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1901-11-28

Senate.

The President took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION

Transferred Departments

Senator KEATING

- I should like to ask the Postmaster-General, without notice, if he will take steps to see that the return for which I moved some two months ago, showing the names and positions of the officers in the transferred departments who have received increases of salary since the taking over of the departments, will be attended to as early as possible?

Senator DRAKE

- This of course is a matter that applies to other transferred departments as well as the Post and Telegraph department. ' I know that all the necessary inquiries have been made, so far as toy department is concerned, and I will ascertain how the return stands.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY : TASMANIA AND ADJACENT ISLANDS

Ordered(on motion by Senator Keating) -

That there be laid upon the table of the Senate copies of all correspondence and documents in the possession of the Government having relation to the establishment of systems of wireless telegraphy between Tasmania and certain of the islands adjacent thereto.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

Ordered(on motion by Senator Stewart) -

That there be laid upon the table of the Senate copies of all correspondence between the President of the Senate and Mr. Philp, the Premier of Queensland, relating to a communication which the President, on the 20th of November, intimated to the Senate he had received, and which communication was subsequently read to the Senate by Senator Fraser.

PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS BILL

Debate resumed from 27th November (vide page 7834), on motion by Senator Drake -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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Senator MACFARLANE

So many documents have been quoted to the Senate in the course of this debate that I certainly have no intention of going over the old ground. It would be a vain repetition to refer to many of my notes, but there are one or two matters which I should like to mention. Before I do so I wish to take notice of what has been said by several honorable senators with regard to statistics quoted by Dr. Maxwell. Dr. Maxwell was very careful, indeed, when he gave the returns to which I allude, to ascertain that they were accurate. He says, and has asked me to mention the fact, that he was in Melbourne, and telegraphed repeatedly to the Under - Secretary for Agriculture in Brisbane on the subject. One telegram he sent was as follows : - Please wire me at once number of kanakas actually engaged in sugar work, state the districts, &c.

The Under - Secretary for Agriculture replied -

The numbers are as follows.

And then he gave the numbers quoted in Br. Maxwell's pamphlet. As Dr. Maxwell wished to be accurate, and wanted to rely on the figures, he telegraphed, asking that they should be confirmed. They were confirmed ; and when he went to Brisbane a few days after, he saw the Registrar-General, Mr. Hughes, and asked him to confirm them personally. Mr. Hughes didso, indorsing the returns with his own hand. So that as far as Dr. Maxwell was concerned, he did everything within his power to see that these returns were correct. Then he says -

So far as I am concerned the only omission of a factor from my statement, which is serious enough to affect my conclusions, is one particularly prejudicing the district of Cairns, in its relation to the incidence of the bonus. The bonus is payable upon cane, and on the basis of ten tons of cane to one ton of sugar it amounts to £2 per ton of sugar. In the Cairns district, according to the census of 1900, the cane required to make a ton of sugar is not more than eight and a half tons, against more than ten and a half tons required in the Bundaberg district.

The cane contains a much larger density of juice than that produced lower down.

Senator Glassey

- It simply means that the land is newer.

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Senator MACFARLANE

And perhaps the climate has something to do with it.

The effect is to reduce the value of the bonus in the Cairns district from £2 to £1 14s. per ton of sugar, which, with the charges which will attach to the administration of the Acts, it is estimated will reduce the total value of duty and bonus to about £4 1 0s. per ton of sugar. As a result, the amount that will accrue from duty and bonus upon the tonnage of sugar given as the product of the Cairns district will be about £205,000, or some £30,000 less than the sum which it is estimated to cost to substitute the kanakas in the Cairns district by white men.

These are Dr. Maxwell's conclusions from the figures furnished to him, and I think that as they are official we have no data upon which we can question them. One or two honorable senators, however, have questioned Dr. Maxwell's conclusions that sugar cannot profitably be produced by white labour in the rich lands in the north of Queensland. Senator Styles questions those conclusions on the ground that white men can and will do the field work, and that it is only a question of wages, but he also says that white men work so much better than black men, and that consequently fewer would be required. He concludes that Dr. Maxwell's contention, that no proposed bonus or protective duty will reduce the extra cost of production, is a myth.

But Dr. Maxwell's figures are grounded on the existing rate of wages paid to white field labour, and even if Senator Styles' conclusions were correct, that fewer white men than black men would be required - which I do not admit - the increased wages paid would naturally make up for the difference.. If there are fewer white' men they will have very much larger wages paid to them, and this will increase the cost of production, and, therefore, the position of the planters will not be benefited in any way whatever, as Senator Styles thought would be the case. Consequently Dr. Maxwell's conclusions on that point remain accurate. Senator Higgs, on figures not official, contends that Dr. Maxwell's return of the number of kanakas working in the sugar plantations cannot be relied upon. But what are the facts? I have Dr. Maxwell's authority for saying that his figures were . furnished to him by the Registrar-General. When he received them he thought there might be some mistake, and he therefore took steps to see that they were accurate. Therefore, I do not see that they can be questioned. Senator Higgs said that including females and 360 kanakas on Thursday Island, there are 9,324 kanakas working in connexion with the canefields in Queensland. He says that there are south of Mackay 3,853, in Mackay itself 1,775, and in Cairns 3,336. But the official figures after all show very little variation, namely, 1,912 for the Bundaberg district, 1,475 for the Mackay district, and 4,228 for the Cairns district. In neither case are the districts defined, and that is probably the reason why the figures do not agree in detail. But I contend that they agree substantially. Senator Higgs says that there is a total of 9,324 males and females, whilst Dr. Maxwell says there are 8,656 males alone - a difference of 668, which is really accounted for by the females and the kanakas on Thursday Island, whom Dr. Maxwell did not include. So that I contend that Senator Higgs' own figures practically confirm Dr. Maxwell's conclusions, and that there is virtually nothing to cavil at in them. One return referred to by Senator Pearce was to the effect that it was estimated that the abolition of kanaka labour would involve a loss of £7,000 to the Cairns district. But Dr. Maxwell says there will be a loss of £30,000 instead of Senator Pearce's incidence of £7,000. No bonus and no Tariff that has yet been proposed will make up that enormous difference. There will be something like £58,000 required to make up for the increased cost of white labour over black in Queensland.

Senator Charleston

I had the impression that Dr. Maxwell himself said there would be a loss of £7,500 in the Cairns district.

Senator MACFARLANE

But in working it out carefully he finds that only 8 1/2 tons of cane are required per ton of sugar, and that is how the difference arises.

Senator Pearce

- He has found that his figures were wrong, and they may be wrong again.

Senator MACFARLANE

He only took a general average, and the alteration strengthens his position. I call the attention of honorable senators to this statement made a few days ago by the Prime Minister in a letter to the Premier of Queensland -

The true question is what is the policy to be adopted on a fair view of fully disclosed facts.

It seems to me that the facts disclosed are very inconclusive. That the white man can and will work in the tropical districts of northern Queensland is disputed. Some say they can and do. Surely the small farmers comprising the Pioneer River Farmers' Association ought to know, and this is what they say -

The Pioneer River Farmers' Association in meeting assembled, consisting of a number of small cane-growers who have many times tried their best to grow sugar-cane entirely with white labour, desire to place on record, as the result of their experience, that it is impossible to do so successfully in northern Queensland owing to physical causes, and that it is distinctly a climatic and not a financial difficulty - one that money cannot cope with.

That is the opinion of practical men and small farmers who are anxious to employ white labour.

Senator O'Keefe

- They are anxious to employ cheap labour.

Senator MACFARLANE

- A number of honorable senators here say that white men can do the work, but there is one other difficulty which, I think, should be referred to. The white man's skin is not as thick as that of the black man. When he works in the cane-brake, particularly in damp, hot weather, an irritant comes upon his skin, which is so trying as to drive him almost into a fever, and this is well known on the plantations as the "cane itch." When it is said that white men can do the work in the

Cairns district, I ask why it is that so many contracts made by white men to do the work are broken 1

Senator Dobson

- Is it a fact?

Senator MACFARLANE

- It is a fact that contracts are broken, and I can give an instance. On the Mulgrave plantation, close to Cairns, the manager has lately been very anxious indeed to get white labour.. He advertised for cane-cutting to be done by tender, and the tender of fifteen white men was accepted. After three or four days' work they threw up the contract as too hard for them.

Senator Pearce

They found they had taken it too cheaply.

Senator MACFARLANE

- They took it at their own price. Fresh tenders were called for, and another batch of fifteen white men undertook the work, but after a week the contract was thrown up because the work was too disagreeable. Tenders were called a third time, but no white men tendered, and the same number of Hindoos have taken the contract at the same rate, and are making 35s. a week and rations.

Senator Pearce

- A magnificent wage.

Senator Dobson

- A very high wage for agriculturists.

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Senator MACFARLANE

It is a high wage, but I only give the instance to show that there is something connected with the work which renders it too hard for the white men to stand. They can work in the mills, and in moving about with carts and horses, but they cannot do the work of the canebrake during the hot summer months. That information was given to me quite lately as a fact by a gentleman who has just come down from Queensland. I have given the opinions on the subject of practical white men who have tried to do the work in the northern part of Queensland, and when we turn to see what the official opinion is, we find that Mr. Philp, in his place as Premier of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, and with the approval of members on both sides, said -

It is not now a question of federation or anti-federation, but I can safely and honestly say that if Messrs. Barton and Deakin, when they came to Brisbane some six or eight months before the vote was taken on federation, and charmed an audience of about 3,000 people in the Exhibition Hall, had shown their hand,

and been honest and candid with the people of Queensland, there would never have been a majority in favour of federation. Now, I think when a man who knows nothing about the industry attempts to interfere with it in the way now proposed, he is doing a criminal act, and is no friend to Queensland. , I understand that the sugar-planters to a man voted for federation, thinking that at all events they would get justice, and this is the sort of justice given to them.

We have the evidence of the Queensland Government officials and of the head of the Government in Queensland representing the majority in Parliament. We have also the evidence of small farmers of the Pioneer River, and we might have the evidence of farmers in other districts to the same effect as representing the views of practical working men engaged in the industry.

Senator Charleston

Senator Drake was a member of the Philp Ministry, and he holds different views.

Senator MACFARLANE

- We cannot go into that question now. It is said that after all it is only a question of wages, but let us see what we are going to do. There are thirteen central sugar mills established under the direction of the Government, and their capital amounts to £588,000. If we are going to vitally injure those concerned - and it has not been proved that we are not - it is clear that we ought to give them some compensation. We should not for our own benefit, or to indulge our own whims, injure our fellow-citizens of the Commonwealth without giving them fair compensation. According to the evidence of Mr. Paget,' the expert, an average cane farm is 40 acres in extent, and it requires from 1 8,000 to 30,000 tons of cane to keep a mill going. When the cane is ripe it must be cut; and put through the mill, and the crop cannot be changed every year. The sugar crop must go on for four or five years to get the natural profit, without which the industry must fail. Dr. Maxwell, in his official statistics, states that in the Bundaberg district there is one white farmer to 32 acres of cane. In the Mackay district, one to 42 acres ; and in the Cairns district, one to 72 acres. He says that in Bundaberg there is one black to 24 acres in the MacKay district, one to 17 acres ; and in the Cairns district, one to 9 acres. These figures show the relative density of the population. He gives these figures as to the wages : - The wages paid in Bundaberg for twelve months amount to £37 2s. 3d. for blacks and £72 4s. . 6d. for whites ; in the Mackay district, £32 0s.11d. for blacks, and £77 8s. 4d. for whites ; and in the Cairns district, £36 6s. 9d. for blacks and £91 19s. for whites, so that honorable senators will see that the white men's wages rise with the latitude.

Senator McGregor

- And the black man's wages on the toboggan slide principle.

Senator MACFARLANE

We will not mind their wages in this instance, as I am sure the honorable senator does not want their wages increased. It is clear that no Tariff bonus will meet the great expense of substituting white labour for black in the north. According to the statistics furnished to us by Dr. Maxwell--

Senator Staniforth Smith

- The statistics are incorrect; because the average yield taken is wrong. The average was taken for the two years in which the smallest yield was produced.

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Senator MACFARLANE

- Even assuming that the average yield taken was too small, it is clear that the expenses are bound to be increased. The very object of this Bill is to increase wages by substituting white labour for. black in the northern sugar districts - and the profits must accordingly be reduced. . The bonus which it is said will be available under the Tariff for the sugar planter is clearly a myth, so far as the northern part of Queensland is concerned. It is said that the kanaka must go, and I am inclined to think it is better that he should. I was one of many honorable senators who listened with great attention and pleasure to Dr. Paton and others, and I am prepared to admit that I think the traffic is not altogether satisfactory. We may teach some of the kanakas, and we may teach some of the children in the schools, but the evidence of Dr. Paton was that it was better that the black man, after residing in these States, should not return to his home, as he would only deteriorate the faster. By all means then, I would say let the kanaka go, and let us give every facility to the white farmer to settle and' work his land in the north, if he can. That I think ought to be our principal object. Let that be tried, and let us give every facility for a fair trial. But we ought to remember that it is not wise to burn our ships, and I am inclined to think that in a very few years' time the good sense of the

people of the Commonwealth will recognise . that it is absurd to throw some of the best land of the tropics into jungles rather than to employ possibly an alien race, and possibly Hindoos under proper conditions to work and develop the resources of those lands. In the meantime it seems to me that our best plan would be to entirely stop issuing licences to recruit for the present, and to allow the kanakas gradually to return to their homes, as I believe they will do in the majority of cases. I am told that if a "boy" takes it into his head to go home, nothing will stop him. If that course is adopted, the evil, if it is an evil, will be gradually worked out. That I think is a suggestion which is worthy of consideration. Failing this I would suggest that the seven years should remain in statu quo, and that after three years the kanaka should be deported. Those are two suggestions which occur to me as worthy of consideration, and I think the latter suggestion would be a fair compromise. The matter is surrounded with difficulties, I admit. I shall be very glad to assist in carrying out either of the courses I have named, or even to support the appointment of a select committee if that be deemed advisable. I do not think, however, that a select committee would bring us any nearer a solution of the question than we are at present. We have much data before us, and, in my opinion, time alone will show whether the white man can do the work or not.

Senator DE LARGIE

- During this debate I have listened very patiently for something new to be advanced from the pro-kanaka side of the question. I must say that I have listened in vain. I was in Queensland during the election campaign of 1888, when Senator Glassey was returned to the Queensland Parliament, and the speeches which I heard at that time in favour of kanaka labour were very similar to those on the pro-kanaka side which have been delivered during this debate. I well remember that the Postmaster-General, who now represents the Government in the Senate, fought a very hard battle on that occasion for the abolition of the kanaka traffic, and when I consider that he is still to be found working on the same side, I think he deserves some credit for his consistency. Charges of want of consistency are frequently heard in the Senate when a slight change of attitude upon any question is discovered on the part of any honorable senator, but no such charge can be made against the Postmaster-General upon this question. I left Queensland in 1889, under the impression, from the speeches I had heard in favour of the abolition of the traffic, that this class of labour would soon be abolished. I never dreamt that it would be continued for so many years, and that at this late date the question would still be unsettled. From the tone of some of the speeches delivered by honorable senators who are pro-kanakas, I think it would still be left unsettled if they had their way. Nothing new in favour of the traffic has been advanced during this debate. The special pleadings which I heard in Queensland in 1888 in favour of it have been repeated here.

Senator McGregor

- The only change is that the colour line has been shifted further north.

Senator DE LARGIE

- That is so. At the time of the general elections of 1888 the pro-kanakas would only agree that white labour could be employed on the sugar plantations as far as the Tweed and Logan Rivers. Now they admit that it can be employed as far up as Mackay, which is considerably over 800 miles north of those rivers.

Senator Fraser

- Perhaps if the honorable senator will only wait a while, we will go the whole hog.

Senator DE LARGIE

- No doubt the honorable senator has made up his mind that he will have to do so. At any rate, the electors of Australia have resolved that, he and other honorable senators shall do so whether they like it or not. We have heard many contradictory statements as to what was the real issue put before the electors of Queensland upon the occasion of the federal elections in that State. In order to satisfy my own mind upon the point I have hunted up some of the press reports of speeches delivered on that occasion by the honorable senators who have been returned to represent that State, and I find! that the speeches which they have made during this debate - so far as they have spoken - are in full accord with their utterances on that occasion. Their election speeches are too lengthy to read, but I should like to quote a short extract from an article which appeared in the Brisbane Courier - the leading newspaper in Brisbane - on the day before the federal elections. The article is headed - "What is the Issue?" and the paragraphs to which I refer read as follow: -

Had he (Mr. Burton) been willing to confine his policy regarding a white Australia to Asiatic immigration,

leaving the kanaka until he had visited Queensland for himself, the obstacle at present existing to his policy in this State would never have been raised. There is not the slightest excuse for dragging the kanaka on to the federal platform. Nature herself had taken him in hand, and in any case the Government and Parliament of Queensland had been true to their trust.

But labour in Queensland has always shrieked for the summary dismissal of the kanaka without giving the facts in connexion with his employment reasonable consideration, and since the main issue in recent general elections has been the platform and position of the labour party, Mr. Barton has by his own act transferred, it to the first federal elections.

That shows clearly what was the issue before the electors. We have had some very impudent statements made during this debate, if I may be permitted to say so, in regard to the question of whether certain honorable senators who represent Queensland, represent the opinions held by the people of that State upon this question. We have had figures presented to us showing the voting at the senatorial elections for Queensland, and therefore it is unnecessary for me to repeat them. I should like, however, to give the Senate the advantage of the figures I have collected relative to the return of honorable members to represent Queensland in the House of Representatives. There are two pro-kanaka representatives from Queensland in the other place, and seven anti-kanaka representatives. The two pro-kanaka members represent a total enrolment of 24,246 votes, or 25percent. of the electors of the whole State. The seven anti - kanaka representatives represent a total enrolment of 69,027 votes, or 75 per cent. of the electors of that "State. The two pro-kanaka champions represent 6,218 actual voters, while the seven anti-kanaka champions represent 23,869. The percentage of votes polled for the pro-kanaka members was 55 per cent, of those on the rolls for the particular electorates for which they were returned, while the votes polled for the anti-kanaka representatives was 61 per cent. Thus, there was a much larger percentage of votes recorded in the electorates for which anti-kanaka candidates were returned than in those for which pro-kanaka candidates were elected. Therefore, there was a decided majority in favour of the anti-kanaka members both in regard to the number of electorates and the actual number of votes recorded. During this debate Senator Dobson has repeatedly inquired what should be the wages paid to white men for cutting cane in Queensland. I quite agree with all that has been said as to the laborious nature of the work, and the oppressive heat which has to be endured by those employed in that calling. For my own part, I am not going to deny that the work is about as laborious as any which a man could be called upon to do. But there are occupations that are also very laborious, and in which the men employed require to endure very great heat. In Queensland, as in Western Australia, there are many callings which are quite as oppressive as sugar-cane cutting. We know that it is no picnic to work in a deep railway cutting in any part of Australia, and we know also that much has to be borne by those who work in the deep mines. Nevertheless, there are numbers of men engaged in both of those callings j and I think it is fair to assume from that fact that if good and reasonable wages are paid to white men engaged in the sugar industry, no difficulty will be found in securing the labour required. I know from my own personal experience that if a reasonable rate of wages is offered, no difficulty will be experienced in securing the requisite white labour for the industry in even such a warm district as Cairns. If the labour cannot be- secured, however, and if the cost of the sugar industry in the northern districts is to be the toleration of the kanaka, then the mandate of the people of Australia is, that we had better forego the industry in those places. The people of Australia have been very liberal in their proposals for overcoming the difficulty. They have agreed practically to pay a very heavy bonus on sugar produced in these places - a much higher bonus in fact than the sugar-growers themselves thought would be offered to them. I have here a pamphlet issued by the Brisbane Chamber of ' Manufactures and the sugar planters of North Queensland, in which the following statement appears : -

On the question of the Tariff, we consider that a preferential import duty in favour of Australian grown sugar should be imposed by the Commonwealth of £4 per ton.

That statement was published last year, and we know that the advantage is to be considerably greater than £4 per ton. Therefore, it must be admitted that the people of Australia are acting very liberally in this matter. They are prepared to pay a fair amount in order to secure the abolition of kanaka labour. So far as I have been able to judge this aspect of the question has been narrowed down to one of wages. I think it is agreed that a good rate of wages should be paid. No one can say that in the past wages have been reasonable. When we compare the rates paid for white labour in northern Queensland, with those which

exist on the Tweed and the Clarence Rivers in New South Wales, we see at once that there is a very great difference indeed. We have had the statement made by the representative of those districts in the House of Representatives, that the cane cutters on the Tweed and Clarence Rivers in northern New South Wales make their £2 15s. to £3 15s. per week. Let the same wages be paid at Cairns, even though its climate is much hotter, and I am quite satisfied that any amount of suitable labour will be available. Who will have to pay the enhanced price for the labour? Apparently the Australian public are quite willing to pay it. Surely, therefore, it is a reasonable thing to say that the wages of the men who toil in the production of the sugar should be higher than they have been. That is a view at which no person should cavil, and it is a sufficient reply to the oft-asked question of Senator Dobson as to the rate of wages.

Senator Dobson

- Senator Higgs said 6s. 6d. a day.

Senator DE LARGIE

- I think Senator Higgs will agree with me that that rate is too low, when he reflects on the peculiar nature of the work to be done. I should be very sorry to see men working for 6s. 6d. a day in the climate of Cairns and the northern parts of Queensland. That rate is paid to labouring men in the cooler parts of Australia, and I hold that a great deal more should be paid in such places as Northern Queensland. I do not agree with the mournful wail of several honorable senators as to the awful results which will follow from the abolition of the kanaka trade. It is a great privilege to be in a position to end this inhuman traffic in human flesh, and we should be very proud of the record in our history. When Senator Pulsford referred to the opponents of kanaka labour as the pro-kanaka and agitator party, he might very well have considered that it was something to be proud of. In the literature with which we have been deluged, we have read sufficient of the evils and atrocities which have disgraced the trade to justify us in deciding that it shall come to an end. We have the statements of clergymen that the sugar trade of Queensland is watered with the blood of black labour to such an extent that it is really disgraceful to the Australian people. That is a blot on Australian history which we ought to be proud to remove. To judge from the arguments advanced by several honorable senators, this traffic could go on until the crack of doom before they would bring it to an end. They apply for an extension of a few years more. But that very argument was used ten years ago, when it was urged that it should not be abolished until the end of ten years.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- Is the honorable senator prepared to buy out the planters?

Senator DE LARGIE

- If there were no better way of dealing with the question, I should be quite willing to buy them out. As a matter of fact, we are buying them out. The bonus of £6 a ton for the production of sugar with white labour, is a very good price to pay to the planters for the abolition of the kanakas. If it rested with me, I should not allow private persons to have a mortgage on the sugar trade. I consider that the Government will get very little in return for the very big price they are paying to the planters. All the return they will get is the honour of abolishing an inhuman traffic.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- At the expense of the planters.

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Senator DE LARGIE

- At the expense of the taxpayers of Australia. . In my opinion, the sugar trade, in which such close inspection is required, can only be properly conducted in the hands of the Government. If they could see their way to take over the trade, I should be only too happy to vote in that direction. We have a mandate from the electors to carry out. The Sphinx has spoken, and all the excuse's which have come from honorable senators and from the Government of Queensland cannot alter the fact that the verdict of the people at the federal elections was that the traffic must end. If we were to prolong its existence for more than five years we should be departing from that mandate. I support the Government in their very reasonable attitude. It is in accordance with their election pledges, and it is very creditable to them in every sense of the word.

Senator O'KEEFE

- I hold that no more important question can be debated in the Senate in this session than the abolition of the kanaka traffic. To me it is, if not the first, the second question of national importance. It is of greater

importance than any other measure we are likely to have, except, perhaps, one before the close of the session. It is the duty of every honorable senator, if he feels as strongly as I do, to place on record the reasons which guide his vote on this Bill. There is no need to say that it is an important question. Any question which can stir up in any section of the community in a State, such an agitation as this one has aroused, and is arousing in Queensland, must be of very vast importance.

Senator Macfarlane

- The shoe is pinching.

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Senator O'KEEFE

- The shoe is pinching a section of the people, but it has pinched a larger section of the Queensland people, and thereby a larger section of the Australian people ever since the traffic commenced. We have been told that the kanaka traffic has nothing to do with the greater question of a white Australia. In my opinion that is an incorrect view to take. To my mind it is a part of that great question, and I cannot understand an honorable senator, who only last week said that in pursuance of his policy of a white Australia, he would vote in a certain way on another Bill this week, voting for an extension of the kanaka traffic, or at all events urging that an extension should be granted. No doubt honorable senators who take that view will explain away their action to their own satisfaction, if not to that of their constituents. The strongest argument, perhaps, which has been adduced against our contention is that there is great difficulty in obtaining a regular supply of reliable labour in the cane-fields of Northern Queensland. That aspect of the question has been thrashed out here with very great ability. I admit that there are very many difficulties in the way. No reasonable man who has read the various reports which have been circulated, who has heard the address of Dr. Maxwell, and read his report, and the statements of many other persons, can but admit that there are difficulties in the way. A great deal has been said on the other side of the question, and I do not think that it has received enough attention here. I do not think that quite sufficient weight has been attached to the arguments of Senator Glassey. Any honorable senator who has made this the principal item in his politics in his own State for very many years, as Senator Glassey has done, is at least entitled to have some weight attached to his arguments and his opinions. Many of the opinions which he advanced the other day to me were unanswerable. I have waited patiently to hear them answered in a way which would appeal to the reason of any common-sense man. So far, I have not heard the chief of his arguments answered in a way which would appeal to my reason. After listening to the very able speeches as to the opinions of the majority of the people in Queensland; after being told that the voice of that State is against the abolition of the kanaka traffic, I still think we are justified in taking the verdict of Queensland at the federal elections. No argument has been advanced from the other side which can appeal to us with such force as the decision of Queensland to send down to both Houses of the Federal Parliament representatives pledged to abolish the traffic at the earliest possible opportunity. It has been stated here, over and over again, that we cannot take the verdict of the State as representing the true voice of its people, but I hold that we can. The people of Queensland undoubtedly knew what was to happen in connexion with the kanaka traffic on the day of the general election; and, knowing that, they sent to the House of Representatives thirteen members out of fifteen pledged to its abolition. It was my good fortune to be then in the Cairns district, which we have been told can never continue its sugar industry when the kanaka labour is swept away. On the night before the federal referendum was taken there was a crowded meeting in the largest hall in Cairns. I attended as a stranger, and heard a number of speakers on both sides. Some of them tried to persuade the electors that they should not vote "yes," and pointed out to them as plainly as possible that if they voted for federation it would mean the early extinction of the kanaka traffic. Those in favour of abolishing the kanaka stood on the platform, and said openly and candidly, and without any hesitation, that they advised the electors to vote for federation, because if Queensland joined the union it would mean the very early extinction of kanaka labour. There was no mincing the question. It was not kept from the electors. That was practically the only issue before the people at that meeting; and I am able to stand here, and say that there was an overwhelming majority in favour of federation. I do not remember the figures at the poll, but I believe I am right in saying that in the Cairns district there was a very large majority in favour of federation.

Senator Glassey

A substantial majority. In my own town, there was a majority of 475 out of 1,500 electors on the roll.

Senator O'KEEFE

- Surely the working men of Northern Queensland have as much sense as the working men in other parts of Australia. If they believed that the abolition of the kanaka traffic was going to ruin them, and take away their source of labour, would they not have voted "No," instead of "Yes." I take it that that is the very best argument that could be advanced in favour of my view, that not only the people of Queensland generally, but of Cairns in particular, knew what would follow if that State joined the union. We are also confronted with the argument that even if white men would do the work in Northern Queensland, and if the planters were agreeable to pay them the wages they asked for, they are really physically unfit to do it. But there is a very trying kind of work that is being done by white men in all the -tropical ports of Australia, even as far north as within the Cairns district. I maintain that this work is equally as laborious as any work that has to be done upon the sugar plantations. How is it that people of European descent can work in the stifling atmosphere of a ship's lower hold, stowing away cargo in tropical and sub-tropical ports, such as Cairns and Cooktown and Townsville ? This is very heavy work indeed. But not only do white men do it, but they are glad to get it to do, and come back for it whenever they get a chance. Why? Because they are paid a decent wage for doing it.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- They are protected from the sun.

Senator O'KEEFE

- But they would be just as well off' without the protection from the sun, if they had a little more fresh air, as they are now in the stifling holds of steamers with that protection. I have done a little bit of manual labour in my time in some pretty hot parts of Australia, and I candidly say that I would sooner have the sun burning upon me to the extent "of 96 or 98 degrees shade temperature, than work in the lower hold of a ship.

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Senator Fraser

- If the honorable senator was working in the sun in Northern Queensland, he would be in a temperature of 170 degrees.

Senator O'KEEFE

I spoke of the shade reading, because we generally take that as the measure of heat in Australia.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- A man working in the cane-fields would have the full force of the sun upon him.

Senator O'KEEFE

There are people who say that even in these tropical parts of Australia work can be done in the sun by white men. A large number of extracts have been read from various authorities, many of them of the most reliable character. I am going to cite an authority which has not yet been quoted. I quote it because I maintain that it is an authority equal in reliability to any which has been quoted in the course of this debate. I am going to quote from it to uphold my view that white men can do sugar-cane work in Queensland. Just about the time of the opening of the Federal Parliament, a journal in Melbourne sent up a special representative to study the whole question of the kanaka traffic, in view of the intention of the Federal Parliament to abolish this class of labour. Here I may say that in my opinion, if every one of the leading journals of Australia had adopted the course which > was pursued by the Herald in Melbourne, and had despatched an impartial representative for the purpose of telling the people of Australia in an unbiased and unprejudiced fashion what is the truth about this matter, they would have been performing the true functions of journalism far better than by simply advocating one side of the question and neglecting the other, as the leading papers' of Australia have done. The special representative of the Melbourne Herald in the pamphlet which has been published by that journal says, that in trying to get the views, not only of the workers, but of the planters and of all sections of the Queensland people, he interviewed a planter who gave him the information which I will quote. The interviewer asked him - " You all employ kanaka labour ? " The planter said -

Not all kanakas. We also have numbers of Japanese and Indians. I suppose there are altogether about 380 of the coloured race employed by the planters of the district, and foi' the most part of the year they are fully employed. When I went there in 1895 the place was at a stand-still.

Then he goes on quoting from this Mossman planter, who says -

No one will employ a recruit when he can get an old boy. The kanakas, as you know, are employed all the year round. Bight through the slack season as well as the bus}' they are paid at the same rate. It makes no difference if they fall ill. On the whole, I think their remuneration is equal to the average wage paid to farm labourers in Victoria.

Just to show that I want to be fair - as the gentleman who compiled this report wanted to be fair, and to put both sides of the question before the public - I am giving' the other side. I have just quoted a planter who was opposed to the abolition of the kanaka. The Herald's special commissioner goes on -

The foregoing interview furnishes some interesting food for thought, and my old friend will, I suppose, attribute the fact that some of us may, on the same data, arrive at conclusions different from his, to the mere bigotry of the southerner. Now, just by way of setting off his view, and those of the planters whose experiences I gave last week, let me now, in this impartial series of statements, present the other side, as put by a Cairns man with whom I talked.

"You must always recollect," he said, "that this is an out-of-the-way sort of place, and that it is not easily get-at-able. If it were otherwise, or, since we cannot well recast the continent, if travelling were easier and less expensive, we could draw upon the southern cities for the additional labour needed in the busy sugar season, and things would be different. Do not believe half you hear about white men being unable to do the work. Why, the very whites who say it are themselves amongst the hardest workers in the district, and you do not find them delicate looking, do you ?"

"No, indeed, they're what the complimentary inspecting officer would declare to be ' a very fine body of men.' "

"Precisely, and they do the hard work."

" But they trash not, neither do they cut cane."

" Not while they can get niggers to do these things for them."

#34; But wouldn't they prefer to give employment to men of their own race ? Blood is usually supposed to be thicker than water."

"Yes, that is a very good and time-honoured idea - sometimes true, occasionally false - but since you deal in aphorisms perhaps you have heard one which declares that ' business is business ' ?"

" The figure does seem somewhat familiar."

" Somewhat ! Well, I'll let your modification pass. The point really is that in this work-a-day world 'business is business' with these planters, and whatever they may pretend to the contrary, the kanaka is cheap - ' cheap and nasty,' in fact, if we are to have a general parade of hackneyed figures of speech. I know the country well, have lived in it for years - for my sins, I suppose - and it is just beastly in the summer months. But most of us, British-like, get about and do our business all the year round, and it is hard work for whites as well as for blacks in the sugar season. I know whites can cut and load cane - I haven't seen any of them trashing - and if they care to stick to it would go through the season. Not, however, when there's anything better on, when there's good work on the wharves, as happens in the sugar season, and men can make i'4 or £5 a week, or when a new rush is heard of."

Senator Fraser

Does the honorable senator believe all that?

Senator O'KEEFE

- I say that the views placed on record by an impartial, unprejudiced correspondent of a southern paper, who went up there to study the question in all its aspects, without the slightest pecuniary interest in it, must appeal to the people of Australia with greater force than the arguments put forward by journals which are fighting the battle from the point of view of financial interest. If Senator Ferguson asks me whether I believe the testimony of this, correspondent, I reply that I do. I happen to have been a journalist myself for a few years, and I say that it is the aim and ambition of every journalist, if he wishes to be a successful member of his profession, to look at the matters which he is sent to investigate from all sides. To be successful, a journalist must be an honest man, and must speak the truth about what he sees. I believe that this journalist has given his opinions as fairly as he could.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

Then the honorable senator must give the same credit to papers on the other side

Senator Fraser

- The Queensland newspapers, which are on the spot, ought to know more about the subject than a

peripatetic journalist.

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Senator O'KEEFE

- But we know that papers on the spot are more likely to be interested than a paper a long distance from the spot. Another consideration is that the Brisbane Courier, upon which the advocates of the kanaka rely, has more than once changed its opinions upon this subject. Not only that - do honorable senators mean to tell me that the big journals in Queensland have put the question from both sides ?

One has only to read their articles to see that some of them have been trying for a long time past to make out a case as well as they could for the continuance of the kanaka traffic.

Senator Playford

- It is free-trade and protection over again !

Senator O'KEEFE

It is largely a question of locality.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- The honorable senator must not pin his faith too much to newspapers. Take the Age and the Argus, we cannot ride with both.

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Senator O'KEEFE

I say that I pin my faith considerably to newspapers, because I believe that impartial newspaper men try to place a true account of any matter before the people. We are not dealing now with the Age or the Argus, but with the testimony of a gentleman who went up specially to investigate this question on the spot, in view of its coming before the Federal Parliament. I could quote ad infinitum from his letters as other honorable senators have done from other sources. There are many more statements in his pamphlet which are quite as strong, and they show that opinions are about equally divided.; but a very large number of working men, and some of the planters themselves in Northern Queensland, say that white men can do the work. I come now to another aspect of the question-. We have been told by some honorable senators, not so much perhaps in' connexion with this question, as in connexion with another Of a somewhat similar nature, that as members of the labour party, we take an extreme stand in trying to prevent our dear coloured brothers, whom Senators Dobson and Pulsford love so much, from earning a living side by side with ourselves. We are told that we should be prepared to enter into competition with them, and that we do not stand well when we say that we are afraid to enter into competition with them. But do the gentlemen who profess so much regard for these cheap coloured aliens practice what they preach 1 We find that when the shoe pinches themselves they tell quite a different tale. A little time ago some Chinamen in one of the northern sugar districts of Queensland commenced to indent kanakas.

They entered into competition with the white sugar-growers and what was the result 1 There was . immediately a howl from the sugar-growers who have sent us such heaps of correspondence asking that they should not have the kanaka taken away from them, and they even went the length of trying to get the Queensland Government to prevent Chinese growers indenting kanakas. So long as the cheap coloured gentleman only came into competition with the white labourer he- wa3 an object of sympathy, but immediately he entered the charmed circle and became an employer instead of an employe, he entered into competition with themselves, and he was then a wicked person who ought to be crushed out if possible by the Queensland Government. I understand that the Queensland Government had not the power to do what the sugar-growers asked them to do. Let us see what occurred in connexion with the pearl-shelling industry a few years ago. I have the following little extract upon that subject : -

In the pearl-shelling industry, organized capitalism having driven out white labour with cheap coloured divers, found itself the victim of the black and yellow capitalists competition. At once Parliament interfered to prohibit the person of colour from owning a pearl-shelling boat. All the pathos about how the Christian faith makes no distinction between the white man and the coloured specimen at once dried up.

That is the Christian faith of which we have heard so much from Senator Pulsford -

The rich man who is so shocked at the selfishness of the poor man in wanting to shut out cheap Asiatic competition, found the Asiatic competing with himself and promptly forbade him by Act of Parliament. And, then, having forcibly suppressed Asiatic competition as directed against his own personal interests, he went on being shocked at the poor man's selfishness in just the same old way. Now he wants to shut

out the Asiatic from being a boss planter, because in that capacity he will interfere with the fat man's interests, and at the same time his attitude of Christian surprise because the white worker also objects to the Asiatic interfering with his interests is in as good repair as ever.

Honorable senators will see that as soon as the shoe pinched the employers there was an outcry from them against this cheap competition. Instances of this kind must compel us to believe that this is, after all, only a question of cheapness. Another phase of the question put before us is that the planters must have the kanaka to carry on their industries, because he is a reliable, docile, and servile labourer, who can be depended upon at all times and in all seasons, while the wicked white labourer, who is not reliable, cannot be depended upon. Let us consider this gentle, law-abiding, peaceful kanaka in this respect. If honorable senators go to the Queensland gaols they will find that during last year 103 kanakas were imprisoned, and that that number represents 6 per cent. of the total prisoners, though the kanakas in Queensland constitute less than 2 per cent. of the total population. It is worthy of mention in passing that 460 other aliens were also imprisoned. This is the reliable, docile, coloured man who is pointed to as an example for our white labourers. There is still one aspect of the question which has not yet been put before the Senate, and I make no apology for referring to it. I allude to the walkabout kanaka, and I find that the Herald correspondent says in this connexion -

In Queensland, apart from the considerable number of "ticket" boys who are exempt from the kanaka regulations, there are thousands of Polynesians "unaccounted for," and concerning whom the suspicion is that they have associated themselves permanently with the population. Visit any northern town, and more particularly "observe "the walk-about kanaka" at Bundaberg, and you will understand how some of the leakage displayed in official returns is explained. "The sturdy well-fed black man, the survival who parades the streets of Bundaberg," remarks a writer in Progress, "or who is hanging about on strike on the Isis, is a very different person from the ignorant-scared weakling who used to be landed with a metal ticket round his neck to distinguish him from his fellows. These seasoned islanders are leasing land, marrying white females, entering into engagements not only in sugar-growing but other occupations, in fact becoming a part of the population." There is not much doubt about it that a considerable number of kanakas are achieving a permanent citizenship, and I have already expressed the opinion that unless a kanaka is willing to return to his island home no existing law is strong enough to compel him.

I hope there will be a law made by the Federal Parliament which will be strong enough to compel him. Politically, however, the men survive for he gets no vote - that is reserved for his piebald offspring. The Maryborough Chronicle, which I am told is not a labour piper, publishes a report of the Currajong Farmers' Progressive Association in May, 1899, in which one is given a picture of the "walk-about kanaka" perfectly according with what I recently saw myself at Bundaberg.

I remind honorable senators that this gentleman is not writing of a time sixteen or twenty years ago. He is speaking of what he observed three or four months ago.

"The 'walk-about kanaka,' as a rule, is a useless, impudent brute - a danger and a disgrace to Queensland. We can thank the swaggering, free kanaka for most of our Chinese gambling hells, Japanese dens, and many other infamies in this Christian land." The writer goes on to say that the police were then "rounding up the camp kanakas," and observed "their removal to anywhere else removed from here a danger to our women particularly."

Now, just one or two more quotations with reference to the moral aspect of the question, as put before the public by this unprejudiced and unbiased correspondent -

The moral phase of the kanaka question is in itself a subject big enough for a series of articles, and I can only pretend here to touch upon a few of its features. I have said that the frequent stories of cruelty, ill-feeling, &c, are either wholly untrue or exaggerated, but that does not alter the fact that the black traffic is only thinly disguised slavery.

Senator Clemons

- From what is the honorable senator quoting?

Senator O'KEEFE

- From articles specially supplied by a correspondent of the Herald newspaper, who visited Queensland for the purpose.

Senator Fraser

- They are not worth two straws.

Senator O'KEEFE

- I accept the opinion of this gentleman as worth far more than the opinion of Senator Fraser. He gives his views on a subject in which he has not the slightest personal interest, and, though I do not say that Senator Fraser is interested in this matter in any way I do say that an ordinary man would attach more weight to the- statements contained in this pamphlet than to the opinions expressed by the honorable senator.

Senator Fraser

- I am a large shareholder in the paper, and I say deliberately that the pamphlet is not worth two straws.
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Senator O'KEEFE

- I must congratulate the honorable senator upon being a shareholder in an impartial and well-conducted journal. The writer goes on to say -

Part of the disguise is the elaborate Queensland system of laws in regard to it. These laws are so often and flagrantly violated - even Dr. Maxwell admits some transgressions - that one is compelled to take the view that the law is only a blind. It is necessary to preserve appearances in the face of a censorious world, and these Queensland Acts and regulations are the paint and powder with which it is sought to give an aspect of beauty to an essentially ugly thing. It is not only a traffic in living flesh and blood, but in human life. The death-rate of kanakas in Queensland, as I have shown in these articles, is not so high as it used to be, but it is still very high. It is estimated that up to the end of 1894, about 50,000 kanakas had been imported into Queensland, and that of that number no fewer than 10,000, some say 1 1,000, had died. What awful tribute is this. Surely it may be said that the sugar-growing industry of Queensland has been baptised in the blood of the black man.

Another argument advanced is that this traffic is not thinly-veiled slavery, but that the men work under contract. I assert, however, that it is thinly-veiled slavery. Can a contract between an educated, intelligent man, and a kanaka who knows absolutely nothing of the country to which he is going, or of the ordinary conditions governing agreements between two parties, be considered a fair one ? I leave the good sense of the Senate to answer that question.

Senator Fraser

- The Queensland Government have pledged themselves to see that justice is done.

Senator O'KEEFE

- But they are powerless to see that justice is done in every case. I should like to read an extract relating to a matter which has already been referred to in the Senate, in order to show that the Queensland Government is powerless to see that justice is done to the kanaka equally with the white voters of that State -

For refusing to turn up to work next morning, after being kept at work late the previous night, the Cairns police magistrate fined two kanakas £5 and costs (a year's wages), and three others £20 and costs (three years' wages). "No goods," said the inspector in the first case. "Two months' imprisonment," replied the police magistrate. "No goods," said the inspector in the second instance. "Three months' imprisonment," said the police magistrate. Pure slavery this.

Senator Clemons

- That has been quoted before.

Senator O'KEEFE

- Apparently it has had no effect upon Senator Fraser, who refuses to believe that the kanakas can be ill-treated in Queensland.

Senator Fraser

- No doubt they are in some cases, but two wrongs do not make a right. Are not white men treated wrongly sometimes ?

Senator O'KEEFE

But white men have a better means of securing redress than have these unfortunate people, who do not know our language ; who have not got a voice or a vote in the affairs of the country, and who, in spite of anything that may be said to the contrary, are slaves to almost as great an extent as those who had to bare their back to the planters and overseers in South America.

Senator Fraser

- But many of them come back from the islands.

Senator O'KEEFE

That point has been ably answered already by quotations from letters written by missionaries. What after all does this agitation for an extension of time mean ? Let us strip the question of all the humbug that is thrown around it. Do not let us blind our eyes to the fact that it is not a mere extension of time that is asked for, but a continuation for all time of this or some other servile form of cheap labour.

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Senator Sir William Zeal

- On what authority does the honorable senator make that statement?

Senator O'KEEFE

- On the authority of a dozen statements that I can produce if necessary. Has not Senator Zeal, in common with other honorable senators, received numerous pamphlets on the subject, in which it is said that the sugar industry will be ruined if kanaka labour is abolished ? The planters do not mince matters in this respect, and the Premier of Queensland is to-day asking the Senate not to abolish the traffic.

Senator Fraser

- He has asked for an open inquiry.

Senator O'KEEFE

An inquiry was asked for ten years ago and granted.

Senator Fraser

- But this is a new Parliament.

Senator O'KEEFE

The cry is purely and simply a dodge to secure delay. Are we going to allow the traffic to continue for all time or are we going to abolish it? If we are prepared to abolish it in seven or ten years' time, as asked by some, why should we not abolish it in five years' time? In fact I would ask, why not abolish it at once, because I freely admit that the Bill allows a greater time for the gradual abolition of the traffic than I had anticipated. If the abolition of kanaka labour five years hence, is going to ruin the industry, then it will ruin it in seven years' time. The truth is that the people who are crying out for an extension of time, believe that if their request is granted they will be able in the meanwhile to keep on agitating, and to bring fresh pressure to bear on members of this Parliament so that their beloved kanaka will be left to them for all time, and they will not have to say every morning, as no doubt some of them do at present - " Oh, Lord, give us this day our daily kanaka."

Senator Fraser

- The honorable senator wants the cheap Java man at 3d. per day.

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Senator O'KEEFE

I do not. In view of the honorable senator's interjection I would ask, what better time could we have for doing away with kanaka labour than the present, when we have another measure to be brought before us shortly in connexion with which such a Bill as this must be considered ? I refer to the Tariff. I think it was clearly shown by an honorable senator on the other side of the House, whose statement has not been contradicted, that the preference made by the Tariff in favour of sugar grown entirely by white labour over that grown by black labour, will undoubtedly make up for the cost of substituting white for black labour. During the last few months I have endeavoured to get at the bottom of this question. I have sought to learn whether the work can be done by white men, and whether, if it can be done by them, they are willing to do it. Since the introduction of the Tariff I have also endeavoured to ascertain whether the increase'd cost to which the planters will be put in substituting white for black labour will be made up to them under the Tariff proposals, and I have come to the conclusion that I cannot vote for or support any extension of the time within -which it is proposed under this Bill that kanaka labour shall cease. I come now to another and a higher aspect of the whole question. It is all very well to say that this is merely a business question ; but we know that it is a duty which devolves upon the men who have been sent here from all parts of Australia at the commencement of our national life, to pass laws under which the people by whom they were returned will be protected.

Senator Fraser

- And stir up strife immediately we become a Commonwealth.

Senator O'KEEFE

- We are not going to stir up strife by removing the kanaka unless it be among a small section of the community. How much greater strife should we create amongst the 99-100ths who sent us here with a mandate to abolish kanaka labour for Australia if we did not carry out that desire. I am going to look on this matter from a national stand-point. Not very long ago a lady made a hurried tour through Australia, like many other travelling newspaper correspondents from other portions of the world who place upon record their views on Australian questions, as if they had lived here all their lives. The lady I refer to is Miss Shaw, a correspondent for what is regarded as the chief newspaper in the world - The Times. In the course of one of the articles, which she contributed to that journal, she stated, in writing upon northern Queensland matters, and incidentally no doubt upon the sugar planters -

The business of politicians of tropical Australia will be to make laws by which a large servile population will be ruled by a small body of aristocratic men.

I think I may fairly claim to say that that represents, not only the view of Miss Shaw, but also the view taken by Senators Fraser, Ferguson, Macfarlane, Dobson, and particularly by Senators Pulsford and Walker, who tell us that they almost love the kanaka. It also represents the opinion held by the Premier of Queensland. If we, who want to see the kanaka go, think that by dilly-dallying with the question we shall help to bring about such a state of affairs that in one part of Australia we shall have a servile population dominated by an aristocratic body, we are justified in adopting the proposals in this Bill, which are not of a drastic character, in order to do away with the slavery at once. I hope we are all Christians, but it is singular that those good Christian senators, who, in almost every other walk of life give practical proof of their Christianity, put Christianity and humanitarianism on one side directly they touch their pocket. The pocket always prevails. As soon as the love of Christianity comes into conflict with the worship of mammon, the history of the world shows us that mammon prevails. In that connexion I should like, for the benefit of those who are so anxious to continue this system of slavery-

Senator Dobson

For only two years beyond the period fixed by the Bill.

Senator O'KEEFE

- Why for two years longer?

Senator Dobson

- Because it takes a long time to elaborate laws to get the small farmers on the land.

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Senator O'KEEFE

- The honorable senator is a legal gentleman of great standing and of great political experience in his own State. He must know perfectly well that if the most complete arrangements cannot be made in five years they cannot be made in seven. At the end of the seven years we should still be asked for "only another two years." I wish to read a very brief extract from a work on American slavery, in order, if not to show the danger, at any rate to emphasize our opinion that we are only speaking for what- the anti-slavery man asked during the big fight for the abolition of slavery in that country. In 1850, Senator William Henry Seward said in the American Congress -

This is a State, *nd we are deliberating for it, just as our fathers deliberated in establishing the institutions we enjoy. Whatever superiority there is in our condition and hopes over those of any other "kingdom" or "estate," is due to the fortunate circumstance that our ancestors did not leave things to "take their chance," but that they "added amplitude and greatness" to our Commonwealth "by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs as were wise." We, in our turn, have succeeded to the same responsibilities ; and Ave cannot approach the duty before us, wisely or justly, except we raise ourselves to the great consideration of how we can most certainly "sow greatness to our posterity and successors." And now the simple, bold, and even awful question which presents itself to us, is this - Shall we, who are founding institutions, social and political, for countless millions - shall we, who know by experience the wise and the just, and are free to choose them, and to reject the erroneous and unjust - shall we establish human bondage, or permit it, by our sufferance, to be established? Sir, our forefathers would not have hesitated an hour. They found slavery existing here, and the} left it only because they could not remove it. There is not only no free State which would now establish it, but there is no slave State, which, if it had the free alternative, as we now have, would have founded slavery

We are in the very same position to-day. We are in danger of establishing a system of slavery in this young nation if we dally with this question. We have indisputable evidence of that.

Senator Clemons

- Does the honorable senator consider that this Bill is as fair to Cairns as to Bundaberg

Senator O'KEEFE

- Yes, because I do not see that there is a possibility of making a distinction.

Senator Clemons

- The honorable senator admits that it is not quite as fair to one as to the other

Senator O'KEEFE

I freely admit that there may be more difficulty in obtaining white men to do the work at Cairns than at Bundaberg. The working men of the Cairns district have said that the work can be done by them. I was in Cairns on the night before the referendum was taken. At a large public meeting, the question was placed before the electors by public speakers on each side. It was distinctly stated that if the electors voted for federation, it would mean the early abolition of the kanakas. What was the result of such statements

A big majority in favour of federation next day.

Senator Clemons

- Would the honorable senator give Cairns two years more if he could take it off Bundaberg ?

Senator O'KEEFE

If I had- my way they would not get five years

Senator Clemons

- But if the honorable senator could take it off Bundaberg ?

Senator Dobson

- Three years to Bundaberg and seven years to Cairns.

Senator O'KEEFE

At the end of the seven years we should be asked to give ten years to Cairns. I esteem it as the greatest privilege, perhaps the proudest hour, of my life, to be able to assist in striking a blow at what I believe, if left untouched, would develop into a system of slavery in Australia. I am proud to be able to have a voice and vote in suppressing this traffic. I am proud to be able to look at this question in a broad national light, and to have the opportunity of joining in building up in Australia a state of affairs which posterity will not be ashamed of, and for which our children, and our children's children, will thank us. It is better that they should have to thank us, than that they should have to blame us for having helped to perpetuate a system which every reasonable man ought to feel to be a disgrace to this Commonwealth.

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- I should not have ventured to obtrude any remarks on the Senate had it not been for the references made by some speakers to the attitude which others have taken on this kanaka question. We do not object to any opinions which honorable senators may hold. We only ask them to extend to those who claim considerate treatment for the planters the same consideration as they ask for themselves. I have never had any interest in Queensland, but I certainly have been very much influenced by representations which have been made to me by representative people throughout the length and breadth of that very large State. It is the duty of honorable senators hailing from temperate latitudes like Victoria to give to this question that fair consideration which Queensland representatives ask for. If they will look at the matter fairly, they will see that we can have no interested object in view in our discussions.

Senator McGregor

- Did the honorable senator ever ask the kanakas, or the white workers, or the planters of Queensland any questions ?

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- No. The planters were induced by certain representations of the Government of Queensland to embark their fortunes, large or small, as the case may be, in an enterprise which successfully or unsuccessfully has been carried on during the past ten years. Some honorable senators seem to be determined at all hazards to crush out these men. Is that fair and honest ? Would the strongest advocate of this policy here like to be treated in that way ?

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Senator O'Keefe

- They went into the enterprise knowing their risks about kanaka labour.

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- I have no knowledge of that. I do not think that Senator -Glassey did justice to some public men in Queensland when he spread broadcast insinuations against them simply because they had changed their minds. Is there a politician of any eminence in Australia who has not changed his mind on particular subjects? It seems to me that Sir Samuel Griffith changed his mind as the result of an experience which has not been available to many of us here, and I give him credit for the honest and reasonable intelligence he displayed in dealing with this question. I feel quite sure that Senator Glassey would ask for similar treatment for himself. One would think from the speeches of some honorable senators that the kanakas are over-running the country. But it is admitted by the opponents of their employment that there are between 8,000 and 9,000 kanakas in Queensland, and that their employment now requires the employment of 20,000 white labourers. Does this not prove that the use of 35 per cent, of coloured labour enables 65 per cent, of white labour to be profitably employed? I dare also assert that the white labourer gets infinitely better paid for his work than does the unfortunate kanaka. But be that as it may, there is not one honorable senator, I hope, who wishes to do an injustice to blacks or whites. It is not right with one wave of the hand to sweep out of existence this large industry, which, as Senator Glassey has said, is of greater importance than the great butter industry of Victoria. This is an industry which cannot be safely tampered with.

Have honorable senators who hold extreme views ever considered the fact that we are surrounded by large sugar-raising countries, which may in the future materially affect the supply of sugar to Australia? Do they realize that the Philippines have been engaged for years in the growth of sugar? I ask those who wish to wipe out our sugar industry as with a sponge, where is our sugar to come from if the proposed bounty is not sufficient? In Java, the Philippines, Mauritius, and other countries, sugar is raised by cheap labour, and if we do not pay a sufficient bounty on the production of sugar in Australia, we shall wipe out our sugar industry and have to get the whole of our supply from foreign countries. If the planters cannot pay £3 10s. a week to men to work in the cane-fields, how are they to carry on the industry?

Senator McGregor

- Does the honorable senator want both the duty and the kanaka?

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- I only want fair play for the kanaka as well as the white man.

Senator STANFORTH SMITH

- The honorable senator wants fair play for the kanaka and we want fair work for the white man.

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- The honorable senator wants for the white man exceptional treatment, which is not justified by reason or experience. If the sugar industry is swept away by immature or unfair legislation, how can it be developed again? Has the honorable senator considered the great effect it will have on Queensland, which is none too prosperous at the present time? The representatives of that State here are prepared to do an injustice, against which my judgment revolts, to a section of the community, who invested their money in this industry under the auspices of the Government. Senator McGregor, a sturdy democrat, has talked about the aristocracy of labour. He is the greatest aristocrat in this Chamber. He is now actually seeking to bring about class legislation, and to create an aristocracy of labour, centred at the Trades Hall. He cannot get away from the fact that that is so. Let us take a parallel case. We have in Victoria a great industry - the mining industry. Have honorable senators ever considered what effect that industry has upon the labourers who are engaged in it? Have they ever considered, that the shareholders who put their money into mining obtain an infinitesimal part of the profits derived from its development, and that 70 or 80 per cent, of the gross outlay in carrying on the mines is spent among the working men?

Senator McGregor

- They do all the work!

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

- And they are well paid for it. The honorable senator seems to think that because a particular industry is developed in a particular way, the advantages of it are taken away from the workers. Nothing of the kind. The workers in the mining industry of Victoria obtain from 75 to 80 per cent, of the gross earnings of the mines.

Senator McGregor

- And the people who do nothing get the other 20 per cent.

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

-- They get what they can, and in some cases they get something less than nothing. In any case, they only get an unstatable fraction of what is derived from it. The extra 20 per cent, does not go into the pockets of the investors, but most of it goes in machinery to develop the mines, and in paying the wages of mine managers and overseers, which further depletes the profits.

Senator McGregor

- It is a wonder that all the mining investors have not found their way to the benevolent asylum long ago !

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

-In Victoria to-day there are thousands of people who have lost a large portion of their fortunes in mining investments. If the honorable senator wishes to speculate a little, I can offer him a box of scrip belonging to myself. He can have it all for £1, though it has cost me thousands. I mention this, because I have no doubt that the sugar industry, like the mining industry, is not altogether as profitable as some people think it is. I remember the great depression which took place in the value of sugar property some twenty years ago, when hundreds of people were ruined, who had invested their means in plantations. It is all a matter of business and of bargaining, and if this industry can be carried on under reasonable conditions, and is treated with fairness, let us extend that consideration to it. I ask honorable senators to reflect upon this point, and not to attempt to do that which seems to me to be a manifest injustice. I had not the pleasure of hearing Dr. Maxwell deliver his address to members of the Senate, but I have been told that he adduced facts which were worthy of consideration. I do not believe that that gentleman has in any way endeavoured to misrepresent facts. I ask honorable senators in all fairness, as British subjects, to give reasonable and just treatment to the planters, who are in a small minority. We all know that very often it is not the popular side which is the true side. Many great errors have been believed in by the masses of the people. AVe often hear the referendum spoken of as a means of undoing every possible social evil. Do honorable senators recollect that the most significant illustration of the use of the referendum in early times is found in the Bible, and that that referendum, the first on record, resulted in the direst consequences to the human race?

Senator Higgs

- Could the Chosen One have spoken, would He have been in favour of the kanaka traffic ?

Senator Sir WILLIAM ZEAL

-I cannot say, but I know that many honorable senators are supporting this measure because they believe that they are giving effect to the popular will. I instance the case I have mentioned, because it shows that a popular decision is not always correct, and that it is the duty of honorable senators . not always to swim with the stream. There is nothing easier in the world than to agree with the mass of the people. It is certainly safest to do so in politics. It requires a considerable amount of courage and determination to stand out against a popular verdict, and to do what is right and honest. It requires ten times more courage to do that than to go with the stream which may result in injustice. There are matters which are infinitely more important to the Commonwealth than the immediate settlement of this kanaka difficulty. Let us then see whether we cannot find some means of solving this problem, which will be just alike to the planters and to the white labourers. I entreat honorable senators not to be biased upon this subject, but to give the arguments which have been adduced on the side of the minority fair and reasonable consideration. I ask them to mete out to a section of the electors who have the misfortune to be in the minority that fair treatment which they are always willing to give to the major part of the electors.

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Senator KEATING

- I have listened with great interest to the speech of the honorable senator who has just resumed his seat, because, during the course of the long debate which has taken place on the motion for the second reading of this Bill, I anticipated that we should receive from Senator Zeal something which would be directly opposed in character to the stream of eloquence which we have heard from so many other honorable senators on either- side of the chamber. But I certainly think that, in addressing himself to the question, Senator Zeal has, if I may say so, made certain unwarranted assumptions and drawn therefore certain conclusions which are absolutely unreliable. In the first instance, he has asked honorable

senators, before committing themselves to the policy contained in this Bill, to pay regard to the opinion of Queensland. Now, I think that those who have expressed their intention to support the measure proposed by the Government are paying a great deal of regard indeed -to all sections of opinion in Queensland. "Senator Fraser, who sits beside Senator Zeal, has told us that in estimating the opinions of the people upon matters of public importance, we should pay regard to their statutes rather than to the utterances of their public men. We might extend that principle very much further and come to this conclusion - that in estimating what is the opinion of the people of Queensland upon the question which is submitted for our .decision, we should bear in mind that in connexion with that question certain candidates presented themselves for election. We must have regard, not to what is the opinion of the newspapers of that State, either contemporaneously or subsequently to the election, but to what were the results of the election itself. The results, so far as Queensland was con'cerned, were these : Queensland as a State was entitled, as were all the other States of the Commonwealth, to return six members to the Senate. Five of those six have come here and expressed their intention to -work for the abolition of kanaka labour upon the lines proposed in the Bill submitted by the Government. I believe that some of those five, in offering themselves to the electors of Queensland, laid down the principle of abolition without any. qualification whatever. They are now prepared to deal with the measure submitted by the Government upon this question in a spirit of compromise. So far as another place is concerned, Queensland has nine representatives. Seven of them were returned pledged to the policy which is carried out in this Bill. Yet in the face of these facts we are asked by Senators Zeal, Fraser, Sargood, Macfarlane, Walker, Pulsford, and others to believe that the opinion of Queensland is in favour of the retention of the kanaka. Senator Pulsford actually stood up in his place yesterday and asked us to believe that the five representatives of Queensland who support this Bill in the Senate are misrepresenting that State. I absolutely refuse to accept the honorable senator's cordial invitation. I ask him to apply that test to himself. Let him consider whether he is representing or misrepresenting the people of New South Wales. We have to recollect that the Queensland elections were fought on this one issue. We cannot get away from that fact. Any honorable senator who cares to read the files of the Queensland newspapers at the time approaching the March election will see that there was an endeavour on the part of the journals' supporting the kanaka traffic to induce the electors to believe that the issue was that of the abolition of kanaka labour. It was put in cold, clear black and white by every paper ; and it was an issue of black or white. I turn to the Brisbane Courier of the 27th March, two days before the election, and I find that the Postmaster-General is referred to in the leading columns of that journal as having allied himself with our honorable friends Senators Higgs and Dawson, and others ; and it is stated that the return of these men to the Senate would mean that Queensland would have a body of representatives who would throw themselves into an alliance with the " ignorant southerner" who would endeavour to ruin the great sugar industry of that State.- Therefore it is clear that a fair issue was put before the people. Notwithstanding the fact that the Courier, the Telegraph, and other journals printed the names of the candidates, and scored out the names of those who were pledged to the abolition of the kanaka traffic, we find that six men were returned to the Senate all of whom distinctly pledged themselves to the establishment of a white Australia. As a matter of fact, we have now five of the six supporting this Bill. Senator Ferguson has asked for an extension of time. He, I believe, has had considerable experience in Queensland politics, and has occupied a seat in the Legislative Council of that State. No doubt his experience during many years there has taught him that, whenever this question arises, the safest course to pursue for those who believe in the retention of the kanaka is to ask for time. Indeed, the kanaka employer occupies in Australia very much the position that Oliver Twist occupies in English literature - he is always wanting " more." " A little more time" is always the plea which he puts forward. If we look at the history of the kanaka traffic in Queensland by the light of the legislation of that State, we shall find that every time an attempt was made to impose stringent regulations upon the traffic, and to effect its cessation, the argument invariably employed by those who were using kanaka labour was - "We want just a little more time.'4 It appears to me that those who are fighting the cause of the kanaka and the employer of kanakas, in deluding members of this Senate and the environs of the Senate with so much literature, have really overstated their case. We are told that if this Bill is carried in its present form, the sugar industry of Queensland will be ruined.

Senator Ferguson

- Quite right

Senator KEATING

Why then does the honorable senator ask for an extension of time when it can only mean the delay of the ruin for a couple of years? If the carrying of this measure in its present form will ruin the industry, surely if we extend the period from five to seven years we shall only be delaying the evil day.' Senator Ferguson is a good sound, honest, thoroughgoing old free-trader, and one of the great principles of free-trade is that where there is an industry which cannot exist without special supports, which are accorded to it in preference to any other industry, then it is time for those concerned in that industry to devote their energies and attention to something else.

Senator De Largie

- Does the honorable senator say that Senator Ferguson will not vote for the sugar duties?

Senator KEATING

I do not think that Senator Ferguson will allow any bigotry as a free-trader to carry him to that extent. I am pointing out that it is a principle of the absolute free-traders that an industry must not be propped up by any artificial supports. There must be no special consideration given to it. Senator Ferguson, on his own admission, believes in a white Australian policy. He will admit that to permit the continuance of the kanaka traffic for the special benefit of the Queensland sugar industry would be to offer a special consideration and supply a special prop, which would give the industry an advantage over all others. I cannot then understand why the honorable senator, as a free-trader, is found advocating the extension of the period to either seven or ten years when his logical attitude as a free-trader should be to assert that if this industry cannot stand under ordinary conditions, which the people of Australia wish to have characterizing all the industries of the Commonwealth, it is better that those who have put their money in, it should find other and better investments.

Senator Ferguson

- What I mean is that they want a little time to let them out with as little loss as possible. The loss is coming in any case.

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Senator KEATING

- We have heard the same demand for years and years. In 1892, when the Queensland Legislature was considering the matter the same cry was raised, and it was said that with ten years' further use of the kanaka, the industry would be firmly established, and could then be carried on with white labour. The ten years have almost gone by, and now the Federal Government are offering the sugar-planters five years more within which to set their houses in order. I think that in this connexion the Federal Government should have been guided by the experience of the Queensland Legislature in the past. If they had been they would have acted very differently. They would not have offered the sugar-planters a further term of five years, but a further term of two or three years³, and then Senator Ferguson, the Brisbane Courier, Premier Philp, and all the other persons who have been advocating an extension of the time proposed in this Bill would have told us that within five years everything that was necessary could have been done, and the five years term could then have been finally agreed upon to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. I can very well understand many of those who oppose this Bill most strongly opposing any restriction upon the employers of kanakas for the main and principal reason that they resent any interference with the employer in securing the cheapest labour he possibly can. But so far as the people of Australia are concerned there is no doubt that at the federal elections one note was sounded uniformly throughout each of the States, and that was that Australia itself must be committed to what is known as the white Australia policy. After such a mandate as we received at the last general election it seems to me that the only question left for the determination of this Legislature is by what methods the principle enunciated is to be put into practice. In offering the planters five years within which to arrange their affairs, the Government is not only doing what is absolutely just, but is extending to the planters a great deal of consideration, and perhaps much more than some of them are entitled to. Senators Eraser and Pulsford argued with great vehemence that the settlement of this question was a State right. I listened carefully to the arguments of both those honorable senators on that aspect of the situation, and I say unhesitatingly - and challenge any honorable senator reading the Mansard report to contradict me - that every one of the arguments advanced by those honorable senators on that point might have been used with equal force on previous occasions with regard to other matters which it was claimed by the

representatives of various States were matters affecting State rights. The portion of Senator Eraser's speech dealing with the State right aspect of the question, might be taken out of Ilansard bodily, and inserted in the discussion on clause 54 of the Post and Telegraph Bill in support of the claim that the maintenance of the Tattersall monopoly was a matter of State right. I have only one or two further words to say with reference to the proposal of the Government. We have heard it repeatedly stated by every speaker who has opposed the exclusion of the kanaka at all, and every speaker who has advocated an extension of time for the planters, that the work on the sugar plantations is work which it is absolutely impossible for white men to do. That is said in face of the fact that we have the evidence of the reports supplied by Dr. Maxwell himself that throughout Queensland, wherever cane planting is engaged in, white men are working. I do not think we have had a single tittle of evidence put before the Senate to show that there is any one district, or part of a district, at Bundaberg, Mackay, Cairns, or elsewhere, where it can be absolutely stated that there are no white men working.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- Yes, two districts are mentioned ; the Mulgrave and the Mossman.

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Senator KEATING

I think that if Senator Sargood reads the paper in his hand a little more carefully he will find, that it is nowhere distinctly stated that there is a district in which white men are not working. There may be a white farmer who has no white employes, but we have small owners farming their own lands throughout the whole of the sugar districts of Queensland, and in some districts the small owners predominate. We have figures to show that there is one white man to an average of 32 acres in the Bundaberg district ; one to 42 acres in the intermediate districts of Mackay, and one to 72 acres is the average in the Cairns district. Knowing as we do that there are some very large plantations in the Cairns district, from the average given, there must be some very small farms on which there are actually no kanakas employed at all, and on which the whole of the work is done by the people of the homestead. There is not a single reliable piece of evidence before the Senate that in any part of Queensland it is found so absolutely impossible for white men to work on the sugar plantations, that white men are not actually working there. How can any honorable senator who says that this industry is not fit for white men to engage in, tell us that they are pledged to, and in favour of a white Australia, and at the same time ask us to keep this industry going ? According to the contentions of those honorable senators, the industry should cease to exist. We have been told by Dr. Maxwell, that in connexion with the Tariff proposals submitted by the Government, the Bundaberg planters will gain a considerable amount per annum at the expense of the general tax-payer of Australia. The Mackay planters will also gain a considerable amount, and he says that in the Cairns district there will be a loss of £7,500 a year. But if honorable senators will read Dr. Maxwell's report, they will find one omission which is of a very serious character indeed. He tells us exactly the number of kanakas employed in each of these districts, and that the displacement of the kanaka by white labour in each district will cost so much. He arrives at the amount it will cost by considering the difference between the average pay of the kanaka, and the average pay of the white man. But he assumes - apparently, because he makes no statement upon the point - that to displace 1,000 kanakas, 1,000 white men will be required. He bases this loss of over £7,000 for the Cairns district on the assumption that one white man will be required to displace every kanaka who ceases to be employed in the Cairns sugar district. According to the argument of Senator Glassey, or, according to an answer which the honorable senator made to a question put in the course of a debate, one white man can do at least as much as two kanakas.

Senator Charleston

- The doctor has denied that

Senator KEATING

- If the honorable senator will read Dr. Maxwell's pamphlet on the subject, he will find that there is no comparison made of the labour efficiencies of the two races. He assumes right through that, to replace 1,000 kanakas, 1,000 white men will be required. On that account, I say that the results he deduces, so far as Cairns is concerned, are to be to a certain extent discounted. He tells us that the loss which the planters of Cairns will be put to will be over £7,000 a year.

Senator Macfarlane

- He says now it will be £30,000.

Senator KEATING

- I have not had an opportunity, as the honorable senator no doubt has had, of interviewing the doctor within the last few minutes. The latest statement, in black and white, which I have read from him, is that the loss will be £7,500 a year, but I feel that his estimate is made upon a wrong assumption.

Senator Charleston

- Does he not say that white labour will be less valuable in the Cairns district than in the Bundaberg district ?

Senator KEATING

- If the honorable member will look through Dr. Maxwell's pamphlet he will find that there is no comparison made between the labour efficiency of the white man and the black man in any of the districts ?

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Senator Higgs

- He uses an illustration about the horse and the mule in the report written for the Prime Minister.

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Senator KEATING

-I am not speaking of that, but of his latest pamphlet addressed to honorable senators. In that pamphlet he says that the planters of Bundaberg and Mackay will gain a certain amount per year, and those of Cairns will lose a certain amount, but his results are based, in my opinion, upon a wrong assumption, the assumption that the labour efficiencies of the races are equal, and, according to the answer we have had from Senator Glassey, the relation of the efficiency between the white and black races is as two to one in favour of the white. I contend, therefore, that the conclusions of Dr. Maxwell with regard to the loss likely to be sustained in the Cairns district are not fairly deducible. I think that an opportunity is now given to this Federal Parliament of dealing with this question as the Queensland Parliament could possibly never have dealt with it for various reasons, which need not be entered into here. I do not want to emulate Senator Glassey, or to use the language which he employed in referring to the conduct of the public men and the Parliament of Queensland; but he has had parliamentary experience in that State, and all I can say is that no matter how honorable senators may have deprecated the terms in which Senator Glassey referred to the conduct of some of the Ministers of the State in the past in connexion with this and other questions, we cannot get away from the fact that the very terms employed by him have been used openly for years and years by a dozen newspapers throughout Australia. The honorable senator is simply repeating what is public property in Australia so far as accusations are concerned. We come to the Federal Parliament, assembled from all the States, with an open mind upon this question, free to deal with it fairly and honestly in the interests, not merely of the people nor of the planters of Queensland, but in the interests of the people of Australia as a whole. We can deal with it now once and for all, and I trust that the Senate will follow the example set to it by another place and endeavour to grapple with the question once and for all, so that we may remove this black stain from Australia. The purport of Senator Zeal's argument was that there was really not so much danger in the kanaka traffic because there were not so many kanakas in Australia. We admit that there is not a great number of them here, but we know the conditions under which they live in Australia. We know how their presence is affecting the very character of our population itself, and further than that, if we come to look at the whole question from the ethical or moral standpoint, so far as the history of the Pacific Island is concerned, we find that as the result of this traffic the islands are fast becoming depopulated. If we allow the traffic to go on and make no restrictions, we know that it will be only a matter of a few years before the kanaka is as extinct as the Tasmanian aborigine. Then where would Senator Ferguson's Cairns sugar industry be ? Would he not then want to secure the right for the planters to employ other alien labour : the Indian coolie, or the Javanese labourer at 3d. a day, to whom Senator Eraser has referred? We should then have this statement submitted solemnly to this Parliament - " You did not interfere with the kanaka. You allowed us to believe that we could go on for all time employing this cheap labour. We invested our money in this industry under that belief : why should we be asked to rearrange our affairs and employ white men who want better conditions, higher wages, and a better standard of comfort than these men do 1 Give us, O ! give us, a further extension of ten years, or give us the Indian coolie, the Javanese, or some other cheap coloured labour. If you do not our

industry will be ruined." That is the position in which we shall be placed in the course of a few years, unless we take this trouble in hand firmly at once.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- Pole-axe the planters.

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Senator KEATING

- Senator Zeal's friends, the planters, have been in effect pole-axing the kanakas for a good many years. They have been getting rid of them at a very rapid rate. The islands are being depopulated rapidly, and if this measure could do such a thing as pole-axe the planters then we are only anticipating time by a very few years. Time itself will lead to the extinction of the kanaka and the consequent pole-axing of the planters. When we come to that position to which Senator Macfarlane looks forward with so much joy, both Houses of this Parliament will be approached by these very self-same planters? The argument used by Senator Zeal will be employed by them then with a great deal of force. The planters will say that they invested their money under the impression that the conditions prevailing when they entered the industry, would be allowed to continue. We shall be told when the last kanaka has gone out of the islands, and the last half-caste has refused to work, unless under the same conditions as - white men, that the planters invested their money in the belief that the original conditions were going to exist for all time, and that as they are unable to obtain the cheap labour necessary for the maintenance of their industry, it is incumbent upon Parliament to allow them to bring into the Commonwealth the Javanese, the Japanese, or some other undesirable immigrants. They will ingeniously suggest that these people should be allowed to remain in the Commonwealth under certain restrictions which would prevent them from coming into contact with the white races, and from acquiring our vices. Are we going to legislate in a way that will open to us a vista of such possibilities? I think it is the duty of the Federal Parliament, now that the matter has come before it, to deal with it calmly and gravely in the interests of the whole of Australia. I am quite prepared to look to the special interests of Queensland, recognising that it is the State of the union that is most affected by the sugar industry, and that the kanaka came into the Commonwealth primarily to enable that industry to be developed. What can we say? Queensland has been asked distinctly what is the opinion of the electors on this question. Her answer has been given unmistakably, by the honorable senators she has sent to represent her in this Chamber, and by the representatives which she has sent into another place. It will be a very sorry day indeed for this Parliament when we disregard altogether what has been the verdict of the people at the polls. It will be a very sorry day for us when we allow a State Government, or a State press, to tell us that a conclusion that would ordinarily be deduced from the result of the elections is a conclusion that is not fairly to be assumed, and that those who are professing to represent Queensland here, and who are sitting here by virtue of the mandate of the people of that State do not represent them. Where is it going to end? Are we going to be dictated to by the press, or even by the Government of a State? Are we to be asked to disregard the opinions expressed by those who are returned by the people to represent them in Parliament, more especially in view of the fact that this was practically the only question before the people at the federal elections in Queensland? Senator Fraser has said that if, instead of having been held in March last, the federal elections were to take place to-day the result would be different.

Senator Fraser

- I am sure of it.

Senator KEATING

- The honorable senator may be sure of it. I should not like to say that he is prejudiced. I do not say he is, but it is only human nature, when a man has any doubt, to give the benefit of that doubt to his prejudices. * I think that is what Senator Fraser is doing. In this instance, I think he is really following what is another characteristic of human nature, especially in the political world, where it is a most conspicuous feature of all minorities to refuse to acknowledge when they are defeated. We have had this question submitted to the electors of Queensland for the last ten or fifteen years. At the federal elections in Queensland it was the real issue raised. The newspapers of Queensland invited the people to take their attention from the fiscal issue, and the Brisbane Courier denounced the Postmaster-General for daring to deal with the fiscal issue. It asserted that in doing so he was endeavouring to put before the people a false issue - to conceal the fact that he was in favour of the abolition of the kanaka, and wished to ally himself with Senator Higgs,

Senator Dawson and others, and join forces with the ignorant Southerners in order to do an injustice to Queensland. In view of that fact, it is unfair to ask the people to disregard the result of the federal elections, and to say that honorable senators from Queensland were not returned on the issue upon which they spoke so unmistakably. Considering that this is the position of Queensland, I can scarcely understand why it has been thought necessary to argue at such great length, ever since the Federal Parliament met, the pros and cons of this question. I am quite prepared to support the proposal that is outlined by the Government in the Bill submitted to us, and if the Government were prepared to lessen the period within which it is proposed this traffic shall cease, I should still support them.

Senator BARRETT

- I agree absolutely with my friend Senator Keating in one of his later conclusions in regard to this question. He showed very clearly that had it not been for the federal union the people of Australia would not have been able to settle this question so effectively and quickly as they are called upon to do at the present time. It has been said that this is not a new question. It is certainly one that has been before the people of Australia for many years. For the last fifteen years the exclusion of aliens - the demand for a white Australia - has been in the very forefront of the programme of the party with which I am connected. I take up the ground that the Bill now before us gives effect to that principle. It seems to me also that it embodies very clearly the policy of the Government as outlined by the Prime Minister in his Maitland speech. In regard to this matter various charges have been made against the Government. Some ' honorable senators have gravely asserted that they had no idea that we should be called upon to deal with this question in the early stages of the Federal Parliament. I think that any one who carefully reads the Prime Minister's Maitland speech and compares it with the policy of the Government, which has since been enunciated in both Houses, can only come to the conclusion that if the Government had failed to place this question before Parliament at an early stage they would have been guilty of a serious dereliction of duty.

Senator Higgs

Probably they would have been put out of office.

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Senator BARRETT

- I can quite conceive that if the Government had left this matter over for the second or third session of the present Parliament, the opponents of the Government would have charged them at once with failure to keep faith with the people of Australia. I have been listening carefully to the debate and taking notes, and I have been struck by some of the expressions used against the Government. The Government have been told by some honorable senators, who have come here to support the Government policy, that they have been legislating in this matter without knowledge. They have been told that they are harsh and cruel ; that they are entering upon this legislation with a light heart, and that they have deliberately set themselves to ruin the sugar industry of Australia. I sometimes think that very often we try the impossible task of convincing ourselves against our own judgment. If any honorable senator believes that the Government are guilty of the actions which have been charged, it is his duty henceforth to give them no quarter, and to oppose their measures. To my mind there can be no two opinions in regard to their attitude. They have been right in introducing the measure so early, and I have not the slightest doubt but that in the main it will be passed as it is presented. I do not wish to convey the impression that Queensland should be disregarded in the consideration of this important question, but in my opinion there is another side to be considered. While the interests of Queensland have to be considered, the interests of Australia have to be borne in mind. Even supposing that Queensland is unanimously in favour of the kanaka traffic, and that the rest of Australia is unanimously of the contrary opinion, the voice of the latter ought to prevail. But that is not so in this case. From the time the kanakas were introduced to Queensland in 1863, the traffic -has been opposed. Time after time in that State public opinion has ranged itself against the traffic. The efforts of men like Senator Drake, Senator Glassey, and others are about to be crowned with success by the enactment of a law of the Commonwealth. On all questions I desire to deal fairly. On all questions we ought to have a broad and open mind. In politics a man ought not to have narrow views. A man with sectional views is out of place in Parliament. I frankly confess that some aspects of this question have presented a great deal of difficulty to my mind. I have studied the pros and cons., and whichever way we may deal with this involved question there must be some sacrifice. It has

been pointed out by various honorable senators that it is our duty so to legislate as to produce a minimum amount of suffering. There is no doubt, from the figures which have been quoted, that the sugar industry of Queensland is a great one. In this debate no honorable senator has stood up and tried to defend the kanaka traffic. We realize that it is bad from every point of view, and the only point we are called upon to consider is whether we shall grant a five years' extension, as the Government propose, or an additional five years, as is claimed on behalf of the sugar-growers. We have heard a great deal, too, about whether the Queenslanders knew what they were doing. The argument has been worn threadbare ; and we have had enough evidence on that point.

It seems to me that the people of Queensland knew perfectly well what they were doing. They knew, as Senator Styles said very neatly yesterday afternoon, that by entering the Commonwealth they would get the markets of Australia, but that by standing aloof they would be isolated, and the result would be disastrous to their State. In my judgment, they were halting between two opinions. They wished to enter the federation, because they saw the advantages which would follow, and after they had considered the question from every point of view, they voted for the Commonwealth Bill, but at this stage they ask for a continuance of the traffic, to obtain not merely the benefit of the import duty, but also the advantages that arise from the employment of black labour. I was very much pleased with the first pamphlet of Dr. Maxwell, which was issued at the desire of the Prime Minister, and which, I think, was a very able and admirable one, but I am not prepared to take, without reservation, a great deal of what he has urged in the second one, which contains a little special pleading. It seems to me, on comparing the two pamphlets, that he wished to please the Government of Queensland, and, from the one point of view, was wishful to make out as good a case as possible on the other side. His figures and his conclusions have been challenged. In the second pamphlet he compares the yield for the last two years. But it is scarcely fair to compare a normal year with a year in which the yield was extremely small. It shows the unreliability of figures in this case, as well as in others. Dr. Maxwell took the years 1899 and 1900, but if we base a comparison on the yields for the years 1898, 1899, and 1900, we shall find that his conclusions are entirely upset. A period of two years is very short for the purpose of a comparison. In 1898 Queensland produced 107,922 tons of sugar, which, taken at the same rate as the yield for the other two years, would add £93,000 to the wage fund which Dr. Maxwell so ably worked out. Bundaberg would receive an addition of £37,208, Mackay £16,744, and Cairns £39,048. Honorable senators will see that when a comparison is made in that way, the figures work out altogether differently, and there is no deficiency, so far as Cairns is concerned, in substituting white labour for black. I believe that if it were spread over a period of five or six years, it would work out differently to even a larger extent than do the figures in the case of the three-year period. According to Dr. Maxwell's figures, for the period of two years there would be a deficiency of £7,000, that is, if the kanakas were replaced with white men, and in order to pay that sum the money would have to come out of the proposed duty of £5 per ton. But, above and beyond that, another factor must be considered. In some districts there has been a falling-off of two-thirds in the yield, and Dr. Maxwell says it is the result of the slovenly condition in which the land has been cultivated. In this respect, the sugar farmers are no better and no worse than are other agriculturists in Australia. Scientific farming is scarcely known in this continent. Increased attention to scientific farming, so far as the sugar-cane is concerned, would result in a very much larger yield than we have at the present time. If such a state of things could be brought about - and I think it must be brought about in the near future - it would largely increase the yield of sugar, and also work out more favorably in the comparison I have noted giving increased profits to the planters, and enabling the wages of the white workers to be raised to a very much higher standard, as will be the case under the duty and the bonus given for the employment of white labour. I will not weary the Senate by recounting to them how the Government propose to deal with this matter. We know that the Government ask not only the Senate, but another Chamber, to assent to proposals that will very largely assist the industry. But apart from that I ask myself the question whether coloured labour is a necessity at all. We are told on the one hand that it is a necessity, and on the other hand that it is not. We have evidence for and against ; and I think that if there is any one who deserves commendation in regard to the treatment of the question in this Chamber, it is Senator Glassey. He, as well as others, has proved to my satisfaction that black labour is not a necessity of the sugar industry. It strikes me that the argument that it is a necessity is a reflection upon our own race. We have been told that all the year round in Queensland white men have to work in the open air. They have to work in

building railways and in other laborious occupations. For physical endurance, for power to labour under severe conditions, we certainly should not go to an inferior race like the kanakas, but to a white race like the British. It has been proved overwhelmingly that black labour is not needed in this industry at all. But at the same time there is the difficulty that the conclusions that have been come to with regard to the tropical parts of Queensland are probably correct, and that perhaps in the far north the quantity of sugar grown may be less in the future than it has been in the past. Assuming that that is so, the great body of public opinion in Australia has declared that, at whatever cost, the kanaka must go. Even to the extent of making a sacrifice in the direction I have indicated we must insist upon this labour ceasing. Attention has also been paid to the effect of the Queensland climate and modern civilization upon the kanaka. The facts from this point of view are lamentable to contemplate. Out of every 1,000 kanakas who enter Queensland, 42 die annually.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- Not now ; the number has been 30 per 1,000 for the last five years.

Senator BARRETT

- The figures I have mentioned are derived from a source to which we must attach credence. They show that the death rate of kanakas for the ten years from 1890 to 1899 inclusive, averaged 364, and that the average rate per thousand was 42.22 . Those figures are taken from the returns of the Registrar-General of Queensland.

Senator Sir William Zeal

- How does the first year compare with the last?

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- During the last five years the rate has been only 30 per 1,000.

Senator BARRETT

That is a sad thing to contemplate. If a man went down the street to-night, and, either for his own gain or to indulge his criminal instincts, struck another man a blow on the head and killed him, the law would call it murder. But here we are, in this professedly Christian community, allowing kanakas to be brought from the islands to Queensland, knowing well that this enormous number will die, and yet we take no notice of it.

Senator Clemons

- Is it the work in the sugar-fields that kills them ?

Senator BARRETT

It is that and the climate and other tilings combined.

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Senator Clemons

- Is the honorable senator going to expose white men to the same lot?

Senator BARRETT

- The comparison falls to the ground, because figures from the same source prove that only twelve white people per 1,000 die under the same conditions. This includes women and children. While in the case I have mentioned the offender would be indicted for murder, we deliberately allow the South Sea Islanders to enter Queensland, well knowing that the system is nothing but legalized murder. We also know that the islands are being depopulated, and that it is merely a matter of time when the kanaka race will die out in consequence of this depopulation. Therefore, not only in the interest of the kanaka, but also in the interest of the people of Australia, we ought not to countenance a traffic of this description. Under the circumstances, I feel constrained to vote for the measure introduced by the Government. I regard it as a just measure, and one that meets all the points that ought to be dealt with.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Before the Postmaster-General replies upon the whole debate, I wish to define my own attitude in respect of this Bill. The debate has travelled over a very wide field - perhaps a wider field than was absolutely necessary. No honorable senator, I understand, opposes the second reading of the Bill." It cannot, I think, be gainsaid that in the present state of public feeling, and in the present temper of the Australian people, the kanaka labour must come to an end. My honorable friend Senator Ferguson, in a speech, which was most interesting, coming from a gentleman of great ability and of great knowledge on the subject of sugar plantations, the necessities of which, he has pointed out, rest to a large extent in

northern Queensland upon the use of kanaka labour, said -

I admit that the kanaka must go, but let those who have invested their all in the industry get clear of it with as little loss as possible.

It seems to me that that really states the whole issue which is under the consideration of the Senate in connexion with this Bill. It is really a question of time and of terms. My honorable friend Senator Barrett, who has just sat down, in the earlier part of his speech dealt in the most commendable language, if he will allow me to say so, with the general aspect of the question. I do not say that I fully agreed with him in the latter and more pathetic part of his speech, but certainly in the earlier part of it he dealt in the most moderate and temperate language with the sacrifices which would probably be involved in the determination of this kanaka labour question, and he said that our duty was as far as possible to minimize the sufferings and to reduce the loss which might be entailed as far as we possibly could. To that I say "Amen." It seems to me that the whole question which we have to consider, and which may be debated - as it has been debated - without feeling or temper or heat of any kind, is really : What are the best and the fairest terms to be given to those planters and farmers who - admittedly on all hands - have invested their capital in this great industry, and who have for many years past been utilizing and relying upon the species of labour with which this Bill deals ? Two matters have been introduced, both of grave and vital consequence in themselves, but which appear to me to have no bearing upon the question with which we are now concerned. They are matters which ought to be left out of consideration. The first is the general policy of a white Australia. The other is the question of the sugar duties and the suggested preferential rate of excise on sugar grown by white labour. I decline to mix up those two conditions with the issue now before us.

Senator DRAKE

- I do not see how the honorable and learned senator can separate them.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- They must be separated. It is not fair to the Senate that we should have these two questions - particularly that in relation to the fiscal issue - connected with and inextricably mixed up with that of kanaka labour. The Bill raises a specific question which must be dealt with, and which I propose to deal with, on its merits, irrespective of the general question of the exclusion of alien or undesirable persons and irrespective of any fiscal issue whatever. I consider that we must deal with the subject from a higher platform than that of any suggested bargain by which a particular class of the community, the consumers of sugar, are to pay for the expulsion of the kanaka. We can deal with it on a broader and a better platform than that. In the first place, so far as regards the general question of a white Australia, we are nearly all of us agreed that Australia is peculiarly fitted to be the home of the British race. Speaking generally, we are agreed that if it is possible we should make Australia the resort and the home of ourselves, of our children, and of all of the same blood who choose to come here - especially, I would say, of all of the same blood. I do not extend it even to other white races. I am, and always have been, an advocate of keeping Australia - I would not limit it to Australians only - for those of British blood, so far as we possibly can. The Government have wisely recognised that this question is one to be determined apart from the general question of a white Australia. In the Bill now before the Senate, the kanaka traffic is treated as outside the general policy of alien immigration. It is expressly excepted from the provisions of the Immigration Restriction Bill, and is made the subject of a special measure. The fiscal question is not before us. It is impossible for us to deal with it. This Bill does not rest in any respect on any fiscal bargain that is to be made between the Commonwealth and the planter.

Senator DRAKE

- The fiscal question rests upon it.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Then the fiscal question ought not to rest upon it. If we are to deal with this kanaka matter upon the broad grounds which we have heard put with marked ability during this debate, and with which so far as principles are concerned I entirely agree, we must deal with it irrespective of payments and bargains to be made, under which the compensation for any increased cost of production is to come out of the pockets of the consumers.

Senator Playford

- Without any duty on sugar there can be no production of the article in Queensland.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- My honorable friend knows quite well that we are not dealing with the question of protection of the sugar industry.

Senator Playford

- The two things are combined.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The honorable senator knows that the two things are totally separate. The question we are dealing with now is not the encouragement and protection of the growth of sugar.

Senator Styles

- Yes ; with the protection of the sugar producer.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Not at all. My honorable friend does not suggest that the kanaka is like a bonus given out of the coffers of the State.

Senator Styles

- We retain the kanaka in order to benefit the planter.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I say we do nothing of the kind. I do not propose to retain the kanaka to benefit the planter. I say that if we can grow sugar in the tropics without coloured labour, we will grow it without coloured labour, but if it is said that we cannot grow sugar in the tropics without coloured labour, without protection, it is a very different matter altogether. The honorable senator knows that the two things are not mixed up in any way. I decline to consider myself bound in the attitude I take upon this Bill by any prophetic dealing with this question of the sugar duties. I hold myself perfectly free, and I shall be no party to any arrangement or adjustment now, nor shall I be a party to any sort of understanding that this Senate is not to have a perfectly free hand in regard to the question of free-trade and protection. When the sugar duties come up for consideration, we shall deal with them absolutely as we choose, without regard to the kanaka labour problem, or any other problem.

Senator Fraser

- Queensland has competed against the world without a duty.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That may be so, but I do not intend to enter into that question now. I am satisfied to make it abundantly clear that this question of the kanaka is one which honorable senators must deal with on its merits, and it is not to be the subject of a bargain by which one particular class of the community, namely, the sugar consumers, are to be taxed in order to compensate the planter in respect of any increased wages he may have to pay. I am quite willing to meet my honorable friends, when the time comes, on the matter of protection, but the two things are not in any way mixed up together, and so long as it is clear that we reserve to ourselves perfect freedom to deal with each I am satisfied. Having cleared away these matters, I may say that this Bill immediately affects Queensland only, and one of the great industries of Queensland, but indirectly it may affect the whole of Australia, not only because what touches any one State touches the whole, but because there are questions underlying this Bill which may touch the interests of Australia as a whole quite irrespective of the interests of any one State. The whole trouble of the races, it seems to me, arises because Australia comprises in itself a great tropical area. Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland comprise within their borders a vast extent of tropical country. It has appeared to me that we are very apt to forget that whilst the greater part of Australia is possessed of one of the finest climates in the world, for the Anglo-Saxon and the European, yet there are parts of Australia which are not fitted for the Anglo-Saxon or the European. There are parts of Australia in which this problem will arise from day to day, and from year to year, and it will not, as Senator Keating has said, be settled finally by this Bill in any respect whatever. We are dealing with one specific matter, in relation to one specific State, and it is this great geographical and climatic fact to which I have referred that is the real source of all the difficulties which are sought to be dealt with by the measure now under consideration. In my judgment Providence never meant tropical countries to be peopled by the Anglo-Saxon race. I ask honorable senators to mark the expression "to be peopled." I say that if we have overrun or possessed ourselves, as undoubtedly we have, of tropical countries, we have done so as lords

and conquerors - no doubt as beneficent conquerors, extending, as in the case of India, a beneficent rule to the untold advantage of the people of that country.

Senator Stewart

- Question !

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- My honorable friend says "Question!" but no one can doubt that what has been called the Pax Britannicum which exists in India has been of unmixed and exhaust less benefit to that great country.

Senator Higgs

- The people do not think so.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- My honorable friend Senator Higgs is of a superior race, and is in fact a very superior person, but he is entirely mistaken when he says that. The people do think so, and if the British power were withdrawn tomorrow there would be a state of anarchy and internecine war prevailing from one end to the other of that country.

Senator Playford

- They would fight over a cow.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Senator Playford has travelled in India, and he knows what the condition of things is there. We know that in these tropical countries which the people of the Anglo-Saxon race have possessed themselves of, they leave of necessity the hewing of wood and the drawing of water to those who have been described in this debate as the subject races. It must inevitably be so. It is recognised that in these countries which are wholly tropical - India, the Soudan, and the like - that whilst the Anglo-Saxon race may maintain their position as directors and governors, the actual labour must be done by these so-called inferior races. I say with great deference to my honorable friends who take another view - because there may well be a division of opinion on the subject - that it is a fact which cannot be denied, and it is of universal application to those countries which we are proud to control. My belief is that we shall have to recognise it some day or other, though perhaps not now, as to those parts of our own heritage which are within the tropics.

Senator Pearce

- That is what was said in the United States before the war of emancipation.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- There is no parallel whatever between the question arising in the United States before the civil war and the question which we are called upon to deal with.

Senator Pearce

No ; but the same old doctrine was laid down

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I am not laying down a doctrine for any one, but giving the experience of myself and others. I can appeal to Senator Playford, whom I have met travelling in India. I have had considerable experience of travelling in India. I have had considerable experience in Ceylon, and considerable experience in other countries of like climatic conditions, and my own conclusion, from that experience, quite apart from reading, is that the Anglo-Saxon is not fitted for the work of tropical agriculture in the open field.

Senator McGregor

- Not at 4d. per week.!

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I do not care if it is £4 a week.

Senator McGregor

- I know better.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I dare say the honorable senator knows everything better. I am always ready to sit at his feet and learn when my honorable friend tells me something worth learning ; but not this 4d. a week kind of thing. I go further, and I say not only that' the Anglo-Saxon cannot with anything like comfort, or health, or happiness, undertake the work of tropical agriculture in the open field, but that he ought not to do it. That is the position I take up. I say that he ought not to do it. Of course, if it is a matter of absolute necessity

that is a very different thing. I know quite well that in cases of emergency and in cases of extreme necessity an Englishman will go anywhere and do anything. Our soldiers have marched and fought and conquered on the plains of India, 'subject to tropical heat, and under a tropical sun, in the very worst of climatic conditions.

Senator McGregor

- Yet Englishmen cannot dig potatoes.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- It is a very different thing for nations to be fighting for their lives and for white men to be plodding in daily menial toil in a steaming paddy field or a cane brake.

Senator McGregor

- And living on rice.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- And living on rice, as my honorable friend says they do. I do not care what they live on. Does Senator McGregor tell me that the sort of food that is suited for an Englishman in a temperate climate would be suited to him when doing such work as this in the paddy-fields and cane brakes ?

Senator McGregor

- He generally eats it.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- And dies when he does.

Senator McGregor

- He lives.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Instead of . the death rate of 12 per 1,000, we should have a death rate of 50 per 1,000 in those circumstances. If there is a death rate of 30 per 1,000 among the kanakas now working in the sugar-fields, owing to the climate, and if these people are an inferior race, I prefer that they should suffer that extreme death rate rather than my own countrymen. That is a vast question which we cannot settle now, but which, I think, it is important we should bear in mind before we speak rashly, and before we arrive at any final determination in regard to this question, beyond the absolute necessity of the case as it concerns kanaka labour in the sugar industry of Queensland. Sooner or later we shall have to face the question of whether the tropical part of our country is to be doomed to perpetual barrenness - is to remain a desert - or whether we shall have exceptional legislation, or exceptional arrangements with regard to particular occasions that may happen to arise. I recognise quite freely the general policy of a white Australia. I recognise quite frankly that anything that interferes with that policy must be exceptional.

Senator Stewart

- But the honorable and learned senator says it is an impossible policy.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I do not say so. I say I recognise that tropical Australia must be dealt with exceptionally. When the time comes to consider the development and the populating of tropical Australia, we shall have to keep our minds open in determining how far we should go in that direction, and under what conditions we should undertake it. We are dealing now with one exceptional case and that is the condition of things in Queensland in regard to a particular industry that exists there, and which is affected by this particular measure. It seems to me that we should do well to confine our attention to the specific object of this measure, and the proposal itself as affecting Queensland. That being the case we are faced at the outset with this situation. Queensland has sent a majority of representatives - a majority of five to one - to the Senate pledged, I understand, to put an end to kanaka labour.

Senator McGregor

- And it was understood that the remaining one was likewise pledged

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I think it would be well for us to refrain from insinuations of that kind.

Senator Higgs

- Senator Ferguson was! not in Australia at the time.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Then he could not have been pledged. At any rate no one in the Senate can deny the perfect candour,

as well as the care, with which. Senator Ferguson has dealt with this matter. Whilst on the one hand we should feel greatly indebted to honorable senators who, like Senator Glassey, have with great labour and pains brought before us their side of the question, we should be equally grateful to honorable senators who, like Senator Ferguson, have placed us in full, possession of the other side. Queensland has sent a majority of five to one representatives to the Senate pledged to the exclusion of the kanaka. In the face of that fact how can we say that Queensland - regarding it as a Queensland question - desires this traffic to be continued ? To my mind that is impossible. It is impossible for us to say that Queensland desires that such a state of things should continue in the face of the representation she has sent to the Senate. Any other inference would be very hard to understand. For myself I am unable to follow it. It would have been a parallel case if, before the civil war, the Southern States of America had sent a majority of representatives to Congress pledged to free the slaves. If such a thing had happened the probability is that we should have had no civil war in America. The situation is substantially the same here, and it appears to me that it is sought to be discounted in three ways. First, it is said that the anti-kanaka party were well organized ; then it is said that the other side were apathetic ; and thirdly, it is said that ' the number of electors who went to the poll represented only about one-fifth of the voters. It is impossible to regard these attempts to discount the votes given in this respect as in any degree satisfactory. To my mind, it is paltry to put those reasons forward. If the four-fifths were apathetic we have no more right to say that they would have voted pro-kanaka - if I may use that term - than the other side have a right ' to say that they would have voted anti-kanaka. It seems to me that we are bound to give the greatest possible weight to this representation. It is not conclusive, because I apprehend that these honorable senators themselves would be the first to admit that we are not to surrender our own judgments as members : we are not to surrender our own duty, which is as representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia in the Senate, to watch the interests of all and every part of Australia. Therefore, finding the future of a great industry at stake, we are bound to see that it prospers, to see that it sustains no injury at the hands of this Parliament ; just as our friends from Queensland would be bound to see in regard to any industry peculiar to the State from which we come, that it sustained no hurt by any legislation which was proposed or enacted here. Therefore, I -claim, as Senator Zeal claims, that whilst giving 'every weight to the presence of the representatives from Queensland, whilst accepting them as representing the voice of Queensland, and, probably, the wishes of Queensland in regard to the kanaka, we should still exercise our own judgment and come to our own conclusions as to the course which we should take in dealing with this subject. We cannot fail to recognise, on the other hand, that there is a large minority of opinion the other way. We have been literally deluged with representations of all kinds against the policy of the exclusion of the kanaka. It is our duty, it seems to me, to give weight to those representations. I am not aware - I shall be corrected if I am mistaken - of any representations which have been addressed, at any rate in the same formal way, to the Senate in favour of the Bill.

Senator Glassey

- There is not the same necessity to do so, when five out of six honorable senators representing Queensland are in favour of the Bill, and seven out of nine representatives of Queensland in the other place approve of it.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- My honorable friend will find that I am not depreciating for one moment the view which he has suggested. Undoubtedly that is a strong circumstance to be taken into consideration. But there is the fact that for weeks past we have been literally bombarded with representations from all parts of Queensland, from all sorts and conditions of people who are concerned in the prosperity of Queensland. We had the Postmaster-General himself, in the course of his speech in moving the second reading of this Bill, reading to us a most emphatic telegram signed by the mayor of Townsville, who presided over a gathering representing a large number of municipalities, protesting against this measure.

Senator Stewart

The ratepayers of Townsville do not agree with the mayor.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- How do we know that ? We can deal only with what we have got before us.

Senator Stewart

- But we have got that fact before us.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Where?

Senator Stewart

- In the shape of resolutions from every town of any consequence in Queensland.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Time would fail me if I were to attempt to deal with all the resolutions I have received protesting against this proposal.

Senator Stewart

- What is the value of them ? They were passed simply at hole and corner meetings.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- After all, even my honorable friend's individual views are only hole and corner ones.

Senator Stewart

- The resolutions to which Senator Symon refers were passed at meetings held in the back rooms of pubs.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The back room of a pub. is generally a very good place for an election meeting.

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Senator DRAKE

- I do not understand that the telegram from the mayor of Townsville referred to a meeting

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I do not know whether it did or not. I feel the deepest regret that I did not have an opportunity of listening to my honorable friend's speech. I have read it, however, and I gathered from it that the telegram referred to a meeting. Certainly it spoke with great force and strength. It is a remarkable fact that, so far as I am aware, we have not had any representations on the other side of the question. There is another point to be considered. I admit that this is a question of time and terms. So far as these terms are concerned, I am not aware that whilst the people of Queensland have expressed themselves on the principle in regard to the necessity of determining kanaka labour, they have expressed themselves as to the terms or the time which should be given to the planters to enable them to get rid of that class of labour. I have been listening, and the reason why I did not speak earlier was that I might hear the views of other honorable senators, and get information. I have not heard it put forward here that there was any issue, and I have not heard the conditions stated of any issue as to the terms on which, and the time at which, the kanakas should go.

Senator Higgs

- Yes.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- If so I should like to hear them stated. When did the people of Queensland declare that the kanakas should be deported ?

Senator Higgs

- The candidates said within not more than five years, and some of them said within a less period.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Some of them said less. Senator Drake, speaking with a very just scorn, described the suggestion that the doing away with them should take place at once as cruel and hard. It is quite evident that some fair time was to be allowed, and I am bound to say that in the speeches delivered by the Prime Minister the question of terms and time was left entirely at large. We must have some regard for the people in Queensland who are now agitating for an extension of the time. I shall not say that they were misled, but they might very easily have been lulled into security by the rather vague expressions which were made use of by the Prime Minister. I shall read two quotations from his speeches, because of interjections which have been made. Speaking at Newtown, he said -

In doing that they should take fair means to prevent the increase of kanaka labour in Queensland, and in addition they should take fair and reasonable means of reducing the importation of that labour until the importation was discontinued. He did not mean by this that they intended to wipe the thing away at one step, because it was not the policy of the Ministry to destroy any industry which was a possession of the

Australian nation.

Then comes the nearest approximation to anything like definite terms which were suggested, and which were before the people of Queensland authoritatively -

By a fair reduction over not too long a period of years to legislate in such a way that the importation of kanakas should come to an end.

What could they possibly derive from the expression - " not too long a period of years" ?

Senator Styles

- Three years.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I should say twenty years. But then came another pronouncement, which I think was still more calculated to beguile them, at least for the moment. It was made at a dinner. Some question was raised as to the attitude of the late Sir James Dickson. It was thought that he was not quite sound. The Prime Minister defined the attitude of the late Sir James Dickson, and said that that gentleman would - he was sure, be ready, when the whole of the Ministry were ready, to deal, perhaps not in a precipitate way, but in a careful and high-minded way, with that question.

What possible guidance was that to the planters of Queensland as to the time within which they would have to get rid of their labour? We are going to deal with this question in a high-minded way. We are going to ask the Minister to extend the time a little.

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Senator McGregor

- A high-handed way.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- No ; that is the way my honorable friend would deal with the sugar planters - he would give them a short shrift. These are the only authoritative communications which the Prime Minister gave as- to the terms upon which kanaka labour should be interfered with in Queensland.

Senator DRAKE

- He spoke half-a-dozen times there.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Yes; the, Prime Minister explained it, and each subsequent speech was an explanation of what went before, but none of them contained anything definite in terms. I have culled only two of the scattered sweets from the crowd in print. I admit that the kanaka is likely to give place, in the natural order of things, to white labour. I do not quite understand whether that is applicable to the far tropics, as Senator Barrett said. In the far north of the tropics he regards it as very doubtful whether the opinion which is held that white men cannot work in the open fields may not be well founded, but Mr. Dalrymple says in the paper which was read yesterday -

The number of white cultivators has been increasing year by year, and the number of black auxiliaries decreasing at a corresponding rate. Nothing has gone so much to foster this tendency as the continuation and extension of the central mill system. Probably if the industry were left to the Queensland Parliament to regulate, in another decade the central mill system would be all but universal, and Queensland would in time present the unique spectacle of cane-sugar being grown on a vast scale by innumerable white cultivators with the help of an insignificant number of blacks. If anything is more remarkable than the expansion of the sugar industry between 1893 and 1901, it is the ever-increasing number of whites and the ever-diminishing number of blacks engaged in it during that period, a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of cane-growing. Those who have observed this phenomenon were not without hope that within a generation the regime under which sugar is produced by whites and blacks in combination would give place to a regime under which sugar would be produced by whites alone, and they noted with satisfaction that the race which would be indispensable during the transition stage was the one subject race that need not be dreaded as a competitor, or as a contaminator of our own people.

As to the latter part of the paragraph I say nothing, but the part I have read I accept, as indicating the opinion of the gentleman who is described as Secretary of Agriculture, that there is no impossibility in carrying on the sugar industry, at any rate in the more favorable portions of Queensland, with white labour. This is put forward by Mr. Philp ; it is attached to his. statement as

supporting the necessity for care in dealing with' the question. But we are bound to accept it, and to rest upon it as a proof, that, in the opinion of these persons, white labour is perfectly able to cope with the sugar industry, in the more favourable parts of the State. If that is the case, we find that there are three zones, namely, the district south of Mackay, the Mackay district, and the part north of Cairns. It seems to me that, looking at all the material we have before the Senate, we ought to try to discriminate when we deal with terms between those three different parts.

Senator Charleston

- Can we! A constitutional objection has been raised.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- What constitutional objection can there be?

Senator DRAKE

- That we cannot give an advantage to one part of the community.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That would not give an advantage. What is the object of the Bill ? It is the exclusion of kanaka labour.

Surely we can say that it shall be excluded from one part within a certain time, from another part within a certain other time, and from another part within a certain other time ? What has that to do with trade and commerce?

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Senator Staniforth Smith

- It is discriminating.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Nothing of the kind.- It is a different thing, of course, when a bounty is given. What are we dealing with ? Honorable senators declare that it is a question cognate to that of white Australia. What reason is there why we should not say that we will exclude the Chinese from Victoria within five years, from New South Wales within seven years, and from Queensland within ten years? None whatever. This is a question of immigration.

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Senator Higgs

- And trade also.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- It so happens that these people - they are employed in other pursuits. to a small extent - are employed mainly in the sugar industry. But supposing that they go away, and that the Chinese are employed in that industry. Why could you not clear out the Chinese in the same way, taking them from one part within one time, from another part within another time, and so on 1 There is nothing in the world to prevent that course being adopted. It is very easy to raise a constitutional bogey. Generally a thing is called unconstitutional when it is not liked, and it is a very convenient term to apply. There is nothing unconstitutional in this view. If it has been established that the Bundaberg district, say south of Mackay, is able to go on with white labour, why should we give it an advantage for ten years, which they do not want, and aggrandise the planters there to the injustice of the planters at Cairns whom everybody admits are at least entitled to a little extra consideration?

Senator De Largie

- There are more kanakas in Bundaberg than anywhere

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- But they do not want them. Both sides concede - otherwise all the debate has been thrown away - that conditions in the south, as they are in the north of New South Wales, are quite different from those which prevail at Cairns and to the north. Senator Barrett in his exceedingly candid speech made that perfectly plain. Even he with his strong views felt that the conclusions of those who consider that white labour would not be possible within the northern - the tropical - part of Queensland were probably right. I confess that I was considerably surprised at the suggestion that was made as to the impossibility of dealing differently with the three zones within which the kanaka is to be found, and within which he labours. I am unable to understand upon what foundation it can be said that it is impossible for the Parliament to discriminate in a matter which is purely one of immigration between different portions of Australia or any

one State.

Senator Charleston

- Suppose the farmers in Bundaberg desired the kanaka, saying that his retention would be an advantage to them ?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- They would not get him.

Senator Charleston

- Then it would be said that we were breaking the Constitution by conferring a favour upon one portion of a State which we withheld from another.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- We should not be conferring a favour, but simply declaring that the kanaka should disappear from one portion of the Commonwealth at one time, and from another portion at another time. I would ask the attention of honorable senators to the provisions of the Constitution. Under section 51, the only sub-section which deals with the question of uniformity is the third, with regard to bounties. No one can say that this is a bounty. Then there is section 99, which declares that -

The Commonwealth shall not, by any law or regulation of trade, commerce, or revenue, give preference to one State or any part thereof over another State or any part thereof.

This is not a regulation of trade or commerce. It is a regulation of immigration. Under what section are we dealing with this kanaka business ?

Senator Charleston

- Would the honorable and learned senator give one part of a State a right to cheap labour and not another ?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Not at all. It may be that the consequence of having Chinese, or kanakas, or Hindoos, or other undesirable people amongst us, is to give opportunities for obtaining cheap labour to employers, but that is a mere consequence of alien immigration ; it is one of the evils which we all admit, and which, if possible, we wish to put an end to. But our power to legislate with regard to the exclusion of kanakas is exactly the same power as we are going to exercise with regard to Chinese and Hindoos. We exercise it under subsection (27) of section 51, which hands over to the Commonwealth Parliament the control of immigration and emigration. What is this Bill ? It is a Bill presented to Parliament under that power. It deals with immigration. It is a Bill to prohibit a certain section of people who have to be specially dealt with, because of the interests which have grown up in connexion with them.

Senator Pearce

- Does the honorable and learned senator say that we could differentiate in respect of Hindoos as between State and State?

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- We certainly could legislate that they should leave a certain State at one time, and another State at another time. This is a Bill dealing with immigration and emigration, and not with trade or commerce in any shape or form. We have the power to deal with immigration with uniformity or without uniformity, just as we please. We are entitled to say, if we think fit, that in the Northern Territory of South Australia, we shall not require the Chinese to go for twenty years, but that we will expel them at once from the city of Melbourne. There is nothing to prevent us from doing that.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- And that power could be exercised under the 26th sub-section of section 51, which deals with -
The people of any race other than the aboriginal race in any State for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That is an incidental power. Of course, I am not saying for one moment that there will not be upon this, as upon other matters, differences of opinion. I am merely directing the attention of the Senate to the position as to the power under which we are, within our legislative jurisdiction, seeking to enact a law upon this particular matter. The Bill before us is on the same footing, so far as it goes, as the Bill relating to alien immigration. It is for the -

Regulation restriction and prohibition of the introduction of labourers from the Pacific Islands and for other purposes.

What does that mean ? It means that it is for the restriction of the immigration of a particular section of an alien race. Our power to enact such legislation is given by the section to which I have referred, and not by section 99, which deals with laws regulating trade and commerce. Therefore, it seems to me as plain as possible that we have the right to say that the kanaka shall disappear from one particular part of Queensland at an earlier or later date than from another part. The consequence that his disappearance will take him away from occupations in which he be engaged, is no more than would happen to any other aliens who might happen to be in any other part of Australia, and against whom the fiat of the Commonwealth Parliament had gone forth that they should remain there no longer. If that be so - and I have no hesitation about it - it is admitted that there are three different portions of Queensland to which different conditions apply, and which, so far as this particular traffic is concerned, are differently affected. There is the portion to the south of Mackay, which has been referred to as the Bundaberg district. There, as far as I can gather from what has been said, and what I have read, there is no doubt that white labour is not only possible, but that coloured labour is unnecessary.

Senator DRAKE

- We have only heard that during the last few days.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I have understood all along that, so far as Bundaberg is concerned, even those who are the strongest advocates of kanaka labour, admit that it is not essential in regard to the production of sugar in that district. It is a notorious fact with regard to the sugar production of the northern part of New South Wales that kanaka labour is unnecessary, and I have no doubt that the southern portion of Queensland is in a similar position. Then Mackay is on the borderline. It is more doubtful whether the kanaka can be dispensed with there. But as to Cairns, which is in the tropical part of Queensland, there is a very strong opinion expressed, and very strong representations are made by 22 different agricultural societies, by various bodies in different parts of Queensland, and by Mr. Philp - who of course does not represent the Queensland Parliament, but whose opinion is entitled to grave consideration, seeing that he is a responsible Minister in the country to which this legislation is to be applied - that the kanaka labour is essential to the sugar industry. All these representations are made to us, and they are strong in support of the fact that Cairns, and the northern district of Queensland to which the same conditions apply, cannot produce sugar without the aid of kanaka labour. To those representations we are entitled to give consideration.

Senator Best

- So that if Cairns has cheap kanaka labour that will give it an advantage over Bundaberg. Does not. that necessarily involve a discriminating excise?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Well, my honorable friends who have spoken this afternoon have almost convinced me by their speeches of the fact that one white man is equal to two kanakas. If that be the case, the Bundaberg people will be practically in as good a position as the people of Cairns even so far as labour is concerned. But if a discriminating excise is to be applicable under the conditions imposed by this Bill, the Bundaberg man will not only have the advantage of white labour - one white man being equal to two kanakas - but he will also get the advantage of £2 a ton.

Senator Best

That won't do !

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- What do my honorable friends want? Flog high or flog low, there is no satisfying them. On the one hand, they say that if kanaka labour is abolished, the sugar-grower can have white labour, which is superior to kanaka labour ; and when this argument fails them, they say they propose to give the grower, to equalize tilings, an advantage of £2 per ton.

Senator Glassey

- White labour in Cairns is just as valuable as white labour in Bundaberg.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That is a point upon which there is a great difference of opinion. This afternoon my honorable friend, Senator O'Keefe, dealt with the subject. I may say that nothing has been more characteristic of this debate than the fairness with which admissions have been frankly made, even though they might tell against any extravagant argument we might be disposed to urge. Senator O'Keefe said on that question that there was an equal division of opinion. I admit it.

Senator O'Keefe

- I said there was an equal division of opinion in the number of pamphlets and other communications which had come from the sugar districts.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Exactly so. No one can read the pamphlets, speeches, and representations of all kinds that have been submitted to us without coming to the conclusion that there is an equal division of opinion.

Senator McGregor

- The honorable and learned senator puts the word " equal " into the mouth of Senator O'Keefe when he never said equal. He said "a division."

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Senator McGregor is quite mistaken, and could not have been listening with his* usual acuteness. The expression used by Senator O'Keefe was " equal division of opinion." I do not for a moment urge that he meant that there were 50 on one side and 50 on the other. I take it that he meant what I should have said myself, that there is a substantial division of opinion. A majority on one side, if honorable senators like, and a solid minority on the other side. There is a difference of opinion as to whether white men can work in the cane-fields as far north as Cairns and beyond.

Senator Best

- And, therefore, .the honorable and learned senator would give them additional time in Cairns.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I would give them additional time, because if we accept the views of those concerned in the industry, and who have embarked their means in it, we must give them time to put their house in order. If their declaration is well founded, as it is expressed in scores of these representations, that the withdrawal of kanaka labour must ruin the industry-

Senator Best

- An equal division of opinion, remember.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- If we accept that, we should in fairness give them an opportunity to set their house in order.

Senator Best

- Why accept their statements rather than the statements of the other side ?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I do not say that we should accept their statement rather than the statements of the other side, but let us give fair play. We find a difference of opinion upon the subject. On one side it is said that the white man can work in the Cairns district as well as at Bundaberg, and on the other side that he cannot. In the argument in favour of the substitution of white labour for kanaka labour, it is freely admitted that in Bundaberg it can be done. The Bundaberg district is the district of the small farmer, and it is admitted that many of the small farmers work their farms without kanakas. If that is not admitted, and it is said that Bundaberg and the other places are on the same footing, then by all means give them the same extension of time at Bundaberg.

Senator DRAKE

- Is not that what we propose to do in the Bill ?

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I do not believe that they are on the same footing. I am prepared to leave Bundaberg with the time proposed in the Bill. I am prepared, in the case of Mackay, to extend the time to seven years, and in the case of Cairns, to extend it to ten years. It is a question of terms and time to be allowed, and what it is best we should do under the circumstances. I never read anything which gave me greater satisfaction than the statement made by the Postmaster-General, that he would be no party to any hasty withdrawal of kanaka labour, because it would be cruel and harsh. If it would be cruel and harsh to do it at once, and

if it is to be done at all, it is only a matter of degree if we do it in two years five years, seven years, or ten years. The time is for us to determine. I accept the statement of Senator Drake that it would be harsh and cruel, and then I ask what, mandate has Queensland sent us that the time fixed should be five years ?

Senator Stewart

- Its representatives.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I agree that they come here as the constitutionally accredited representatives of" Queensland pledged to the principle that the kanaka must go

Senator Stewart

And at once. That was the platform upon which I was elected

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I am indebted to Senator Stewart, and I thank him for declaring it so emphatically, but that is not the attitude of the Government.

Senator Pearce

The Government compromise.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The Government say that would be harsh and cruel, and if that is the mandate of Queensland we are departing from that mandate in this Bill.

Senator McGregor

- And the honorable and learned senator wants us to depart a little further.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I wish to depart a little further in the interests of fair play and justice.

Senator Charleston

-The public of Queensland had sympathy with the kanaka in the matter.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I wish to extend my sympathy to the kanaka as well. But I extend my sympathy also to those who are entitled to more consideration than the kanaka, the enterprising planters and farmers of Queensland who have embarked their money in this industry. It is a great industry, and one which will result in the supply of more than all the wants of Australia in respect of sugar. It is an industry which already has been enabled without help of any kind to compete in the open market with the sugar grown by the coloured labour of other countries. We know what the duty upon sugar has been in Queensland, but we know that that duty has been of no effect in respect to their over-production, which has had to be sold in the open markets of the world in competition with sugar coming from other places. I unhesitatingly accept the constitutional verdict of Queensland on the principle that the kanaka must go. But if the mandate has also been the immediate exclusion and deportation of the kanaka, the '

Government have departed from that mandate, and it is for us to say whether the compromise proposed by the Government is fair and just, or whether we ought not to increase the concession offered.

Senator Stewart

- The mandate was the immediate cessation of recruiting. I did not say " deporting."

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I wish to extend my sympathy to the kanaka as well. But I extend my sympathy also to those who are entitled to more consideration than the kanaka, the enterprising planters and farmers of Queensland who have embarked their money in this industry. It is a great industry, and one which will result in the supply of more than all the wants of Australia in respect of sugar. It is an industry which already has been enabled without help of any kind to compete in the open market with the sugar grown by the coloured labour of other countries. We know what the duty upon sugar has been in Queensland, but we know that that duty has been of no effect in respect to their over-production, which has had to be sold in the open markets of the world in competition with sugar coming from other places. I unhesitatingly accept the constitutional verdict of Queensland on the principle that the kanaka must go. But if the mandate has also been the immediate exclusion and deportation of the kanaka, the '

- The immediate cessation of recruiting. Senator Drake, who brings down this Bill to the Senate, says that it is harsh and cruel.

Senator DRAKE

- No; I referred to the immediate "abolition." I was referring to Senator Millen's amendment on the address in reply.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That would be harsh and cruel, and what we are dealing with now is the compromise offered by the Government. The whole matter is, therefore, open to us, and it is for us to say whether that compromise is fair and just, or whether it is not one which we should alter in the interests of this great industry.

Conceding the principle, I should have been glad if we could have had a committee of inquiry upon details, not as to whether the kanaka should go, because upon that I believe the final word for the present has been spoken. I should have been glad for two reasons to have had a committee of inquiry. First, we have been endeavouring to deal with complicated details and wide considerations, many of which have been submitted to us by honorable senators in strings of figures more or less interesting, and it is impossible for us to do them that full justice which we should like without an inquiry into the matter

Senator Pearce

- What about the lobbying?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I know that, like everything else, this is open to all sorts of difficulties and abuses very likely. But still we must do the best we can. The other ground upon which I should have been glad to have had a committee of inquiry is that it has been asked for and pressed for by many in Queensland, who, whether interested or not, are at any rate likely to be familiar with the subject.

Senator Dobson

- And they offer to be bound by the result.

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Senator McGregor

- And then the third consideration is to gain time. Why does not the honorable and learned senator finish it?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

-- Well, I may say that it is not a very good thing to legislate upon a matter of this sort in great haste. There is one point on which it would have been well for us to have had a committee of inquiry. It has been suggested by Senator Charleston, and is worthy of a good deal of consideration. It is as to the interests of the kanakas themselves. There is a provision in this Bill for deportation. I think it would be well for us if we had some inquiry before we passed that provision.

Senator Charleston

- I think it may be a cruel wrong.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I have not the figures, but I am told that some 4,000 out of the 8,000 odd kanakas employed in the industry have been in Queensland some for six years, and some for longer. If that is true, I believe that to pass a summary provision of this kind for the deportation of those people would do them an inhuman injustice. I can conceive that many of those people, after living for years away from their islands, may, when they are returned to them, find themselves alienated from their relatives, friends, or tribes. They may be exposed to injuries and ill-treatment from which we shall be powerless to protect them. I say that is a grave consideration. I am not going to dwell upon it, but I say that we ought not to forget the kanakas themselves in this connexion. So far as the planters and farmers and others connected with the industry are concerned, no inquiry is necessary, in my judgment, to induce us to be fair. We ought indeed to be more than fair. We ought to be generous. Surely the members of this Senate will not seek to deal out their fate to the planters and farmers with an iron hand? Let us deal tenderly with them. What wrong have they done that they should be brought in peril in regard to this industry?

Senator Charleston

- We must not commit a wrong upon the kanakas at the same time.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I am dealing now with the position as it affects our own fellow citizens who have invested money in this industry, and who, under the encouragement of the laws of Queensland, have brought it to a state of great perfection and prosperity. I say let us be generous. Are these people who have made representations to us in a minority? Granted that they are, are minorities never to be represented? Are

the rights of minorities never to be respected 1 I see a motion, that has been on the business-paper for months, concerning the introduction of the system of proportional representation in order to secure the representation of minorities.

Senator McGregor

- Hear, hear !

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Senator McGregor cheers that, but let us have a little of the justice and good effect to follow from that resolution now

Senator McGregor

- Minorities should not govern, although they should be represented.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Let us give a little of the benefits to follow that principle, which we shall have enunciated with force and eloquence, to the minority in Queensland now.

Senator DRAKE

- They have been telling us all along that the minority is represented by five senators.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Then if that is so, so much the worse for the minority who seek to ride rough-shod over the majority; My honorable and learned friend may have it either way.

Senator Pearce

- Flog high, flog low.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Yes, there is no pleasing my friends, the antikanakas. I am not seeking to retain the kanaka, only I want fair terms for my fellow citizens in Queensland in respect of the pursuits in which they have embarked their fortunes. Assuming that they are in the minority, and assuming that they have to declare that the majority have spoken, and that representative government is government by the majority, still the minority has to be considered in the terms. The fiat of the majority is that the kanaka must go, and the minority say - because it is boiled down to this - " Let us have fair terms. Let us have sufficient time to get rid of our stocks and machinery if we are to be seriously prejudiced and must submit." I 'say let us ' be generous in the terms we give them. That is a fair thing, and surely one year or two years, more or less, is nothing in this connexion. There are 8,000 kanakas engaged in this great industry in Queensland, where there is a population, I think, approaching half-a-million.

Senator Walker

- Over half-a-million.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The historical retrospect that has been given to this Senate shows that for some 30 years the kanaka has been in Queensland, and it is said that the evils are so enormous - undiscovered in the past, unredressed in the past - that we must get rid of them at all hazards within five years, or within two years plus the term of the agreement.

Senator Charleston

- Undiscovered ? How can the honorable and learned senator say that in view of the legislation passed in Queensland.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- It has been the most fluctuating legislation in the world. The people there have never known their own minds. I doubt if they do now. I know that my honorable friends here represent - the minority Senator Drake says - but they represent the majority in my opinion.

Senator DRAKE

- I did not say they represented the minority ; but that is what we have been told.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Really, is it not absurd when these planters - interested people if you like; people who want to benefit pecuniarily by this trade - say to us, " Give us two or three years more ; we recognise that the kanaka must go," that we should rule them with a rod of iron and say " Not an hour"? I say it is unjust and unworthy of the Federal Parliament to take up such a position. What then do we find ? Nothing could be

more interesting than the historical account of this question given by the Postmaster-General. In 1885 the Queensland State Legislature, affected by the same facts as affect us now, gave them eight years in order to get rid of kanaka labour. Surely we might at least allow them the same period ?

Senator Dobson

- They gave them five years- 1885-1890.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Five years plus the term of the agreement. The Postmaster-General made that clear in his interesting summary of the legislation on the subject. The result was that when 1892 arrived, they found that it was impossible to carry out that policy.

Senator Glassey

- Impossible ! Who said that? I decline to believe it. I was there.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- It was asserted that it was impossible to carry out that policy. That was the basis upon which the fresh legislation took place. It is not for me to argue whether that statement was true or not. The Parliament of the day by overwhelming majorities decided that it was true, and carried the Bill of 1892.

Senator Pearce

- They were traitors to their own election pledges.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I am not here to defend those traitors. I do not know that they ought to be called traitors, or that expressions of that kind should be thrown broadcast in the Senate in respect of men who are absent.

Senator Pearce

- They were traitors, seeing that they pledged themselves at the previous election not to adopt the course which they pursued.

Senator Playford

- And they were returned at the next election.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Here we have the finest reason for an independent inquiry. These gentlemen who are called traitors by Senator Pearce were returned by the people at the general election after the Bill of 1892 had been passed.

Senator Pearce

- They were returned by the property-holders.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- And my honorable friend Senator Glassey, as a true patriot, as he always is, was defeated. No one knows better than Senator Glassey

Senator Glassey

- I know that they spent £20,000 of public money to carry the question at the elections of 1883 and 1888. They dipped their hands into the Treasury.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- A good deal of money is spent at election times. I spend as little as I can. The total expenditure on elections is a very sad item to take up, and I can only say that there is no finer proof of the prosperity of Queensland, when it gets fair play, than the fact that they were able to spend £20,000 up there upon an election.

Senator Glassey

- Senator Symon is only inviting a second debate on the whole of this ground, and I shall certainly go over it again.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I think it would be better not to go over the ground again, but to impeach those Queensland gentlemen for the treachery that has been referred to, if any such thing exists. I am not here to vindicate them, or to denounce them. I am here to say what Senator Playford has pointed out - that the gentlemen who advocated fair play to this industry were approved by the people and re-elected to Parliament. I appeal to honorable senators to do, at least, no less than was done in Queensland in 1885. Let us have, in this year of grace, 1901, the same liberality of sentiment in this, the great national Commonwealth Parliament, as

the Queensland Parliament had in 1885. The State Legislature then gave the planters eight years within which to get rid of this labour. Let us, at least, give them, after they have been encouraged to go on with their pursuits for nearly seventeen years more, at least equally fair treatment. Remember, too, that after they had had, between 1885 and 1892, experience, whatever it was worth, to guide them, we find that in the last named year the Act, to which reference has been made, was passed, and that Act put no limit upon the employment of the kanaka. Some honorable senators speak as though that meant a term of ten years, and we were now at the end of that term. If that were the case I should be the first to say that the kanaka ought to go to-morrow, because that is the treatment which ought to be meted out to the planters.

Senator McGregor

- Senator Symon knows that was the term they asked for

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- If that was the legislative term fixed, the planters and farmers were in duty bound to prepare for the change at the end of that period ; they would now be entitled to no consideration whatever, and there would be no cruelty or harshness in saying that the kanaka should return to his island home next week.

Senator DRAKE

- If the honorable and learned senator had been in Queensland in 1892, would he not have taken up the position that it was decided that the term should be fixed, and the planters should abide by it ?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The term was fixed by the Act of 1885, and when 1892 came round the Parliament declared that the Act of 1885 should disappear. They wiped it out. What is the use of misleading the Senate by suggesting that the Act of 1885 was an operative measure after the Act of 1892 was passed ?

Senator Dobson

In 1892 they dared not fix a limit.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Whether they dared or dared not, they passed the Act to which I have referred. Ten years afterwards we are asked, without any change having taken place in the meantime, to summarily get rid of this traffic - because I think that to get rid of the traffic in the way proposed in this Bill would be to dispose of it summarily - without giving the planters the fair terms, and the time they asked for. We know quite well that it is this fluctuating policy in Queensland which has been responsible for a good deal of this difficulty.

Senator Glassey

- And the honorable and learned senator would perpetuate it.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- No; my honorable friend says this Bill is to be the final word.

Senator DRAKE

- The Queensland Legislature said that in 1885.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- But they did not carry that out. The people and Parliament of Queensland could not. We have heard it said that this Bill is to be the final word on the subject. If it is not to be so, what is the use of passing it? Every one, even the man interested in retaining the kanaka perpetually, agrees that the kanaka must go. Should we regard this as the final measure, the question is what time must be given for the change? It is said that if we had fixed the term within which the traffic should cease at two years, the planters would have asked for three, or if we had fixed it at ten years, they would have asked for twenty years. That is merely trifling with the question. The real question is, what is a fair time to allow under this Bill ? Another consideration that has to be borne in mind is that there can be no doubt whatever - and one reads of it with a good deal of pain - that there is a strong expression of discontent that the Federal Parliament at the outset of its career should be legislating in this particular way, in face of the entreaties for fair and liberal treatment by those who are most intimately affected by it. I ask the Senate to consider that aspect of the question. Let us not, on the threshold of our union, promote discontent or hostility in any section of the community. If we can we ought to avoid making any section, whether small or great, repent of having come into this federation. We ought not, if we can possibly avoid it, to implant any seeds "of bitterness in the breasts of any section of the community in any State whether large or small. My own belief is, reading as I do of what has happened in the Queensland Parliament, and what is to be found in the documents

which have been brought under our notice by different bodies in Queensland, that there will be a very strong feeling created if we are not generous in our treatment of this question. It is worth while, whatever our opinions may be, to give these people another two or three years, in order that the object may be achieved in a conciliatory and tactful manner. Why should we risk ill-feeling towards the federal union and discontent for the mere sake of another year or two to get rid of the kanakas ? On that ground I appeal to honorable senators most strongly. With me this is no party question. I am expressing my own views. The principle of the measure is altogether undoubted. The necessity for a committee of inquiry, I think, most of us feel has passed by. I should have been glad of it as to details, but no committee of inquiry can be necessary in order to stimulate us to do what is fair and just. If it is thought that what is proposed is more than fair and more than just, then let it be generous if you will. I shall assist in amending the Bill so as to give a reasonable extension of time for the discontinuance of kanaka labour, and, if possible, according to the three zones I mentioned. I shall do so in the hope that we shall thereby achieve the object we all have in view with the least possible disturbance to a great national industry. I think that we can achieve it with equal success by making some such concessions as I have indicated, and at the same time do no hurt that it is possible to avoid to those of our fellow citizens who have invested their money and expended their energy in a great enterprise which has been of immense value to Queensland, and which will yet be of great value to the whole Commonwealth.

Senator MCGREGOR

- After the lengthy discussion we have had on this question, and the clouds of arguments we have heard, and the oceans of literature we have all had, and which many of us found it necessary to peruse, probably I should not have risen to speak had it not been for the astonishing statements made by some of my respected friends, such as Senator Fraser and Senator Symon. Those two honorable senators and all those who have argued in the same direction have repeatedly declared that we wish to destroy the sugar industry in Queensland.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- I never said so.

Senator MCGREGOR

- Senator Fraser has repeated that statement, and within the last ten minutes Senator Symon has said that we are going to sweep it away in an hour.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- I never said anything of the kind.

Senator MCGREGOR

- I am very sorry if I misunderstood the honorable and learned senator. I do not very often misunderstand what is said, and I distinctly understood Senator Symon to say that we were going to do these things in an hour. That was the burden of his song right through. The words " in an hour " were repeated by him. I am very glad to see him back among us. I feel that after his triumph in Tasmania he has come back invigorated. I noticed this afternoon that he has infused a spirit of elation into those who have missed him so long. They seem to be in a glorified state this afternoon. Something in the shape of a revival has come over them, but we shall see what it all means. The Brisbane Courier, of the 13 th November, which no one can deny has a bias in the direction of supporting the planter who has made his money out of the sweat and blood of these poor unfortunate kanakas, says that a speech was delivered by some friend of the kanaka, in the House of Representatives, which will furnish arguments for Senator Symon, Senator Fraser and others, to do great things in the Senate, and it puts down as coming from Senator Symon himself the words - " Sharpen our weapons for us. Give us our weapons and we will let them see what we can do." Senator Symon within the last fortnight, although he was away, must have been very active in this direction. But what has he told us tonight? There are persons who will think it presumption on my part to put my opinion against Senator Symon's with respect to the interpretation of a provision in the Constitution. I question very much the value of his opinion on this occasion, and even he, I believe, has very grave doubts.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- I have no doubts at all, grave or otherwise.

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Senator MCGREGOR

No ; but then the honorable and learned senator might be able to change his opinion on another occasion if a legal question were to arise and interpret the Constitution in an entirely different way. Such things have occurred. A lawyer, if he is well paid, is always prepared to argue for his client. I am afraid that there is a good deal of this going on, even in the Senate, with laymen as well as lawyers. What do we find ? Subject to the Constitution we have power to legislate for the peace, welfare, and good government of the people of Australia in certain directions, and one of these is as to immigration and emigration. We cannot legislate as to commerce or industry in any way which would give an advantage to one portion of a State over another portion of it. Senator Symon questions whether that provision has any bearing on the position we are discussing. I believe it has and that if the point were argued before him as a Judge in the High Court of Australia he would very probably come to the conclusion that it has. I wish Senator Symon and others to consider what section 117 of the Constitution says -

A subject of the Queen resident in any State shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were a subject of the Queen resident in such other State.

Of course its meaning is arguable. There may be points raised in the law court, but the intention of the section is as plain to me as is A B C. It is plain to every just man that the legislation of the Commonwealth Parliament must apply equally to all States. Consequently, it precludes the possibility of legislation of the description to which Senator Symon has referred.

Senator Clemons

- That section does.

Senator McGREGOR

- Any legislative power which is conferred by section 51 is to be exercised, subject to the rest of the Constitution. If section 117 can be applied

Senator Major Gould

- It has nothing to do with it.

Senator McGREGOR

- Honorable senators are taking the Constitution exactly in the same way as they take a Bill. Probably they have never read the Bill, but when they come to a certain clause they take it as one of a lot of nine pins they have to hammer at, irrespective of anything else in the Sill. I have found them doing that very often. They do the same thing very often in connexion with the Constitution. Every Constitution is not an aggregation of sections, but it is a complete whole, and one part of it depends on the other as much as one member of a family depends on another.

Senator Clemons

- Section 117 cannot possibly apply.

Senator DRAKE

- It is a matter of opinion.

Senator McGREGOR

- I wish to show that the spirit of that section does apply. When Senator Symon was speaking he was asked - " would this apply to a Hindoo? " and he placed the Hindoo on the same plane as any other alien. A Hindoo is a subject of the King, and he may be resident in Queensland. Senator Symon wants to make a law apply to a Hindoo in one portion of Queensland which would not apply to him in another portion of it, consequently he is contravening the Constitution.

Senator Clemons

- Not in section 117.

Senator McGREGOR

Apart from that altogether, taking section 51, the sections referring to trade and commerce, and section 117, and reading them as portions of the Constitution - one portion being subject to the other - then I hold that any just Judge in Australia would be bound to come to the conclusion that we had no right to pass differential legislation such as has been alluded to this afternoon. We are asked to believe that the sugar industry of Queensland is to be destroyed. Senator Fraser repeated that statement more than a dozen times in his very able speech.

Senator Fraser

- In the North, certainly.

Senator McGREGOR

- The honorable senator never referred to any particular portion of Queensland. He said that the industry was going to be destroyed.

Senator Fraser

- In Cairns, I said, and I say so still.

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Senator McGREGOR

- The honorable senator did not say so at the time I refer to. He was trying to give the general impression that the sugar industry in that State was in great danger. Most honorable senators know that only about one-third of the sugar industry is in the Cairns district. They also know that there is any amount of room for the expansion of the industry in other parts of the State, and that it would only be a question of removing the planters from one place to another if it were necessary. I am going to show that it is not necessary, and that white men can do, and are doing the work. I want Senator Fraser particularly to go back to the year 1887, when the Cairns railway was being constructed. Were they kanakas or Chinamen who carried out that work ? A wage of 8s. a day was paid on that line, and when an advertisement was put in the paper calling for men to do the work, there were hundreds of them willing to do it at that rate of pay. What was the first portion of the work but labour of the very same character as that which the kanakas are said to be so well adapted for - namely, the clearing of dense tropical scrub ? Here were these white men, who, we are told, are not physically capable of trashing cane in Queensland, working in dense scrub and swamps through which it is impossible to make a way except with a scrub-knife, and yet we are told that the same kind of men are incapable of working in the cane-fields ! But we do not need to go back as far as 1887 to prove that white men can do laborious work in these tropical regions. How long is it since the Chillagoe railway was built ? Only just lately. That is in the very same district.

Senator Clemons

- No. I know it very well. I have been there, and Senator McGregor has not. It is 2,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Senator McGREGOR

- But it is in North Queensland. It is in the tropical regions. Only 7s. a day was offered to men who worked on that line, and when the work started there were over 300 men on the ground ready to start work as soon as they got an opportunity. White men have never refused to do the work that had to be done, whether it was on the top of a hill or at the bottom of a swamp. They have always been willing to do it if they were paid wages adequate to satisfy the requirements of civilization. Senator Clemons talks about the Chillagoe railway being 2,000 feet above the level of the sea. It is all a question of altitude now. Previously it was a question of latitude. I am afraid that Senator Clemons is like Senator Symon, who when before the electors was a good, sound, white Australian. In the first portion of his speech this afternoon the honorable and learned senator was a little bit of a white Australian, and only discriminated between Bundaberg and Cairns. But before he had finished we had him declaring that the Constitution could be so manipulated as to exclude Chinamen from Queensland, or to allow them to come into Victoria, or vice versa. He made a regular hotch-potch of the white Australia question. I only wish that some honorable senators had been honest in declaring their opinions to the electors when seeking their suffrages. Then, again, something has been said about the change of opinion that came over the people of Queensland in 1892, because the Parliament of that State then carried legislation at the request of the planters, who asked for an extension of time for five years. The longest term any of them asked for was ten years. As every honorable senator knows, the reason given by Sir Samuel Griffith for mentioning no period in the Bill was that he did not want to create any vested rights. Yet that fact is now quoted as though Sir Samuel Griffith had attempted to allow coloured labor to be imported permanently. Senator Eraser has said that another Queensland Parliament was returned which maintained the same attitude towards this question. But does he not know that the same Parliament that passed the extension of the kanaka business also passed what is known as the Purification of Rolls Act ? Does not the Senate know that, in consequence of that measure, a large proportion of the working population of Queensland were struck off the rolls, and have never had an opportunity of getting on again since ? Do they not know also that there are polling booths erected in Brisbane at general elections by means of which owners of property in the different parts of the State can multiply their votes in many directions ? Do they not know

that that is a reason why there is a difference between the State Parliament of Queensland and the federal representation of that State ? Do they not know that there is plural voting for the State Parliament, whilst the Federal Parliament is elected on the basis of one man one vote ? If they know these things, why do they try to make unfair capital out of the facts ?

Senator Fraser

- How does the honorable senator explain the change of opinion as regards the members who took the place of those who were elected to the Federal Parliament ?

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Senator McGREGOR

The only change of opinion on the part of a representative of that State that I know of is the case of Senator Ferguson. I think I have now shown that white men have done far more laborious work in the tropical parts of Queensland than either cane-cutting or trashing. White men are not going to be persuaded to do work alongside kanakas and other coloured people, but if they are paid proper wages they are prepared to do the work.' White workmen will not mix 'with kanakas unless, indeed, they are the lowest class of whites. Give the white men proper wages and decent conditions, and they will do all the work that is necessary. Now, I want to say a word or two to Senator Symon. I do not think, he recognises certain facts or he might alter his opinion with respect to the necessity of giving a longer time in the Cairns district than in the Bundaberg district. Returns have been produced showing the number of cane-growers in each of the districts, and we have also had a return showing the number of registered employers of kanakas. This is a Government return from the office of the Immigration department. Dr. Maxwell's figures have been very extensively dealt with in this debate to the detriment of both the Cairns district and Dr. Maxwell's own judgment. This return shows that there are 321 employers of kanakas in the Cairns district, and that there are 523 white cane-growers in that district. So that there are 202 employers who employ no kanakas. According to these figures, two-fifths of the white population of the Cairns district engaged in growing sugar employ no kanakas. Is not that sufficient proof for Senator Symon or any other man that the other three-fifths are capable of doing the same thing? Senator Fraser has said that if 5 per cent, of the growers could show that it was possible to do without kanaka labour he would alter his position. I have given proof that three-fifths of the growers do without kanakas.

Senator Fraser

- Those figures are wrong.

Senator McGREGOR

They are Dr. Maxwell's figures. Of course, if all the figures which go to show up the pro-kanakas are wrong, the Lord help white Australia ! How dare Senator Fraser say that the figures I use are wrong, when I tell him where I get them from ? Let him tell the Immigration department and the Registrar-General of Queensland that their figures are wrong. I have already shown how wrong Senator Fraser was when he said that there were 48,000 white people directly or indirectly interested in the cane industry. The next day he came down and reduced the number to 20,000. His figures were wrong, and I was right. I think I have now shown conclusively that white men can work in the tropical parts of Queensland if they are properly paid for it. I have proved it by the Cairns railway' and the Chillagoe railway.

Senator Clemons

- Not at all. I have been to Chillagoe and the honorable senator has not. Chillagoe has one of the best climates in Queensland.

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Senator McGREGOR

- Senator Clemons has been everywhere. He is as "much* travelled " as Smythe. I now want to deal with the report furnished by Dr. Maxwell. I want to show some of the peculiarities existing in that report, upon which a great deal of stress has been laid. Senator Sargood and Senator Macfarlane were put up as special advocates for Dr. Maxwell's figures. I think I can show the howling fallacy into which they fell in their advocacy before I have done with them. In the first place, I wish to say that I am not finding fault with Dr. Maxwell. I believe he was employed by the Queensland Government for a certain purpose. He had certain instructions, and was well paid for carrying them out. I do not believe that he attempted to deceive the Senate, nor do I want to make out that he has any interest in doing so. I want to show how he has

relied on the Registrar-General. I have been in Queensland trying to get information myself. It is a very peculiar thing, that apparently they have never taken Dr. Maxwell down to Stradbroke Island to give him a sight of the "Peep Show," and evil results of the kanaka traffic. He has had nothing to say about that, of course. Apparently they have never taken him to Friday Island, where he might have seen a portion of the legacy left by this traffic to the people of Queensland. It was not the intention of the Queensland Government that he should tell us anything about those things. But poor Dr. Maxwell, clever though he may be, goes - confiding individual ! - to the Registrar-General and says - "How many kanakas are there in the district of Bundaberg ?" The Registrar-General looks up the returns, evidently the census returns, because the exact figure of the male and female kanaka population of the Bundaberg census district was 1,912. That was absolutely correct. Dr. Maxwell puts that down in his book. . Then he says - " Now what may be the number of kanakas in the Mackay district?" Then the Registrar-General, his clerk, or somebody in the office, turns over to another page and reads out " 1,475," which is the exact number of men and women in that district, that is to say, the census district of Mackay. Then Dr. Maxwell says - " Now I want all the kanakas in the Cairns district, all north of Mackay." Different instructions are given this time, and the Registrar-General bundles the whole lot together, and says - "There are 4,278." Dr. Maxwell puts that down. Then he says - "Now there is something else I want. I want the number of cane-growers in the Bundaberg district." He may get this information from another office, as perhaps he only referred to his friend Mr. Hughes, the Registrar-General, for information as to the number of kanakas. He goes to the Agricultural department or some other office, and he says - " How many land-holders in connexion with the sugar industry are there in the Bundaberg district?" The fellow turns over his book and says " 1,432." That is all right, and down it goes with the other figures. Then he says - "How many of the same class of people are there in the Mackay district ?" Another page is turned up and the answer is given, " 655." " And in the Cairns district how many are there - cane-growers, I mean, Mr. Officer?" "Oh, there are 523." Down it goes, and away goes Dr. Maxwell to wherever his office is. He has got the data now for a grand report. He has got it in his book. What Dr. Maxwell has got to show is the progress of settlement in the Bundaberg, Mackay and Cairns districts. He has got also, by some peculiar kind of information, the rate of wages, both of white men and kanakas, in these districts.

Senator Higgs

- It is to be hoped they are more reliable.

Senator Pearce

Yes ; he got them from the planters.

Senator McGREGOR

- Very likely from the planters. He goes to the planters in different districts, and says - " What do you pay white men here?" and he finds that they are paid £71 in Bundaberg, £77 in Mackay, and in the Cairns district £91. My word, they must be well off there ?

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- Dr. Maxwell says that he examined the books, and did not take a verbal statement.

Senator McGREGOR

The particular pages of the books must have been given to him. I want Senator Sargood to hold hard just for a little bit. Dr. Maxwell tells us that in examining the books, wherever he got them, he found that the kanaka in the Bundaberg district - I hope that honorable senators, and especially Senator Fraser, who was accustomed to the making of great calculations when a railway contractor, and Senator Pulsford, who is always in his glory when he is in a sea of figures, will pay attention to this, because there is something involved in it. Dr. Maxwell finds out all the expenses connected with the kanaka in the Bundaberg district, the £30 paid for bringing him there, the £5 that has to be paid back again, the cost of the salt junk, vegetables, wines and spirits, and everything of that description with which he is indulged, and he finds that it amounts to £37 a year. Then he goes to the Mackay district, and finds that the kanaka can get all these indulgences and delicacies for £32 a year in that district. He goes north to Cairns, and he finds that wines and spirits are a little dearer there and the cost rises to £36 per year. Wait till I tell honorable senators what this means. They will have seen one of those brass whistles which have an inclined plane on one surface. You blow into them big notes and little ones.

Senator Fraser

- No, we are not accustomed to jugglers.

Senator McGREGOR

- I am going to show honorable senators where the jugglery comes in. I am the one who is going to expose the wizard of the north. Well, this makes a sliding scale up towards Cairns. Honorable senators will see that the difference between the wages of the kanaka and the white man in the Bundaberg district is £35. The difference between the wages of the white worker and the kanaka in the Mackay district is £45, and the difference in the Cairns district is £55. Do not honorable senators see how nicely it slides up and down ?

Senator Pearce

- £10 for every 400 miles.

Senator McGREGOR

- Yes, £10 for every 400 miles, because he tells us there is a distance of 800 miles between Bundaberg and Cairns.

Senator Fraser

- So there is

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Senator McGREGOR

So there is, and it is over 10,000 miles to Great Britain, and 7,000 or 8,000 to Japan, and I may have something to say on that directly. The thing is made to slide up and down

Senator Fraser

He was poking fun at the honorable senator !

Senator McGREGOR

- People do not generally poke fun at me without being found out. I have shown honorable senators the gentle slide with respect to the white man, and the toboggan with respect to the kanaka. Bundaberg is in a more temperate climate. It was settled first, and, consequently, the settlement was closer ; that is the deduction, but I want to say that that is not the cause of it, and when I destroy the figures and deductions of any one who brings up a report like this, I remind honorable senators that Senator Fraser told us that if we destroy one portion of any argument or one portion of any defence we destroy the whole lot. I am going to destroy the whole lot if I can. There is far greater settlement within 10 miles of Melbourne than down at Warrnambool, though the Warrnambool district is one of the pleasantest places in which any one could live. Why is that ? It is simply because Melbourne was established many years ago, and was the centre of industry first, and land in close proximity to Melbourne became dear. The same way in connexion with Bundaberg. It was first settled, and because of that settlement the land there was subdivided before the land in the Cairns district was subdivided. Senator Fraser and other senators know that, if a man wants to get any land in the Bundaberg district fit for sugar-growing, he will have to pay from £12 to £22 an acre for it. Does not Senator Fraser also know that only within the last ten years or so there were large tracts of country opened up in the Cairns district by the Queensland Government, and surveyed in to blocks of 160 acres, and any one wishing to go there and commence work in the sugar industry could get a block of 160 acres at 5s. an acre ?

Senator Fraser

- But they did not like the heat.

Senator McGREGOR

- But they went and got it all the same ; 523 of them went and got those blocks, and are already settled in that district, and that is why there are more acres to the single settler in the Cairns district than in the district of Mackay. The same thing applies in connexion with the Tweed River. It was settled first, and of course, as the settlement there is denser, the land is dearer. It is always from the centre of population that the areas of land increase, whether in a hot climate or in a cold climate, and so in the Bundaberg district, being close to the centre, the settlement would be denser, and districts farther away from the centre would be more sparsely populated. This shows conclusively to my mind that the argument that it is not a very good place to settle in is an idle one. The very fact that 523 people have settled there successfully, and that 202 of them have been able to carry on without the aid of kanakas should disprove that statement.

Senator Fraser

- Not one of them has been able to do it with white labour.

Senator McGREGOR

I will deal with that.

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Senator Fraser

- The honorable senator cannot. If they have not employed kanakas they have used other coloured labour.

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Senator McGREGOR

- We shall see about that by-and-by. I am showing that the deduction to be drawn from the density of population in the Bundaberg district and that of the Cairns district, is not that one is more difficult to work in than the other, but that one district has been settled for a longer period than the other, and that the planters have been able to take up larger areas further north. That is the way in which honorable senators should regard the question if they do not look at it with a certain amount of bias. There have been very peculiar conclusions derived from the figures I have already stated in connexion with the development and the position of the different subdivisions of Queensland. We are told something about what it will cost to supplant the kanaka labour of the different districts by white labour. We are told also the amount which each sugar-grower is to gain from the duty and the bonus under the Tariff proposals. I want to call attention to the fact that not a word has been said as to the white workers in any of the districts. We have not been told how many white workers there are to be found up there. We are told that there are 1,432 white cane-growers occupying their own land in the Bundaberg district, and that there are 1,912 kanakas working for them. But we are not advised of the number of white labourers who work for these 1,432 cane-growers. I do not believe that any honorable senator could tell me the number, but I am in a position to enlighten the Senate on the subject, if Dr. Maxwell's figures are correct. Allowing that they are only approximations, I shall make all my approximations more in favour of the kanaka than in favour of the white man, and I shall prove before I have concluded that Dr. Maxwell has not followed out that course. There are 46,000 acres devoted to the cultivation of cane by these white settlers, in the words that Dr. Maxwell quoted himself. There are 43,500 tons of sugar 'produced ; and it is estimated that 10 tons of cane will produce 1 ton of sugar in the Bundaberg district. £5 per ton on the 43,500 tons of sugar, accordto Dr. Maxwell, gives us £217,500. It will absorb £67,000 to supplant the 1,912 kanakas by white workers and that leaves £150,000 to provide for increasing the wages of the white workers who supplant the kanaka as well as the white men who are at present working in the sugar industry in the Bundaberg district.. Now, I add the 1,912 kanakas and the 1,432 white cane-growers together, and that gives us a total of 3,344. Senator Eraser, after his great experience as a railway contractor, can add that up. Dr. Maxwell said that this £150,000 would increase the wages of the white workers already there, and of those who are to supplant the kanakas by 10s. or 12s. per week. Ten shillings per week is £26 per annum, while 12s. per week amounts to £31 4s. per annum. But I shall take £30 per annum for the purpose of easy calculation. If we multiply 3,344 - which, represent the kanakas and sugar-cane growers - by 30, we get a total as nearly as possible of £100,000. That leaves £50,000 to be distributed among the white workers who are there already in the district, in addition to the 1,432 white planters and the 1,912 white men who replaced the kanakas. Then if we divide that £50,000 by 30, that will give us the number of white workers who are there already. I want honorable senators to remember this fact, because I intend to prove something from it presently. Dividing the £50,000 by 30, we get in round numbers 1,600, and that represents the number of white workers in the district already. Adding the 1,600 to the 1,400, we get a. total of 3,000 white people and 1,912 - which is pretty well 2,000 - kanakas. Thus, there are 3,000 white people and practically 2,000 kanakas cultivating cane in the Bundaberg district. I shall not interfere with the Mackay district, because I am so doubtful about the genuineness of the figures, seeing that they come down to £32 per head. That looks bad, and therefore I shall leave it out of the question. Then honorable senators must recollect that although there are 27,000 acres under sugar cane in the Mackay district, there is only a production of 18,000 tons of sugar for the year. That looks bad, and so I shall go on to the Cairns district, and deal with that and the Bundaberg district only. Senator Sargood and Senator Macfarlane say that Dr. Maxwell is bound to be right in his figures, and that Senator Higgs is bound to be wrong. Of course I shall, not refer to Senator Higgs' figures. I shall only refer to those that are correct. Let us take the 37,000 acres of cane in the Cairns district, producing 47,500 tons of sugar, or something like

that. Dr. Maxwell tells us what the £2 bonus and the £3 duty on this will be. Senator Macfarlane has qualified the statement a little, but I am only taking the report as I get it. £5 per ton on the 47,000 tons output gives £235,000 to the Cairns district. Then 4,228 kanakas have to be supplanted by an equal number of white men, and when we give the same as the 'other 523 white settlers who are there will receive, we are £7,000 short or thereabouts. There is not a word about white labour in the Cairns district. We are led to believe that there is none, but I do not take that for granted. I say that the 202 sugar-growers, if not the 321, must have white workers in their employ. Who is minding their horses or ploughing their ground, and carrying out that kind of cultivation that the kanaka is not allowed to do, provided the regulations are being brought into operation ? Seeing that I can prove, as I have proved, that there are 1,600 white labourers in round numbers in the sugar industry in the Bundaberg district, by the same deduction and calculation based on an increase of 4s. per week in the Mackay district, I can prove that there are 700 white labourers there in addition to the 655 white settlers. I could prove that, but there is no necessity to do so. If we take it that in the Bundaberg district there is that proportion, and in the Mackay district there are 700 white labourers bearing nearly a similar proportion to the number of white labourers in the Bundaberg district, we must also take the same proportion of that class of labour in the Cairns district. Does any honorable senator object to that ? If so, now is the time to take the objection. If there are 1,600 white labourers in the sugar industry in the Bundaberg district, and 700 according to the same calculation - which no one can prove to be incorrect - in the Mackay district, there must also be about 500 or 600 white labourers in the Cairns district. There are 523 settlers, and I say there are 500 or 600 labourers in the same proportion. Of course, in view of the deficit in regard to the Cairns district, it is not possible for me by any method of calculation such as I can carry out, to deal with that part of Queensland. But, according to Dr Maxwell's own figures, there are 1,492 kanakas or other coloured people working in the cane-fields in the Cairns district. I hope that honorable senators will bear that in mind. Some of these people are Japanese, some are Hindoos, and others are coolies and Javanese, and people of other alien races. Here I wish to make another point against those honorable senators who are continually crying out that the white men cannot do the work.

Senator Fraser

- The honorable senator will find that that is correct before he dies.

Senator McGREGOR

- If I were as young a man as I was when I was working for Senator Fraser, I would go up north for the bonus at once. I was working harder for the honorable senator than I should have to work up there.

Senator Fraser

- I hope that I was a good master.

Senator McGREGOR

The honorable senator never did anything to me, because I always did my work. A large number of Japanese are now working there. It is said that climatic conditions are the sole cause of the inability of Britishers to work in the tropics or districts bordering on the tropics. Can Senator Fraser, without looking at the map, tell me whether Japan is in the tropics ?

Senator Fraser

No.

Senator McGREGOR

How far south is Japan compared with the British Isles?

Senator Fraser

- Not very many degrees. In some parts of Japan the people are as white as is the honorable senator, but in other parts they are black.

Senator McGREGOR

- It does not matter whether they are black or white, because the climate of Japan is decidedly a temperate one. If the natives of Japan can come down and work in the Cairns district, the natives of Great Britain, who are as good men as ever they were, and better in my opinion, can come down and work in the ' same place, and there is no climatic influence that will affect one which will not affect the other. I hope that honorable senators will recognise that fact, and never talk about Japan again.

Senator Fraser

- Japan has a varied climate, some parts being cold and others hot

Senator McGREGOR

So has Great Britain. Peaches and grapes can be grown in the south of England, but not in the north of Scotland.

Senator Fraser

- In a hot-house.

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Senator McGREGOR

- In the Cairns district there are 523 white settlers, and about that proportion of white labourers ploughing and doing work of that description for them. According to that calculation 1,000 whites and nearly 6,000 coloured people are cultivating say 35,000 acres of cane in the Cairns district. In the Bundaberg district 3,000 whites and 2,000 kanakas are cultivating 45,000 acres. Will Senator Clemons just do a simple equation 1 If one white- man and six coloured men can cultivate 35 acres, and three white men and two coloured men can cultivate 45 acres, what is the labour value of a white man compared with that of a coloured man ?

Senator Clemons

- I shall do it, but the honorable senator does not expect me to give him an answer in a second

Senator McGREGOR

- The honorable senator need not take the trouble. The labour value of a kanaka is 3f acres and that of a white man 12£ acres. Giving away a fourth to the kanaka and taking a half off the white man, that is three kanakas for every white man'. How does Senator Fraser like that proportion ? That is deducted on mathematical principles from Dr. Maxwell's own figures. Is there any honorable senator who can find fault with it ? For the sake of Senator Ferguson, Senator Fraser, and some others I shall give away the 500 or 600 white labourers, and take only the 500 white planters, and the 6,000 coloured people in Cairns district, and making the same deductions we shall find that the kanaka is worth 5§ acres, and one white man a little over 11 acres. That deduction, giving away everything to the kanaka, shows that one white man, according to Dr. Maxwell's figures, is worth two kanakas. I have given the Senate the proper mathematical deductions which may be taken from Dr. Maxwell's figures ; not the assumptions that he makes, and no honorable senator can gainsay one word I have said in that respect. What becomes, then, of Dr. Maxwell's opinion that it will cost so much to supplant coloured labour in the northern portion of Queensland when one white man is worth three kanakas, or, to give everything away to the kanakas, one white man is worth two of them 1 Instead of having to employ 4,228 white men in the place of that number of kanakas the planters will have to employ only 2,114, and that doubles the wage - £72 - that would be paid to them even at the rate which Dr. Maxwell states as being paid to a kanaka. See the amount there would be to spare for an increase of the wages, and what would become of the £7,000 supposed to be deficient in his argument 1 There is another assumption. I wish to deal with, that if we do this we shall put the poor planters or settlers in the Cairns district and the Bundaberg district in a dreadful position. The Bundaberg planters are going to get a greater advantage over the Cairns planters

Senator Fraser

- So they are.

Senator McGREGOR

Wait until I deal with them from the 8 1/2-ton gun Senator Macfarlane tried to fire off to strengthen the revised version of Dr. Maxwell's report.

Senator Macfarlane

- Not mine.

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Senator McGREGOR

- I wish to show that the honorable senator has made the position of Dr. Maxwell worse than it was. What is the relative position of a planter in the Cairns district and the Bundaberg district ? In the latter district, to my knowledge, and I am sure to the knowledge of Senator Glassey, there is not a settler who has not paid from £1 2 to £20 an acre, or who does not pay at least 5 per cent, on the capital value. For every acre he has selected he has, at the very least, 12s. an acre to pay. The original selector in the Cairns district got his land for 5s. an acre. The one has to pay 12s. an acre in rent, interest, or something else,

and the other 3d. an acre, which is an advantage of lis. 9d. per ton of sugar, allowing 10 tons of cane to a ton of sugar. According to the revised version of Dr. Maxwell's report, put before the Senate by Senator Macfarlane, in the Cairns district 8[^] tons of cane will produce a ton of sugar, while 10 tons are required in the Bundaberg district. The Cairns planters therefore have a 15 per cent, advantage over the Bundaberg planters in the density of their cane. Taking the value of a ton of sugar at £12, that represents £2 lis. 9d. an acre, but we shall say that it is £2 7s. 9d., deducting the 4s. which the Bundaberg planter has to pay in addition. There is another factor which comes into the calculation. While the 46,000 acres of cane land in the Bundaberg district yielded only 43,500 tons of sugar, the 37,000 acres of cane land in the Cairns district yielded 47,000 tons of sugar. , That is another 20 per cent, advantage. That percentage on £12 is £2 8s., and that sum added to £2 7s. 9d. gives a total of £4 15s. 9d. That is another bonus of £4 15s. 9d. per acre that the Cairns cane-grower has over the man in the cooler climate of Bundaberg. All these deductions are made from Dr. Maxwell's own figures - which so many honorable senators have tried to represent as being correct, whilst the figures of every one else are represented to be wrong. Am I not entitled to make these deductions ? When I have done it, I say that any argument used by Senator Fraser or Senator Symon, or any one else as to the disadvantage of the Cairns district as compared with the Bundaberg district is all moonshine, and not worthy of the consideration of the Senate. I want to say now that I believe - and I have no reason to believe otherwise - that Br. Maxwell has been acting honestly, but that he was unconsciously biased. All the deductions which I have made in connexion with the figures 1 have used are entirely in favour of the kanaka. I want to see now whether Dr. Maxwell made his calculations in favour of the kanaka, or in favour of the white man. When Dr. Maxwell is coming to the conclusion of his article, he says that the planters are not going to reap all this great benefit, because there are "over 1,100" kanakas not engaged in the sugar industry, who will also have to be depopulated, and made up by white labour, thus placing another burden upon the shoulders of the planters. Dr. Maxwell knew that he was exaggerating on the wrong side when he made the statement, because his own figures are - he got them from Registrar-General Hughes - that there are 8,656 male kanakas in Queensland, of whom 7,615 are engaged in cane-growing. Deduct 7,615 from 8,656, and it will be found that there are only 1,041 kanakas not engaged in cane-growing. So that Dr. Maxwell was exaggerating in the wrong direction so far as my inclinations go ; but from the point of view of Senator Sargood and Senator Fraser he could exaggerate as much as he liked so long as he was doing it in the direction that suited their arguments.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- That is not quite fair.

Senator McGREGOR

It is a fair statement to say that he exaggerated when he said that there were "over 1,100" kanakas not engaged in the sugar industry.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- But it is not fair to say that he satisfied me and supported my arguments on that ground.

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Senator McGREGOR

- According to the arguments used in order to defend the position taken up by Dr. Maxwell, I can come to no other conclusion. When a man says that there are "over 1,100," he ought not to mean that in reality there are under 1,100. The laws of approximation do not allow of statements of that kind being made. If there were over 1,050, he had a right to say that there were " a little under 1,100 "; but to say that there were "over 1,100," when as a matter of fact there were only 1,041, was an exaggeration. That is a straw which shows how the wind blows: I have now shown that Dr. Maxwell's prejudices were inclined in a certain direction, although he might not be conscious of it. I have shown, according to his own figures, the position of the Bundaberg and Cairns districts. I have shown that one white man is worth three kanakas - or that, according to the very lowest calculation, based on the evidence in favour of the kanaka, one man is worth two of them. I have shown that certainly all Dr. Maxwell's figures are not to be relied upon. I have shown that white men can do the work, and will do it if they get properly paid for it. Why are so many honorable senators opposing this Bill ? I should not like to say that because Senator Fraser is chairman of a large squatting company in North Queensland, he is afraid that when those engaged in the sugar industry have to use white labour only he will have to . pay more than 15s. or £1 a week to his

rouseabouts on the station. I do not think that consideration has entered into the honorable senator's mind, but I do know that it has entered into the minds of a great many people, and that there are many who are prepared to do their utmost to retain kanaka labour on that ground. Now, I want to say another word or two upon the question in conclusion. Who are the pro kanaka senators working so strong. in favour of ? They are working in favour of the independent, sturdy able white man, who is prepared to take his position and defend himself under all circumstances, in any part of the world - they are taking his side against that of the unfortunate, ignorant, superstitious, and defenceless kanaka, who has only the members of the labour party,' together with a few good liberals, to take his part. I should like to ask Senators Ferguson, Fraser, Zeal, and even Senator Sargood himself : when they come to the Senate and reverentially bow their heads when our President reads the words, " Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," do they think of whether they are doing anything to bring about the kingdom of God in this world, when they are promoting a system under which a number of their fellow creatures are kept in a condition of semi-slavery, in which they are not prepared to work themselves ? Do they think that they are trying to bring about that peace and happiness which ought to be in every man's breast, when they are bringing these people here to reduce the condition of their white brothers and their white sisters, and bring them to degradation, by putting these islanders into competition with them, so that they may not be able to earn a proper living that would give them all the benefits and comforts of civilization in Queensland? Do they think, when they hear the words, " deliver us from evil," of the feelings of the fathers and mothers, and of the emotions of the wives and daughters of the poor kanakas, who are taken from their native islands? Do they not think, when they are listening to these prayers, that it is their duty as soon as possible to do away with an evil traffic of this kind. When Christ went into the temple and found it being defiled by the moneychangers, did He say to them - " You have been doing this business for 50 years, and I will allow you to carry it on for a few years more before I put an end to it "? No ! Did He not make His whip of cords and drive them out ? And that is what I say today in connexion with this infernal traffic. If honorable senators wish to carry out the principles of the Christian religion, which they profess to believe in, they will put an end to it as soon as possible. I hope the Senate will forgive me if I have spoken warmly. I feel warmly about the subject. I heard a sneer to-day when the Christian religion was mentioned ; but, sir, I have just as much Christian feeling with respect to questions of this kind as any honorable senator can have. I hope that honorable senators will go home to-night and think of the position I have put to them, and that they will come to-morrow prepared to vote in a different direction to that which some of them have indicated.

Question resolved- in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee -

Clause 1 agreed to.

Progress reported.

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21:58:00

Senate adjourned at 9.58 p.m.