT

- Under our standing orders no senator can move the adjournment in the course of his speech, but, as new circumstances call for new practice, I propose, with concurrence, to adopt this procedure, namely, - that I shall call upon Senator Fraser to continue his speech on next Wednesday. «

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Senator DAWSON

- Is that open for discussion?

The PRESIDENT

- That is what I propose to do, if it is not objected to.

Debate adjourned. <

Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

. - Under the circumstances, I move -

That the resumption of the debate stand an order of the day for Wednesday next, and that Senator Fraser have leave to continue his speech.

Senator DAWSON

- I have no objection at all to Senator Fraser continuing his speech on Wednesday next, but I must say that I feel it is a weakness on the part of the Government to allow this practice to crop up. I hope that if any opportunity is afforded to them they will stop it. They are only piling up difficulties for themselves in the matter of "stone-walling."

Question resolved in the affirmative.

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16:25:00

Senate adjourned at 4.25 p.m.