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1901-12-04

Senate

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

PETITION

Senator Major GOULD presented a petition from seventeen persons comprising the Council of the Diocese of Grafton and Armidale, in New South Wales, praying the Senate to reject the Matrimonial Causes Bill.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

STRANGERS IN THE GALLERIES

Senator MCGREGOR

- - Before the business of the day is called on, sir, I wish to ask you, for the purpose of giving the public an idea of their position as visitors to a House of Parliament, if it is in order for any visitors to the President's gallery, or the public gallery, to take notes, or to read books or newspapers.

The PRESIDENT

- There is nothing about the matter in the standing orders. I apprehend that any one who comes in to listen to the debates is entitled to take a note if he so desires. We do not discriminate between visitors. We have reporters from all the States, who take notes in different parts of the House, but, of course, not on the floor of the Chamber. And I know of nothing which should prevent other visitors from doing so. I do not think there is any rule to prevent any person from reading a book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DEPUTY POST-MASTERS-GENERAL

Senator Lt Col NEILD

- Will the Postmaster-General lay upon the table copies of the special instructions which have been issued by him to Deputy Postmasters-General ? I do not know whether these documents are purely departmental, or whether they involve any question of public policy 1 If they are of the latter description I think they ought to be produced.

Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

- I do not consider that the instructions contain any reference to questions of public policy. I have no objection to lay them on the table if that is the desire of the Senate.

PAPERS

Senator DRAKE laid upon the table

Copy of telegram to the Prime Minister from the Premier of South Australia conveying a resolution passed by the House of Assembly of that State, relative to the conservation of the waters of the Murray and the Darling.

Copies of telegrams between the Prime Minister and the Premier of Queensland, relative to the number of kanakas in that State.

Ordered to be printed.

MILITARY COMMANDANT

Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

. - I desire to announce that the position of Commandant of the Military Force of the Commonwealth has been offered to and accepted by Major-General Sir Edward Hutton, at a salary of ?2,500 per annum, which covers everything except travelling allowances. I am informed that the appointment has received the approval of His Majesty the King.

QUESTIONS

SHIPS' STORES

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Senator PULSFORD

asked the Postmaster-General, upon notice -

Has any correspondence passed between the Government and the Governor-General on the subject of the clauses of the Customs Act dealing with ships' stores, either before or since the passing of such Act ?

If there has been any such correspondence, will the Government take steps to lay it upon the table of the Senate ?

Has any revenue been collected from overseas vessels for duties on ships' stores, and, if so, what is the approximate amount to any date that can be given ?

Is it true that the Government have to a large, or to any, extent authorized the Customs authorities to waive the claims they were originally instructed to make in regard to duties on ships' stores in the overseas trade?

Senator DRAKE

- The following answers have been supplied to the honorable senator's questions - 1 and 2. There is no such correspondence. 3. i' 1,080 18s. 4d. has been actually collected, exclusive of guarantees for payment pending the decision of questions of legal liabilities. 4. No.

#### ELECTORAL AND FRANCHISE BILLS

Senator STANFORTH SMITH

asked the Postmaster-General, upon notice -

Is it the intention of the Government to introduce Electoral and Franchise Bills this session, and if so when ?

Senator DRAKE

- It is not finally decided whether both these Bills will be introduced into the Senate ; but the Franchise Bill will be introduced this session and without any unnecessary delay.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Resolved (on motion by Senator Clemons) -

That six weeks' leave of absence be given to Senator Matheson on account of urgent private business and family sickness.

#### PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS BILL

In Committee (consideration resumed from 29th November, vide page 8037) Clause 3 -

No Pacific Island labourer shall enter Australia on or after the thirty-first day of March, One thousand nine hundred and four.

Upon which Senator Ferguson had moved -

That after the word " Australia," the following words be inserted : - " except that part of the State of Queensland north of the Tropic of Capricorn."

Senator WALKER

- I intend to support the amendment. According to some figures which have been supplied by a member of the Queensland Parliament, 8,710 kanakas are employed in sugar-growing in that State, namely, 5,605 north of Rockhampton, and 3,105 south of it.

Senator Higgs

- Has the honorable senator abandoned Dr. Maxwell's figures ?

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Senator WALKER

- No ; but the figures I am quoting take the Tropic of Capricorn as the dividing line, as the amendment does. If this return is reliable, as I have no reason to doubt, about two-thirds of the kanakas in the sugar districts are employed north of the Tropic of Capricorn. I notice that 3,104 other alien' labourers are employed north of that line,, as against 479 south of it, or six times as many. Altogether, 8,709 coloured labourers are employed in the sugar industry north of : ' that line. Is it at all probable that within the next five years a sufficient European settlement will have taken place to supply anything like the amount of white labour which will be required to take the place of black labour? I am aware that some honorable senators think that, in regard to tropical agriculture, one white man is equal to three black men. I take the liberty to differ from them. I have lived in the tropics. I have seen sugar brought down to Dungeness, at the mouth of the Herbert River, and transferred to a steamer. I saw both kanakas and white men working; side by side ; and one particular black man. always took twice the weight upon his shoulders that the white men. carried. He took two bags of sugar up and down, and seemed to think it amusement. Having spent four summers in Rockhampton, I can certify that the damp heat there is very trying. I had an attack of incipient sunstroke when playing in a cricket match in the district, on New Year's Day, in 1866. Even though one played under a big cabbage-tree hat, the heat was very considerable. The

match was between two bachelor establishments, and the very names they gave themselves convey an idea of the heat. One of the establishments was called "Purgatory," and the other "Agapemone." Undoubtedly, the humidity of the atmosphere has very much to do with determining the question of whether white men can endure the climate. I have known the heat to be 112 in the shade at Westbrook station, on the Darling Downs, on Christmas day, and it was not so unbearable as at Rockhampton when the thermometer did not register so high a degree of temperature. I wish now to correct Senator Fraser. The figures he quoted showed not the number of persons engaged in the sugar trade north and south of Rockhampton, but the number of whites resident in the respective districts. The number south of Rockhampton is 21,000, and the number north 27,000 making a total of 48,000 who are more or less dependent, directly or indirectly, upon the sugar industry. I have before me a letter from the Queensland Sugar Growers and Manufacturers' Union at Mackay, in which it is stated -

It is an acknowledged fact that the mills can only carry on profitably so long as the supply of cane is assured. Notwithstanding any increased price for the sugar produced that may result from the proposed import duty, most of which will be absorbed by increased wages in the mills to correspond with the higher wages in the field, any serious reduction in the cane supply will simply mean either that the mills must cease operations or only carry on by paying the farmer a reduced price for the cane supplied. It will thus be patent that if, as is practically certain, any large number of growers go out of the industry, those remaining will, by reason of the reduced price for the cane, fail to secure anything like the full benefit of the proposed bonuses or rebate of excise duty. It, therefore, disastrous results, and the certain ruination which now confronts thousands of your fellow white citizens of Australia, are to be averted, it is absolutely essential that some modifications of the terms of the Bill should be brought about, so that to some extent confidence may be restored. Setting aside, therefore, all matters of controversy arising out of the proposals of the Federal Government, we earnestly seek your co-operation in securing such modifications of the same as may be calculated to establish the requisite confidence. As a suggestion, which we believe will appeal to the minds of all reasonable men whose views have not been blinded by prejudice, we propose that the operation of the Bill should be amended so that for the next seven years licences might be issued for the introduction of Pacific Islanders to a number not exceeding, say, so many as might be requisite to maintain the number in the State at the present figures, so that the other provisions shall be postponed so as only to come into operation from the expiration of such period of seven years.

That practically means ten years - seven years to import and three for the kanakas to get away again, thus carrying out the suggestion of Senator Ferguson. I do not wish to trouble the committee with too many quotations, but I will read one from a man - who has spent four years on the Herbert River. Dr. Spencer recently wrote to the Sydney Daily Telegraph objecting to some extent to the idea of a white Australia, and a correspondent replied : -

Dr. Spencer simply pointed out the notorious fact that the British race is unable to propagate itself within the tropics - a fact so well established by ethnologists that I should have thought it unnecessary to draw attention to it nowadays. Of course, the ethnologists may be wrong, but I shall be very much obliged to any one who can tell me of an instance where three healthy generations of English people have been bred and born within tropical limits.

As a matter of fact, the individual Englishman is able to live and work pretty well in the tropics, if he has black labour to save him as much expenditure of energy as possible ; but a very great number of English women become sterile, and they are rarely able to nurse their children.

I am afraid that is true.

Seldom, indeed, are there more than three children to a marriage ; and half of the children do not survive infancy. And yet it is the universal experience in India and all other tropical places which the English have conquered. The honest and respectable (though not intelligent) labouring gentlemen who control the various Governments of Australia have made up their minds that they can make water run up hill, that an Act of Parliament will enable the British race to breed in a hot climate ; and nothing that a humble scientist can say is likely to alter their opinion. At the same time, I would warn people that the Aliens and Kanaka Acts are not likely to work as they are expected. True, we shall keep out the kanaka, because he is a decent, quiet, timid sort of man, not given to leaving his comfortable island for laborious purposes : but Asiatics will smuggle themselves in, and take his place. This will be very good for the sugar-former, but I

fancy it is not exactly what the labour party desire. They do take these things so seriously : but why not take the trouble to look into matters a little, to find out what is, and what is not, possible ? '

We talk of labour being abundant in Bundaberg and elsewhere. I am going to read a telegram which was published in the Sydney papers yesterday from Crookwell, near Goulburn, New South Wales. I quote it because many honorable members seem to think that plenty of white labour is available for the sugar plantations in the north. If that is so it might be supposed that in New South Wales with a good climate there would be plenty of labour available. Let honorable members listen to this -

Numerous complaints are being made by station owners that no shearers are available for getting off their wool clip. Up to 30s. a hundred is offered. Farmers are also unable to harvest their hay crops on account of the scarcity of farm labourers, and are offering high prices for farm hands. Neither shearing nor harvesting operations can be prosecuted with 11113' degree of satisfaction, through lack of men. Hence Mr. O'Sullivan's seven 00b a day minimum wage is coming in for severe criticism.

If in New South Wales sufficient men cannot be obtained at good wages, how can it be expected that men can be obtained in Rockhampton and further north. I shall now make a quotation from a speech by a gentleman in a high position in this conn try.

Senator McGregor

- Who is it ?

Senator WALKER

- I am not going to mention the name, but if any one likes to ask me his name privately, I will give it.

Senator Higgs

- We want the public to know.

Senator WALKER

- Well, I do not. He says-

I am not content when I look forth upon the people of Queensland at this present moment. I have never known an instance which so emphatically brings to my mind the story of the Irishman, who proclaimed, that he would have peace if he had to murder every mother's son in the place. In Queensland I remember when the price of sugar went up very rapidly, and when the people went forth and seized upon the land at a far greater price than it was worth in face of that rise : and we all remember how, very soon after, when sugar fell, 'these people were ruined. But again they went out and occupied their lands and produced more sugar, and laboured under great trouble, and just as they were turning the corner legislation turned them upside down. That was withdrawn after a little while, and they were allowed to go and seek prosperity again, and they have been getting on fairly well until now. It is certainly clear that in the Northern portion of Queensland the prospect of getting any other man than the kanaka to carry on that enterprise is difficult indeed. In all loyalty I submit to the better judgment of those whose business it is to inquire into the surroundings and the extent Of the difficulty, and to them I leave it with the fullest faith; but, while! hope for a white Australia, I trust we shall not try to get a white race with the whiteness of the desert. We want our products as abundant and constant as we can get them, and the means of liberal transport and price to us. If the Commonwealth will only produce the former, the second is ever ready. We have got the men, and have got the ships, and men courageous enough to find the money, too.

With regard to the time when sugar cutting takes place, Senator McGregor stated the other day that Lt.

-Col. Reay and Mr. Mauger went to Queensland in April. A letter in the Sydney Morning Herald says : - The cutting commences on the average about June or J July, and terminates about the first week in January, so that you see your correspondent was wrong in making that statement.

Senator McGregor

- Lt.-Col. Reay was up in Queensland just before I was there for the Eight Hours demonstration, that is, before the 1st May.

Senator WALKER

- The writer further says -

The kanakas' work in the field is to hoe the ground and keep the weeds free from the cane from three to four months, until the cane is of sufficient strength to kill the weeds. The next process is the trashing of the cane, that is, taking all the loose leaves from the cane to allow it to grow and mature properly. This process is gone through three times, that is if the planter wishes to have a good season. Mind you, this work is all done in the hottest part of the year. The first and second process is not so bad, as they can

generally get a little breeze ; but the last one, when the cane is from 6 ft. to 7 ft. high, and at a temperature of about 160 degrees in the sun, and not a breath of air to be got, only the constant rays of the sun, I say it is simply unbearable. The white labour was tried on the Herbert River - which is about 60 miles north of Townsville - some years ago, but proved an utter failure. Once the cane is cut it wants to be taken to the mill as soon as possible - and this is where the difficulty occurs if the labour is not available, - for if allowed to lie three or four days it becomes sour and unfit for sugar-producing. So you see that if the planter does not get men he can rely on he will be on the wrong side of the ledger at the end of the season.

I know for a fact that in some of the mills, the heat being that intense, they have "punkas" going the whole day so as to give the men a bit of fresh air. I think that if some of the framers of the Bill to abolish black labour were to go up there in the hottest time of the year, say the last two months of the cutting, they would come back a few stone lighter and with a different impression. It is not to say because the cane fields of New South Wales can do without black labour that Queensland can. You must take into consideration the climate. Why, only the past week the manager of a mill employed a lot of white labour at a fair wage, and they have all since left. How do you account for that ? I am not in favour of black labour in the least. I would like to see a white Australia, but I cannot see how it can be done as regards the sugar industry. I think it will only be the means of raising one of the finest industries of Australia, and leave an opening for foreign countries to come in and jump a claim that is worth millions of pounds to Australia.

Senator McGregor

- Why not pay the white men higher wages 1

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Senator WALKER

- Surely the honorable senator knows that the cost of producing an article has something to do with whether it pays a man to enter upon its manufacture. Our sugar has had to compete with sugar produced in all parts of the world, and if the industry in Australia is ruined we shall probably have to purchase sugar grown by black labour elsewhere. As the honorable senator knows, the employment of kanakas is confined to the fields. Personally, I should like to see three zones in Queensland, and Dr. Maxwell apparently favours the same view. I recognise, however, that we shall have to be content with two. Senator Pulsford clearly proved that kanakas having a wish to return to their own country are in the habit of saving sufficient money to purchase boxes of odds and ends, their passage money being already provided for. Therefore, we can only come to the conclusion that when kanakas re-engage for work in Queensland they prefer to remain there rather than return to their islands. There are 707 kanakas, I believe, holding certificates of exemption in Queensland at the present time. In days gone by when kanakas were employed inland, as well as on the coast of Queensland, Mr. George Henry Davenport, of Headington Hill - a station on the Darling Downs - told me that he had a kanaka on his station who was earning £1 per week and his rations as a horse breaker, and that this man had £100 in the Savings Bank. Therefore, it is not to be presumed that these men are slaves. Within the last week I have received a letter from a leading squatter in the Rockhampton district, who is not interested in the sugar industry, and who does not employ kanakas. He says he is sorry to see that the labour party do not know their friends from their enemies, and that in injuring the sugar industry they are reducing the chances for white men to obtain employment. Some reference has been made to the number of half-castes in Queensland. I find that in 35 years only 181 South Sea Island half-castes have been born there. Of that number 41 were the offspring of South Sea Islanders and whites; the remaining 140 being the offspring of South Sea Islanders and aboriginals. I can scarcely imagine that any one will deny that a half-caste of the latter kind is physically an improvement upon the aboriginal. I trust that it is not too late for the Government to undertake to bring forward a proposal for a commission of inquiry. I have considerable sympathy with the sugar planters in Bundaberg ; but evidence has been brought forward, which many honorable senators believe, that sugar can be grown in that district by means of white labour. I shall be very glad if that is so.

Senator MCGREGOR

- Has the honorable senator any sympathy with white labourers?

Senator WALKER

- I have considerable sympathy with them. White labourers, however, should have some sympathy for the employers. I think it is no kindness to the white man to ask him to trash cane in the tropical regions. In my

opinion, he is capable of doing much better work for which his employers can afford to pay him better wages.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- We have now reached the practical and business aspect of this question. The Bill having been read a second time establishes the principle that, so far as legislation is concerned, the departure of the kanakas from Queensland has to be arranged for. We have now to consider what is fair and just treatment not only for the kanakas, but for the planters and farmers, who have been induced by 30 years of legislation in Queensland to embark their money in an industry, one of the essential conditions of which, according to the view of a large number of people, has been the employment of coloured labour. It has been an essential, at any rate, until within comparatively recent years, and an almost universal practice in Queensland in connexion with this industry. Instead of travelling over all the ground which concerns the employment of the kanaka, we should recognise the stage which we have reached, and deal with the matter from a practical stand-point, and from the aspect of doing what is fair and just all round. From that point of view Senator Ferguson has given notice of a series of amendments. The principle which underlies these amendments is that, whilst recognising that arrangements must be made for the removal of the kanakas from Queensland, we should recognise that as regards Bundaberg and the southern districts - an observation which might be equally applicable to the northern parts of New South Wales, where sugar-growing is carried on - the situation is different from that in regard to the northern district of Queensland, which we have referred to as Cairns and north of Cairns. He draws a line which consists of the Tropic of Capricorn, and says that it is fair and just to the people who have invested their money in this industry north of that line that a longer time should be given to them than to those south of the line. My honorable friend has stated a number of reasons for that position, and he urges two main grounds. The first is that if it is a question of whether the white man can work in the cane-fields of northern Queensland, then, considering the nature of the climate and the occupation, it is only fair that a longer period should be given to those engaged in the industry to substitute white for coloured labour. I am bound to say that, after listening to the debate, and reading all that I have been able to find on the subject, my own conviction is that the withdrawal of the kanakas from the cane-fields of far northern Queensland will mean the absolute cessation of the industry there. Senator Ferguson's second ground is that, if that conclusion be the correct one, it is only fair that those who have been engaged in sugar-growing there for 30 years should have a little extra time in which to get out of the industry which, if their views are correct, will tumble about their ears in the course of a short time, and be enabled to save something out of the crash. If the withdrawal of the kanakas means in the estimation of many people the ruin of the industry, especially north of the Tropic of Capricorn, it is only fair for us to give the planters a little time in which to realize their property or machinery, to turn their areas into other, though perhaps less profitable uses, and to get out before they are overwhelmed in the crash which they fear will overtake them. Their position appeals strongly to me, and with a view to enabling them to do what is proposed, Senator Ferguson has given notice of a series of amendments, with the first of which we are now dealing. My honorable friend points out that if we carry that amendment, the application of the measure will be left exactly as it is in respect of districts south of the tropic. We are a liberty-loving, and I hope a justice-loving people, and in preserving our own liberty of action, honorable senators who come from the other States must try to do what is just by having regard to the claims upon us of those in the State of Queensland who are not represented, assuming that they are a minority. I assume that they are a minority. My honorable friends are five to one, and in a most un-English fashion they desire to ride rough-shod over the honorable senator and the minority he represents.

Senator O'KEEFE

- The honorable and learned senator wishes to ride rough-shod over the majority.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

-No ; have I not said, again and again, that the majority of Queensland, so far as regards the principle of this Bill must be recognised. Is it not a fact that the majority are acquiescing in a proposal which Senator Stewart at any rate says is not the mandate which he accepted from the people of Queensland. We are now at a stage in which we are endeavouring to do what is just.

Senator Playford

- That is the trouble, because the people on this side say that to pass this colour line will be their ruination.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The difficulty is none the less because of the circumstances to which the honorable senator refers, but it is a difficulty which, in my humble judgment, can only be solved justly and fairly by a thorough and impartial inquiry into the whole of the circumstances. If honorable senators are strong in their majority of five to one, let them not use their strength harshly to crush the minority. Let them be merciful, and consider that whether the minority are right or wrong they have material interests in this question. They have their money, and the prosperity which is associated with this industry in Queensland at stake.

Senator Stewart

- There is something of much more importance than money at stake.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- The whole thing is a question of money.

Senator Pearce

- There is the race question.

Senator Staniforth Smith

- And the question of humanity.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- We are all agreed as to the race question, and we want no contamination. Senator Smith speaks of humanity. Is it humanity to send back to a state of barbarism 4,000 kanakas who have been introduced to the advantages of civilization, and have become accustomed to the life in Queensland? It is the most inhuman proposition ever put forward in any Legislative Assembly. It would be like sending the whole of the negroes in the "United States, many of whom are highly educated and accomplished men, back to the wilds of the west coast of Africa. Our honorable friends have interjected references to slavery, but I utterly deny that there is anything having the remotest resemblance to slavery in connexion with the employment of these kanakas. During recent years the condition of the kanaka has enormously improved in Queensland, and that is shown by the fact that many of them, probably a majority of them, do not desire to return to their islands at the close of their terms of agreement, but prefer to remain in Queensland to pursue the avocations to which they have become accustomed. I am not going to trouble the committee at this juncture by asking whether the kanaka ought to remain. We have decided that. But I decline to allow it to be said without protest that the kanaka is ill-treated, or that white men can do the work in all the districts of Queensland. I know from missionaries who have been amongst them in Northern Queensland that the kanakas are well treated and cared for, and that their life is an exceedingly pleasant and happy one.

Senator Staniforth Smith

- How is it that the islands have become depopulated?

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- My honorable friend knows that it is impossible to draw any inference from the statistics and figures which we have had quoted. I prefer the opinion of trustworthy men on the spot, who tell us what has been their own experience in connexion with the subject. I shall read one or two sentences from an address by the Rev. Mr. Thompson, a missionary to the kanakas in the Isis district of North Queensland.

Senator Glassey

- The Isis in North Queensland. It is only about a 100 miles from Brisbane.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- He is - a missionary there, but he knows the whole of Queensland. He says -

Referring to the work which kanakas have to perform in the fields, the lecturer remarked that if gentlemen who talk so much about a white Australia would, only go to Queensland and do a little work in the plantations on a hot day, they would change their political opinions in a very few hours. White men cannot do the work, and he quite agreed with the contention that it was not white men's work. He pointed out that the kanakas were allowed, similar rations to those supplied to men on cattle and sheep stations, with the addition of rice.

The whole of the accounts I have read from these men who have had experience of the condition and of

the work of kanakas throughout Queensland is entirely in favour of their treatment, and utterly pulverizes those ridiculous charges about slavery.

Senator Glassey

- This man has never been out of the Isis.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I take leave to question the honorable senator's statement; he is speaking of the whole of Queensland. I availed myself of an opportunity of having a conversation with the Rev. Dr. Guinness, who has made it a special point to inquire into the condition of the kanakas in Queensland, and, without exception, he corroborated every statement that had otherwise come to my knowledge, with regard not only to the improved condition of the kanakas, but in regard to the care which is taken of them and their entire contentment with their lot. He said that many of them were unwilling to return to their islands, and that they always expressed the intention when they did return of coming back to Queensland and resuming the occupation in which they had been engaged. The question for us to consider is whether Senator Ferguson's proposals are fair as between those carrying on the ' industry in districts south of the Tropic of Capricorn and those carrying it on under more difficult and trying Conditions in districts north of the tropic. I confess I have been a little surprised at Senator Sargood's position upon this question. My honorable friend says that he cannot support this amendment, but I hope he will change his mind before the vote is taken.

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- No, indeed he will not.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I am sorry to hear it so emphatically said. My honorable friend is as impulsive as a young colt. I thought that a little consideration might have induced him to change his opinion again. He says the reason is that he disapproves of the introduction of the kanakas into Queensland at all. Very good. -Under the Bill it is proposed to extend their introduction for a certain number of years. If he is going to do justice to the planters and farmers, and he is satisfied that further time is necessary, what has the original wrong to do with the question ?

Senator Sir Frederick Sargood

- A great deal.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Absolutely nothing. Otherwise my honorable friend ought to go for the immediate expulsion of the kanakas. But he cannot do " that, because he voted the other day to retain for all time the 4,000 who have been for six years in the State.

Senator Charleston

- He favours the stoppage of the importation.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- Is the honorable senator going; to move an amendment to that effect ?

Senator Charleston

- I am.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- It will be defeated. The Government have said, .and said justly, that it would be cruel and harsh to do what my honorable friend thinks would be fair and humane. But how does that suit Senator Sargood<sup>1</sup> Five years the Government are going to give, and the people in Northern Queensland - the minority if you like - say it is not enough to enable them to put their houses in order. But my honorable friend says, "Whether it is or is not enough, the original introduction of the kanakas was wrong, and I shall not give them any more time." I appeal to my honorable friend whether that is a fair position to take when we are dealing, not with the question of their introduction, but with the question of what is fair play to the planters all over Queensland. Another consideration to which I invite the attention of my honorable friend is that the introduction of kanakas, whether for the period the Government propose or for a lengthened period supposing that it is just, is subject to a gradual diminution. There is not to be the same importation as there is now. There is not to be an unlimited introduction of kanakas. Whether the honorable senator supports the Government proposal for five years, or an extension of the period to seven years - that is



making it ten years employment altogether - it is subject to a graduated diminution during that period. At its expiry the introduction of kanakas is to end, and then it will become simply a question of deportation. Is it fair that we should decide matters which are of vital moment to the planters and the farmers by a consideration of the sentimental or humanitarian grounds on which the kanakas came to be introduced ? I appeal to my honorable friend to look at the question, not as regards the original vice as to the kanakas getting into Queensland, but as to the terms by which we can deal fairly with the men who have been carrying on their industry with them. The object of the amendment is, first to introduce a limitation south of the Tropic of Capricorn - that remains as it is in the Bill - and then Senator Ferguson says that north of the tropic he desires an extension to 1909.

Senator Drake

- That is not according to the amendments which have been printed, and in which he proposes the introduction of the kanakas until 1908, and that none shall be deported until 1911.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- That is a different thing. Senator Ferguson, as I understand, is suggesting certain alternative amendments. Of course, some of them will not be moved if the others are carried. I am obliged to Senator Playford for drawing attention to the resolution which comes from Bundaberg. There is no doubt that it emphasises the difficulties which exist in dealing with this question. We all desire, I am sure, to do what is fair and right. The resolution makes it perfectly obvious that it would be better to have \_ an inquiry to determine the whole matter. A great many of the members of the Commonwealth Parliament have not made a study of this subject, and may be taking an erroneous view. We have to do the best with the materials before us, and that best may be wrong. Our care must be to avoid an injustice. I am perfectly willing to assent to the Bundaberg proposal and make a general extension applicable to all Queensland. On the whole I think that the amendment of Senator Ferguson will do better justice all round, and better carry out the object we all have in view than a general extension throughout Queensland. If it is not carried I shall be perfectly willing to agree to an extension, which I suggest should be more or less of a compromise between the five years and the ten years, say seven years, applicable to the whole of Queensland. But the difficulty which we have in doing abstract justice is that there are conditions, apparent from the Bundaberg resolution, applying in southern Queensland, which do not apply north of the Tropic of Capricorn, It made one quite cold in the midst of a tropical discussion to read a reference to frosts in their resolution.

Senator Drake

- In his report Dr. Maxwell refers to frosts in Mackay as well as Bundaberg.

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Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- A very rhetorical expression is used in this resolution to dissuade us from giving an extension to the planters north of the Tropic of Capricorn by saying that it is - an unfederal idea which means building up some districts on the ruins of others.

Is not that exactly what the planters of the north may say of the planters of Bundaberg, who are to get a concession of five years in a district, where by experience, there are not the same difficulties existing as to the availability of white labour, as exist to the north of the Tropic of Capricorn ? We shall benefit the planters to the south if we mix up with this question the adjustment of the Tariff. They will get the advantage of £2 a ton extra on their sugar, whilst the unfortunate planters who will be struggling to the north of the Tropic of Capricorn with their coloured labour until the whole thing peters out, are to be content with £2 a ton less. Surely the Bundaberg planters must have forgotten the situation, in which they will be placed as compared with the northern planters, when they spoke about building up an industry on the ruins of the industry conducted in this more favoured region. Bundaberg, according to the opinion of many persons, has the sturt of the rest of Queensland, because there are a great many more small farmers and plantations there than to the north of Cairns. We know from the figures which have come before us that there is one white farmer to every 32 acres, whereas north of Cairns there is one to every 72 acres. That gives the Bundaberg planters an immense advantage over those in the northern part of the State. I protest against the Tariff question being brought into consideration at all. I do not disagree with the view which Senator Playford expressed by interjection the other day, that when the Tariff comes on we shall have to consider, as was done in New South Wales, the difference between the import duty of

say £6 a ton, and the excise duty of £3 a ton, as a means of giving what is called protection or encouragement to the sugar industry. But what I decline to consider in connexion with this question, is giving a discriminating excise duty of £2 a ton, as a bribe in respect of the abandonment of coloured labour, and saying that the planters at Bundaberg, who can avail themselves of it much more quickly than those of the north, shall have an advantage of £2 a ton over their less favoured brethren. I decline to deal with this question at all from that stand-point. Then, too, I do not think we should be led astray by the phrase "a colour line" in considering this amendment. There is no colour line in the question at all. It is a matter of decreasing the employment of aliens in a great industry, in such a way as to lessen the injury which may be brought upon those who have been employing them. So far as concerns the - illustration referred to by the Postmaster-General from the United States - the Missouri question - it has nothing to do with this at all. In America it was a case of an attempt to interfere with the right of a particular State to carry on a system of slavery ; and whilst it was given effect to at one time - a great many years ago - at a later date it was held to be unconstitutional to limit the powers of any State as to the mode by which it should employ its labour, or as to the kinds of labour which it should use. But these considerations take the question a good deal beyond the limits to which we need go. Let us put the matter upon the ground - if honorable senators like - that there is a minority in Queensland who expect fair play at the hands of the Commonwealth Parliament. Let us refrain, as far as we can, from doing injustice, and causing loss, to the minority. Even if we think we are in a majority, do not let us exert our power without due consideration. We cannot enforce any law unless with the sanction, certainly of a very large majority of the whole people, whether tacit or expressed, and the moment we attempt to enforce a law which is in antagonism to the views of a substantial minority, we give rise to discontent and to difficulties. Certainly, if I were a Queenslander, and one of the minority whose material interests and the prosperity of whose country were being seriously jeopardized, I should use every legitimate and constitutional means of resisting the enforcement of such a law, and of getting it repealed or modified at the very earliest opportunity. I cannot believe that the Federal Parliament, at its very inception, will fly in the face of a large minority of the people in Queensland. It would be better to make some small concession, even though we considered that we were too generous, and to secure for this law the good will of the people amongst whom it is to be enforced. There can be no doubt whatever that the thousands of people in Queensland will regard this Bill, if it passes in its present form, as wearing the garb of coercion.

Senator Pearce

- It will undo a wrong.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- We agree that we are going to undo this kanaka business, and bring it to an end. But the point for consideration is how best to do it with the goodwill of those affected by it ; and it is far better for us to err largely on the side of liberality of treatment than to make the people of Queensland feel that the first result to them of the establishment of the Commonwealth Parliament is a burning sense of injustice.

Senator DAWSON

- Which they will not feel if this Bill passes.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I wish I could accept that assurance. But we cannot read the debates, the resolutions which have been pouring in upon us from all quarters of Queensland, and the letters which have been quoted in this Chamber, without coming to the conclusion that there is an underlying sense of wrong on the part of the great body of the people of that State. At the outset of the career of this great Parliament, it behoves us to be careful of raising asperity of feeling and bringing about a state of things which may sow the seeds of future difficulties, and mar that harmony which we all hope will insure to us the very greatest advantages from the establishment of our union.

Senator PEARCE

- Some of the statements made by Senator Walker should not be allowed to go unchallenged, because they are so evidently beside the facts. He has quoted some anonymous correspondence which he gives his word is the concoction of influential persons who can be depended upon. I am sure that there is not a single honorable senator who would question Senator Walker's statement. But one of the anonymous authorities quoted had regard to the question of wages paid." Senator Walker asks the committee to believe that squatters in New South Wales have offered 30s. per 100 to get their sheep shorn, and have

not been able to obtain labour. As a matter of fact, however, one could hardly take up a paper during the last three months without reading of continual strikes throughout the pastoral districts of Queensland, where the shearers have been asking for 20s. per 100. They went on strike because they could not get that rate of payment. Yet the committee is asked to accept the statement which has been read. We are also asked to accept Senator

Ferguson's amendment in order to allay any ill-feeling with regard to the rights of the minority in Queensland. We are prepared to recognise the rights of the minority so far as they should be regarded, but we must not overlook the claims of the majority. The majority of the Queensland senators have been returned pledged to the policy of this Bill. We are asked to disregard their views and listen to those of one honorable senator, who asks for an extension of time for ten years. Surely the opinions of five representatives should have more weight than the views of one. Senator Symon has said that there is no attempt to erect a colour line in Australia. I hold that, disguise it as honorable senators may, if we allow it to go forth that the Senate is agreeable to draw the line proposed, we shall be for ever pledged to the principle of the employment of black labour north of the Tropic of Capricorn. I shall be loath to believe that this Senate will pledge itself to anything of that sort. I regret to see that the leaders of the freetrade party in this Chamber are advocating the extension of the time for the employment of kanakas. They are doing an irreparable wrong to the party of free-trade in so strenuously advocating this colour line, and I protest against their action.

Senator Walker

- Does the honorable senator believe in free-trade in labour?

Senator PEARCE

- No, I do not ; nor, I believe, do the leaders of the free-trade party ; but in consequence of their attitude the public will naturally associate the freetrade party with the party that desires an extension of the term within which black labour may be employed in Australia. I also contend that there is a remarkable resemblance between the speech of Senator Symon and the speeches of those who spoke against the abolition of slavery in the southern States of America. Senator Symon says that there is no analogy between the kanaka question and the slavery question.

Senator Sir J osiah Symon

- Where does the honorable senator find the analogy?

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Senator PEARCE

- The honorable and learned senator will find it upon the shelves of the library. I much regretted to hear these old theories trotted out by the leader of what ought to be the reform party in the Senate. Who was it who advocated the retention of slavery in America in those days? It was the protectionist party and not the free-trade party. I am very sorry that it is not the protectionist party which is now advocating' the continuance of kanaka labour. The Rev. Mr. Thompson, according to Senator Symon, said, practically, that we should change our opinions on this subject simply because of a few degrees of temperature. I would ask honorable senators who support this amendment, whether they are going to apply their convictions on this question to other avocations ? If they object to the white man working in northern Queensland on the ground that it is disagreeable and unhealthy for him to do so, why do they not raise the same objection to the employment of white men in the cyanide works of Western Australia and Tasmania, and the silver-lead mines of Broken Hill? They are not prepared to apply the principle all round, and, therefor, their advocacy must fall to the ground. It is said that we are going to perpetrate an injustice if we remove this coloured labour from Queensland within five years. The views held by some of the leading men in Queensland are in direct opposition to that assertion. On the 27th December, 1893, the late Mr. Chataway said -

If any one made the statement that white men cannot work in the fields anywhere south of Townsville it is obviously untrue. White men can work in fair comfort, except during' three or four months of the year. The obvious deduction from that is that during those three or four months white men find it uncomfortable to work in the fields there. But work in the wheat-fields of South Australia during January and February is not by any means comfortable, as I can testify from my own personal experience. Mr. Chataway continued -

In proof of this, I may say that besides whites cutting several thousand tons of cane this year, white

farmers grew, cut, and delivered at the mills at least 15,000 tons of cane, which were never touched by a coloured labourer. The trouble is that white men will not accept such wages as an agricultural industry can afford to pay. Men who are accustomed to eight hours a day and 1s. an hour will not work twelve hours a day at cane-cutting and. earn only 30s a week and their rations.

I should say they would not. We have it on the authority of the honorable member for Richmond, New South Wales, in another place, that white men employed by contract in the sugar industry there earn from £2 15s. to 3 15s. per week. If such wages can be paid, and the industry can thrive there, notwithstanding that the planters have had only a duty of £3 per ton, do honorable senators mean to blame white workers for refusing to go to Cairns and Mackay to work for 30s. per week ? They would be fools to do anything of the sort. I shall now read an extract from the Trinity Times, which is published at Cairns, giving an account of an interview which a reporter for that journal had with Mr. Thomas Swan-\*

As a successful sugar-grower in the Mulgrave Central Mill, we asked Mr. Swan, of Nelson, first, did he consider that sugar was protected, sufficiently by the proposed duty - referring to the Commonwealth Tariff proposals - to enable it to be grown by white labour ? "Undoubtedly I do," replied Mr. Swan; " there is ample margin. We are now getting 13s. a ton for our cane, and doing fairly well at that price. Of this between 3s. and 5s. goes for black labour. The new duties will give us at least another 8s. - possibly 10s. - for our cane ; so, therefore, we could afford to pay twice as much for our labour, and still be 3s. to 5s. better off." " But those who stand out for black labour contend that whites cannot be got, even if 3'ou pay them twice as much as blacks," we said. "That is all nonsense. -

That is the statement of a sugar-grower in the Cairns district, and I would draw Senator Walker's attention to the fact that the name of the author of the statement is given. - If those at the head of affairs were sympathetic to whites, and made determined efforts to do away with blacks, there would be no trouble about that at all. The only danger I see is from these people refusing to take the proper steps to obtain white labour. To take away the elements of unreliability you must make the conditions for whites better. Up to the present the whites we have had have been made shiftless and unreliable by blackfellows' wages and bad conditions, and we have disgusted them of the work. But that could easily be altered if those at the head of the industry only liked. "How many men will &n6L employment in our local cane-fields ? "Cane takes about one man to every eight acres. There are some 3,000 acres in the Mulgrave Central Mill, and there are not now 375 men in the fields. There are about six. weeks only of slack time ; the red of the year finds constant work." " You hold that whites can do the work all right?" "Of course they can. There's a lot harder and. more tiresome labour done by whites than field work, I can assure you."

Surely if a statement of that kind can be made without contradiction, in the very district where it is said that white labour cannot be employed - an assertion made by men who have never been there, and who speak only from hearsay - then we are justified in saying that white nien can and will do the work there if they are properly paid for it and given proper conditions. We shall be inflicting a real injustice upon the people of Queensland if, by the first Act on the subject passed by the Federal Parliament, we allow black labour . to be continued for ten years, in the very districts where the people voted for its abolition. The people of the north voted for federation on the distinct understanding that this subject would be one of the first to be dealt with by the Federal Parliament. If we are going to perpetuate the traffic in one district, we should perpetuate it throughout the whole country, for it cannot be denied that the people of the Brisbane district returned some, representatives to the Federal Parliament in favour of the continuance of black labour. The same cannot be said of. the people of the north, who sent anti-kanakas into both Houses of Parliament. We have a right to listen to the representatives of that State, and to remember also that the Government proposal for the abolition of this traffic is not an extreme one. Honorable senators from Western Australia were pledged to the immediate cessation of the kanaka trade, and we are accepting this measure only as a compromise. I contend that the terms on which it is proposed to do away with' the traffic are very generous, and I trust that the application which has been made to honorable senators on this side of the committee to change their opinion will be futile. If they have any respect for the future of the party, they will not do so, because the advocacy of the continuation of kanaka labour has been too much associated with the free-trade party already. It is necessary to show that freedom of trade and freedom of labour are not necessarily synonymous terms. I repudiate the idea that, because I believe in free-trade, I should believe also in freedom of contract and labour. If the two are to go hand in hand I shall

be content to be called a protectionist. Although I am a free-trader in matters of trade, I do not believe, in freetrade in matters of labour; such as has been indicated to us this afternoon by the leader of the free-trade party.

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Senator FERGUSON

- I have listened very attentively to the discussion, and I am more than ever convinced that my proposal is a just and equitable one. The Postmaster-General has raised two or three objections to it. One of them was in regard to the colour line which I drew, but I think that Senator Symon has shown that there is nothing whatever in that objection. The next point raised by the honorable and learned senator was that white men could work in the cane-fields at Cairns just as well as at Bundaberg, and the Postmaster-General quoted numerous references to the temperature at Bundaberg, Mackay, and Cairns in support of his contention. He almost made us believe that Cairns was cooler than Bundaberg. Another objection raised by him was that we could not discriminate between one part of the State and another. If this Bill means anything, however, it means the enrichment of one section of the community of the State, and the ruin, to a certain extent, of another. It has been acknowledged on both sides that white men can work in the sugarcane fields of the southern portion of Queensland, but any one who understands the business must admit that they cannot work in the cane-fields in the Cairns district. The planters themselves have said that, and if black labour is done away with, we may take their mills and farms as well. The late Mr. W. H. Groom, who was Chairman of the Commission appointed in 1889, visited the Cairns district, and after gathering all the evidence to be obtained there,, he arrived at the conclusion that if the sugar industry in the north had to depend upon white labour only, it would die out, and that the £5,000,000 invested in the industry would be lost. That opinion is on record, and there is no gainsaying it. We know what Dr. Maxwell has said, and he is the only man in Australia who can give an expert opinion upon the question. He is one of not more than half-a-dozen leading experts in Europe and America, and that is acknowledged all over the world. No one can deny that his reports are impartial and unbiased, and that he has stated! what he believes to be correct. He was, engaged to go to Honolulu at a certain salary in connexion with the industry there, and when he had been there for only a year, his salary was doubled, because those who had engaged him could see what was likely to be the result of the advice he was able to give. As the result of his operations in Honolulu, the output of sugar increased from 3 tons to 5 tons per acre, and the total output from 150,000 to 300,000 tons in six years. The Government of Queensland knew these facts, and engaged Dr. Maxwell as their expert. I mention this because some senators, and especially senators from Queensland, have referred to him in a disparaging way, and I desire to show the opinion held of him in other parts of the world, where he is known as an expert upon the question. I particularly appeal to the Senate on this occasion. We all know that Queensland is suffering at the present time from one of the most severe droughts through which any State has passed. She has lost nearly half her stock. I have here a statement which gives some idea of the effects of the drought - Mr. William Riley has just returned to Longreach from a trip to Beetoota, in the course of which he purchased 1.50 horses for South Africa. He reports that the country below Jundah is in a very bad state. There is no grass except in the river channels, and even this grass, owing to the floods, has become so loose as to be easily blown out. On all sides nothing was seen but the skeletons of cattle which had perished in the drought. Station-owners can now form some idea of their losses. On one station 24,000 head have been reduced to 300, and on another 40,000 to 2,000, while five adjoining stations lost a total of 150,000 head. Mr. Riley was shown one waterhole in a river in which it is estimated that 30,000 cattle perished.

The squatters have had to face another serious trouble. The wind piles up dust against the yards and the buildings to such an extent that they become useless. The owners of some stations have announced their intention to throw up their holdings, but others intend to try and stock up the country. A succession of good seasons will be required to restore the country to anything like its former condition.

I appeal to honorable senators to see that justice is done to Queensland. That State has passed through five years of drought. She had a deficit of over £500,000 last year, and there is another staring her in the face. Queensland is looking to the sugar industry to help her out of her difficulties. Can honorable senators wonder in the circumstances that the Queensland Government are anxious about the passage of this Bill? At present the output of sugar in Queensland is annually 150,000 tons, worth about

£1,500,000, and if the industry is left alone for two or three years the output will be increased to at least 200,000 tons, worth £2,000,000. That is what people in Queensland are looking to to help them out of their present trouble, and now honorable senators are proposing to kill this industry and throw Queensland back for years. I know how the division is likely to go, and I see no necessity for delaying the committee any longer.

Question - That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted - put. The committee divided.

10

AYES

16

NOES

Majority..... 6

AYES

NOES

Question so resolved in the negative.

Senator Barrett

- I desire to call attention to the fact that the bell in the club room did not ring. Senators Playford and Staniforth Smith were there, and it was only by accident that I came into the chamber in time.

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Senator CHARLESTON

- I move -

That after the word "Australia," line 1, the words "after the passing of this Act" be inserted.

To put myself right with honorable senators, I may say that if I am successful in carrying this amendment, it is my intention to propose a subsequent amendment to provide against the deportation of any of the kanakas. I have purposely refrained from making many speeches upon this question, because it is one about which I know very little. In common with other honorable senators, I have received various circulars and correspondence, which I have carefully read. I have listened to the able speeches made in this Chamber, and I have read the speeches delivered in another place. The conclusion I have arrived at is that this kanaka traffic was conceived in crime, born in iniquity and nurtured in atrocities. Although the traffic is conducted to-day under conditions which, I suppose, maybe considered as good as can be suggested, I am unconvinced that the kanakas, with the exception of those who have previously been in Queensland, are leaving their islands with their own free will. Kanakas who left their homes in ignorance to spend three years or more in Queensland find themselves on their return practically strangers among their own people, and do not receive a welcome which would induce them to remain. Probably they would be in danger of losing their lives. Their disappointment when landed on their islands would lead them immediately to seek the shelter which the ship and are engagement would give them. I believe that the fresh recruits are still ignorant of the conditions under which they are to labour. We ought not to agree to any measure to draw the kanakas away from their homes, and practically enslave them for three years. I use that word "enslave" advisedly, because if the kanaka only receives just enough food and shelter and clothing to enable him to do work, he is practically enslaved. In my opinion it is wrong to continue this traffic. When the Act of 1892 was passed in Queensland, no time was prescribed as to when the traffic should cease. The idea prevailing in the minds of its opponents was that at the very first opportunity they would stop importation, but the other side may have thought, as a time was not stated, that they were to be left to carry on the traffic indefinitely. We, however, are not influenced by the prejudices and animosities which have surrounded the subject in that State. We are in a position to act fairly towards all parties concerned. I do not see how the immediate stopping of the traffic can inflict any injustice on Queensland, because all along it has been conducted under protests more or less energetic. Although some honorable senators strongly advocate an extension of the employment of the kanaka, they admit that he must go. Would they favour the abolition of the traffic unless they felt that the moral sense of Australia rebelled against the traffic in any shape or form? It is our duty to see how we can prevent any further injustice being done to the islanders. Seeing that vested interests have been built up in Queensland, and that thousands of kanakas in that State are afraid to return to their islands, it is our duty to allow those men, who have established their homes there, to remain as long as they like. Let them be free to return, and if they do so the responsibility will be on their own heads, but for us to deport them to

their islands, there to meet probably savage tribes, would be to do an act of injustice ; in fact, of inhumanity. I expect to get the support of at least my labour friends in the corner to my amendment, because they have argued that the system is bad in every respect. I appeal to them if they are working in the interests of the kanaka, who is a fellow labourer with them, to support me in my effort to stop the traffic at once. If it is carried, and the sugar duties are imposed, the planters in New South Wales and the southern part of Queensland will, undoubtedly, employ white labour, and the coloured labour, there released will have to proceed to the northern districts. Therefore, the planter in the Cairns district will be in a position to employ kanakas, and probably to continue his industry until he can see a way to get out of it with a minimized loss. I earnestly hope that honorable senators, who have pleaded the causes of the kanakas and the planters, will agree to my amendment and my suggestion as to the deportation of this labour. I earnestly plead with honorable members who have spoken so clearly of the evils concerning the traffic to assist me to stop the importation of the kanaka, and bring about that condition which is essential to the peace and good government not only of the Commonwealth, but of the islands of the Pacific.

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Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

. - I am glad that Senator Charleston has told us that his amendment is only a part of the alteration he desires to make in the Bill. In fact, he purposes to substitute a different method of dealing with the subject. Our proposal is that there shall be a gradually diminishing introduction of these labourers - and that concession is made in order to deal out justice to the planters - and we fix a term, the 31st December, 1906, when we say that the importation having ceased, the kanakas who are then in Australia shall be deported. That is the proposal of the Bill, and we hope by that means to fulfil the promise made by the Prime Minister to the people, at the same time doing no injustice to the persons engaged in the sugar industry, or to the kanakas themselves. The honorable senator proposes that we shall stop kanaka labour at once. The proposal looks attractive at first sight ; but the other part of the scheme is that, having stopped kanakas from entering Australia, we shall allow those who are in the country to remain for ever, to constitute probably a separate colony in Australia. That is a most objectionable proposal. It is about twice as objectionable as the amendment of Senator "Walker, that kanakas who have been in Queensland for six years should have the option of remaining. The committee should be warned by the statement of Senator Charleston, that the amendment is only one half of his scheme, and should have no hesitation in rejecting it.

Senator STANFORTH SMITH

- While I am of opinion that kanakas should not be allowed to come into Australia, and think we should apply the same policy to all coloured races, yet, as the amendment is tacked on to a proposal that the kanakas already in Queensland should be allowed to remain, I am unhesitatingly opposed to it. I rose principally with the object of protesting against the extraordinary eccentricity of the division bells. Senator Playford and myself were in the club room, and no bell rang when the last division was about to be taken. I trust that whoever has charge of the bells will see that such an occurrence does not happen again. I desire to state publicly that if I had had an opportunity of voting, I should have voted with the Government, as also would Senator Playford.

Senator Drake

- I can only express my regret at what has been stated by Senator Smith. The moment I heard that the bells were not ringing, I sent instructions to the electrical department to have the matter seen to at once.

Senator STEWART

- I am sorry that I cannot support the double barrelled proposal of Senator Charleston. His first proposition is that kanaka labour shall cease at once. I admit that that is a proposition upon which I was elected a member of the Senate, but I do not intend to stick closely to the terms of it, although I should be entitled to do so. I recognise that interests have been created which must be respected. For this reason I support the proposals of the Government, which, notwithstanding the strictures passed upon them, I regard as being magnanimous in the last degree: I do not think that any industry in any country has been so continuously made the care of the State as the sugar industry in Queensland. It has been, spoon-fed since its first inception. In the beginning it had special privileges in the way of cheap labour, and hundreds of thousands of pounds of public money have been spent upon it. Now every taxpayer in the

Commonwealth is to be called upon to contribute towards its continuance. The sugar growers should be grateful to the people of Australia for the terms they are receiving. With regard to Senator Charleston's second proposal, if he had lived in Queensland for a few years and understood the feeling of the Queensland people, not only towards kanakas, but every kind of coloured men, he would not have made such a suggestion. He proposes that the kanakas, who are now in Queensland, should be allowed to remain. Are they to continue in the sugar industry? One great objection, which the white men have to working in the sugar industry is that it would necessitate their working in association with kanakas. They do not believe in working in the same field, or the same mill with them, and do not even like working in the same locality. If the kanakas stay, where are they to live? Are they to be segregated? Is a particular portion of the State to be set apart for them? The working men of Queensland wish the kanakas to be turned out of the State altogether, and they wish every other coloured man to be cleared out of the continent.

Senator Walker

- Including the aborigines?

Senator STEWART

- They are in a different position to other coloured people. The Aborigines were here when the white men came to Australia; they are being protected, and their rights must be respected. But the other coloured people are interlopers, and we have a perfect right to deal with them as we think best in the interests of the Commonwealth. Either the kanakas who are already in Queensland will have to be deported, or, under Senator Charleston's amendment, they will have to be segregated. It will be more humane, and more in their interest to send them back to their islands than to keep them in Queensland.

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Senator Sir FREDERICK SARGOOD

- It is my intention to support the amendment. Senator Symon has referred especially to me, and I say at once that I agree very largely with the views he has expressed as to the absolute necessity of dealing with this kanaka question, but I entirely disagree with the mode proposed by this Bill. Senator Symon says it is a question of what is fair and right to the planters. That is perfectly true so far as it goes, but what of the kanakas? Are we not bound to consider what is fair to them? Again he said, that it is not a question as to the original introduction of the kanakas, but of what is fair to the planters now. I entirely differ from him there. I maintain that the introduction of the kanakas was a crime to begin with, and the continuance of their labour has been so ever since. It has resulted in an immense loss of life and of liberty. I am perfectly consistent, holding these views, in voting for the proposal that kanaka labour shall cease at once. I also agree that the proper course would be to appoint a committee of this Senate, or a Royal commission, to inquire into the matter, so that honorable senators might have more reliable information. It is not to the credit of the Government that they have refused this demand on the part of a considerable minority in Queensland for an inquiry into the interests of those whose future livelihood depends upon how this subject is dealt with. I entirely agree with the Postmaster-General, that we must be just, not only to the planters, but to the kanakas. But let me remind the committee, that since we last discussed this question, important figures have been submitted to the Prime Minister, dealing with the number of kanakas in Queensland. These figures materially differ from those which were submitted to us last week. It appears that in the Mackay sugar district, there are only 1,775 kanakas, north of Mackay there are 3,696, and south of Mackay, where we are told that the climate is comparatively mild, and where white men can work with comparative ease, there are 3,853 kanakas. In other words there is a larger number in the temperate zone than in the north and hotter zones. With an increase of 500 which has taken place since the 1st of January, there are now in Queensland exactly 10,024 kanakas. I find from the figures of the Immigration Agent's report to Parliament, so far as it relates to the Polynesian department, that during the six years 1895 to 1900 inclusive, 7,464 arrived, while 4,791 left, so that 2,673 remained. Two-thirds of those who arrived during that period returned to the islands. Up to the 30th ult., 1,502 have arrived this year, and 703 have returned to the islands. I mention these figures in order that we may see the movement that has been going on steadily for a number of years. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that coloured labour will be required for some years yet by the planters of Queensland, and that the kanakas who have been in Queensland for some years must be more valuable to the planters than are the raw recruits. During the past five years the death rate of kanakas in Queensland has been 30 per



1,000, and it is a well-known fact that the number of deaths among recruits is considerably in excess of that percentage. Therefore, by allowing the introduction of kanaka recruits to continue, we shall be making ourselves parties to a large loss of life. Of late years Queensland has done the best she can to bring this iniquitous trade under the heel of authority, but even under stringent regulations most deplorable instances of cruelty and serious loss of life have occurred in connexion with this trade. It appears to me that this discredit to the Commonwealth should be removed at once. No one can deny that the introduction of kanakas has been a form of veiled slavery, and I shall be no party to its continuation. We know also that the forced deportation of kanakas will, in a large number of instances, be cruel in the extreme, and we have ample evidence that in many cases these men, at the termination of their engagements, have been landed on islands to which they were strangers, with the result that many of them have been murdered. My feeling is that this iniquitous system should absolutely cease. There are 10,000 kanakas in Queensland, and bearing in mind the rate at which they have been returning to their island homes, I believe that we can, with justice to the planter, allow those kanakas who desire to complete their term of engagement to do so. In the past, two-thirds of the number imported have returned to their homes, and there is no reason to suppose that they will not continue to leave for their islands in the same ratio. Once they leave Australia they will not be able to return. Thus year by year we shall see the number steadily increasing. We have reason to believe that the bonus system under the Tariff proposals will enable a number of white men to be employed in the sugar industry in the southern districts of Queensland.

The surplus kanaka labour there will then go to the north, so that under a scheme such as this the northern districts would not feel the pinch that they certainly will feel if the terms of this Bill are adopted. We shall avoid in this way the continuation for a period of five years of what I cannot describe otherwise than as a damnable system of dealing in human flesh, whilst we shall avoid the almost equally criminal system of deporting practically the whole of the kanakas to the islands. That is one reason why I venture to differ from those honorable senators with whom ordinarily I vote and act. Holding these views I cannot conscientiously support the introduction of a single kanaka, nor can I support their forced deportation. Let those already here die out or go away, as they will, but do not let us charge our consciences either with the cruelty of bringing these men into the Commonwealth or of deporting them. I am utterly at a loss to imagine how those who are leaders of religious bodies can, for one moment, lend themselves to the importation of these men. I am equally at a loss to understand how Senator Glassey, who I feel sure is thoroughly earnest in this matter, can refuse to support Senator Charleston's amendment. That remark applies equally to Senator McGregor, who delivered a most impassioned address on this subject the other evening, and with whose views in many respects I entirely agree. For the credit of the Commonwealth, for the credit of ourselves, for the sake of the kanakas, and in the interests of the planters themselves, I think we ought not to agree to the terms of the Bill, but accept some scheme similar to that proposed by Senator Charleston.

Senator FRASER

- I am utterly at a loss to know how Senator Sargood can speak as he does, and yet vote as he proposes to do. We have created the Commonwealth, and surely we must recognise that Queensland is part of it. For 30 years that State has been dealing with the kanakas. They are imported under contract, and the Queensland Government, knowing that they could not protect themselves, have taken care to protect them. It is nonsense to say that these men come here against their will. Many of those who returned to the islands have come back, and it is misleading to speak of isolated cases. The people of Queensland have dealt with this question, and dealt with it wisely. I cannot imagine that the committee will support an amendment of this kind, whereby hundreds of farmers in the north will be ruined. The kanakas have large sums of money in the savings banks, and 4,000 of them attend Sunday-school. It is idle to say that they are slaves. To stop the introduction of kanakas immediately would be to do a cruel and unjust wrong. It is not true to say that the Queensland sugar industry is a spoon-fed industry. It is a huge industry, and one of the most profitable in Queensland. No less than £1,500,000 is expected to be derived from the industry in the ensuing year, and no man can put a limit to its development. We find that Mauritius has a better climate than Cairns. The fact is that there are parts of Queensland and of South Australia that are not adapted for white men. Are we going to abandon the northern part of Australia and say that we will not utilize it! Immense sums of money have been invested in the Mauritius and in Ceylon, where a handful of

white men are controlling millions of blacks ? What about the servile labour which is employed in the industry in Java 1 Honorable senators do not object to consume the sugar grown in Java and the Mauritius, or the tea grown in Ceylon. I am as much in favour of a white Australia as Senator McGregor, but I say that if there are parts of Australia which are not adapted for the work of white men, let the white men rule benignly there over men who are fit to do the work in such districts. This amendment deserves no more support than it has already obtained.

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Senator HIGGS

- The electors of Victoria must have been misled by Senator Fraser when he addressed them on the 23rd March last, at Bendigo, and said that he was in favour of a white Australia. The honorable member did not state then that he was in favour of a colour line, and that he believed that in the north of Queensland there should be a black race. He did not seek the suffrages of the electors of Victoria on those grounds, but he stated that there would not be any kanakas here in twelve months' time, because machinery would be found to do their work. I should be with Senator Charleston on this amendment if he made no qualification. I went to the country in Queensland on those terms. I said that we must stop the importation of kanakas at once, and let those who are in Queensland be deported as soon as ever their agreements expire. Senator Charleston proposes that we should allow the 9,000 kanakas who are in Australia to remain there. I would ask the honorable senator whether he has considered this aspect of the case, that there are some 8,656 male kanakas, while there are only 671 kanaka women in Queensland 1 What is the honorable senator going to do with- the extra 8,000 odd male kanakas 1 Where is he going to find wives for them t Is the honorable senator going to perpetuate such a state of things as I find described by the Isis correspondent of the Alert, a newspaper published at Maryborough. Under the heading "Isis Notes," in the issue published on 30th November last, it is stated -

There is a derelict going about this district with the kanakas, generally in a state of intoxication, followed by a string of kanakas for immoral purposes. Their carryings on are seen and heard by school children and decent living people. At what price do we keep on black labour ? The kanaka and his low white companions are a curse to cling to the minds of the innocent young children that are to form the people of this great Commonwealth. Then there are the Yokohama brothels, within a stone's throw of the State school. Here low whites and semi-savage kanakas are to be seen satisfying lust ; and this is in a so-called civilized community, in broad daylight, where the minds of the young are moulded into various channels.

These descriptions are common in the newspapers of Queensland. In all these districts where kanakas are employed to any extent, there are these brothels and Japanese brothels, and, of course, as unfortunate white women are to be found everywhere", they are used by . these people. I would ask Senators Charleston and Sargood whether they are in favour of allowing that thing to go on 1 We must remember that in many cases settlers are compelled, from the very nature of their occupations, to leave their wives and children unprotected, and it is not an infrequent thing for kanakas to endeavour to break into their homes in their absence. I think it was only about a year ago, that in Queensland a kanaka tried to break into the house of a Queensland settler and was killed. The white woman who killed him was tried and acquitted, as she had a right to be. As was pointed out in the course of a debate on the alien question in this Chamber, it is not the females of the well-to-do classes who are likely to be contaminated, but the wives and children of the white workers of Queensland who are compelled, by their circumstances, to have these people around them. I cannot support the amendment. I agree that we ought to give the sugar-planters five years in which to get rid of the kanakas, but I cannot see my way to permit these people to remain in Australia.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I do not rise for the purpose of prolonging the discussion, but, in view of the debate and the divisions which have been taken, to ask Senator Charleston to withdraw his amendment. I am quite sure that Senator Charleston and Senator Sargood are perfectly sincere in their desire to stop the importation of kanakas at once. I yield to no man in my desire to see this traffic brought to an end at the earliest possible moment, but I think we ought to recognise that the measure proposed by the Government is a reasonable compromise between those who hold extreme views with regard to the stoppage of the traffic at once,

and those who hold that it should be continued for some time longer. I cannot support the amendment, because I do not wish the kanakas who are here to stay. Under the proposal of the Government a certain number will be brought in each year for a term, but a greater number will be taken away each year and the evil will gradually become less, until such time as the last kanakas have disappeared to their islands, from which they should never have been taken. Inasmuch as the traffic has been carried on for such a long time, as extreme views are held on the question by a number of persons, and as this is a happy compromise, the least we can do is to support the Bill which will give satisfaction, generally speaking, to all parties.

Senator CHARLESTON(South Australia). - How can Senator Glassey say that the Bill is a fair compromise when he thinks of the great wrong which will be done to the kanakas who will be taken from their islands during the next two or three years 1 There can be no compromise with wrong. If, as he says, the traffic has been immoral and has produced nothing but evil, how can he give his vote for the introduction of another kanaka ? I have been influenced by the remarks of honorable senators to move this amendment. I am striving to prevent an injustice being done to the islanders.' I can quite see that it may be most disastrous to some planters if they are bound to deport all the kanakas within the time specified in the Bill. But I am not concerned so much about that possibility as I am about the deportation of the kanakas. We have been told that when the kanaka attempts to return to his island, in many instances his reception is such that he is practically murdered. How, then, can honorable senators support a measure which will bring such terrible disasters on these poor people? Senator Higgs has made some remarks about the association of the kanaka with females. Are we not told that the kanakas have viewed their relationship with the planters as practically that of slavery? If it be true that they would prefer a state of slavery under conditions with which they are conversant, their return to their islands must be far more dangerous to them than their stopping here. If it be true that the kanaka has had to work for 2s. 6d. per week, what chance has he to associate with prostitutes ? If it be true that the kanakas regard their employment in the cane-fields as slavery, then under my amendment they would be free to go to their islands, but if they went they could not return to Australia. The working men of Queensland must, since they have been participating in this traffic, expect to suffer some inconvenience. What I suggest would minimize the evil to all concerned. It is said that the kanakas are a very industrious people, and have saved over £28,000. Of what value would that money be to them on their own islands ? I understand that they do not take back any money because it is valueless there, but that they take back a few trinkets. The traffic is being conducted to-day under the most favorable conditions. The Government of Queensland appointed an agent to superintend the importation of the kanakas. Probably he would prevent them from being whipped or ill-treated in any way, but he is not able to talk their language, and explain to them all the conditions under which they have to labour. Therefore, many of the evils which are supposed to have been removed may still exist. After all is not my amendment consistent with the one moved in the Immigration Restriction Bill, by Senator McGregor, who desired to stop the importation at once, and suggested that all the aliens in our midst should be deported 1 Why will honorable senators do to an inoffensive man who is unable to take care of himself that which they dare not do to a man who has a Government behind his back? I learn now that no harm can arise to the kanaka from being deported. If honorable senators would support my amendment, they would be consistent. If my amendment is defeated, I throw all the responsibility on them, and say, let the kanakas be deported at the time which is provided for in the Bill.

Question - that the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted - put. The committee divided.

2

AYES

27

NOES

Majority..... 25

AYES

NOES

Question so resolved in the negative.

Senator FERGUSON(Queensland).- I move -

That after the word "and," line 3, "six "be inserted.

This amendment does not propose a discrimination between one part of Queensland and another, so that I think I can claim the support of those honorable senators who objected that the strongest argument against my last amendment was that it created a colour line. I admit that I should prefer that my previous amendment should have been carried, but I have to accept the decision of the committee. It has been stated that white men can work in the cane-fields of North Queensland. But whether that is so or not, it is a well known fact that white women cannot live and rear children in the tropical regions. What is the good of white men only living in a country where they cannot increase the population, and where fresh labour will have to be imported year by year ? I particularly claim the support of Senator ^Stewart, who told us that he was going to deal fairly with the industries already established in the north, and to see that no injustice was done to people who have invested their money there, and I also hope that the other Queensland senators will vote for my amendment. If they represent Queensland for the next twenty years they will never have a better opportunity of doing an act of justice to that State than they have now. They should follow the example of the labour members in the State Parliament, who are prepared to extend the time to the period proposed in my amendment, namely, seven years. That has been advocated by Mr. Barber and other State members. My amendment will enable the -planters to clear out of North Queensland if they desire to do so. I am satisfied that the Bill will cause ruin in that State, and I desire to minimize the loss as much as possible. Surely that is not unreasonable. The representatives of Queensland can turn the scale if they vote for the amendment. Let me read to the committee what was said by Mr. Deakin, the present Attorney-General for the Commonwealth, in addressing a meeting at Brisbane before the federal referendum took place. He said -

We must be one in knowledge - knowledge of each other. This trite remark impresses itself upon me, particularly in regard to Queensland. Your vast territory, probably but imperfectly known to the bulk of your own people, possesses products and problems peculiar to itself, still less mastered by your southern neighbours. My ignorance is shared by many others. Our southern conditions, though doubtless in many respects novel to you, are more likely to be comprehended by you than your situation is to be grasped by us. One of the first tasks of the Commonwealth must be to make us better known to each other, and one of the many duties that still appeal to fill true federationists, will be to remove misunderstandings, overcome local prejudices, and to listen to the views of those who, geographically remote from us, have separate interests and aims. We must listen to the men who are carrying on the work of settlement in the far north and the far west.

What does that mean except it refers to -the sugar planters 1

It is in this spirit that we must enter on our national life if federation is to be a blessing to all the States ; and it will be ominous of disaster to the future of the Commonwealth if its foundations are to be laid in the shifting sand bank of prejudice and political emergency rather than on the solid rock of equity and justice. That statement was made prior to the referendum, and they were not aware then how the majority would go. At all events it shows that the Government have since changed their views materially. Mr. Deakin also said on a subsequent occasion when speaking to the electors of Victoria -

There had been built up in Victoria industries in which much capital had been expended and many men employed. If those industries were ruthlessly destroyed federal history would commence with a period of industrial depression which might come to financial disaster.

Is there a single industry in which any of the southern parts of the Commonwealth have so much interest as Queensland has in the sugar industry 1

Senator DAWSON

- Mr. Deakin spoke of industries being " ruthlessly destroyed."

Senator FERGUSON

- And the sugar industry of Queensland is to be ruthlessly destroyed. Honorable senators will find that out, and it will recoil on them some day. There is no industry the destruction of which will throw so many men out of employment, or occasion such disaster, as the sugar industry of Queensland. Queensland has already suffered severely. This Bill will simply strike another blow at her prosperity, and her credit and financial position. I appeal to the committee on the ground of the justice of this amendment. Even if it was thought that the other amendment which I proposed was too harsh, it surely cannot be said that I am now asking too much. I appeal especially to the representatives of Queensland. It is for them to see that Queensland .is not unfairly treated on this occasion.

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Senator DRAKE

- A characteristic of this Bill is that it is in the nature of a compromise between extreme opinions. The last amendment which we defeated proposed that the introduction of kanaka labour should be abolished at once. Now we are meeting a proposal that the introduction of kanakas to Queensland shall be extended for two years beyond the time proposed in the Bill. It is not quite correct to say that this Bill shows that proper consideration has not been given to the people of Queensland, or even to those engaged in the industry. Senator Ferguson quoted from a speech made in Brisbane by Mr. Deakin prior to the referendum on the Federal Bill. Mr. Deakin then said that consideration would be given to settlers in the northern parts of Australia. Has not consideration been given to them ? Has it not become more clearly evident during the course of this debate that the people engaged in the sugar industry of Northern Queensland are not likely to be placed in any difficulty in regard to the employment of coloured labour for the next five years ? Within the last two or three days we have had a distinct admission from the advocates of coloured labour that sugar can be produced without that form of labour in the Bundaberg and Mackay districts. Some honorable senators have not attached sufficient importance to the fact that under the Queensland law there is nothing to prevent the kanakas at present in Queensland from being re engaged, for six months at a time, right up to 31st December, 1906. We must make some allowance for deaths and for those who voluntarily return to their homes, but if sufficient inducement is given to those who are at present in Queensland, there is no reason why a number approximating the number of kanakas now there should not be retained until December, 1906. The stimulus of a bonus on sugar grown exclusively by white labour in those districts where it is admitted by every one that sugar can be grown by white labour will lead to the substitution of white for coloured labour. The black labour will thus be displaced, and during the next five years it will go to those districts where it is not so easy to obtain white labour. Therefore the planters in those districts will have an ample supply of coloured labour for the next five years. If they are prepared to take up the position that sugar can be grown by white labour, surely five years is a reasonable time to allow for the making of the change? I do not think we can accept the amendment. Five years is a reasonable term, and I do not think we should be justified in asking the people of Australia to agree to the differential duties which will give a preference over imported sugar to sugar grown in Australia, even when it is grown by black labour, and to consent to the continuation of present conditions for a term longer than is proposed in the Bill.

Senator Playford

- The bonus is for cane grown by white labour ?

Senator DRAKE

- Under the proposals of the Government, there is an import duty of £6 per ton, and an excise duty of £3 per ton. That £3 per ton excise duty is a preference given to locally-produced as against imported sugar, even in the case of sugar grown by black labour. We contemplate, under this Bill, that that labour will continue until the 31st December, 1906, and we are asking the people of Australia to agree to these preferential duties until that time.

Senator Playford

- In respect of sugar grown by black and white labour.

Senator DRAKE

- We are asking the people of Australia to give a preference of £3 per ton in favour of sugar grown in Australia even when that sugar is grown by black labour, and we provide that it can be grown by black labour until the end of 1906. Senator Ferguson's proposal is that the term for the introduction of kanakas shall be extended for two years. If he carries that no doubt he will follow it up with the proposal that the term of deportation shall be extended for two years more.

Senator Ferguson.- Yes.

Senator DRAKE

- Then we shall be asking the people to submit to the differential duty of £3 per ton in favour of sugar grown by black labour for two years longer than the term proposed in the Bill. I do not think that we should be justified in doing that.

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Senator FRASER

- I hope . that the labour party will support this amendment. What difference will it make 25 or 50 years hence? It will certainly enable the Commonwealth to go on its career peaceably. Honorable senators admit that there is a good deal of bitterness in Queensland in regard to the terms of this Bill. The Government cannot have any serious objection to this amendment. The Premier of Queensland was offered a portfolio in the present Federal Government, and his opinions on kanaka labour are well known. Had he been a member of the Government the Bill would not have come before us in its present form. I appeal to the committee not to allow a feeling of bitterness towards the' union to be aroused in any State at the starting of the Commonwealth merely for the sake of an extension of two years in the\* time within which this trade shall cease.. What is the opinion of the labour representatives in the State Parliament ? Here is a. speech made by Mr. Browne, a member of the Queensland Legislature, in which he agrees that it may be right to give the planters seven or eight years in which to make the change : - "We are willing to accept this as a final solution if you give us sufficient time. " Though I believe myself that five years will be ample time. I believe the chances are that there would have been a little extension of time allowed. And so on. I could make a number of quotations like that. Honorable senators from Queensland really ought to look on this matter as affecting a State right. There are millions of Queensland money concerned in the sugar industry. This question has nothing to do with that of a White Australia, and even if it had an extension of time for a couple of years would make no difference. The Government are proposing to give a huge bonus to this industry, but the sugar-growers in the southern districts of Queensland and in the north of New South Wales, have competed in the open market without any bonus or any assistance at all. I am not sure that we ought to handicap other industries by raising the price of sugar enormously. I agree with Senator Symon that the Tariff question ought to be' dealt with on its merits, and that it should not be dovetailed with this Bill. Proper cognizance is not taken of the merits of the case, because the proposal to be submitted will put money into the pockets of the planters of Mackay and Bundaberg, and certainly of New South Wales, while it will starve and ruin the sugar-growers of Cairns. This is a vicious Bill, and coupled with the Tariff proposals it will destroy an important industry. If honorable senators from Queensland will support the amendment proposed by Senator Ferguson they will do some measure of justice. If we give the planters of the Cairns district more time to pay up their advances or to work out the position, perhaps something may in the meantime be devised which will be even better for them. If honorable senators from Queensland will not support the amendment, we can have no hope of carrying it, and I wash my hands of the whole thing ; but I tell the Government that I am not going to pledge myself to act as they suggest in regard to the duties on sugar. There are other industries affected by the price of sugar, and I cannot see why we should be asked to put a bonus of £3 per ton into the pockets of men who have proved for the last thirty years that they can get along perfectly well without "it, and at the. same time keep it out of the pockets of the men in the north who cannot get along without it. This is a gross injustice, and I protest against it. I would ask how is the Government going to deport these kanakas in the face of the objection pf the people of Queensland? I doubt very much whether they will have the courage to do it, if it is apparent to the people of Queensland that the sugar-growers in the north cannot get along without black labour. I would not mind if the State Parliament of Queensland passed a law like this to-morrow. They might undo it as they did before, but the State Parliament would know the circumstances and be able to realize the position. We are placed in a position of extreme difficulty when we find labour representatives of Western Australia, South Australia, and other States, taking certain/ action, although they know nothing of the circumstances. They have an opportunity now of doing a modicum of justice to Queensland ; if they do it we shall be grateful, but if they do not we cannot help it.

Senator PULSFORD

- The amendment is, I think, entitled to be considered an entirely moderate one, especially when we take it in conjunction with clauses of the Bill which show that its restrictive effect would begin to be felt on. the 1st of January next. The Bill requires that after the close of this year licences shall be required, and. these can only be granted for three-fourths of the number of kanakas that have returned this year. Therefore, when the 1st of January arrives the question would immediately arise as to whether certain persons applying for licences were, entitled to them. Surely, it is a little too severe that the restrictive effect of the Bill should begin to be felt within one month.

Senator Glassey

- The amendment would) not alter that. The restriction would commence next year all the same.

Senator PULSFORD

- If the amendment is agreed to, it is presumed that other amendments will be accepted to carry on a1 the dates by two years.

Senator Drake

- To allow the importation to go on unrestricted for two years ?

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Senator PULSFORD

- As at present. The Government agree to the importation of 75 kanakas for every 100 returned in one year, and 50 for every 100 returned in the following year. I presume that when the matter is looked at it will be recognised

If any harm does happen to the sugar industry - which I believe and hope will not be the case - if the men in the Federal Parliament set their teeth and fight this battle to a finish, if any one in this colony is responsible for that it is the Premier, the Brisbane Courier, and one or two others. What have they done ? Had those gentlemen, when they saw the feeling throughout Australia, recognised and admitted that there was no hope as far as what they wanted was concerned - that a large majority had determined against coloured labour - if they had then come forward and said - "We recognise that you are determined to do away with coloured labour, but we believe you should give us a little longer time-

At this point Mr. Cowley interjected -

We ask for an inquiry ; we don't ask for any time.

What does Mr. Cowley mean by that interjection t He means that if an inquiry is made the justice of the claims made by the sugar industry, will be recognised. Mr. Browne continues -

If they had said - ' ' We are willing to accept this as a final solution if you give us sufficient time," though I believe myself that five years would be ample time, I believe the chances are that there would have been a little extension of time allowed.

Mr. Brownemakes his position quite clear. Five years is his time, but he also says that if the sugar industry had asked for a little longer time he thinks it would have been granted. On behalf of the sugar industry a little longer time is to-night asked for. I take it that the little extension of time which he said would probably have been granted, might now reasonably be conceded by the Senate. It is a small request which is being made. I wish to refer to a remark made this afternoon by Senator Pearce, especially as it followed on one or two other remarks made in the same direction by other honorable senators on previous occasions. He said he was rather surprised that free-traders were supporting this extension, and he suggested that it was ' likely to injure the cause of free-trade with voters in the country.

I said nothing at

ATE.] Labourers Bill.

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Senator STEWART

- Both Senator Pulsford and Senator Ferguson referred to statements made by Mr. Browne, the leader of the Opposition in the Queensland Assembly, and also to certain statements alleged to have been made by other members favouring an extension of the time. Senator Ferguson appealed to those of us who represent Queensland to be at least as liberal as the members of the State Parliament. I think it is evident that Mr. Browne thinks an extension of five years is quite long enough. If Senator Pulsford will turn to the report of Mr. Browne's speech, he will find that at page 7 he answers one argument which was stated very strongly this afternoon by Senator Ferguson, who came to the conclusion that it is impossible for white men to perform the necessary labour in the cane fields in the north, and demanded an extension of time. Mr. Browne deals very forcibly with that aspect of the question when he says -

One thing strikes me as rather remarkable in this demand for an extension for a few years and that is that in the same breath those who want the kanaka to stay with us for a few 3'ears more also say that it is impossible for white men to work in the north. If that is so, what on earth is the use of stringing this thing out year after year ? In 1889, when Mr. Cowley brought his motion before the House, the demand was that kanaka labour should be extended for five years, and that was refused by the House ; but later on the period mentioned in Sir S. W. Griffith's manifesto was ten years. At that time Mr. Cowie)' said - "An extension of five years would answer all present requirements, and would not pledge the country to anything very great."

That was 13 years ago, and now they are not content with another five years on the top of that, making 18 years. Mr. Morehead, the then Premier, went dead against the extension at that time. He also referred to the five years. He said - "I quite agree with what has been said by some honorable members that this five years' system might be an eternal one. After the five years are over we might be asked for an extension of the period, and so it might go on indefinitely."

That is just what has happened. Mr.

O'Connell, the present Minister for Lands, said - "And it is only those who want to make political capital out of this business who will not see this, and stand up before audiences of working men and tell them they are selling their birthright for a mess of pottage. The planters are only asking for this extension of the Act for five years."

Sir S.W. Griffith. Does anybody really believe that.

Mr. O'Connell. If it is such a difficult thing to get - this five years, why try and make out that we are putting in the thin edge of the wedge before asking for it for ever?"

They were evidently putting in the thin edge of the wedge. Mr. Cowley made the position still clearer. Speaking on the amendment moved by Sir S. W. Griffith, that the relief should not take the form of an extension of coloured labour, he said - "If the honorable member had added to his Amendment, not involving a re-opening of the coloured labour question, otherwise than by an extension of the Polynesian Labourers' Act for five years, I would have supported him gladly, for I wish it to be distinctly understood what we mean by colored labour."

Our contention is that the Government have submitted a very equitable scheme for the settlement of this much-debated question. I am convinced that the planters are merely sparring for wind. They think that if they can get an extension of time for two years or any other period, something will happen in the interval to give them a fresh lease of life. That has been their policy all along. They have always admitted publicly that the kanaka must go, but they have said - "Give us time." "We now have a repetition of those tactics. The committee need not wonder that those honorable senators who come from Queensland are a little dubious as to how the planters will act in the future. Senators Ferguson and Fraser have argued that it is simply impossible for white men to work in the northern cane-fields. My information is exactly - of a contrary character. I have been in close communication with people in Cairns and the northern sugar districts, who have told me that it is all a question of wages. If there is a sufficient cash inducement for men to work in the cane-fields they will work. Senator Symon dwelt upon the letters and resolutions from associations and boards which have poured in upon this question. But he should not have ignored the more important fact that five out of the six Queensland senators are absolutely pledged to the immediate cessation of the kanaka traffic."

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- I did not ignore that.

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Senator STEWART

- But the honorable and learned senator pleaded for justice on behalf of the minority. We have been considering the minority, and, as I have already intimated, I am to some extent acting contrary to my pledges in giving an extension of time for five years. We want to have the question settled, and if, as Senator Ferguson argues, white men cannot work in the northern cane fields, it does not matter whether we settle it in five years or five minutes - the result will be the same. We have had a most remarkable change of front on the part of the advocates of the kanaka in this Chamber. At the beginning of the debate we were told that this legislation would ruin the sugar industry all over Queensland. We have driven the advocates of the kanaka from ditch to ditch - from the southern ditch to the central ditch - until they have had to take refuge in the north. But if there are certain disabilities in the north, there are also certain advantages to counterbalance them. For instance, the yield per acre is very much larger in the Cairns and Mulgrave districts than in Bundaberg and Mackay, where the soil is in a great measure exhausted, having been cropped and re-cropped for the last 30 years. In the north the sugar-growers have a virgin soil, and a more favorable climate for the production of cane. They have every advantage except that the climate is a little more severe than further south. Yet the people who live there - I know a number of them - look just as strong and healthy as those who live in the south. Besides that the land is cheaper in the north, though it is the best land in the Commonwealth. I had a letter from Cairns no later



than last week telling me of certain sugar farms, which changed hands recently, have gone up in price 50 per cent. That does not look as though the ruin of the industry were contemplated. The small growers everywhere are much pleased with this Bill, and have come to the conclusion that there will be money in the sugar industry in future. They are preparing as speedily as they can to get rid of their kanakas. It is the big companies who oppose the Bill. If the small men are satisfied I do not trouble much about the big men - though I may add that Mr. Browne quotes Mr. Angus Gibson as follows : -

He dared not say that it would be impossible to cultivate sugar with European labour, because climatic conditions affected the white man but little so long as they were paid, and if the white men who worked in the fields, were to be adequately paid it would require more than £3 or £4 to recoup the deficiency.

Mr. A.W. Gillies (New South Wales). Say £6 per ton.

Mr. Gibson was not empowered to ask for £6, and, moreover, he was as sure that it would not be given at the present stage as he was that the 'old' era Parliament would in the course of time do away with black labour.

We have been told that the planters voted for federation without anticipating that the Federal Parliament would pass such a Bill as this, but Mr. Gibson says distinctly that he knew that the Parliament would deal with the question, and he also says as plainly as possible that the difficulty about employing white men is that of wages. We now have it admitted that the Bill will benefit Bundaberg and Mackay. My honest belief is that it will also benefit the northern portion of Queensland. I will support no movement for an extension of time. I think the Bill, is sufficiently liberal, and hope that it will be carried as it stands.

Senator Major GOULD

- If honorable senators could agree with the last part of the remarks of Senator Stewart, that the northern part of Queensland would benefit from this Bill, there would be no difficulty in passing it. I have no doubt the honorable senator believes what he has said in the course of his carefully-reasoned, calm, and temperate speech. I congratulate the Government on being supported by such a solid phalanx. Of course, where compacts are made they must be kept.

Senator DAWSON

- We only support them when they are in the right.

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Senator Major GOULD

- I have found in public life that nearly every Member of Parliament claims that he votes for the Government when he thinks it is in the right, and against it only when he thinks it is in the wrong. There is an anecdote of a certain Minister who said that he did not want members to support him only when his Government were right, as any man would do that, but when they were wrong. The extension of time asked for by Senator Ferguson is by no means extravagant. From the commencement of this debate there has been a recognition of the fact that there is a determination on the part of the electors of Queensland to get rid of the kanaka, and that it is only a question of when they shall go. Some honorable senators say that five years is a reasonable time. There are others who think that an extension would be more reasonable. I am among that number. I happened to be among those who, in the first instance, would have advocated a longer period, but when I saw statements - put before the Senate by Government officials specially requested to report upon the matter - setting forth that in different parts of Queensland the Bill would have a different effect, I thought it would be a reasonable thing to differentiate between the terms granted to the various parts of the State. I believed then, and I still believe, that if the Government had seen in the first instance that they could constitutionally carry out such an arrangement they would have been prepared to suggest something of the kind. It has been pointed out that it would not be unconstitutional to do so, but the Government, having set out a particular line of action, seemed determined to adhere to it, feeling probably that certain of their friends would expect them to do so, whether it was right or wrong. It has been alleged by some honorable senators that the sugar industry will, in certain districts of Queensland, die without the assistance of black labour, and that is now urged as a reason, why the extension asked for should not be given. But if it is agreed that the sugar industry cannot go on without black labour, an extension of time will enable the planter to get out of what is believed to be a doomed industry. The very difference between five and seven or eight years will probably be the means of saving the planters from ruin. Whatever may be the opinion of honorable senators as to the desirability of getting rid of the kanaka at the earliest possible moment, I decline to believe that any one of

them would say - " I do not care whether I ruin the planter or not. If I ruin him, serve him right for employing black labour," always remembering that he was induced to go into this industry by legislation passed in Queensland, believing 'there would be a continuation of the policy initiated in 1892.

Senator Glassey

- How could the planters believe that, in the face of the request they made for a certain extension of time ?

Senator Major GOULD

- It was considered undesirable to fix any time, because it was impossible to predict what the future of the industry would be. Therefore, it was left an open question, with the risk to the planter that the Government might take steps at any time to get rid of this coloured labour. In any event, however, it would not have been disposed of by the State without ample time being given to the planters to make their arrangements.

Senator FRASER

- The Government went on spending money in the industry.

Senator Major GOULD

- Yes ; in order to induce the planters to go on with the industry. Quite recently a Bill was sent Home from Queensland which made provision for assistance to planters who would employ white labour only, but the Royal assent was disallowed. That, again, would cause those engaged in the industry to believe that there would be no attempt to interfere with them, at any rate without reasonable notice. On the other hand it is said the planters think that, if an extension of time is given, there may be a change of policy in the meantime. We are giving them a period of at least five years within which to get rid of the kanaka. If there is to be a change of policy, it will take place long before their time has expired. Before then the members of another place will have gone before their constituents. There will be a new House, and there will be opportunity for a change of policy. So far as the Senate is concerned, one-half of our number will have to retire in three years, and those who replace any honorable senators may hold different views. Therefore, this is not a sparring for time, in order to secure a change of legislation ; but simply a demand for an extension of time to enable the sugar-growers to get out of the industry. If a change of public opinion comes in the meantime, it will influence the legislation of this Parliament. When the Queensland Parliament give five years' notice of intention to end the traffic, not only the industry, but the towns and cities dependent upon it, were going to the bad. I have before me a speech delivered by the late Sir Thomas Mcllwraith, who was Colonial

Treasurer in Sir Samuel Griffith's Government when that gentleman had forced upon him the fact that the legislation of five years previously had been a mistake. Would the Premier of Queensland at that time have called Parliament together specially to deal with this question if he had not regarded it as a most serious one? Rightly or wrongly he did so, and this is what his colleague, Sir Thomas Mcllwraith, said in regard to the matter -

We were bound to recognise the position and to face the causes of our condition with remedies, and that is what we have attempted to do. We saw plainly that there was one very prominent point in which we had failed in past legislation, and that we had by our legislation hurt an industry that might have been prosperous now. That was the sugar industry in the north. We saw that plainly. It was plain to any man who went north. He had only to go to the towns to see the effect, not because there were starving black fellows there, but because he would find starving white men in all the towns, although he would see evident vestiges of the towns having been much larger in past years. That can be seen from Brisbane right up to Cooktown. Then if he went into the interior a little, and visited the plantations, he would find that what were formerly scenes of industry now show a decaying industry, and an industry which is bound to go unless some means are adopted to keep it in existence.

And so on. At that same time a change was made. I find also that Sir Samuel Griffith, in a paper presented to the Government of Queensland in 1896, upon the question of Queensland entering the federation, pointed out that there might be some difficulty felt by the people of Northern Queensland in intrusting their interests in a matter of this kind to a Parliament that would be so largely recruited from the southern States, which would have no knowledge of the special requirements of Queensland.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- Yes, the people of the north were full of apprehension, and Sir Samuel Griffith pointed out that nothing would be done in this direction without inquiry. I think that the honorable and learned senator should read

the paragraph.

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Senator Major GOULD

- Yes. Sir Samuel Griffith spoke of federation and said -

There may, however, be reluctance on the part of the people of the northern part of the continent to intrust the uncontrolled exercise of this power to a Legislature in which the majority would necessarily represent the people of other parts different in climate and natural conditions, and might have no adequate knowledge of the real nature of the Social and material aspects of the problems with which they are called upon to deal. But the probability is the representatives of the nation would rise to the occasion, and would decline to do any act that might inflict disaster on any part of the continent merely in obedience to a popular cry. The gravity of the matter with regard to both external and domestic consequences would be felt to be so great that it could not fail to exercise that steadying influence which the undertaking of great responsibilities has almost always exercised amongst the British race. Perhaps all that can at present be asserted with confidence on this subject is that the future social history of northern Australia will depend upon the effect which its climate produces on the European races - an effect which is still quite problematical, and on which little, if any, light is thrown by history. This is indeed so obvious to unprejudiced observers that it may be anticipated, with some degree of confidence, that a Federal Parliament, imbued with a due sense of its responsibility, would not until it is in possession of much fuller knowledge than is at present attainable permit airy action which would result either in the general substitution within any part of the territory under its control of Asiatic for European civilisation, or in the definite condemnation of any part of that territory to barrenness and desolation.

If any man in Queensland took an interest in federation it was Sir Samuel Griffith, and in urging his fellow citizens to support federation he pointed out in this paper that they need have no apprehension that the Legislature would not rise to the necessities of the occasion, and treat this matter in a statesmanlike way, with a full view of the history that had gone before, and with some regard for the future. We do not look to speeches made in 1892 simply as a passing matter. The industry had then been in existence for a great number of years, and legislation had been passed in order to put an end to this traffic. Instead of an end being put to the traffic an end came to that legislation. The State was driven to adopt such a course in order to save the country from ruination, because of legislation which might be hasty or ill-considered.

Senator Glassey

- What warrant has the honorable and learned senator for that statement?

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Senator Major GOULD

- My warrant is the history of Queensland. Senator Glassey took part in the making of that history, and went down in consequence of the position he took up on this question at that time. With this history before us, it is fair that we should consider this matter carefully. While we have the legislation for the whole Commonwealth placed in our hands, it has never been contemplated that we should condemn any portion of the rich tropical country of Australia to barrenness. Our duty is to render these places, productive. Our wealth lies there. If we are to continue to be a prosperous community our duty will be to develop the whole of the resources of the Commonwealth, whether they are in tropical, subtropical or temperate regions. We must, recognise that in our territory, extending from these temperate regions to the extreme heat of the Tropics, and almost up to the equator, we have different classes of country which must be worked in different ways. While I, and other senators who think with, me, would rejoice to find that our apprehensions are not well founded, and that we are utterly wrong in thinking that it is not possible to carry on the industry in the northern districts without coloured labour, still, as sensible men, we think that we should progress slowly in a matter of this kind. This request for a further period of two years is reasonable, and I think it ought to be agreed to. We are all agreed as to the necessity of the kanaka going. Even Senator Ferguson, who looks forward to a very gloomy future for the industry, recognises that. If it is necessary in five or six years' time for the Federal Government to say that the experience gained has proved that a mistake has been made, that the sugar industry is in a declining condition, and can only be kept going by means of some kind of colored labour, I believe that our friends of the labour party will be prepared to assist in rectifying the error, especially if they find that the men they represent are lacking employment. They will then say that while they wish to have a white man's Australia, where

the white man will ever remain, the dominant factor, whenever it becomes necessary, they will not object to the employment of some form of cheaper labour to keep up an industry in the interests of the Commonwealth, and for the assistance of the white labour of Australia. Senator Stewart said that the white man will do this work so long as he gets sufficient wages, and that brings, us to the question as to what wages the sugar industry can pay. If the sugar industry can pay a man £5 per week for the class of work that is performed in the north, let him have it. But if it is proved that the industry cannot pay what is considered a fair rate of wages for white labour, then it- must go down, or the wages of white labour must go down, or some assistance must be given in the shape of alien labour. If I were satisfied that the industry could be carried on with white labour alone, no man would be more ready to hasten the period when the white man should have the field to himself. I hope honorable senators will give the matter further consideration, and that if they can reconcile it with their consciences and principles they will extend the period to seven years as proposed. If they do not think that a reasonable thing they will vote with the Government, and as far as we are concerned, who will have fought a losing battle, we shall feel satisfied in having done our best, and shall only wish God-speed and success to the measure determined upon by the majority of the members of this Parliament.

Senator Lt Col NEILD

-Col. NEILD (New South Wales). - There is one point in connexion with this matter upon which I should be glad to have an explanation from the Postmaster-General. The Government are about to take over British New Guinea, as a territory of the Commonwealth. I should like to know in what relation the natives of that portion of New Guinea will stand to Australia, under this Bill, should it become law 1

Senator Drake

- We disposed of that question when discussing the ' New Guinea resolution.

Senator Lt Col NEILD

-Col. NEILD.- There maybe some honorable senators present, who, like myself, did not hear that discussion. It is a very serious question, because divided from us by a very narrow strip of water, there will be a great number of coloured workers, whom it will be very difficult to exclude from Australia. With reference to the question of whether the coloured labour employed in Queensland has, or has not been an advantage to the white workers, I had reason to travel a good deal in Queensland in the early eighties, before I became a member of Parliament, and when consequently there was no reason why people should not talk to me perfectly freely as I represented no party. Many representations were then made to me by white workers that the kanakas did a class of work which the white men could not do, or certainly did not do, and that the work accomplished by the coloured workers supplied a higher type of employment for the white workers of Queensland. Why should this Parliament of the Commonwealth be asked to do something: with reference to a Queensland industry which the Parliament of Queensland has never done or sought to do with any large, amount of support? I am one of those who came here pledged to a white Australia, but I own that in making the statement that I was a supporter of a white Australia, I never went into any details, on any occasion, because it would have been, mere nonsense for a candidate to pledge himself beforehand to an exact date or to exact conditions. To-day I am as strong an-, advocate of a white Australia as any honorable senator present. But we have an industry established under local laws that existed in full force up to the time of the formation of the Commonwealth, and very large sums of money have been invested and large interests have arisen. We must not forget, when we speak of large sums of money being invested, that those sums- do not always belong to rich people. Much of the money invested in Queensland is the money of widows and orphans. If honorable senators will look over the share list of any bank or monetary institution they will find that widows and orphans and executors appear in every such list throughout the Commonwealth. I therefore say that the destruction of capital in a matter of this kind will affect widows and orphans, as well as the more wealthy people. We have an application made for an extension of time of two years. My reasonableness in this matter is, I think,, evident, because in the first division taken this afternoon I voted against an amendment moved by Senator Ferguson, and I am disposed, now to support a lesser time than he then proposed. I am taking up an attitude of so reasonable a character that my action can not be attributed to any partisanship on either one side or the other. I am splitting the difference. We have a proposal made by the Government to fix the period at five years. We had a proposal made to extend that period to ten years, and we are now asked to split the difference and make the period seven years. Surely in supporting that proposal I am

trying to arrive at the happy medium between the extremes of parties represented in this debate. My disposition at the present moment is to support the amendment fixing the time at seven years.

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Senator GLASSEY

- I am sorry that I have to rise again to take part in this debate. I really thought the whole ground had been fairly covered, and that I had referred to most of the matters since alluded to by Senator Gould and others. I find that I have to repeat myself again, and give some facts in contradiction of the assertions that have been made. We have heard nothing but mere assertions without the slightest proof being given by those who make them. Senator Gould tells us what Sir Thomas Mcllwraith said in 1892, but he did not tell us what that gentleman said in 1888, when he put his signature to a paper that he would re-open that question

Senator Major Gould

- That was anterior to the speech made in 1892.

Senator GLASSEY

- That is so, and my advice to the honorable and learned senator is to investigate the causes which led to the speech made in 1892, and he will find some exceedingly shady things and some transactions of which he would by no means approve. Some honorable senators seem to imagine that they are the saviours of Queensland, and that we, its senators, are its destroyers. From whom did they receive a mandate to come here and say that they are its saviours 1

Senator Major Gould

- We recognise that those who are advocating a period of five years are doing so honestly.

Senator GLASSEY

- I can show from the Queensland Hansard, that in 1892 I contradicted every statement we have heard, and cited the facts from the census returns. It has been strongly urged that Sir Samuel Griffith and Sir Thomas Mil wraith had to reverse their policy, especially the latter. But what proof have honorable senators given in support of their assertion? If it had not been for the peculiar methods which successive Governments have adopted to procure their existence, this Parliament would not have been called upon to legislate in this direction, but the legislation would have been passed long ago. A Parliament was elected by Queensland, in 1883, to carry out the policy of Sir Samuel Griffith, to bring this traffic to an end at a certain time, and it was embodied in an Act of Parliament in 1885. Certainly it was reversed in 1892, by a four years old Parliament, in which both parties were pledged up to the very hilt to bring the traffic to an end. Senator Drake and I entered the Legislative Assembly in 1882, pledged to Sir Samuel Griffith's policy of 1885. Sir Thomas Mcllwraith signed a document with his own hand, setting out that if he were returned to power, he and his party would strictly adhere to the policy embodied in the Act of 1885. Would not any reasonable person imagine from the remarks of honorable senators, that if that policy had been as destructive as they have alleged, the industry would have shown a gradual decline since 1883 ? The Queensland statistics for 1900 show that in 1883-4, 36,000 tons of sugar were produced. There was a gradual increase of the yield, year by year, until in 1891 - the year before the reversal of that policy took place - 61,000 tons were produced.

Senator DOBSON

- I feel it my duty to support this amendment as an act of justice and a matter of policy, because I admit that a white Australia has very little, if anything, to do with this point. I wish to touch briefly on three points which the discussion has brought out. First, that there is very little difference between the two parties to debate ; secondly, that the facts which I have taken infinite pains to ascertain are absolutely against the labour members ; and thirdly, that instead of granting the planters this extension of two years and treating them in a just and federal spirit, they refuse to put out their hand, and are turning every planter into an agitator. Senator Glassey has fought so earnestly for the abolition of this traffic, and is so overjoyed at the prospect of seeing his policy carried out that he seems to think that there are not two sides to the question. Only the other day, when some very good arguments were being rammed home, he held up his hands in horror and said that he would have to repeat his four hours' speech. I would ask him to read the old fable of the lion which has been used with great effect in a work by John Henry Newman. Does my honorable friend realize that there are two sides to the question ?

Senator Glassey

- Of course there are two sides to every question.

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Senator DOBSON

- Whenever the honorable senator is told that the five senators who came from Queensland, pledged, as they think, to the policy of a white Australia, do not represent their State, he says that it is most insulting to them. But I believe most firmly that those five senators do not represent the feelings of Queensland. My reasons are as follow : - Since they were elected a great change has come" over the feeling of the people of that State. Can they not draw a line .between candidates on election platforms talking about the policy of a white Australia, and the same men sitting in this legislative Chamber endeavouring to do statesmen-like justice between the people on the one hand and the planters, who have invested seven millions of capital in the sugar industry', on the other 1 Has there not been time for a revulsion of feeling to take place in Queensland on the subject ? Since they were elected the Prime Minister has crystallised into legislative form the policy he put forward in his election speeches. The people of Queensland have seen the provisions of this Bill, which have been published in the newspapers, and the feeling has been growing stronger and stronger in favour of the case of the sugar-planter. I agree absolutely with Senator Ferguson, that if we had an election to-morrow, some of the present representatives of Queensland who are in favour of this policy would not come back to this Parliament. In order to prove what I have stated, let me refer to facts which I think are worth all the arguments of honorable members who support this Bill. Sir Samuel Griffith, after getting kudos from the whole of Australia for his legislation upon the kanaka question, came forward and said that he had made a mistake ; that he took the blame upon his own shoulders ; and that in the interests of Queensland it was his duty to repeal the Act which he had passed- - as repeal it he did - and that is a most cogent fact in favour of our granting an extension of time. But that is not all. In 1894 Sir Hugh Nelson was the Premier of Queensland. He did not care to repeal the Act which Sir Samuel Griffith had passed. Then the Honorable J. T. Byrnes became Premier, and he made no movement towards a repeal. Then the late Sir James Dickson became the head of a Government in Queensland, and he had not the pluck to make a movement for repeal. Then came my honorable friend Senator Dawson, and he did not attempt to repeal the Act. Then came Mr. Philp, the present Premier, who not only did not try to repeal the Act passed at the instance of Sir Samuel Griffith, but has had the pluck to say why that ought not to be done.

Senator Higgs

- He has not asked the Queensland Parliament to back him up. 23 v

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Senator DOBSON

- If I understand anything of politics and of legislatures, the Premier of a State and his party are supposed to represent the majority in the Parliament. Otherwise, how many hours would they remain in office? Will honorable senators say that Mr. Philp does not represent the Queensland Parliament ? If he does not, the members of that Parliament must be a very shilly-shally, cowardly set of men, or they would not permit their Premier to misrepresent his State, without, at any rate, moving that his policy and that of his colleagues was antagonistic to the feeling of the House. They have made no such move, and I therefore have a right to assume that Mr. Philp and his Government truly represent the people of Queensland on this question. Furthermore, there is an absolute silence on the part of the Queensland people in support of the policy of those honorable senators who honestly, but I believe wrongly, think that they represent their State on this subject. But I can see nothing to support the statement that those five senators at the present moment fairly represent Queensland. A great deal has been said about slavery.

SenatorMcGregor has interjected, at least a dozen times, various remarks about slaves and slavery. I venture to think that that was a very objectionable thing to do. If SenatorMcGregor, and other labour members, when before their constituents, talked about the kanaka traffic as slavery, they simply misrepresented the facts, and misled hundreds of thousands of people throughout Australia. How can the question of slavery be brought up in connexion with a question concerning the affairs of Australia ? Do we not recollect how Great Britain and the British courts acted with regard to slavery ? Have not honorable senators heard of the celebrated case of a slave owner named Somerset, who had taken a slave to England. The slave became sick and was left to shift for himself. A gentleman called Granville Sharpe took care of the slave, who got well, whereupon his former owner sought to recover possession of him ;.

but the courts decided that there could be no such thing as slavery in Great Britain. There is another question - that of compensation. I think it is in order to mention it, because the Queensland planters, with Mr. Philp and the Queensland Parliament at their head, have simply asked for a little more time and for investigation.

They have not at present asked for compensation. But if we refuse to take one step forward and compromise with them, they will ask for compensation as sure as we are meeting here. What happened in England? In 1807 a Bill was passed by the British Parliament setting free the slaves. Between 1807 and 1833, although the slave-owners could not purchase more slaves, they were allowed to keep the slaves whom they had previously had. In 1833 another Act was passed, declaring that all slaves should be free within twelve months, and the British Parliament thereupon voted £20,000,000 as compensation to the slave-owners. I have shown that there is no slavery about the kanaka traffic. It is free labour, in which the kanakas can come or go as they please. But if we refuse the moderate request of these planters they will ask for compensation, because they have invested £6,000,000 in the sugar industry, into which the Queensland Parliament induced them to put their capital. They certainly will make a claim for the injury done to them by the abolition of the labour which is necessary to their industry. The debate has shown how little we really have to discuss. I congratulate Senator Glassey and the labour members on their victory. The whole voice of Australia has declared that the kanaka must go. The only question is whether we should give the planters five or seven years. Surely it is not worth talking about: I urge my honorable friends to consult together, and take the one step necessary to effect a compromise which will settle this matter. I urge the honorable senators representing labour not to injure the planters, but to give them the two years they want as a matter of fair play. My next point is that the evidence upon this subject is absolutely opposed to the arguments of the labour members.

Senator Higgs

- Why not include the Postmaster-General ?

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Senator DOBSON

- I do, because I believe that if I were a Judge I should have to give my decision against the Government. I honestly believe that in most parts of Northern Queensland the sugar industry cannot be developed without some black labour. Senator Pearce quoted the remarks made by some planter, in the course of a newspaper interview, in order to show that white men could work there. But does the honorable senator imagine that I am going to adopt the views of a planter, ignorant of the injurious effects of such a climate upon the health of white workers, against the words of Dr. Spencer ? Let me read what Dr. Spencer says in a letter to the Sydney Daily Telegraph, under the heading of " The White Man's Australia "-

Let capitalists be invited to rent tracts in tropical Australia upon specific conditions of investment.

Let the lessees be authorized to import coloured labour for agricultural purposes, upon condition of repatriating every imported labourer on the expiry of his indenture.

He then goes on to suggest that the tropical portion of Australia should be divided into different territories, and that each territory should have an administrator. After mapping out a form of government, with which I need not trouble the committee, because it is too elaborate, he goes on to say -

This bald outline of a scheme does not include its methods of development, nor enter into administrative detail. I see no reason why it could not be in process of evolution within seven, and supremely successful within twenty, years.

He speaks of the classes of labourers to be indentured, and expresses a preference for Hindoos. Then he says -

The thorough administration which characterizes our rule throughout the world would guarantee these States against the incursion of alien labour by way of territories. The northern coast-line would be guarded by settlement and organization of the territories in the only possible way -

In the next clause Dr. Spencer appeals to those who are in favour of a white Australia as follows -

Commending this scheme, to prevent the fishing from us of a white man's Australia, to the labour leaders, I beg leave to notice certain spectres which the undigested aspirations of premature socialism often bring into the visual field.

Cheap labour. - If in course of a job a mechanic should try to trench upon the work of a man of another trade, he would be promptly put into his place - his proper sphere, where he is useful. Keep the man of

colour in his place, but use him.

The second spectre is -

Bloated capitalists. - Under our present social system capital represents specie - the lifeblood of the body politic. The more specie the greater prosperity. Keep the capitalist in his place, but use him.

No capitalist will employ white men at the tropical labour, for which only the coloured man is fit. If any one maintains -

This is intended for Senator Higgs - that the agricultural riches of tropical Australia can be developed by white labour, he is either a deluder or is deluded. Even in a socialist Utopia nature would make such distinctions. If we can't have the things we expect, let us make use of things as they are. - Yours, &c, Waltersperencer, M.D.

Eumore, N ovember 30.

Do honorable senators of the labour party expect me to take the word of a small farmer or planter in Queensland against that of a man like Dr. Spencer, who has made it his business to study the effect of climate upon the human race ? I have the greatest respect for honorable senators of the labour party, but I have only respect for their policy when it is based upon natural lines. I have one more quotation to make, from a leading article published in the Hobart Mercury of the 2nd inst., and dealing with another letter by Dr. Spencer. The article is written by an exceedingly able and clever journalist, Mr. Nicholls, a man of great colonial experience, who was in Victoria 40 years ago writing for the press, and who has the happy knack of applying history to the complex facts of our daily life. He writes -

Mr. Walter Spencer, M.D., has written to the

Sydney Telegraph -

This does not refer to the letter which I have just read, but one published at an earlier date - a letter on "The White Australia Problem," which puts the whole case in its true light, and shows very conclusively the rash folly of what is now being done. The plain truth is, as we have endeavoured to show already more than once, that the question is not whether white or coloured men shall work in tropical Australia, but whether rich regions of country shall be abandoned, or left to the promiscuous occupation of the roving pearl-fishers, criminal white, and wandering Malays, Japanese, and Chinese. That white men cannot work to any effect at laborious occupations in a tropical, moist country is proved beyond all possibility of doubt, by evidence that only the utterly bigoted or utterly foolish can venture to deny or disregard. Dr. Spencer, who has resided for many years in tropical countries, writes as follows on this point "Whilst I was residing in the tropics, I again and again warned our countrymen against continuous hard labour in the open. After disregard of that advice, I again and again performed the funeral service over their remains. Provided with suitable clothing and shelter, one can exist and carry on many useful occupations in the torrid zone ; but the white man's progeny deteriorates from generation to generation, until their remote descendants no longer creditably resemble the stock from which they sprung. If, then, the white man cannot fulfil the conditions of hard labour under the tropical sun, what will be the fate of tropical Australia ? " Dr. Spencer explains the reason why white men cannot work in the tropics is that they do not happen to possess a second liver, or protective pigment in their skins, a fact so notorious, that it can only be ignored by blind politicians and cranky labour members. Further, as the doctor says, the children of white people in the tropics rapidly degenerate, until the third generation becomes so miserably weak that it dies out, and there is a very desirable end to it. Now, it is inexplicable that white men, however foolish, should desire, even clamour, to be placed in such circumstances, and the plain fact is, that they would not and could not work. We have this on the testimony of the Bishop of Carpentaria and dozens of others, whose evidence is worth that of all the labour members rolled into one. If, then, white men cannot and will not work at the manual occupations necessary to make tropical Australia productive, what must happen? Why, precisely what has happened in the Northern Territory. The country, though full of splendid resources, will be practically deserted, except by the roving races which cannot be kept away from its shores, and there will be a state of affairs a hundred times worse than if the whites had done their duty, and carefully superintended the coloured labour, which is one essential of tropical production. These are the plain facts of the case, facts now quite beyond denial, yet the foolish cry is still going on, solely because the labour party desires to keep a monopoly of what it is pleased to call the labour market. Is not Dr. Spencer's evidence, as to whether white men can work in the tropics without deteriorating, better than that of a farmer or sugar-cane grower ? If honorable senators will give me evidence on the



other side, I shall be happy to read it. So far I have heard it only on the one side. If we pass this Bill as it is, it will most certainly have to be repealed or modified. I should like to have seen the question of a tropical Australia fought out, but in consequence of the narrow view taken by honorable senators of the labor party--

Senator Higgs

- Why not blame the Government?

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Senator DOBSON

- We know that it is a Government question simply because the Prime Minister happened to be invited to tropical Queensland, and chanced to make a speech there, which at the time was partly on the lines of public opinion. Public opinion, however, has changed since the whole £6,000,000 of capital invested in the industry has been placed in danger. Supposing that instead of the sugar planters being in danger, there was a prospect of the working man being injured. Supposing there was some great change contemplated, whereby a whole industry was to be swept away, and 30,000 or 40,000 white mechanics deprived of their means of livelihood. Would the labour party say to the carpenter, " You are only 30 or 40 years of age. If you have to give up carpentering, go and learn the trade of a blacksmith or bricklayer? " If a question of that kind arose, would honorable senators of the labour party consider that they were bound by the pledges they had made six months before, when they were not in full possession of the facts ? Would they button up their thoughts, and refuse to listen to the appeal of the workers ? Would they not rather step out of the way to do justice ? I ask honorable members of that party to remember that they will do an injury to their own race by compelling them to work in the tropics.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- Or kill the industry.

Senator DOBSON

- Yes. I see that it is inconsistent to say, on the one hand, that the industry is going to be ruined, and on the other hand, that it will be saved if we give the planters seven years in which to make the change. We only ask for the extension in order that the planters may have time to make fresh arrangements, and endeavour to get capital from their friends. I do not believe that they will be able to get it from the financial institutions. It will give them more time to consider whether they should give up the calling of a lifetime

Senator Lt Col NEILD

-Col. Neild. - Or shift their machinery to New Guinea.

Senator DOBSON

-- Yes ; that will probably happen. Last week we passed resolutions agreeing to the Commonwealth taking over British New Guinea, with its 350,000 natives, and yet here we are saying that not one of those natives shall help to develop our territory.

Senator Fraser

- They are growing sugar in New Guinea now.

Senator DOBSON

- That may probably be one of the schemes which may be tried, but it will be no consolation to the citizens of the Commonwealth, who desire to see it progress, that there are flourishing plantations in New Guinea, when the output of sugar decreases, and thousands of our citizens are more or less' ruined in making the change. The same problem will still exist, and we shall still have to decide what we are to do with the tropical parts of the Commonwealth. If we are going to acquire these territories, including the New Hebrides, later, as I hope we may, it will remain a very important question to decide what we shall do with the natives.

Senator Major Neild

- The inhabitants of New Guinea will have to be deported under clause 8 of this Bill.

Senator DOBSON

- No ; under the clause of the Constitution under which we may acquire territories, it is provided that they shall have such representations as the Parliament of the Commonwealth thinks fit. Their people will be practically citizens . of the Commonwealth, and there is no power to pass laws excluding them from the Commonwealth of which they form a part. We could not do it. Are we going to say to over 350,000 coloured people in British New Guinea that when they are citizens of a territory belonging to the

Commonwealth not one of them shall put a foot within the Commonwealth ?

Senator Higgs

- Does the honorable senator think that this has anything to do with the amendment 1

Senator DOBSON

- I think it has, because I am trying to show that I do not believe that two years more, or ten years more, will absolutely save the industry. I believe with Dr. Spencer, that we shall have to get other kinds of labour if we wish to develop the tropical parts of the Commonwealth. I am discussing the broader issue, and I am not thinking only of the kanaka. We have millions of acres in the tropical districts, and we must have some form of coloured labour to develop them. What are we going to do when the Government asks us to take over the Northern Territory? Are honorable senators going to vote for that? I certainly am not, if a white Australia means that every coloured man has to be deported from the Commonwealth. If that is to be the policy it will be a shameful thing to take over any more tropical country.

Senator Sir JOSIAH Symon

- It will not be a white Australia, but a white elephant that we shall take over.

Senator DOBSON

- It would be a white elephant, and on behalf of the citizens generally, I should not be inclined to advocate the taking over of these territories under such a condition.

Senator Charleston

- The same thing will apply after the seven years.

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Senator DOBSON

- I fully see the inconsistency hurled at us, but I have tried to show that I do not believe that much help will be afforded by giving a further two years. I do not believe we can alter the conditions. I think that the labour party has shown too much anxiety about the question of wages. When we inquire what a fair wage is we have also to consider what wage the industry can pay. When my honorable friends point out that under contract work men are earning from £2 15s. to £3 15s. per week, all I can say is that I do not believe that there is one primary industry in a dozen that can pay such wages. If there is, so much the better. I think that in a tropical climate like that of North Queensland men ought to get 50 per cent. higher wages than in temperate places, but what does that mean? If men are getting £1 and rations in the temperate regions, it might be said that they should get 50 percent. more in the tropical regions, but I do not believe that those engaged in the industry can compete against all the black and yellow labour of the world, and pay more than 30s. per week. The whole industry depends, perhaps, more on the question of wages than on capital, and if the industry is asked to pay unreasonable wages it must be killed at once. I deny that the planters can be expected to pay anything like £2 10s. or £3 a week for field work. No industry could pay it. Then let honorable senators look at how the coloured men are regulated and prevented in every way from competing with the white men. They cannot even drive a cart.

Senator Higgs

- The honorable senator knows that there are 1,000 who are not engaged in the industry.

Senator DOBSON

- It only shows how unreal this sentiment is to tell us that there are 1,000 of these men, whose agreements have run out, and who are walking at large about the towns of Queensland. That brings me to the clause providing for the deportation of kanakas, and I do not believe that any one of them will ever be deported. I shall be surprised to see that clause passed. I do not think we have the power to pass it, or that it would be just to pass it. Everything goes to show that the feeling in Queensland is not what it is made out to be, and I think that honorable senators would do well to go out a step to meet these planters, and make friends and not enemies of them.

Senator DAWSON

- I have not so far addressed myself to this subject either on the second reading of the Bill or in committee, first because I was not physically capable of doing so, and another reason is that I early came to the conclusion that if all the information that could possibly be gathered upon this subject could be given by any honorable senator, and stated by him with the eloquence of a Gladstone, it would not alter a single vote, when the division came to be taken. The debate has been strung out to a great length. A lot of extraneous matter has been introduced and a number of false issues have been put by senators, who,

I expected, would know a little better from their experience in discussing matters of weight in Legislative Chambers. Senator Dobson started out this evening by informing honorable senators that he was in the dark, and was only feeling his way to the light, that he was seeking information, and would be eternally grateful to the honorable senator who would enlighten his darkened mind. I remember that when the second reading of the Bill was before the Senate, Senator Dobson was in a similar state of darkness, and when the honorable senator, who is better qualified than any man in this Senate or any member of the House of Representatives to speak on this subject, was prepared to give him the light for which he was seeking, the honorable and learned senator promptly rose from his seat and disappeared from the chamber, in order that he might remain until the very last in the state of darkness in which he found himself. I refer to Senator Glassey who represented the principal sugar district in the Queensland Parliament for many years. So far as Senator Dobson's remarks were personal to me, I regard them merely as a gibe, but if the honorable and learned senator meant them as an argument, his argument was one of the most foolish which has been used in the debate.

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Senator Dobson

- I read from a pamphlet the names of Queensland Premiers whom I did not know.

Senator DAWSON . -The honorable and learned senator prefaced his remarks by saying that since Sir Samuel Griffith had taken certain action there had been four Premiers, and that the first of them, Sir Hugh Nelson, had not pluck enough to reverse Sir Samuel Griffith's policy. It was not a question of his not having pluck enough, because Sir Hugh Nelson was never in favour of a reversal of that policy. He was against the introduction of that policy, and remained all through the piece consistently opposed to it.

Senator FRASER

- He was Premier at the time.

Senator DAWSON

- Quite so, but I am trying to show the false issue which Senator Dobson placed before the committee in saying that Sir Hugh Neilson had not pluck enough to reverse the policy, when it was not a question of his pluck, but a question of conviction and consistency. Sir James Dickson was in exactly the same position. He had left the Griffith Government, because he could not see eye to eye with his chief upon the kanaka question. So far as he was concerned, it was not a question of pluck. So far as I was concerned, during that brief and breezy period in which I was at that giddy height, I never was afforded an opportunity to reverse the policy, but I can assure Senator Dobson, and those who think with him, that if I had been afforded an opportunity I should have taken it quick and lively, and I, at all events, would have had pluck enough to attempt it.

Senator Dobson

- The honorable senator has skipped Mr. Byrnes, a very able man.

Senator DAWSON

- I should like to remind honorable senators that Mr. Byrnes was not long enough Premier of Queensland to afford him an opportunity of expressing his opinions, one way or the other, as Premier, upon this question. With reference to the present Premier, Mr. Philp, there is no question of pluck in his case, because he has been a consistent advocate of the retention of the kanaka in the sugar districts throughout the whole of his political life. So that it is not a question of pluck, but of certain individuals believing in a certain policy and holding to it consistently. It has been frequently urged in the course of the debate that Queensland gave a most decided and emphatic answer to the rest of the States of Australia as to what is her opinion upon the question of a white Australia and the exclusion of all coloured aliens from the Commonwealth. That answer was the return of five out of six senators in this Chamber, and of seven members to the House of Representatives, pledged to free Australia from all undesirable aliens, including Polynesians. It has been suggested that that occurred six months ago, that since that time there may have been a revulsion of feeling in Queensland, and that probably the people of that State are sorry for what they did, and if they had the opportunity now would reverse their decision. I remember that on one occasion Senator Dobson quoted the by-elections in Queensland as lending some colour to this opinion.

Senator Keating

- He only referred to the State bye elections.

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Senator DAWSON

- There is a very great difference between a State byelection ' and a Federal by-election. Since that time there has been only one Federal by-election, and that, was for the House of Representatives, and the Candidate who was pledged up to the hilt to follow in the footsteps of his father, and to fight tooth and nail for a white Australia, and to support the Government Bill - Mr. L. E. Groom - was triumphantly returned. It is a pure waste of time for honorable senators to say that the people of Queensland may change their opinion, unless\* they are able to furnish evidence in that direction. If they have no such evidence to furnish, let them keep their thoughts to themselves, and not crowd Hansard with absolutely unnecessary matter. I think that on the kanaka question the representatives of other States in the Senate should be largely controlled in their actions by the opinions expressed by not only individual Queenslanders who know the subject, but by the people of that State as a whole. While Senator Dobson and those who think with him are only prepared to act on the opinions expressed by individual Queenslanders we are prepared to act on the expressed opinions based- on knowledge and experience of Queenslanders as a whole. We prefer to take the opinions of the electors who stood shoulder to shoulder on election day, and returned us to the Senate to advocate a white Australia. Although many other questions were mentioned in the manifestos of the different candidates the elections were fought in Queensland on the issue of a white Australia. The great question of the Tariff was not touched upon at all. We took up the gauntlet which the other- side threw down,, and five candidates were returned in favour of a white Australia, and the other, who was not in favour of a white Australia, was on the water, and had the good fortune of -never having to make a speech.

Senator Pearce

- He pledged himself to a white Australia all the same.

Senator Ferguson

- So I do now.

Senator DAWSON

- I believe that every one of the six senators is pledged to a white Australia,, but we are pledged to a white Australia in our time; Senator Dobson has unearthed a gentleman called Dr. Spencer, who has written a great deal about the labour party, and seems to know all about them. He is exceedingly complimentary, and to judge by the language he uses he must be a very refined and cultured gentleman. I am deeply grateful to him for enriching my knowledge of the English language. He wrote a great deal about the tropics, and I noticed that he very carefully steered clear of any reference to tropical Queensland. He may know something of the tropics elsewhere, and if he had mentioned a district in Queensland where the white man has degenerated I should have joined issue with him. I was born in North Queensland, where I have lived all my life. My bad health is not due to that fact, but to coming down to the patchy climate of Melbourne. If a climate" will make a man degenerate and cause his children to be puny we had better deport all the kanakas and other aliens from North Queensland to Melbourne, and let them regenerate the race here. Dr. Spencer's sweeping statements about the effects of the climate in the tropics on, the constitution of the white race can be easily disproved by reference to the statistics. The mortality amongst the kanakas in the tropics of Queensland is very much greater than that amongst the white race there. In fact it is so great that it has caused a very grave scandal, for which we have had to blush. We have been denounced not only in different parts of Australia,, but in Exeter Hall in London, for our cruel and vicious treatment of the kanakas.

Senator Charleston

- It would not take long for them to be exterminated if they were allowed to remain.

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Senator DAWSON

- The argument was used throughout the federal campaign that the kanakas were dying so fast that in a few years there would be none left to recruit - that they could not stand the brand of civilization on the sugar plantations of Queensland, and that they were dying like rotten sheep. The white man has reached a higher standard of civilization, and refuses to be killed off in that way. Senator Dobson has stated that if the measure is carried in its present form the planters will come to the Commonwealth and ask for compensation. Let them come with that request, and it will be for us to say

whether it shall be granted. I fail to see that they have any claim for compensation. Senator Dobson would not give any reasons why they should come to the Commonwealth for compensation. " We owe them nothing, and whenever we think it is a fit and proper time to end the traffic in our own interests, we can take that course without paying or consulting the planters or their agents. At one time the question of compensation was raised in England with regard to the great transcontinental railway. It was said, in order to frighten the electors, that the English syndicates would come along and ask for compensation. They did come, but so far they have not got it ; and I think that if they live till the day of judgment they will be in the same position, simply because they have no claim. Where is the thousand walk-about kanakas" who have been mentioned by Mr. Philp, and who cannot be found about the sugar plantations ? I do not know where all of them are, but any one who has lived in South Brisbane for any length of time can discover a large number there. Every would-be swell has a kanaka groom and a kanaka coachman ; in fact, the late Premier was fined 10s. for having improperly employed a kanaka coachman on his premises. The kanakas are doing so well that they are taken up and made the petted boys of the would-be aristocrats of Brisbane. They dress considerably better than the average working man in Brisbane. In South Brisbane alone they have two very nice cricket clubs, and have lately formed a football club, and I believe it is their intention to challenge Tasmania. After they have mastered the intricacies of football they are going down to Government House to take lessons in the game of golf. A good deal has been said to-night about the opinion's expressed by Sirs Samuel Griffith. Every honorable senator is bound to give due weight to every word which is uttered on this question by Sir Samuel Griffith, who holds a very high position. He has studied the question ; he has been in the forefront of the battle for a great many years and undoubtedly he does know this question, but he is not the only man whose opinion is entitled to be considered. The extracts which were read to-night by Senator Gould, prompted by Senator Symon, are not in any way contradictory of the position which we take up. Senator Gould distinctly read out that Sir Samuel Griffith expressed the opinion that if Queensland joined the Commonwealth its representatives would have due regard to all the industries of Australia, and would do equal justice to all, particularly mentioning those of the northern States. There is no doubt that he made a reference to the sugar industry, and said that Queensland's representatives would take care to see that no injustice was done. I think he was quite correct in making that statement. He had a true and correct estimate of what would be done by the Commonwealth Parliament, when he used those words, and that is exactly what the Government propose to do - instead of putting the knife in at once, and chopping off the -supply they wish to continue the supply for five years, and to give a bonus to those planters who will make the experiment of carrying on the industry by means of white labour. This bonus, according to Dr. Maxwell, will put such planters in a better position - to the extent of £29,000 per annum - to make their crops profitable than they are in with kanaka labour.

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Senator Walker

- In which district ?

Senator DAWSON. - Senator Dobson was in the club-room when Dr. Maxwell pointed out that under the Government proposal the planters who employ white labour on the existing plantations would be £29,000 better off under the new conditions than they are at present. And by way of comparison he split up the acreage into three districts, and showed where it would work out unfairly with regard to district against district, but not with regard to the industry as a whole. For instance, he pointed out that the Bundaberg district would receive a benefit of £21,000, and the Mackay district a benefit of £9,000, and that the Cairns district would lose a few thousand pounds, but that the total gain from the employment of white labour at the current rate would be £29,000. If Dr. Maxwell's figures are correct, what becomes of this plea, and of this awful bemoaning moan that has gone through the Chamber, raised by Senators Ferguson, Fraser, and Walker, that if we carry the proposals of the Government we are going to ruin the sugar industry ? Is an advance of £29,000 from the Federal Treasury going to ruin an industry that is now doing without the £29,000 ? It appears to me that if I were in the sugar industry I could stand ruining on those terms about twice a day ! I have shown that we are not in conflict with the opinions expressed by Sir Samuel Griffith, and I will show now that- there is another eminent federalist who took a great interest in the movement in Queensland, and who, I venture to say, did more for it continuously than did even Sir Samuel Griffith or any other man in that State. I allude to the Postmaster-General, who is now leading the Senate. There is

not a man from one end of Queensland to the other who has taken such a continuously active interest in the federal movement as the honorable and learned senator. He has not only written papers and addressed meetings on the subject, but in his own journal week after week and year after year he has hammered away at the subject. I do not think there is a man in public life in Queensland who has done so much for the federal movement or knows so much about it as the Postmaster-General. If some honorable senators quote Sir Samuel Griffith, it is only fair to balance his name with that of a man who has done at least as much as, if not more, than that gentleman. The absurdity of the proposal of Senator Ferguson as opposed to that of the Government has already been demonstrated. The argument in favour of the seven years' period is that white men cannot do the work. If that be admitted, then seven years would be of no use to the industry. All it means is that, whereas the Government propose to kill the industry in five years, Senator Ferguson proposes to kill it in seven. In any case, according to this argument, it has to die. If that be so, I prefer that it should die in five years. I do not believe in cutting off a dog's tail inch by inch in order to save the animal pain. Senator Pulsford has quoted the remarks of the leader of the Opposition in the Queensland Parliament, but I am afraid he has entirely misunderstood them. Mr. Browne simply stated that, in his own opinion, five years was ample, and then went on to say that, if the sugar-planters had approached the Federal Parliament for an extension of time, he thought they would have got it. But that does not mean that Mr. Browne himself, were he here, would have voted for an extension beyond five years. I am firmly convinced that, if an extension for seven years is granted, long before the time is up there will be another proposal before the Senate for a further extension ; that another ad misericordiam appeal will be made; that more\* tears will be shed ; that the poor widow will once more be brought forward ; and that further attempts will be made to work upon the feelings of Parliament to grant another five years, upon which an amendment will be moved that the term be made seven years. And so the whole process will be gone over again. The Government are doing a wise thing in putting their foot down, and saying - " Here is our proposal; you can take it or leave it." If the planters who say they believe in a white Australia are really honest, and desire to get rid of their kanakas and put in white men, five years is an ample time to allow them. They will get the advantage of the Government bonus. But for those who are not prepared to support a white Australia, and to give that policy an honest trial, 50 years would not be enough. Therefore I see no reason for not supporting the Government in this measure.

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Senator WALKER

- I congratulate Senator Dawson on his excellent speech, and am glad that he is so far restored to health as to be able to speak so forcibly upon a subject in which he takes so much interest. Although I may be in a minority, I am glad to state that our friends in Queensland rejoice to see that the Senate is giving careful and honest consideration to their claim. In the other House they had few friends, but I have letters beside me to the effect that the planters look to the Senate to do them justice. We are asked what good a couple of years will do. At the present time I am in the unfortunate position of being the mortgagee of a saw-mill property in Brisbane. At the present time we find the very greatest difficulty in selling the machinery of that mill. We have to put the whole of it into the hands ' of engineers to be sold gradually. Similarly the Queensland sugar-planters who wish to clear out should have an opportunity of doing so gradually. If we give the planters seven years, many of them will look about to see if there is a suitable place to which they can remove their mills. Not many years ago, in New South Wales, when Mr. Reid was proposing to abolish the sugar duties, it came within my knowledge that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company was making arrangements to dismantle one of its works and take the machinery to Fiji. It is not improbable that before the seven years are up not a few mills in Queensland will be removed to Fiji or New Guinea. As a free-trader, I strongly object to mixing up the Tariff question with this matter. I agree cordially with what Senator Dawson said with regard to the consistent advocacy of federation by the Postmaster-General], and I also recognise that in this matter we have to pay great deference to the opinion of Senator Glassey, who may be looked upon as the fifth wheel of the Government coach. Very good reasons have been given for an extension of time, but I remind honorable senators that on one occasion Dr. Johnson remarked as to a reason which he had given on a certain subject - "Sir, I have given you a reason, but I am not bound to find you with an understanding also." Upon this subject I have received this afternoon a letter from the Childers district. I will read portions of it. The writer says - The Isis was a scrub of some 30,000 acres about twelve years ago, in which a few timbergetters and a

very few maize-growers made a very scanty and precarious livelihood. Experiments were made with cane, and it was found to grow freely on the red soil of the scrub. By the aid of the Queensland National Bank mostly the industry was introduced, and in 1893 enormous crops (in some cases 100 tons per acre) were grown. It was found that the sugar content of the cane was satisfactory, and a great impetus was given by the advent of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, whose mill first operated in 1895. The greater part of the district is in farms of 50 to 100 acres. With the growing of cane very many of the farmers believed that white labour could do all the work required. Amongst them were men with growing-up sons, thoroughly convinced that where a climate such as that obtained it would be wrong to employ any but white labour. Within three seasons following the advent of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company there were many harvesting companies formed. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company formed a harvesting gang, and all of them determined to give the white labour preference. At the conclusion of the three years trial, and in most cases long before, the hope of getting the work done by white labour was completely dispelled. Now there is not one farm on the Isis where the cane is grown and harvested by white labour alone, and the men who have had experience in growing and harvesting tell that it is possible to grow cane with white labour, but impossible to harvest it. I know several harvesting contractors, who year by year got together a band of whites for harvesting, as good men as could be got, and in some cases these bands kept together for a full month, but in most cases for a far shorter time, and then they were thoroughly demoralized. The wages paid was 30s. per week, but it was found to be not a matter of wages at all. The men could not stand it - even the very best of them. Cane harvesting has some peculiarities which it will be well to note. A well-grown field of cane stands about 12 feet high, 8 feet of which is crushable cane. At the time of harvesting the canes are swayed about at various angles and there is a confusing mass of trash, weeds, &c, around the cane roots. It is necessary that every cane be cut separately some 2 inches under the surface of the ground. If the cane is cut 2 inches above the surface the ratoon canes will sprout from the side of the stump, growing weakly, delicate canes and too many of them. Thus the ratoon crop will be destroyed. Then it is necessary to handle each cane separately to cut off the top, as canes vary greatly in length. These are the two matters which make the difficulty of cane harvesting by machinery, many think, an impossibility. At any rate, it has been found impossible, so far, to harvest any cane with any machine yet discovered. To do this work it has been found necessary to employ coloured labour - Chinese, Japanese, Kanakas and Hindoos. Of all these, the kanaka is the best, and the most reliable. There could be nothing further from the truth than the accusation of want of sufficient intelligence to understand the terms of a contract on the part of a kanaka. The planter who employs boys must study their character if he wishes to get on with them. He must be just and liberal in his dealings with them or well they know they have the "Mr. Government" - Polynesian inspector - to redress any grievances they may have. They make a stiff bargain as to wages, and if food is insufficient or faulty they will be careful to have that rectified at once. Then they are Australian in regard to holidays : A half-holiday Saturday afternoon every week, and all the other half holidays possible, with the clear understanding there must be no break in the pay. Then they are keen cricketers, enjoying to the full that king of games. As beginners in Christianity they are enthusiastic in attendance at church, and in hymn-singing. They are far more regular in church attendance than white labourers. It is unnecessary to speak of their temperance. They are temperate by Act of Parliament, any one giving or selling intoxicating liquor to a kanaka being liable to a heavy fine or imprisonment. Compared with their compeers they are much preferable to Hindoos as they are better workers, and better men both physically and mentally. As to the Chinese and Japanese, the kanaka is free from the vile ills of an effete civilization to which these aliens are subject. So far as coming into competition with white men in the labour market, there is infinitely less danger than with the others who can compete, in that they have been trained to live on less and cheaper food than the white. The kanaka, on the other hand, has not had to contend in the struggle for the bare necessities of living. On his islands the kanaka has been accustomed to have abundance of food, fish, and fruit and vegetables, and these he must have here, or he is discontented. Why then, it may be asked, has this agitation started. How is it that it has arrived at a pass word - "The kanaka must go." It is purely an ignorant fad. The worker in the Southern States know as much about cane-growing as we in the northern State know about the needs of wheat growers in South Australia, or dairy farmers in Victoria."

Senator Pearce

- I rise to a point of order. Is this quotation relevant to the point at issue, which is the extension of the term from five to seven years ?

The CHAIRMAN

- I must say that the honorable senator is travelling outside the amendment to a very large extent ; but by general consent, early in the debate, it was understood that certain questions at issue of a somewhat historical nature should be dealt with. I was obliged, in consequence of that understanding, to allow a little latitude; but I fear that it has been unduly availed of. This certainly is in excess of what is justly allowable.

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Senator WALKER

- I shall conclude by reading just a couple of sentences -

But if they are taken away in what way is their place to be filled so far as the Isis district is concerned ?

The 1,100 boys, that is. kanakas, are barely sufficient to a medium season. When a heavy crop occurs, as in 1898, there is need for a large addition. In that year there was an influx of about 300 Hindoos. "Now, the Hindoos are very much more to be feared in the interests of the white labourer than the kanaka, and his skin is just as black.

That letter was written by Mr. Joseph Stirling, a justice of the peace of Queensland, and a blacksmith by trade. I hope that those who oppose the extension asked for will consider whether they can not afford to be generous. They are strong - they should be generous. Let us Listen slowly.

Question - That the word proposed to be inserted be so inserted - put. The committee divided -

Ayes ... .. 9

Noes ... .. 14

Majority ... .. 5

Question so resolved in the negative.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 -

No. Pacific Island labourer shall enter Australia before the 31st day of March, 1904, except under a licence.

Senator DOBSON

- It will be in the recollection of honorable senators that Mr. Philp, the Premier of Queensland, who, I presume, is prepared to take the responsibility for his action, and who has acted in the most precise way, has asked the Senate to grant a commission of inquiry. He has said that the planters will be bound by that inquiry. That appears to me to be a reasonable request, but I have not had time to confer with the honorable senator whom I wish to consult in regard to this matter. I move, therefore -

That the Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The CHAIRMAN

- The honorable and learned senator has spoken on the clause, and he cannot move that now.

Senator DOBSON

- I have moved to report progress, and there is nothing in the standing orders to prevent me from discussing that motion.

The CHAIRMAN

- The matter is one of considerable difficulty. The standing orders are not definite upon the subject, but from the inquiries I have made from various sources, including the President and the Clerk, I learn that the practice, where these standing orders have been in force for some 40 years, is to allow no discussion whatever upon such a motion. The standing order bearing on the subject is No. 163 -

A debate may be adjourned on motion duly seconded, and without discussion, either to a later hour of the same day, or to any other day.

And Standing Order No. 385 provides -

Every question in. committee shall be decided in the same manner as in the House itself.

I propose allowing the motion that I report progress, but on the question of discussing that motion, the practice invariably followed in the Legislative Assembly of South Australia is to allow no discussion upon such a motion, and I rule accordingly.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- So far as I am aware this point has never arisen before. I do not recollect any occasion upon which an



honorable senator has moved that the

Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again. We are dealing now with a very important question which may give rise to considerable difficulty hereafter, and I ask the Chairman to give a ruling upon it.

The CHAIRMAN

- I wish that there shall be no misunderstanding. Senator Dobson rose and moved that I should report progress, and I intimated that I would allow the motion, but would not allow discussion upon it. I did not strictly rule in that way, but if any other honorable senator rises to discuss the motion I shall rule that he cannot do so, and so bring the matter to an issue.

Senator Dobson

- Before you give that ruling allow me to point out that when we accepted these standing orders temporarily as a guide we did not accept them with the addition of certain South Australian practices that honorable senators from South Australia are acquainted with, but which other honorable senators are ignorant of. I submit that you are therefore bound to rule on the standing orders as they are before the committee, and that they do not disallow debate.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- Am I to understand that, without hearing the matter discussed, you have decided to rule that this motion cannot be debated.

The CHAIRMAN

- I have.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- I do not rise at this time of the night to take exception to your ruling, but I protest against it and shall take another opportunity of taking exception to it.

Motion negatived.

Senator Major GOULD

- I understand that there is a desire that this matter shall be further considered at a later time, and I suggest that the Postmaster-General move to report progress. This clause is practically consequential on the clauses that have been passed, and there should be no difficulty in making progress to-morrow.

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Senator DRAKE

- I do not think it is reasonable to ask that we should adjourn. When the Bill was previously before the Senate I was inclined to- ask honorable members to sit later than four o'clock, but as it was represented to me that a number of honorable senators desired to catch their trains, I agreed not to do so, but distinctly said that I expected substantial progress to be made to-day. We are only one line further on with the Bill now than we were on Friday afternoon, and though I should not like to say that time has been wasted, honorable senators might have curtailed some of the speeches which have been made. It is desirable that we should get on with this Bill in order to make way for other work to-morrow, and there is plenty of time this evening to make some progress.

Senator HIGGS

- A battle has been fought and lost in the endeavour to get an extension of time, and everything has been said that could be said in support of an inquiry. Honorable senators should now allow the Bill to go through, as the remaining clauses are only machinery clauses, and depend on the clause which has just been passed.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- In dealing with the matter of the progress of public business, some regard should be had to the arrangements generally understood to exist in the Senate. There was nothing particularly reasonable in refraining from going on after four o'clock on last Friday. If we devoted a month to debating this most important question involving the prosperity of a great industry in Queensland, we should not waste one unnecessary minute. I certainly do not intend to allow clause 8 to pass without some discussion, as it involves the question of the deportation of the kanakas. If we are to stay here until it is debated and dealt with, we shall be landed in the same position as another place, and, perhaps, have an all night sitting for nothing. As we have very little business on the paper we may very fairly appeal to the Minister to adjourn.

Senator Lt Col NEILD

- I do not know whether it would clash with the views of any honorable senator, but I suggest that we

should take the clauses up to and inclusive of clause 7 and then adjourn. This is a very fair proposition, to which I hope the Minister will agree.

Senator Sir JOSIAHSYMON (South Australia). - We are all desirous of getting on with the Bill in reason, and I have no objection to assist the Minister to dispose of the Bill as far as clause 8.

Senator DOBSON(Tasmania). - I desire, sir, to point out that, notwithstanding this half-hour's discussion, I have not had an opportunity of moving that you report progress and ask leave to sit again on another day, so that in the meantime the Government may make the inquiry asked for by the Premier of Queensland. If I am not allowed to discuss that motion, I cannot explain why I wish you to leave the chair.

The CHAIRMAN

- Until the quarter of an hour has expired, the honorable and learned senator cannot move that motion.

Motion (by Senator McGregor) agreed to-

That the committee do now divide.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 (Licences not to be granted except as provided).

Senator DOBSON(Tasmania). - This clause is part of a measure which a great many people in Queensland and representative bodies say is unfair, and in order that the justice of their case may be shown, they ask that an inquiry may be made.

The CHAIRMAN

- That is a matter for the Senate to decide. The committee can only go through the clauses of the Bill.

Senator DOBSON

- In the Tasmanian Parliament, sir, we had a rule that the committee could report progress at any time, and if an honorable member wished the committee to report progress in order to get a Bill altered, he mentioned his intention at the time, and then every honorable member divided on the question, knowing that to report progress meant a certain thing.

The CHAIRMAN

- I ask the honorable and learned senator to deal with the question in the Senate.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 6 (Licences during 1901 and 1902).

Senator DOBSON(Tasmania).- I understand, sir, that the Bill has been remitted to this committee to consider the different clauses, but supposing that it should be of the opinion that it should not be further considered until certain information has been obtained in a particular manner, is there no procedure, sir, under which we can discuss that question?

The CHAIRMAN

- If honorable senators choose to report progress, of course, they can, but in the meantime I am obliged to go on with the clauses of the Bill.

Senator DOBSON

- Then, in pursuance of the standing orders, I shall move that you report progress.

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The CHAIRMAN

- Until six minutes to eleven o'clock that motion cannot be moved.

Senator PULSFORD

- In my speech on the second reading of the BUI, I drew attention to the extraordinary character of this clause, and I have not heard any explanation from the Postmaster-General as to how it is to be worked. The sugar industry of Queensland is in the hands of one person, but is in the hands of two or three thousand settlers, and how we are to apply this clause to the operations of two or three thousand settlers I cannot understand. Nearly all of these settlers use kanaka labour. A number are dispensing every month with certain kanakas who are at liberty to re-engage, but they will not all be able to engage in the proportion herein fixed. Supposing that 100 or 200 farmers part with some of their kanakas during the first half of next year, how will their right to re-engage three fourths of them be arranged under the clause ? Is it proposed under the power to make regulations to prescribe the method without reference to the Senate ?

Senator DRAKE

- It will be met by regulations. The substance of the clause is perfectly clear. If 1,000 kanakas have been

returned during 1901, then only 750 can be imported during 1902. The method by which these licences will be issued must be dealt with by regulation by the Governor-General.

Senator Pulsford

- Surely the Minister can give some idea as to what will establish the right to the re-issue of a licence, and how the licences will be distributed. Under the clause I foresee a state of everlasting chaos when next year arrives.

Senator DRAKE

- I cannot tell the honorable senator what regulations will be made by the Governor-General to meet this case, for the simple reason that, I do not know. I do not anticipate that any difficulty will arise. The matter appears to me to be extremely simple.

Senator HIGGS(Queensland). - I have in my hand a copy of the Pacific Island Immigration Agent's report. It contains a list of the registered employers of kanakas, and I take it that if a planter has 100 kanakas in his employ, and a certain number of them depart he will not be entitled to re-engage except t under the terms of this clause.

Senator DOBSON(Tasmania). - I rise, sir, once more to move -

That the Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

I desire to know if you have considered the point I mentioned, and to intimate that if you. rule that the question cannot be debated I shall dissent from your ruling. We are bound by the standing orders as they appear in this book, and not by any practice in South Australia, unless it is the obvious and only meaning of the standing orders. As the standing orders do not say that a motion to report progress shall be put without debate, it follows, just as night follows day, that I can debate that motion when it is moved. I desire to know, sir, whether, having considered the point, you rule that it is not debatable.

The CHAIRMAN

- Standing Order 163 says -

A debate may be adjourned on motion duly seconded and without discussion either to a later hour of the same day or to any other day.

I admit that there is room for doubt about the interpretation of the rule. I have had the advantage of discussing the practice of these standing orders of the House of Assembly in South Australia. I consulted the President and the Clerk on the subject, and they told me what the practice had been invariably for over 40 years, and I think I have no alternative but to accept the construction which has been so consistently placed on them during that long period. I rule that no discussion can take place on the motion.

Senator Dobson

- I beg, sir, to hand in my written dissent from your ruling. It is as follows : -

I 'dissent from the ruling of the Chairman, on the ground that the Senate is bound b3' the standing orders as they appear in the printed copy of the standing orders, but is not bound by any practice of the South Australian Parliament in connexion with any such orders, unless such practice is the only obvious meaning of such orders.

In the Souse :

Senator Best

- Mr. President, in committee the question was put that I should " report progress, and ask leave to sit again." An attempt was then made by an honorable senator to discuss that motion. I ruled, in accordance with Standing Orders 163 and 385, that there could be no discussion upon the question that I " report progress, and ask leave to sit again." Senator Dobson has thereupon written out an objection to my ruling, and I have to ask for your decision on the point.

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Senator Major Gould

- Would it not be in order for honorable senators to discuss this matter before you rule 1

The PRESIDENT

- I am quite willing to hear any honorable senator before I give a ruling.

Senator Stewart

- There is nothing to rule upon yet.

The PRESIDENT

- There has been an appeal to the President, and I propose to give a ruling, but if any honorable senator wishes to speak I am willing to 'hear him.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- What Senator Stewart referred to just now was that the honorable and learned senator who takes exception to the ruling of the Chairman of Committees ought to move that the ruling 'be disagreed with. That I think is the customary course.

The PRESIDENT

- Oh, no. A ruling has been given by the Chairman of Committees. What happened in committee I only know officially from the report of the Chairman. From his report I learn that his ruling has been dissented from ; and I am now asked whether that ruling was correct or not. That is the whole position is as I am concerned.

Senator Major Gould

- The time to make a motion would be after the President had given a ruling. If the Senate were dissatisfied with that ruling, it would be competent for an honorable senator to move dissent from it. It seems to me to be wrong that there should be no opportunity of discussion . when an honorable senator takes exception to the ruling of the Chairman, and moves that that ruling be disagreed with. Senator Dobson has pointed out that we are not bound by the practice of the South Australian Parliament, but only by the standing orders we have adopted, as far as they are applicable to our purposes. A practice may have arisen in South Australia which is absolutely erroneous. All we have to go upon is the actual standing orders which we have temporarily adopted. A different practice, has been adopted in the House of Representatives, where I believe they have similar standing orders.

The PRESIDENT

- No, they have altered them.

Senator Major Gould

- The universal practice of most Houses upon a motion that the Chairman leave the chair is to allow the fullest opportunity for debate.

The PRESIDENT

- Is not the honorable and learned senator now arguing against his own statement that we are bound by the standing orders, and not by the practice of other Houses of Legislature'

Senator Major Gould

- The standing orders of other Houses allow the Chairman to be moved out of the chair, and on such a motion the universal practice has been in these States to allow an opportunity of discussing the question. We have to 'be care- f'u-1 to protect om1 liberties and our freedom of speech within reasonable bounds, and ought to see that no attempt is made to curtail those liberties. Of course, if a rule is laid down and accepted by the Senate, it becomes the practice of the Senate for the time being, but until something of that kind is done, I submit that it is not only wrong, but mischievous, that any attempt should be made to restrict fair and reasonable debate. The President, as the highest officer of the Senate, is the man to whom we look to protect our liberties. We, therefore, appeal to you, sir, for your ruling, feeling sure that on a matter of this kind you will have no desire to -restrict the opportunities of honorable senators for discussing matters to which they happen to be opposed. Minorities should !be allowed the fullest opportunity of expressing opinions to which they desire to give expression.

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Senator Lt Col Neild

- I was the senator who moved that progress be reported. I submit that such a motion is different from an ordinary motion for the adjournment of the . debate. Of course, the Chairman leaving the chair would be an interruption of the debate, but there is a vast difference between - moving an adjournment and moving an absolute interruption of- the entire proceeding a. I took the step I did expressly for the purpose of securing an- opportunity of saying one or two words. I had no desire to block the proceedings. On the contrary, my wish was to facilitate business. I should not have moved the motion except for the purpose of making a personal explanation. That in itself is a reason against the ruling of the Chairman in committee from which I dissent in all possible good faith. I hold that unless there is an opportunity afforded for giving reasons for moving the Chairman out of the chair no such motion could ever be moved with any hope of being carried. It would be futile to move it. I mention these points because it seems to

me we have a right to explain why the Chairman ought to leave the chair.

The PRESIDENT

- By Standing Order 163 it is provided that -

A debate may be adjourned on motion duly seconded, and without discussion, either to a later hour of the same day, or to any otherday.

That motion cannot be moved in committee. The analagous motion which can be moved is -

That the Chairman report progress.

Standing Order 385 says -

Every question in committee shall be decided in the same manner as in the House itself.

My interpretation of those standing orders, which has been concurred in in the State from which they come, is that Standing Order 163 - which provides that a motion to adjourn consideration of a matter shall not be discussed - applies to the analagous motion in committee. Honorable senators seem to overlook the fundamental position which a committee is in. A committee has only a delegated power. It has no right whatever to discuss any matter which is not referred to it by the Senate. The only matter which is referred to the Committee of the Whole, when a Bill is committed, is the Bill itself and the clauses in the Bill, and the committee have no right to raise questions of policy, or to discuss abstract motions as to other questions which are not involved in the Bill. If honorable senators will look at Standing Order 406, they will find what the powers of the committee are in reference to Bills. That standing order provides that the committee are empowered -

To make such amendments therein as they shall think fit, provided they be relevant to the subject-matter of the Bill.

Some remarks have been made as to the right of senators to discuss matters, freedom of speech, and so on. I should be the last to attempt to curtail freedom of speech in any way whatever. The only point is as to whether the honorable and learned senator who moved that the Chairman " report progress and ask leave to sit again" took the proper mode of bringing a subject which he wished to discuss before the Senate. As a matter of fact, he did not propose to bring it before the Senate at all, but only before the committee, who are only authorized to discuss the clauses of the Bill itself. It has been asserted that the practice in other countries differs. Of course I cannot speak of what is the practice in all States and countries, but the practice in the British House of Commons does not differ. In May, 10th edition, page 369, the following passage appears : -

It is the practice for members who desire to close the sitting of a committee, to move that the "Chairman do report progress, and ask leave to sit again," in order to put an end to the proceedings of the committee on that day - that is all - - this motion in committee being analogous to that frequently made at other times for adjourning the debate.

Those are the very words I used. In committee the analogous motion is to move that the Chairman report progress. In the House the motion is for the adjournment of the debate. My ruling is that the Chairman was quite right in preventing a discussion, but of course that does not prevent any honorable senator from bringing forward in the Senate any question relating to the Bill. The Senate is the proper place in which to bring forward any such question.

Senator Dobson

- But I cannot bring it forward till the committee has finished.

Senator Major Gould

- Has not the House of Commons special standing orders dealing with the question in the House and in committee ?

The PRESIDENT

- Not that I know of.

Senator Major Gould

- Shall I be in order to-morrow in giving notice of motion to dissent from your ruling ?

The PRESIDENT

- No; it is necessary to take action at once.

Senator Best

- Under Standing Order 151 such an objection must be taken at once.

Senator Major Gould

- Very well. I do not propose to do so at the present time, but I shall be, glad when we have our own standing orders.

InCommittee :

Motion negatived.

Clauses 6 and 7 agreed to.

Clause. 8 -

An officer authorized in that behalf may bring before a court of summary jurisdiction a Pacific Island labourer found in Australia before the 31st day of December, 1906, whom he reasonably supposes not to be employed under an agreement : and the court, if satisfied that he is not and has not during the preceding month been so employed, shall order him to be returned to the place from which he was originally brought into Australia, and he shall be returned accordingly.

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Senator Lt Col NEILD

- I shall have occasion probably to debate this clause at very great length. I made a courteous proposal to the Postmaster-General just now, to which he was not courteous enough to reply. I suggested that, as clause 8 was a debatable one, we should proceed as far as clause 7 and then report progress. I have assisted in passing clauses 4, 5, 6, and 7, and I would appeal to the Postmaster-General to have consideration for those honorable senators who were travelling last night - -not only from New South Wales, but from other States - and to agree to an adjournment at this late hour. At no time have I obstructed the passing of this Bill, and we are likely to have a more friendly discussion to-morrow than we can possibly have now when our tempers have got a 'little bit strained. I have only spoken once during the sitting.

Senator DRAKE

- I certainly did hear the honorable senator say that he was willing to go as far as clause 7, and suggest that we should then adjourn till to-morrow. I failed to respond not from any want of courtesy. I am disappointed with the progress which we have made with this Bill. It is true that we have passed four clauses one after the other. But, from 2.30 p.m. until eleven p.m., the committee has been discussing one clause of two lines. During the second reading, the questions of the extension of time and of the deportation of kanakas were thoroughly discussed, and scarcely anything has been added to the discussion to-day that is new.

Senator Lt Col Neild

- Will the Minister consent to postpone clause 8, and deal with the remainder of the Bill to-night 1

Senator DRAKE

- That would be of no advantage, because these questions of deportation and extension of time are the only ones that have been discussed. We have been engaged for two days in dealing with the question of extension of time, and directly we come to the second point we are asked to adjourn, and to start again to-morrow. It would not be fair to agree to adjourn now. There is other important business coming forward to-morrow, and if we do not get the Bill through committee to-night, that business will be displaced. There are other reasons known to the Senate why it is desirable to push on with business. I propose to go on with the Immigration Restriction Bill to-morrow if we dispose of this measure to-night. 1

Senator Major GOULD

- I am sorry that the Postmaster-General does not see fit to consent to the adjournment. Until a few moments ago I was under the impression that he had made a promise to adjourn at this stage, and I know that one or two honorable senators who have paired and gone away are under the same impression. No doubt this clause is subsidiary to clause 3, but it is of sufficient importance to justify full consideration in committee. It provides for the return of kanaka labourers to their homes, and the question arises as to what power we have to pass a clause of this kind. The question also comes up as to whether it is reasonable that such a clause should be in the Bill. ' There will be no possibility of importing kanakas after a certain date, and before that date they will only be allowed to come in in very limited numbers. Therefore their numbers must decrease, and it is a question of policy whether power should be placed in the hands of any officer, where he has cause to believe that a kanaka is not employed under agreement, to bring him before a court of summary jurisdiction, and for us to provide that -

The court if satisfied that he is not, and has not during the preceding month, been so employed, shall

order him to be returned to the place from which he was originally brought into Australia, and he shall be returned accordingly.

There is no provision as to who is to return him. He is out of employment, he has no master, and no one is responsible for him, and yet the court is to make an order that he is to be returned forthwith. It may be that he is to be returned at the cost of the Government. Is it wise to adopt a provision of this kind in the Bill ? I have no desire to discuss this matter at any undue length. I take it that the great principle was fought earlier in the evening. I know that there are one or two honorable senators who have left the chamber who would like to debate this matter, and who probably would have been able to give the Senate a -very much better opinion than I can give in regard to the legal aspect of the case. I have not gone into the matter, but some of those who have seem to entertain very strong views upon it.

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Senator DRAKE

- I think it is necessary, and very desirable, that we should hike power to deport kanakas under this Bill. This clause raises the question of whether the islanders ill ready in Australia are to remain here. We must deride it in this Bill, and this provision will be an expression of opinion on the part of Parliament as to the desirability of deporting these men when they terminate their agreements. With regard to our power to make laws for the deportation of these kanakas, I would refer Senator Gould to section 51 of the Constitution. First of all, in sub-section (26) we have power to make laws with respect to -  
The people of any race, other than the aboriginal in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

Then, we have sub-section (27) - "Immigration and Emigration"; sub-section (29) - "External Affairs"; and sub-section (30), which gives power to make laws with respect to-  
The relations of the Commonwealth with the islands of the Pacific.

I think these are sufficient to show that we have the power of deportation. This power has been claimed and exercised by the Queensland Government under the laws of Queensland.

Senator Major Gould

- Under the agreement entered into between the kanakas and their employers.

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Senator DRAKE

- Yes ; and those agreements will continue to be the same. Every kanaka, when he comes to the end of his agreement, has either to go back to his island or renew his engagement. The Government of Queensland have therefore always claimed the power to insist upon his returning to his island. I quote from a regulation framed in 1896, and which, having been assented to, has the force of law, and it is too late now to raise the question as to whether it is ultra vires -

Every time expired islander shall within one month after the expiration of his agreement be required either to return to his native island or to enter into a fresh engagement with his last or some other employer.

I do not know whether the question has been tested in a court of law, as to whether an islander can be compelled to return to his island, but we have one case in Queensland where a large number of islanders were deported, and as the action taken in deporting them has never been called in question it must be admitted as going a long way to show that Queensland under Queensland laws has successfully claimed the right of deporting islanders. I propose to quote from Votes and Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament for 1885, volume 2, page 1053. By way of preface I should explain that previous to 1885, eight vessels had brought islanders to Queensland, and a question was raised as to whether those islanders had been legally recruited, in consequence of their not having known what were the terms of their engagement. A Royal commission was appointed on the 23rd December to inquire into the matter. They reported that these islanders did not understand the nature of their agreement, and in consequence of that they were ordered by the Governor in Council to be returned to their islands. Honorable senators considering the legal aspect of the case will be interested in this extract from the Minutes of Proceedings of the Executive Council of Queensland of 4th May, 1885 -

His Excellency the Governor, at the instance of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, lays before the Council the report of the commissioners appointed under the Royal commission of the 23rd December, 1884, to inquire into the circumstances under which certain labourers, natives of New Guinea, and of the islands in the Western Pacific Ocean, including the D'Entrecasteaux Islands and the Louisiade

Archipelago, who had been introduced into the colony under the provisions of the Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1880, had been engaged, the manner in which the nature of their engagements had been explained to them, and as to the understanding by the said labourers of the nature of their engagements, and of the period for which they were alleged to have agreed to remain in the colony, and invites the special attention of the Council to the findings of the commissioners, from which it appears that, in their judgment, none of the islanders who were introduced into the colony by

The Ceara, sailing from Brisbane on 31st December, 1883 ;

The Lizzie, sailing from Townsville on 22nd December, 1883 ;

The Ceara, sailing from Townsville on 13th March, 1884 ;

The Lizzie, sailing from Townsville on 14th March, 1884;

The Hopeful, sailing from Townsville on 3rd May, 1884 :

The Sybil, sailing from Mackay on 22nd April, 1884 ;

The Forest King, sailing from Brisbane on 31st October, 1884;

The Heath, sailing from Mackay on 19th July, 1884; understood that they were engaged to work in Queensland, on sugar plantations, for the period of three years, and that many of these islanders were procured by force or fraud.

The Council, after carefully considering the evidence, concur in the findings of the commissioners, and advise -

That the Government undertake the duty of returning the whole of the islanders introduced by these ships to their native islands.

That the several inspectors of Pacific Islanders, in whose district the islanders are employed, be instructed to inform the islanders that they are at liberty to return to their islands forthwith.

That provision be made for the maintenance of such of the islanders as wish to return until arrangements are made for their departure.

That the Honorable the Colonial Secretary be authorized to make the necessary arrangements for these purposes.

That the bonds against kidnapping given in respect of each of the voyages above mentioned (with the exception of that given in the case of the Hopeful, the amount of which has been paid) be enforced.

Immediate action.

V. Drury.

Clerk of the Council.

I am speaking from memory, but I think that under that Order in Council the number of kanakas deported to their islands was 1,200, and they were returned in a steamer called the Victoria. That shows that the power to deport islanders has been exercised in Queensland, and I submit that the powers given to us under the Constitution are larger powers than those possessed by the Queensland Government. I think, therefore, that this clause is clearly within the powers given to us under the Constitution.

Senator KEATING

- I should like to ask the Postmaster-General if the legislation in Queensland to which he has referred is exactly on all fours with this Bill with regard to the powers given to justices to order the return of islanders to the place from which they were originally brought into Australia ? I should like to ask the honorable and learned senator also if he thinks that this power is given in such a manner as to invest a tribunal with authority to order that any particular islander should be returned to any particular place, if those in possession are not disposed to allow the Commonwealth to exercise its power, or the particular place be depopulated or otherwise undesirable?

Senator DRAKE

- I think there is no section in any of the Queensland Acts exactly corresponding to this. All the Queensland Acts apparently contemplate that the islander shall, on the termination of his engagement, return to his island ; because after providing that the engagement shall be for three years, the Acts and regulations go on to provide that the employer shall each year pay a certain amount of money towards paying his passage back. There was an understanding from that that the islander should go back, but there was nothing to prevent him from entering into a fresh engagement instead. With regard to this expression, "return to the place from which he was originally brought," it has been pointed out that some of the kanakas have engaged again and again, and have been a long time in Australia. It is possible that



the island, or part of the island, from which they were imported may have become almost depopulated, or may have become an unsuitable place to which to return them. Again, changes may have taken place which would render it unsafe for them to be landed at the places from which they were originally brought. I am willing to agree to an amendment omitting those words, with a view to substituting for them the words "deported from." I therefore move -

That the words "returned to the place from which he was originally brought into," in subsection (1), be omitted, with a view to insert in lieu thereof the words "deported from."

That will leave the matter in the hands of the Governor-General in Council. Supposing there are several thousands of kanakas to be deported, it should be a great advantage to have the power to deport them to some particular island if they choose to go. If a kanaka who has been in Queensland for many years desires to return to the island from which he came, he can be returned, but if he has been away from that place for a long time, and things have so changed that he prefers to be deported to another place on that island, or to another island, the Governor-General in Council should have power to allow him to be so deported. What I propose is that the Governor-General in Council shall have power to send a kanaka to the place to which he wishes to go, that he shall not be forced, as he might be, no doubt, to return the kanaka to a most unsuitable place. If this amendment is made it will obviate the possibility of any constitutional question arising.

Senator Lt Col NEILD

-Col. NEILD (New South Wales). - As I understood this verbal harlequinade, it is a proposal to empower the Governor-General in Council to order a kanaka to be deported anywhere, without limitation of locality.

Senator Drake

-That is right.

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Senator Lt Col NEILD

- What kind of a condition of legislative insanity are we getting into when a Minister of the Crown will blandly move such a proposition? Surely he must recognise that it is time to go home when he proposes that the Governor-General in Council shall have authority to do what no Government in the world has ever attempted to claim as a right - to take people living within its own borders, and dump them down in any part of creation it pleases. The Postmaster-General must be insane, or, to use another phrase, suffering from brain fag, to make such a proposition. There is no such provision on the statute-book of any nation. I recognise that he is quite right in not desiring to make it obligatory to re-deliver a kanaka at some place which may now be depopulated, but this amendment is really too eccentric to be considered. Surely he can submit an amendment more consonant with common sense and international law ?

Senator DRAKE

- I can assure Senator Neild that I am not mad, although I am greatly amazed at his extraordinary argument. Every civilized country claims for itself the right to escort any person it likes to its frontier, and the only limitation is that, according to international law, one civilized community is not allowed to dump criminal or undesirable persons down in the dominions of another civilized Power. The Governor-General in Council, I have no doubt, will take every care that these islanders are not deported in such a way as to give offence to any Power. The greatest care will be taken to see that the deportation is carried on in the interests of the islanders.

Senator Lt.-Col.NEILD (New South Wales). - Is there anything analogous between the German Government conducting a Frenchman to its frontier and telling him to get into his own country, and the Commonwealth Government placing an unfortunate black fellow or yellow fellow on a ship, and dumping him down somewhere else in the world ? The Postmaster-General must see that he cannot bamboozle the committee and the press with such an erratic proposition. The principle of this amendment is not to conduct people to a frontier, but to another country. No such principle can possibly be in accord with international law. The definition of Pacific Islander in clause 2 does not exclude Pacific Islanders who may be naturalized British subjects, and I dare say that some of the kanakas who have lived in Queensland for seventeen and twenty years, and have wives and homesteads, are naturalized British subjects. Yet the Postmaster-General, with a gravity which claims my admiration as a histrionic performance, proposes to take the right to lay hands on a British subject, and carry him off to any part of the world that may seem convenient, because it must be borne in mind that this clause provides for immediate deportation, and

contains no provision for the detention of a person who has been arrested pending the departure of a vessel. If he moves away is he to be arrested a second time - after the Commonwealth has failed to remove him - or is he to be illegally imprisoned? Is he to be followed all over Australia and arrested from time to time until it is convenient to find some means of conveying him outside its limits? If the Postmaster-General has no respect for the committee, he might have some respect for his own reputation, and not submit such a proposition, because it is sheer nonsense.

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Senator DOBSON

- I again make an appeal to the Postmaster-General to allow progress to be reported. I desire to call attention to an important point, but I do not intend to do it now, and if progress is not reported I shall have to do it to-morrow, on the motion for the third reading. The objection to this clause is that we leave it to a court of summary jurisdiction to settle the important question of whether kanakas shall be deported or not. This is simply playing into the hands of the planters, because many of them as leading men must be justices of the peace. If the Postmaster-General is in earnest about the Bill, I should advise him not to allow a court of summary jurisdiction to decide such matters. If these kanakas were German or American subjects, I should like to know whether they would be deported in the manner proposed. If they were, I am sure that the countries to which they owed allegiance would protest in the language of diplomacy, if not in stronger terms.

Senator Major GOULD (New South Wales). - I think it is a reasonable thing that there should be an adjournment, because the clause is one of a very difficult nature, and there is considerable doubt as to whether it can be legally enacted or not. There has been no obstruction, but simply a desire to discuss the matter fully in all its bearings. It is better that it should be discussed in committee than that the third reading should be delayed.

Senator DRAKE

- With regard to the point raised by Senator Dobson, the courts of summary jurisdiction have very important matters to deal with, and as in this case all that the court will have to decide, is whether the islander is under agreement or not, it is a point which can easily be determined by a court of summary jurisdiction.

Senator Lt.-Col. NEILD (New South Wales). - At this time of the night, we appear, with a bare quorum, to be hacking the clause to pieces. What is taking place is the best possible proof of the wisdom of those who have asked for an adjournment, so as to let this matter be settled according to common sense and international law. To show my bona fides in this matter, if this clause is postponed until to-morrow, I give the Postmaster-General my word that I shall not speak upon the third reading of the Bill. This amendment really proposes to put these kanakas in the position of "returned empties." With a view of saving time, I appeal to the honorable and learned senator to take the discussion upon this clause to-morrow. If the whole matter has to be debated on the third reading I shall not be responsible.

Senator DOBSON (Tasmania). - I ask the Postmaster-General if he insists upon going on?

Senator Drake

- Yes, I do.

Senator DOBSON

- I suppose this clause is intended to affect the 1,000 kanakas, who, it is said, are now in Queensland, and are not under any engagement. I would like the honorable and learned senator to say whether he has considered the case of any of these men who may have rented cottages, who may have entered into contracts of service, or who may be conducting a business in any way. It cannot be said that I have been guilty of obstruction upon this measure, and I do not know what I have done that I should be compelled to work here when I am absolutely unfit for it.

Senator Drake

- The question of the exemptions was fully dealt with on the interpretation clause. I think there can be no doubt that this clause will apply to any islander who comes within the definition given in that clause.

Senator DOBSON

- The honorable and learned senator has not answered my question. I wish to know if he can say what these 1,000 men who have been referred to are doing?

Senator Drake

- I cannot say what occupations those islanders are following, but I think there are very few in Queensland who are occupying cottages, or carrying on a business of any kind.

Senator DOBSON

- In order to introduce a little leniency and justice into the clause, I desire to move that the word " shall " be struck out with the view of inserting the word "may."

Senator Drake

- I decline to withdraw my amendment.

Senator DOBSON

- Surely the amendment I suggest is worth considering ? Are the regulations to be so framed that an order can be made for the return of an islander within one month or up to six months? Will the court give him six months, for instance, in which to get rid of his house or dispose of his business, or complete his hired service? From the way in which Senator Drake has answered me, I do not think that either himself or his colleagues can have considered this point ? They appear to look upon these men as so many diseased sheep or cattle. We have made use of them and they are to be got rid of. Are our labour friends afraid of their own courts, that they will not accept this amendment ? I appeal to the Postmaster-General to let my amendment be put.

Senator Drake

- There has been too much " stone-walling " already.

Senator Lt Col Neild

- That is an insult to the Chamber.

Senator DOBSON

- Yes, and a personal insult to me, and to show my resentment I shall leave the chamber, and take no further part in these proceedings.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause further consequentially amended, and agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Senator HIGGS

- In deference to the wishes of honorable senators who are desirous that the Bill should be a compromise, I do not intend to proceed with my proposed new clause, providing that the kanakas shall be paid a certain wage. Their present wages are deplorably low - somewhere about 2s. 6d. a week; but, inasmuch as the consensus of opinion is that the planters should have five years under present conditions in which to make arrangements for doing away with kanakas, I shall not move the clause of which I have given notice.

Bill reported with amendments.

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00:32:00

Senate adjourned at 12.32 a.m. (Thursday).