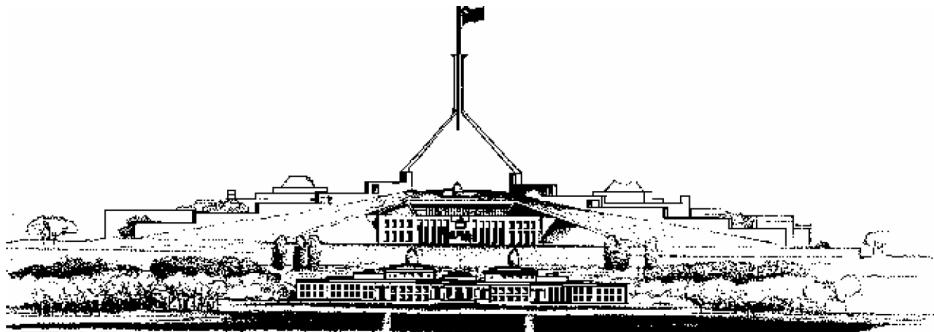




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



House of Representatives

Official Hansard

No. 51, 1913
Wednesday, 17 December 1913

FIFTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

His Excellency the Right Honorable THOMAS, BARON DENMAN, P.C., Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

COOK ADMINISTRATION.

(*From 24th June, 1913.*)

Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs ...	The Honorable Joseph Cook.
Treasurer	The Right Honorable Sir John Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G.
Attorney-General	The Honorable William Hill Irvine, K.C.
Minister of Defence	The Honorable Edward Davis Millen.
Minister of External Affairs ...	The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.
Minister of Trade and Customs ...	The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom.
Postmaster-General	The Honorable Agar Wynne.
Vice-President of the Executive Council	The Honorable James Hiers McColl.
Honorary Minister	The Honorable William Henry Kelly.
Honorary Minister	The Honorable John Singleton Clemons.

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE.

FIFTH PARLIAMENT.—FIRST SESSION.

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator the Honorable David John O'Keefe.

Bukhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston	Tasmania.
Barker, Stephen	Victoria.
Barnes, John	Victoria.
Blakey, Albert Edward Howarth	Victoria.
Buzacott, Richard	Western Australia.
Clemons, Hon. John Singleton	Tasmania.
de Largie, Hon. Hugh	Western Australia.
¹ Ferricks, Myles Aloysius	Queensland.
Findley, Hon. Edward	Victoria.
Gardiner, Albert	New South Wales.
Givens, Hon. Thomas	Queensland.
Gould, Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Sir Albert John, V.D.	New South Wales.
Guthrie, Robert Storrie	South Australia.
² Henderson, George	Western Australia.
Keating, Hon. John Henry	Tasmania.
Long, James Joseph	Tasmania.
Lynch, Patrick Joseph	Western Australia.
Maughan, William John Ryott	Queensland.
McColl, Hon. James Hiers	Victoria.
² McDougall, Allan	New South Wales.
McGregor, Hon. Gregor	South Australia.
Millen, Hon. Edward Davis	New South Wales.
Mullan, John	Queensland.
Needham, Edward	Western Australia.
Newland, John	South Australia.
Oakes, Charles William	New South Wales.
O'Keefe, Hon. David John	Tasmania.
O'Loghlin, Lt.-Colonel the Hon. James Vincent, V.D.	South Australia.
Pearce, Hon. George Foster	Western Australia.
Rae, Arthur	New South Wales.
Ready, Rudolph Keith	Tasmania.
^a Russell, Edward John	Victoria.
Senior, William	South Australia.
Stewart, Hon. James Charles	Queensland.
Story, William Harrison	South Australia.
Turley, Henry	Queensland.

¹ Sworn 13th August 1913.—² Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees 18th August, 1913.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FIFTH PARLIAMENT.—FIRST SESSION.

Speaker—The Honorable William Elliot Johnson.

Chairman of Committees—The Honorable James Mackinnon Fowler.

Abbott, Percy Phipps	New England. (N.S.W.)
Ahern, Cornelius Joseph	Indi. (V.)
Anstey, Frank	Bourke. (V.)
Archibald, William Oliver	Hindmarsh. (S.A.)
Arthur, John Andrew	Bendigo. (V.)
¹ Atkinson, Llewelyn	Wilmot. (T.)
Bamford, Hon. Frederick William	Herbert. (Q.)
Bennett, James	Gippsland. (V.)
Best, Hon. Sir Robert Wallace, K.C.M.G.	Kooyong. (V.)
Boyd, Hon. James Arthur	Henty. (V.)
Brennan, Frank	Batman. (V.)
Burchell, Reginald John	Fremantle. (W.A.)
Burns, George Mason	Illawarra. (N.S.W.)
Carr, Ernest Shoobridge	Macquarie. (N.S.W.)
Catts, James Howard	Cook. (N.S.W.)
Chapman, Hon. Austin	Eden-Monaro. (N.S.W.)
¹ Charlton, Matthew	Hunter. (N.S.W.)
Conroy, Hon. Alfred Hugh Beresford	Werrawa. (N.S.W.)
Cook, Hon. Joseph	Parramatta. (N.S.W.)
Dankel, George	Boothby. (S.A.)
Falkiner, Franc Brereton Sadleir	Riverina. (N.S.W.)
Fenton, James Edward	Mariaburnong. (V.)
Finlayson, William Fyfe	Brisbane. (Q.)
Fisher, Right Hon. Andrew, P.C.	Wide Bay. (Q.)
Fleming, William Moutgomerie	Robertson. (N.S.W.)
Forrest, Right Hon. Sir John, P.C., G.C.M.G.	Swan. (W.A.)
Foster, Hon. Richard Witty	Wakefield. (S.A.)
Fowler, Hon. James Mackinnon	Perth. (W.A.)
² Frazer, Hon. Charles Edward	Kalgoorlie. (W.A.)
Glynn, Hon. Patrick McMahon, K.C.	Angas. (S.A.)
Greene, Walter Massy	Richmond. (N.S.W.)
Gregory, Hon. Henry	Dempier. (W.A.)
Groom, Hon. Littleton Ernest	Darling Downs. (Q.)
Hannan, James Francis	Fawkner. (V.)
Higgs, Hon. William Guy	Capricornia. (Q.)
Howe, Robert	Dalley. (N.S.W.)
Hughes, Hon. William Morris	West Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Irvine, Hans William Henry	Grampians. (V.)
Irvine, Hon. William Hill, K.C.	Flinders. (V.)
Jensen, Hon. Jens August	Bass. (T.)
Johnson, Hon. William Elliot	Lang. (N.S.W.)
Kelly, Hon. William Henry	Weitworth. (N.S.W.)
Kendell, William	Corio. (V.)
Livingston, John	Barker. (S.A.)
¹ Maloney, William	Melbourne. (V.)
Manifold, Hon. James Chester	Corangamite. (V.)
Mathews, James	Melbourne Ports. (V.)
McDonald, Hon. Charles	Kennedy. (Q.)
McGrath, David Charles	Ballarat. (V.)
McWilliams, William James	Franklin. (T.)
O'Malley, Hon. King	Darwin. (T.)
Orchard, Richard Beaumont	Nepean. (N.S.W.)
Page, Hon. James	Marañoa. (Q.)
Palmer, Albert Clayton	Echuca. (V.)
Patten, Robert	Hume. (N.S.W.)
Piggott, Henry Robert Maguire	Calare. (N.S.W.)
Poynton, Hon. Alexander	Grey. (S.A.)
Riley, Edward	South Sydney. (N.S.W.)
³ Roberts, Hon. Ernest Alfred	Adelaide. (S.A.)

¹ Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 5th September, 1913.

² Deceased reported, 25th November, 1913.

³ Deceased reported, 2nd December, 1913.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FIFTH PARLIAMENT.—FIRST SESSION—*continued.*

Rodgers, Arthur Stanislaus	Wannon. (V.)
Ryrie, Colonel Granville de Laune	North Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Sampson, Sydney	Wimmera. (V.)
Sharpe, James Benjamin	Oxley. (Q.)
Sinclair, Hugh	Moreton. (Q.)
Smith, Hon. Bruce, K.C.	Parkes. (N.S.W.)
Smith, William Henry Laird	Denison. (T.)
Spence, Hon. William Guthrie	Darling. (N.S.W.)
Stumm, Jacob	Lilley. (Q.)
Thomas, Hon. Josiah	Barrier. (N.S.W.)
1 Thomson, John	Cowper. (N.S.W.)
Tudor, Hon. Frank Gwynne	Yarra. (V.)
Watkins, Hon. David	Newcastle. (N.S.W.)
Webster, William	Gwydir. (N.S.W.)
West, John Edward	East Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Wynne, Hon. Agar	Balaclava. (V.)

1 Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 5th September, 1913.

COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION.

SENATE.

COMMITTEE OF DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS.—Senator de Largie, Senator Lt.-Colonel Sir Albert Gould, Senator Keating, Senator Long, Senator Lynch, Senator Oakes, Senator Turley.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—The President, the Chairman of Committees, Senator Clemons, Senator Lt.-Colonel Sir Albert Gould, Senator Guthrie, Senator McGregor, Senator Pearce, Senator Russell, and Senator Turley.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—The President, Senator Buzacott, Senator Lt.-Colonel Sir Albert Gould, Senator Keating, Senator Lynch, Senator Needham, and Senator Stewart.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.—The President, Senator Bakhap, Senator de Largie, Senator Long, Senator McColl, Senator McDougall, and Senator Story.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.—Senator Barker, Senator Blakey, Senator Gardiner, Senator Henderson, Senator Oakes, Senator Rae, and Senator Ready.

SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE AND REPORT *re* DISMISSAL, ETC., OF MR. HENRY CHINN.— Senator Bakhap, Senator Blakey, Senator Henderson, Senator Maughan, Senator Story, Senator Rae, and Senator de Largie.

FITZROY DOCK : SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE AND REPORT *re* PARTIAL CLOSING DOWN.— Senator Bakhap, Senator Guthrie, Senator Long, Senator Maughan, Senator Mullen, Senator Rae, and Senator McDougall.

GENERAL ELECTIONS 1913 : SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE INTO AND REPORT.—Senator Lt.-Colonel Sir Albert Gould, Senator Keating*, Senator Needham, Senator Oakes, Senator Lt.-Colonel O'Loglin, Senator Russell, Senator Ready†, and Senator Gardiner.

* Discharged from attendance, 30th October, 1913.

† Appointed 30th October, 1913.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Poynton, and Mr. Sampson.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Glynn, Mr. Groom, Mr. Hughes, Dr. W. Maloney, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Bruce Smith, and Mr. Spence.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ahern, Mr. Anstey, Mr. Archibald, Mr. R. W. Foster, Mr. Higgs, Mr. Mathews, and Colonel Ryrie.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.—Mr. Bamford, Mr. Jensen, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Patten, Mr. Stumm, and Mr. Watkins.

TIMBER CONTRACTS : POWELLISING.—**SELECT COMMITTEE ON.**—Mr. Bamford*, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Burchell†, Mr. McWilliams, Mr. King O'Malley, Mr. Poynton, Mr. Sinclair, and Mr. Gregory.

* Discharged from attendance, 18th November, 1913.

† Appointed 18th November, 1913.

ACTS OF THE SESSION.

APPROPRIATION ACT 1913-14 (No. 14 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen, and to appropriate the Supplies granted for such year in this session of the Parliament. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 16th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1913-14 (No. 8 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen, for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 21st October, 1913. Assented to 6th November, 1913.]

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ACT (No. 19 of 1913)—

An Act to provide for a Joint Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. W. H. Irvine, 16th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

DEFENCE LANDS PURCHASE ACT (No. 18 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue a sum for the purchase of land for Defence purposes. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

EXCISE TARIFF (No. 6 of 1913)—

An Act to impose a Duty of Excise upon certain Sugar. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 30th September, 1913. Assented to 30th October, 1913.]

INSCRIBED STOCK ACT (No. 16 of 1913)—

An Act to amend the Commonwealth Inscribed Stock Act 1911-1912. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 11th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

LOAN ACT (No. 24 of 1913)—

An Act to authorize the raising and expending of the sum of Two million seven hundred and eighty thousand pounds for certain purposes. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 8th October, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

NAVIGATION ACT (No. 4 of 1913)—

An Act relating to Navigation and Shipping. [Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor for Senator Pearce, 6th July, 1910. Assent reserved 24th December, 1912, Assent proclaimed 24th October, 1913.]

NORFOLK ISLAND ACT (No. 15 of 1913)—

An Act to provide for the acceptance of Norfolk Island as a Territory under the authority of the Commonwealth and for the government thereof. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Glynn, 11th September, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

PINE CREEK TO KATHERINE RIVER RAILWAY ACT (No. 21 of 1913)—

An Act to provide for the Construction of a Railway in the Northern Territory from Pine Creek to the Katherine River, the Appointment of Officers, the Making of Charges, and the Appropriation of Money in connexion with such Railway. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Glynn, 21st November, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

POST AND TELEGRAPH ACT (No. 23 of 1913)—

An Act to amend the Post and Telegraph Act 1901-1912 and the Post and Telegraph Rates Act 1902-1911. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Agar Wynne, 21st November, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT (No. 17 of 1913)—

An Act to amend the provisions of the Commonwealth Public Service Act 1902-1911 in relation to eligibility for appointment to the Public Service of the Commonwealth by reason of State service. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT (No. 20 of 1913)—

An Act to provide for the establishment of a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works and for other purposes. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 11th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

SUGAR BOUNTY ACT (No. 7 of 1913)—

An Act to provide for a Bounty to growers of Sugar-cane and Beet. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 30th September, 1913. Assented to 30th October, 1913.]

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT 1911–12 (No. 12 of 1913)—

An Act to appropriate a further sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ended the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and twelve. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT 1912–13 (No. 13 of 1913)—

An Act to appropriate a further sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ended the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and thirteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1911–12 (No. 10 of 1913)—

An Act to appropriate a further sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ended the thirtieth day of June One thousand nine hundred and twelve for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1912–13 (No. 11 of 1913)—

An Act to appropriate a further sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ended the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and thirteen, for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 17th December, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

SUPPLY ACT (No. 1) (No. 1 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and supply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 9th July, 1913. Assented to 10th July, 1914.]

SUPPLY ACT (No. 2) (No. 2 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and supply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 26th August, 1913. Assented to 29th August, 1913.]

SUPPLY ACT (No. 3) (No. 3 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 25th September, 1913. Assented to 29th September, 1913.]

SUPPLY ACT (No. 4) (No. 5 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 28th October, 1913. Assented to 30th October, 1913.]

SUPPLY ACT (No. 5) (No. 9 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fourteen. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 26th November, 1913. Assented to 28th November, 1913.]

TASMANIA GRANT ACT (No. 22 of 1913)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the sum of Four hundred thousand pounds for the purposes of further financial assistance to the State of Tasmania. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 8th October, 1913. Assented to 19th December, 1913.]

BILLS OF THE SESSION.

AUDIT BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 4th September, 1913. Laid aside 12th December, 1913.]

AUSTRALIAN NOTES BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 21st November, 1913; 2nd reading negatived in Senate.]

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 9th July, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 31st October, 1913; laid aside 16th December, 1913.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (CORPORATIONS) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (INDUSTRIAL MATTERS) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (NATIONALIZATION OF MONOPOLIES) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (RAILWAY DISPUTES) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (TRADE AND COMMERCE) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (TRUSTS) BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator McGregor, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

CRIMES BILL—

[Leave to introduce given in Senate to Senator Clemons, 28th August, 1913. No further action taken.]

DEFENCE BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Millen, 9th December, 1913; progress reported, but no leave given to Committee to sit again, 12th December, 1913.]

ELECTORAL BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Kelly, 10th September, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

ELECTORAL BILL—

[Leave to introduce in Senate given to Senator Rae, 23rd October, 1913. No further action taken.]

GOVERNMENT PREFERENCE PROHIBITION BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. W. H. Irvine, 31st October, 1913; 2nd reading negatived in Senate.]

INVALID AND OLD-AGE PENSIONS BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 8th October, 1913; lapsed at prorogation.]

POSTAL VOTING RESTORATION BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Joseph Cook, 31st October, 1913; laid aside 17th December, 1913.]

PUBLIC DEBTS BILL—

[Message recommending appropriation received from Governor-General, 7th October, 1913; Order of the Day for its consideration discharged, 17th December, 1913.]

P A R L I A M E N T C O N V E N E D.

FIFTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION.

(*Gazette No. 47, 1913.*)

Parliament was convened by the following Proclamation :—

PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency the Right Honorable THOMAS, BARON DENMAN, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

WHEREAS by the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act it is, amongst other things, enacted that the Governor-General may appoint such times for holding the Sessions of the Parliament as he thinks fit : Now therefore I, THOMAS, BARON DENMAN, the Governor-General aforesaid, in exercise of the power conferred by the said Act, do by this my Proclamation appoint Wednesday, the ninth day of July, One thousand nine hundred and thirteen, as the day for the said Parliament to assemble and be holden for the despatch of divers urgent and important affairs. And all Senators and Members of the House of Representatives are hereby required to give their attendance accordingly, in the building known as the Houses of Parliament, situate in Spring-street, in the City of Melbourne, at the hour of half-past Ten o'clock a.m. on the said Wednesday, the ninth day of July, One thousand nine hundred and thirteen.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia aforesaid, this twenty-sixth day of June, in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and thirteen, in the fourth year of His Majesty's reign.

By His Excellency's Command,

(L.S.)

JOSEPH COOK.

GOD SAVE THE KING !

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16th December, the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Public Service Commissioner, made a statement to the effect that the rates paid to temporary employés are governed by two factors, the ruling rate of pay fixed by a Wages Board or other industrial authority being given, even though it be higher than the rate of pay received by permanent officials doing the same work. These two answers are seemingly contradictory, and I therefore ask the Prime Minister to call upon the Public Service Commissioner to explain the position, and if the reply of the 2nd December is incorrect, to withdraw it?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I see no inconsistency. The reply given by my honorable colleague is quite correct. The law debars temporary employés from receiving more than is paid to permanent employés who are doing the same work. The second reply was, in effect, that in spite of the law, temporary employés are being paid the rates fixed by Wages Boards or other industrial authorities when these are higher than the rates paid to permanent employés.

Mr. THOMAS.—Do I understand that if a trade unionist in the temporary employment of the Commonwealth is paid the trade union rate of wages, and that happens to be higher than the wages received by a permanent employé doing similar work, the law is being broken?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I ask the honorable member to read the section of the Act for himself.

ELECTORAL ENROLMENT.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—I am informed that several persons at Stanley, in the Darwin division, have been heavily fined for failing to enrol, solicitors having been employed in the cases. I am told, too, that those who have been fined are poor people. I ask the Assistant Minister of Home Affairs if it would not be possible to issue the instruction that on the first charge the fine should be a small amount?

Mr. KELLY.—I understand that the first of cases of this kind, being test cases, necessarily involve the obtaining of legal advice, but the fine need not be a large one. It is the intention of the Department, after the first cases have been dealt with, to leave it to the returning officers to conduct their own business, and thus obviate legal expenditure.

House of Representatives.

Wednesday, 17 December, 1913.

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYÉS.

Mr. THOMAS.—On Tuesday, 2nd December, on behalf of the Public Service Commissioner, the Assistant Minister of Home Affairs stated that the Public Service Act prevents temporary employés from receiving higher pay than is given to permanent officials who are doing the same work; and on Tuesday,

FITZROY DOCK.

Mr. HOWE.—On page 35 of the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the partial suspension of some operatives at the Fitzroy Dock, it is stated by Captain Clarkson that he prevented the purchase of 200 lbs. of tungsten for certain purposes. Is the Minister prepared to lay on the table the correspondence between Captain Cutler and his officers in connexion with the suspension of that order?

Mr. KELLY.—I shall submit the question to the Minister of Defence.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. FENTON.—In the *Age* of yesterday the following statement appears—

Mr. Fenton suggested that in order to popularize the 10s. bank note, the Federal officers should be paid with them.

According to the *Hansard* report, this is what I said—

I should like to ask why members of the Commonwealth Service are not paid their salaries in Federal notes. It would be an admirable means of increasing the note circulation.

The *Age* report attributes to me a foolish suggestion. I do not know how the mistake arose; it may be due to sub-editing, but these mistakes are much too frequent.

SMALL-POX OUTBREAK.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member for Gwydir recently asked the following question—

Is the Minister of Trade and Customs aware that recently a doctor and a nurse have been alleged to be suffering from small-pox in the quarantine area, although they are reported as vaccinated? In view of this fact, and, therefore, of the futility of vaccination, will the Minister now endeavour to remove the embargo on the people of Sydney?

I promised to have inquiries made, and to-day received the following report—

One doctor and four nurses have been under treatment at the Quarantine Station for small-pox since the beginning of the epidemic. These were all admitted on either the 16th or 17th of July, and came from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, in Sydney. Not any one of these had been vaccinated in infancy, and not any one of them had been vaccinated prior to the date of infection; all were vaccinated during the period of incubation, at a stage when it was too late to prevent the development of the disease. No evidence can be obtained of any medical man or nurse suffering from small-pox who was not treated at the station.

BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.

Mr. FISHER.—This is a convenient occasion for the Prime Minister to make a statement regarding the business with which the session is to conclude. Private members have a good many notices on the paper. I wish to deal in some way with the Bills providing for constitutional alterations. Will the Prime Minister say what business he intends to go on with?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The Leader of the Opposition is giving rather a large order at this period of the session. We wish to deal with the business on the notice-paper, and that current between the two Houses. I am disappointed that the Senate went home last night.

Mr. THOMAS.—All the Ministerial supporters except the three paid Ministers were away.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—What has that to do with the question? It all depends upon how the business current between the two Chambers is disposed of. The honorable member would do better to address his question to the Senate.

Mr. FISHER.—What nonsense! I am speaking of the business of this House, and not of the Senate.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The business of this House is also the business of the Senate.

DEFENCE LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor-General recommending that an appropriation be made for the purposes of this Bill.

Motion (by Sir JOHN FORREST) proposed—

That the message be taken into consideration at a later hour this day.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [11.13].—I do not think the Prime Minister should refrain from making a statement.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I have made two attempts, and you will not let me do so.

Mr. FISHER.—That is not correct. I did not intervene beyond giving the honorable member a lead. The Prime Minister owes it to the House not to be petulant at a time like this. There are proper ways of dealing with all these Supply matters. Will the Prime Minister say what business he intends to go on with as

Government business, and when we may have private members' business brought on?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [11.14].—I am disappointed at the progress made in another place. I thought we should be able to conclude the business to-day, and get away without any trouble, but owing to the delay there we are not able to do it. The business remaining to be done here is the Committee of Public Accounts Bill, the Old-age Pensions Bill if we can manage it, a Bill to rectify the trouble in the Public Service in connexion with the transfer of the lighthouse officers, and another measure made necessary by the elimination of the item of £300,000 from the Loan Bill for the purchase of land for defence purposes. That is the matter now before the Chair. We must have a further appropriation of revenue or hang the works up. I cannot say what we shall do about private members' business until I know what they are doing in another place.

Mr. FISHER.—Cannot we go on with private members' business while waiting for the other?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Immediately there is an opportunity I shall not be averse to going on with private business.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

PUBLIC DEBTS BILL.

Sir JOHN FORREST (Swan—Treasurer) [11.15].—I move—

That Order of the Day No. 7, Public Debts Bill, be discharged.

I take this course because there is no time to deal with the measure, and a difficulty which I did not anticipate has arisen in regard to the States. The States require to be consulted. I thought we had had enough consultation, but I find that we have not. We propose to have a conference as soon as we can with the State Ministers, so as to leave them no reason to think that we desire to force this matter upon the country without conferring again with them. A Bill has been prepared by myself and the Treasury officials. Everything is ready, so far as I am concerned, but in deference to the desire of the State Governments, and in view also of the fact that there is no

time to deal with such an important matter this session, I am prepared to withdraw it.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [11.17].—Can the right honorable gentleman say, before the close of the session, what the proposals are which are to be discussed between the Government and the State Governments? That is a fair question to ask. If the Commonwealth Government are going into a conference with the States on an important subject like the State debts, the questions to be discussed should not be regarded as private, because this is not a party or political matter. If the Government have made up their minds as to the policy they intend to pursue, they should be perfectly frank with the country, and so should the States, because there cannot be a satisfactory remedy of this anomaly unless the people are taken into the confidence of their leaders.

Sir JOHN FORREST (Swan—Treasurer) [11.18].—I at first intended to introduce a measure and place on record the views of the Government, but when I found the States wished to have a conference, I thought it far better not to make a statement until the conference had taken place. I do not think anything would be gained by doing it. Perhaps a good deal of controversy would take place in the press and elsewhere on matters upon which we might be often inclined to change our opinions. We are not prepared, at present, to make a statement, and will not be prepared to do so until after the conference.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

ATLANTIC CABLE.

Mr. THOMAS.—Has the Postmaster-General taken any steps to bring before the Imperial authorities the desire of the present Government for the nationalization of the Atlantic cable? The Prime Minister promised to do what he could in that way.

Mr. AGAR WYNNE.—No.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is possible that the whole proposal may be modified by wireless arrangements.

BEEF TRUST.

Mr. SHARPE.—Has the Minister of Trade and Customs seen an interview which a newspaper in Queensland had with Sir George Reid regarding the Beef

Trust now established in Australia, and is it the intention of the Government to take immediate action in connexion with the trust? Different State Governments have prevented these people establishing themselves in their respective States. Seeing that the Queensland Government are not likely, however, to take any action, and that the Commonwealth Government have power to deal with these people, I should like to know whether it is their intention to take immediate action to prevent the operations of the trust in Australia at the present time?

Mr. GROOM.—I cannot say that I have seen the particular interview to which the honorable member refers, but I read the opinion expressed by Sir George Reid in an interview published in this city. I have also had the privilege of a conference with the High Commissioner. The matter of the trust is receiving very serious consideration, and the combined attention of the Department of Trade and Customs and the Department of the Attorney-General.

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE BILL.

Mr. HIGGS.—In view of the fact that a great deal of the work which it is proposed shall be done by the Federal Bureau of Agriculture is already being carried out by the State Departments, does the Minister of Trade and Customs propose to move that the Bureau of Agriculture Bill be discharged from the business-paper, with a view to having the whole question submitted to the conference of State Premiers which the Treasurer proposes to hold?

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member's question is based upon inaccurate information. It is not proposed that the Bureau of Agriculture shall duplicate work now carried on by the State Departments. The proposal is that it shall undertake a large area of scientific research which at present the States cannot adequately take in hand.

PANAMA EXPOSITION.

Mr. RILEY.—Has the Minister of External Affairs received an invitation from the United States Government with regard to the Parliament of the Commonwealth being represented at the opening of the Panama Canal, or at the Panama Exposition, and, if so, what arrangements does he propose to make?

Mr. GLYNN.—I have not received any invitation for members of Parliament, but within the last few days I have had a renewal of the invitation extended to the Commonwealth to be represented at the Exposition.

Mr. RILEY.—What form does the invitation take?

Mr. GLYNN.—The invitation is that the Commonwealth will take part in the Exposition by sending exhibits, acting either alone or in conjunction with the States. The matter is being considered.

ELECTORAL BILL: ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. TUDOR.—As one Order of the Day has already been discharged, I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether he proposes to move that Order of the Day No. 6, which relates to the further consideration of the Electoral Bill, shall be discharged from the business-paper. The Prime Minister announced recently that it was intended to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the administration of the Electoral Act, and I understand that the further consideration of this Bill has been deferred pending that inquiry. Has the Prime Minister any information to give to the House as to whether the Commission is to be appointed, and as to its personnel?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I hope that we shall be able to appoint the Commission. Meantime, I see no necessity for going through the formula of moving the discharge of the Orders of the Day which the Treasurer has thought fit to adopt. I have no doubt that Orders of the Day will be discharged in good time.

KALGOORLIE TO PORT AUGUSTA RAILWAY.

CONTRACTS FOR THE SUPPLY OF SLEEPERS, TRUCKS AND LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I desire to ask the Minister of Home Affairs whether the Western Australian Government is carrying out its contract for the supply of sleepers to the Commonwealth?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is not. It says, practically, that it is unable to supply the sleepers within the time allotted under the contract.

Mr. RILEY.—Are the works being held up?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—What have we to do with the works?

Mr. RILEY.—Have the works been delayed?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We are buyers of sleepers from the Western Australian Government, and that Government is unable to deliver these sleepers on time. It does not appear that we are going to get them for some considerable time.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—Is not the Minister of Home Affairs aware that the delay is due, not to any fault on the part of the Government of Western Australia, but to the heavy rains?

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable member is not in order in asking a further question arising out of an answer given by a Minister to a previous question.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I wish to put to the Minister of Home Affairs a further question on the same subject, but not arising out of the question I have just put. The question is, whether it is a fact that the Western Australian Government had a period of thirteen months within which to supply sleepers before—

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! I am afraid the honorable member's question is not in order.

Mr. RILEY.—Will the Minister of Home Affairs state whether it is a fact that a contract was entered into with the Clyde Engineering Company for the manufacture and supply of a certain number of trucks with a view to facilitating the construction of the transcontinental railway; that the trucks were not supplied within the time fixed by the contract, and that an extension of that contract has been allowed?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I should think that that is a reason for trying to insist upon the proper observance of contracts, and not an excuse for any delay.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether, in considering the question of cancelling the contract for the supply of sleepers which the Western Australian Government entered into with the Commonwealth, he will have regard to the fact that the whole of the transcontinental railway is depending upon the railways of Western Australia; and, further, whether it would not be wise for him to consider the question of transportation before he takes such action?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member may rely upon the Government

giving the Government of Western Australia justice in regard to this matter. We shall not act unreasonably.

Mr. TUDOR.—I desire to ask the Assistant Minister of Home Affairs whether the tenders for the construction of locomotives for the transcontinental railway, which closed about three weeks ago, have yet been dealt with, and whether any Australian firm is likely to obtain any of the work?

Mr. KELLY.—I very much regret to say that no Australian firm tendered in the second competition. I hope to invite tenders shortly for further supplies, which may induce Australian tenderers to come forward.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

Mr. HIGGS.—In view of the Prime Minister's statement that he cannot understand the action taken by the Treasurer in moving that certain Bills be discharged from the business-paper, I desire to ask the right honorable gentleman what he thinks of the statement made by the honorable member for Gippsland that the Prime Minister is the only Minister willing and able to fight the Labour party?

Mr. SPEAKER.—Order! I would remind the honorable member that it is not in keeping with the reputation of honorable members, or the dignity of the House, that such a question should either be asked or answered.

SOUTH BRISBANE POST OFFICE.

Mr. SHARPE.—Will the Postmaster-General state whether it is the intention of his Department to proceed with the erection of a new post-office at South Brisbane; and if, when the building is erected, he proposes to establish there a second telephone exchange?

Mr. AGAR WYNNE.—I think that the South Brisbane Post Office is rather close to the principal telephone exchange; but I shall have inquiries made as to whether it is absolutely necessary that a second exchange should be established there.

PINE CREEK TO KATHERINE RIVER RAILWAY BILL.

Bill returned from the Senate, with amendments.

Ordered—

That the message be taken into consideration at a later hour this day.

PAPERS.

MINISTERS laid upon the table the following papers:—

Papua.—Annual Report for the year 1912-13.
Ordered to be printed.

Rules Publication Act.—Regulations—Statutory Rules 1913, No. 315.

Northern Territory.—Ordinance of 1913—No. 8—Marriage Validating.

Patents Act.—Regulations Amended—Statutory Rules 1913, No. 310.

RAILWAY WORKS: PROHIBITION OF LIQUORS.

Mr. FINLAYSON asked the Minister of External Affairs, *upon notice*—

1. Whether the Minister is aware that the sale of intoxicating liquors is prohibited within five miles of railway construction works in Queensland, with great advantage to the workers?

2. Whether the Minister will adopt a similar provision in connexion with the construction of the Pine Creek to Katherine River railway?

Mr. GLYNN.—The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow:—

1. I was not aware of the facts, but accept the honorable member's statement in regard thereto.

2. The adoption of such a provision must depend upon the existence and extent of any evils that may become manifest. I am not at present aware of any circumstances that would call for such steps as would involve the suspension or cancellation of existing licences.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That leave be given to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the provisions of the Commonwealth Public Service Act 1902-1911 in relation to eligibility for appointment to the Public Service of the Commonwealth by reason of State service.

Bill presented.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That this Bill be now read a first time.

Mr. THOMAS (Barrier) [11.32].—I understand that this Bill goes further than to merely provide for those persons now employed in the lighthouses.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The Bill includes anybody in the State services.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—It is opening the door to the State services.

Mr. THOMAS.—The Bill goes a great deal further than was foreshadowed when it was mentioned yesterday. The Prime Minister then said that the Bill was intended to merely take over those now engaged in the lighthouses.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Those persons supply the occasion for the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. THOMAS.—I take it that the Bill does not mean that we must take persons over, but simply gives us the opportunity to do so?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Yes.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [11.33].—I have no objection to the Bill, but I am anxious that as much freedom should be given to persons to enter the Commonwealth service as is now given to enter the State service. The conditions of the Commonwealth service are more difficult; and I agree that the door ought to be opened, and the way made easier to enter, say, the General Division. Apparently this Bill will give a right which the people immediately concerned would otherwise not have, seeing that they may have entered the State service since our Public Service Bill was passed in 1901-2.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a first time.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That the second reading be made an Order of the Day for a later hour this day.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS BILL (No. 2).

In Committee (Consideration resumed from 16th December, *vide* page 4507).

Clause 1 (Short title).

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [11.36].—I explained in outline last evening the necessity for bringing in a Bill if we desired to accede generally to the desire of the Senate to have a Joint Standing Committee. I should like to add to what I then said, that this Bill differs from the Bill that was withdrawn, not merely in regard to the constitution of the Committee, and in authorizing a new Joint Committee to be formed, but in expressly providing the main functions of the Committee. Clause 3 is as follows—

The duties of the Committee shall be—

(a) to examine the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Commonwealth, and to bring under the notice of both Houses of the Parliament any items in those accounts or any circumstance connected with them to which they think that attention should be directed;

(b) to report to both Houses of the Parliament any alteration which the Committee think desirable in the form of

the public accounts or the method of keeping them, or in the mode of receipt control issue or payment of the public money.

In passing, I may say that this last duty will include the power of making suggestions in regard to practically everything that comes under the Auditor-General's Department.

Mr. FENTON.—Contracts?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—This is a purely investigatory and informative Committee, but the scope of the subjects it may investigate and report on includes the whole frame of the Estimates, for instance, and any matter that arises out of the Estimates, and the whole machinery of, and any matter that arises under, the Audit Act, whether belonging to the Audit Act or not, as to the "mode of receipt, control, issue, or payment of the public money." The clause proceeds—

- (c) to inquire into and report upon any questions in connexion with the public accounts which are referred to them by either House of the Parliament;
- (d) any other duties assigned to the Committee by joint standing orders approved by both Houses of the Parliament.

When the previous Bill was before the House, I pointed out, in the course of the discussion, in answer to a criticism that was addressed to the fact that it did not contain any indication of the duties of the Committee, that it was not a Bill enabling a Committee to be appointed and to fix the duties, but a Bill merely empowering the Committee when appointed, and when its duties had been allocated, to sit and call evidence. The Bill before us, however, is an enabling Bill for the creation of a new Standing Committee, and, therefore, it is appropriate that it should set out the main duties of the Committee, leaving it, if necessary, to the Houses, by Joint Standing Orders, to enlarge the duties if they think fit, and to refer to the Committee any matters regarding which they desire investigation and report. This is not like a Public Works Committee, which has a direct control, and without whose report certain works cannot be carried out. A Public Works Committee has an actively restrictive function, whereas we now propose a purely informative Committee. The powers embodied in clause 3 are taken almost verbatim from the Standing Orders of the Victorian Legislative Assembly of 1895. Those Standing Orders

include one or two things, such as inquiry into the investments of Savings Bank Commissioners, that are not embraced in our provision, but which may be referred to the Committee by either House, or by a joint resolution of both Houses if thought necessary. The Victorian Committee has been in existence for a large number of years, and as it has done very excellent work under these Standing Orders, it is thought desirable to start our Joint Standing Committee on Public Accounts with the main powers that were granted to the Victorian Standing Committee.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [11.42].—The Bill, as I read it, is intended to provide statutory powers for a Committee that might reasonably have been appointed under our own Standing Orders. I direct the attention of the Attorney-General to the use of the words "bring under the notice of both Houses of Parliament" in clause 3, whereas elsewhere the words employed are "shall report to Parliament." I think the words "bring under the notice of both Houses" are too loose a phrase to be incorporated in a Bill that deals with finance. I should think that these words would permit any member of the Committee, without the authority of the Committee, to bring certain things under the notice of Parliament.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—One member of the Committee may be asked to inform Parliament. The provision was made as wide as possible for that reason.

Mr. FISHER.—I am opposed to that, especially in regard to financial matters. There should be no loose method of making any statement to Parliament, because that would be the beginning of trouble, and possibly lead to the dissemination of misleading statements. It is better to bind the Committee to a report, either a majority report or a unanimous one. No statement should come down from individuals of the Committee through our employing the words "bring under the notice of Parliament." Again, it is not advisable to use varying terms in the one measure, because the Committee might reasonably say, "All we are asked to do in this matter is to bring it under the notice of Parliament, and our work is done." The Committee are likely to do a great deal of good. Instead of our having suspicious statements that are made sometimes inadvertently, and sometimes not, the Committee will be in a

position to bring before Parliament the actual condition of our financial affairs. I wish to heaven everything could be laid on the table, so that the people could know exactly what had been ordered and what had been paid for. Governments make blunders, but they are more likely to succeed when every matter is put before Parliament and the people. In a democratic country like this no one is likely to attempt to cover up any matter; he would be the first to suffer. I think we should make this Committee report on everything that is worth reporting on. The provision that Parliament may refer matters to the Committee for report is a good proposal. If any honorable member desires that a certain thing shall be investigated, he can invite Parliament to pass a motion submitting the matter to the Committee; and I suggest to honorable members that they should exercise that right very freely when they think that the public interests are involved, in order that the facts may be brought out in an official way for the information of Parliament and the public. The number of members proposed is a workable one. I do not think another place will make any complaint as to the division—five for this House and two for the Senate. Though another place has certain rights, undoubtedly the House of Representatives is more concerned in financial matters, so that a fair division has been proposed. I see no reason why the Bill should not be accepted. It is a different matter from appointing a Committee of the House. We cannot elect this Committee until the Bill becomes law. I agree with the Attorney-General that a Committee of Public Accounts should be appointed by Statute, and given statutory authority for everything they do. They will then be more answerable for their conduct than a Committee of the House is. I am glad there are to be no fees paid.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The work has been done in the States without fees.

Mr. FISHER.—I see no excitement among honorable members about it.

Mr FENTON (Maribyrnong) [11.49].—I welcome this measure as I welcomed the measure for the appointment of a Public Works Committee. There is a growing feeling in the community that, as a rule, the Government of a country are too much the tail that wags the dog, and I think these investigating Committees

will tend to lessen the influence of Governments in this regard.

Mr. FISHER.—I think they will make it stronger.

Mr. FENTON.—In connexion with public accounts, the Treasury officials run the whole show. If we follow on the lines of the Victorian Committee, that every year, whether anything sensational or out of the ordinary occurs or not, the report of the Committee of Public Accounts will be presented for the information of Parliament.

Mr. FISHER.—Is Victoria a model?

Mr. FENTON.—I do not say that. The Attorney-General is following the Victorian lead in this matter.

Mr. FISHER.—There have been more inquiries into Victorian finance than have been made in any other State.

Mr. FENTON.—I think that if Victorian finance were examined, it would stand as high as that of any other State, and be found to reflect credit on the men who have had the administration of it. We have been singularly fortunate, too, in our Under-Treasurers. I welcome the Bill, and I hope that the House will take considerable notice of the suggestions of the Committee. In Victoria, Parliaments have been very thankful to the Committee for many of its suggestions, and I hope that the same beneficial results will follow the appointment of this Committee that followed the appointment of the Victorian Committee.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3—

The duties of the Committee shall be—

(a) to examine the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Commonwealth and to bring under the notice of both Houses of the Parliament any items . . . to which they think that attention should be directed. . . .

Amendment (by Mr. W. H. IRVINE) agreed to—

That the words "bring under the notice of" be left out, with a view to inserting in lieu thereof the words "report to."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4 (Continuation of evidence).

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [11.53].—It has been found very convenient in connexion with a Committee which is not a judicial body, and whose decrees do not affect anybody's rights, to allow evidence which has been taken before a preceding Committee to be

considered by its successor, as if that evidence had been given before the succeeding Committee. It is not, however, the kind of provision that one would make for a Committee whose duty it was to carry out a strict judicial inquiry.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 (Power to take evidence on oath).

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [11.55].—I would point out that no penalties are provided for the punishment of those who are determined to defy the Committee. The Public Works Bill contains a special clause empowering the Committee to impose penalties, and it seems to me that a similar provision might be necessary here, though it is possible that the provisions of the Acts Interpretation Act will do what is needed.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [11.56].—I am glad that the right honorable member has drawn attention to this matter, and I shall look into it.

Clause agreed to.

Progress reported.

PINE CREEK TO KATHERINE RIVER RAILWAY BILL.

In Committee (Consideration of Senate's amendments):

Clause 5 (Gauge of line).

Senate's Amendment.—Add "but provision shall be made in the construction of the permanent way and works for subsequent alteration to a gauge of not less than four feet eight and one-half inches."

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [11.59].—The clause makes provision for the construction of a railway with a gauge of 3 feet 6 inches, but in view of the probability of one standard gauge for the line across the continent being ultimately adopted, it was intended, in calling for tenders for steel sleepers, to specify that they should be holed for the 4-feet 8½-inches as well as for the 3-feet 6-inches gauge. I, therefore, accept the Senate's proposal, and move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8 (Provision for incidental matters).

Senate's Amendment.—Add "and the railway shall be constructed by day labour."

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [12.0].—I do not think the Minister should have his hands tied as to what particular kind of labour shall be employed in the construction of the railway. As a matter of fact, it may be found much more economical to do the work by contract, or as, I think, is done in connexion with the Port Augusta-Kalgoorlie railway, to do some portions of the work by contract. If this amendment is agreed to we shall be absolutely in the hands of the labour itself as to the terms and conditions of employment. I ask the Committee to disagree with it, as whatever is most economical and best in the long run both for the Government, and for every one employed on the railway, who will, of course, get his standard rate of wages, will be done. I move—

That the amendment be disagreed to.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [12.2].—I regret the Minister's attitude. I took occasion, about two months ago, to lay before the House the report from the Minister of Railways, Mr. Paget, in a Conservative Government in Queensland, who showed clearly that since the inauguration of day labour in that State the Department have practically saved £1,000,000 sterling, and got better work. Mr. Paget went into the matter hostile to day labour.

Mr. FOSTER.—Let us have facts up to date—not ten years old.

Mr. FISHER.—I am giving facts up to date, extending over a period of ten years of railway work. It was proved that 12 per cent. actual saving was made, and Mr. Paget added frankly that not only did the day-labour system save money, but that their permanent-way was better than it would have been if the work had been done by contract. I appeal to honorable members not to act on prejudice in this matter, because day labour properly organized in the Northern Territory will undoubtedly be less expensive than contract. In a country so far distant, the contractors will, undoubtedly, for the slightest deviation or change in construction, bleed the Commonwealth.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER (Wakefield) [12.3].—The Leader of the Opposition has not told us how long it is since Queensland abandoned the contract system.

Mr. FISHER.—She tried it for thirty years.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is ten years, I understand, since they abandoned it; that makes all the difference. It is quite true that in the old days of the contract system we were not moving on economical lines, and that when that system was superseded by day labour there was a considerable saving for some time, but there is as much difference between the contract system to-day and ten or fifteen years ago as there is between darkness and light. The Leader of the Opposition's illustration is no proof, because there is, and can be, no test unless the principle adopted by South Australia is brought into force—that is, to submit public works to public tender, and allow the Department to tender. If the Department's tender is lowest then the Department does its own work. In the case cited by the Leader of the Opposition we simply have an estimate of the responsible officer of the Department. I know that is so, because the system of having the estimate of the responsible officer was tried in the case of many public works in South Australia and other States, and you cannot be sure that the estimate is a correct one, because there is no check on it. There are industrial conditions in these days that were never dreamt of in previous days.

Mr. TUDOR.—Is that why there was a deputation of the printers in South Australia to ask the Government to add to the price of the Government Printing Office 15 per cent.?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—If that were so, it must have been an awful price, because the Printing Office in South Australia, like those in most of the other States, is, and always has been, simply a sink into which public money is poured.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—Why do you come here slandering your own State?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am simply speaking the truth in the interests of the taxpayers. I am not bound by irresponsible people outside to advocate a certain policy on the floor of the House, whether it is a policy of economy or of reckless expenditure. In the case cited by the Leader of the Opposition, we have simply the estimate of the public official, who has to provide a margin to cover contingencies. I would remind the honorable member for

Hindmarsh of a case in our own State, when Mr. Verran, as Leader of a Labour Government, was adopting the day-labour principle. He made the statement to the men, and to the public, that the men made it almost impossible for him to carry out the work, and he had to send for a contractor and give him practically his own price. To-day we have the east to west railway as an example. The honorable member for Herbert only the other day made a scathing and absolutely correct statement in this House, which I defy anybody to answer. His allegations must be investigated, and will, I am certain, be found, if anything, to be understated. The workmen under the South Australian Government in the Northern service know that what the honorable member said about the conduct of the work on the east to west railway is absolutely accurate. The honorable member's complaint is in *Hansard*.

Mr. RILEY.—Why do you not make your Government investigate it?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I shall be ashamed of the Government if they do not do so right up to the hilt. If they do not go into the charges at the earliest opportunity in the recess, they will have no quarter from me, and I shall tell the taxpayers of this country what I know to be correct. Let honorable members opposite, in the interests of the taxpayers, put their principles to the simple test of the tender, and if the Government, with all its advantages, cannot compete with the contractor, we have no business to take a course which is not in the best interest of the taxpayers.

Mr. RILEY.—We say they save money.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The job will be done by day-labour if they do. Let the expenditure on public works be submitted to public tender, and if the Government can beat the outside tenderer, let them have the work.

Mr. FINLAYSON (Brisbane) [12.12].—Whenever this question is mentioned, it is amusing to notice that certain honorable members on the other side become excited, and angry, and explosive. The honorable member for Wakefield has given us an exhibition of anger at the mere suggestion of the superiority of day-labour. He accused us of being subject to the dictation of some irresponsible people outside, but that statement is quite in keeping with his other irresponsible and untrue assertions. We have

taken up a definite line of policy in this matter. It is not a matter of estimate, but a matter of fact. If the honorable member for Wakefield had read Mr. Paget's statement as to the conduct of construction work by day labour in Queensland, he would know that it was based on an estimate taken by way of contrast with contract work. It showed that there was a saving of £1,000 per mile to the Government in building railways by day labour.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The Leader of the Opposition said it was ten years since the Queensland Government had a contract.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—This is an additional argument against the honorable member. It was stated a minute ago that the additional cost was due to the increase in the cost of labour and materials during the last few years. That disadvantage would be against the day-labour system rather than the contract system.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The union agitators made all the difference.

Mr. RODGERS.—Let us have a vote; our minds are made up.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The honorable member for Wannon is to be commended for his admission that honorable members opposite have made up their minds.

Mr. RODGERS.—And so have the Opposition.

Mr. FINLAYSON — “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.” That the day-labour system is cheaper than the contract system is a matter, not of opinion but of fact, and some of the strongest facts in support of it have come from members of the Liberal party. In the Brisbane *Courier* of 3rd instant there appears a report of a deputation of master builders who waited on the State Minister of Public Works, Mr. W. H. Barnes. I shall not weary the Committee by reading the statements made by the contractors, honorable members may read them for themselves; but may I read the reply made by the Minister? These master builders requested that certain public works should be carried out by contract, and made statements damaging in their criticism of the day-labour system. They referred to the reported losses under the system in other States, to the poor quality of the work, the slowness of it, and so forth. The Minister, who, it should be remembered, is a member of

a Conservative Government, and is opposed to the Labour party, said—

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I do not care two straws for that.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I am sorry that the honorable member is not open to argument.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It makes no difference to me whether a man is a Conservative or a member of the Labour party.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—If the honorable member will accept the facts, then my purpose will have been served. This was the reply made by the Queensland Minister of Public Works to the deputation—

In the past the officers had been careful to make their estimates, and if the lowest tenders were higher the work was taken up by the Department. Often fresh tenders were invited. Personally, his inclination was in favour of tender. But he was face to face with the fact that the officers' estimate of day labour was sometimes much below the contract prices. There was no other course, therefore, in the public interests, but to go on with the work. He had no right to let his own desires weigh in that regard, when public duty stood in the road. So far as the Department was concerned, the great bulk of the work was carried out by public tender. He was quite free to admit that very often the lowest tender was less than the official estimate. They had reminded him of the high cost in New South Wales of some of the works recently carried out in that State. But there were no such figures available in connexion with his Department. So far as he knew there was no such thing in existence as the “Government stroke.” He quoted a few cases to support his view. On the new refreshment rooms in the gardens, though the work had been increased on the original plan by £200, they had still saved £20. In a Lands Department job the lowest tender was £484, but they carried out the work for £286. In the Geological branch they saved £234 on a job, as compared to the lowest tender. It had been said that in these works no charge was made for the work of the officers engaged, but that was not so. Everything was properly apportioned. Something had also been said about work at Goodna, which was being carried out by day labour, but they would save something like £9,000 on the job. If they thought the specifications were not adhered to he would be glad to drive a party of them out to inspect it. It was only fair to the officers to say that many thousands of pounds had been saved by the system at present in force. One big work had been mentioned, which he would refer to. That was the Rockhampton Technical College. The estimate was £12,733, and lowest tender £15,703, and it was expected that fully £3,000 would be saved on those figures. At Goodna the estimate for one ward was £16,621, and the lowest tender £20,790, and they expected to considerably cut under the estimate.

If that is not an absolute answer to every statement made by the honorable member for Wakefield I do not know what is.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—All that we ask is that the work shall be submitted to public tender, and if the Department's tender is the lowest, it should be allowed to undertake the work.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The honorable member's interjection reminds me of an erroneous statement which he made when he said that Mr. Paget, in making up his statement, had only the Estimates of the Department before him. He had not only the Estimates, but actual figures and facts in connexion with the construction of railways. He had previous knowledge of work conducted by the Department, as well as the tenders submitted.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I did not know that he had tenders. I admit that I made a mistake. I had in mind the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that no tenders had been received for railway construction in Queensland for about ten years.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I am glad that the honorable member admits that he made a mistake. The Queensland Government had never abandoned the contract system in the building of railways. But experience of a very serious and damaging character has induced them not only to establish the principle of day labour in the construction of railway work, but to apply it also to other public works. The Minister of Public Works, as I have just read, has been compelled to adopt the system against his own inclinations, the facts being against his opinion, and if the honorable member for Wakefield and his party were open to conviction, there would be no difficulty in inducing them, by reason of the actual facts, to accept this amendment.

Mr. GLYNN.—I could not carry out some of the recommendations.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Will the Minister be prepared to propose that the railway shall be constructed by the Queensland Government under their day-labour system?

Mr. GLYNN.—I do not think the Commonwealth should go to the States to carry out its works.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—We do that now. All Commonwealth works in Queensland are carried out by the State Department.

Mr. GLYNN.—That is when we want the Department to carry them out, but we should not be compelled to go to the State Governments.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—If the opportunity had offered when the Bill was before the House, I intended to move an amendment providing that this line should be carried out by the Queensland Railway Department under their system of construction. It is remarkable that the Departmental tenders are always less than are those submitted by outside contractors.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The Leader of the Opposition told us that Queensland had not called for tenders for railway construction for ten years.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—I have just read to the Committee a statement by the Minister of Public Works that the estimates of his Department were thousands of pounds below the tenders of outside contractors.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—But they were for petty buildings, not railways.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—Petty buildings costing £20,000! The Railway Department of Queensland is in a better position to build this line than is any private contractor. It has the necessary plant within a comparatively short distance of the country to be traversed. It has everything ready to start at once. The Government propose, however, that the work shall be given to a contractor, which means that we shall have to pay for the cost, not only of constructing the line, but of the plant as well, whereas if we handed over this work to the Railway Department of Queensland we should have to pay for only a proportion of the plant. The Government propose to throw away thousands of pounds.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We shall save thousands.

Mr. FINLAYSON.—The only advantage connected with the Government proposal is that it will give us one more illustration of the viciousness of the contract system of railway construction as contrasted with the building of railways under the day-labour system. It is no stretch of prophecy to say that if this railway is built by contract we shall find, when we have the facts before us in regard to cost and necessary equipment, that it has cost at least £1,000 more per mile than is involved in the building of railway lines on the Queensland side of the border.

The CHAIRMAN.—There is a tendency on this amendment to discuss the whole question of day labour. I must

ask honorable members to confine their attention to the question of the construction of this line.

Mr. HANS IRVINE (Grampians) [12.26].—In reply to the honorable member for Brisbane, I should like to say that I read last night a statement in a newspaper to the effect that in Western Australia the Wilson Government constructed a railway under the contract system at a cost of £1,400 per mile, whereas it cost the Scaddan Government, under the day-labour system, £2,000 per mile to build a line running through the same class of country. The difference is due to the fact that under the day-labour system we do not get the best results from the workers. In nine cases out of ten it is based on the principle that there should be no work between meals, and that is what honorable members opposite want. The day-labour system is a bad one to adopt. Let tenders be invited for this work. Give the Department an opportunity to tender, and if in open competition it can secure the contract, let it carry out the work. Under the régime of a Socialistic Labour Government in Western Australia we have had an illustration of the costliness of the day-labour system as applied to railway construction, and we have also had an illustration of its costliness in New South Wales during the last three years.

Mr. WEST.—What has happened in New South Wales?

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—The people have declared themselves to be in favour of the bribery and corruption which your party are supporting. The State Labour Government when it took office inherited a surplus of over £2,000,000. It had the largest revenue that had ever been raised in the State.—

The CHAIRMAN.—Order!

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—It borrowed nearly £20,000,000.—

Mr. CHARLTON.—I rise to a point of order.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—And closed its three years of office with a deficit of over £2,000,000.

The CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member is quite out of order in referring to that matter.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I admit that I am, sir; but I have simply told the truth. The figures I have quoted show unmistakably the added cost of day labour as compared with contract work.

Mr. ARCHIBALD (Hindmarsh) [12.30].—It is a matter of regret that the present Government show hostility to the day-labour system. In my opinion, it is always better that the Government should have freedom of action.

Mr. GLYNN.—That is all we desire.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—On the other hand, I am inclined to think that the Government are, to a certain extent, pledged to the contract system. It is, as I say, a great mistake to bind the Government down in this regard, because there may be times when it is desirable to have work done by contract, and other times when day labour may be preferred. I am rather surprised at the tirade of the honorable member for Wakefield, and at the prejudice he has displayed in relation to day labour. No one knows better than that honorable member that great savings have been made in South Australia in consequence of the Government undertaking the construction of their own railways.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes, fifteen years ago; but I can show a 60 per cent. added cost on the other side.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—The honorable member will not deny that the contractors for the overland railway from Adelaide to Melbourne made a remarkably “good thing” of it.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I am talking of to-day, and not of twenty-five years ago.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—The honorable member was in office when the contract system was superseded by the day-labour system; and, truly, the evolution of politicians in Australia is marvellous! I know men who at one time were strongly in favour of day labour, and who can now scarcely find language vivid enough to denounce it. This ought not to be a matter of politics—it is simply a matter of fact.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—It is a matter of the taxpayers’ money!

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—We are trustees for the taxpayers, and it is our duty to see that public works are carried out by the cheapest and most efficient method, irrespective of party. We know that railway construction has been undertaken by the various State Governments, and that the work has proved cheaper than under contract.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—Yes, ten or fifteen years ago!

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—We have the evidence of a Conservative Minister in Queensland, who said that, in regard to day labour, he had been "reluctantly compelled" to alter his opinion. I regret the remarks of the honorable member in regard to South Australia, because we have not the figures here to enable us to judge.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I have the figures here—the tenders.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—No doubt the honorable member has the figures for one side, and, unfortunately, my experience of recent years is that there is always another side to any remarks he may make. The Queensland evidence, to which I have referred, is of to-day, and not years ago; and I think that our distinguished and learned friend the Attorney-General could tell us something about the price of locomotives in Victoria under the contract system. Of course, I do not deny that day labour under a weak Government, with poor organization, may prove expensive; but in Queensland, and, as matters were in South Australia, for instance, there is every guarantee that the taxpayers' interest is conserved. The assumption of the late Government, in instituting day labour, was that the work would be properly organized. Another example of a saving under day labour is presented in the Commonwealth Offices in London.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—We cannot find out what the cost has been.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—I do not think there would be any difficulty in finding out; and I have no hesitation in saying that, when the accounts are produced, we shall find a similar result to that obtained in Queensland. I regret that the honorable member for Wakefield should have raked up the matter of the Government Printing Office in Adelaide.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—I did not "rake" it up.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—Such remarks might very well be made in Adelaide, where the necessary information to confirm it, or otherwise, is available. At any rate, we have the fact that the master printers in Adelaide, in applying to the Government for work, desired that the tenders of the Government Printing

Office should be loaded to the extent of 10 per cent.; and this does not look very much as if that establishment were a sink for public money. If the printing work for this Parliament were done by a private firm, the extras involved in the fact that the office would have to be practically kept going day and night, would be staggering.

The CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member must not discuss that matter.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—The honorable member for Wakefield wandered a bit, and I thought I would keep him company. If freedom of action were left to the Government, as I think it ought to be, I feel pretty confident as to the course that would be pursued by the Minister in charge of this Bill; but members of the Government, and their supporters, have gone throughout the country declaring that they are in favour of the contract system, and this, of course, makes honorable members on this side somewhat suspicious. The contention that day labour is unsatisfactory is all nonsense, for the simple reason, as I have pointed out before, that it all depends on the organization; and it is an insult to the Government, and to the army of trained engineers who are at their service, to suggest that they cannot successfully carry out public works. We all know what happens when, under private contracts, the specifications are departed from; and in this connexion alone there must be great savings under the system of day labour, which permits variation as the circumstances demand.

Mr. GLYNN.—The amendment would prevent a modified contract system, which was one of the suggestions I made. The amendment ties my hands; and I think that the modified system would be the best for the men.

Mr. ARCHIBALD.—For many years past I have been in favour of what is called the "butty gang" system, which has worked very satisfactorily. For the reasons I have given I think the amendment of the Senate ought to be accepted.

Mr. SAMPSON (Wimmera) [12.42]. The time has passed for a general discussion on the relative merits of the day-labour and contract systems. One of the objections I have to the amendment is that it ties the Government down to one course of action, and presents no opportunity for comparison between

the two systems. The Northern Territory is very isolated, and, considering its distance from the seat of government, the danger of lax supervision is very much increased.

Mr. FALKNER.—That is the whole trouble in regard to day labour—the supervision.

Mr. SAMPSON.—Quite so. There are times when advantages in both systems might be discovered in practice. In Victoria some years ago, after the appointment of the Railways Standing Committee, certain railways were, on the recommendation of that body, constructed by day labour, but the whole administration, through the investigations of the Committee, was revolutionized, so that there can be no analogy drawn, or comparison made. Under the circumstances, day labour having apparently proved so beneficial in Queensland, it seems to me that there is good reason for giving the Queensland Government an opportunity to tender for this railway.

Mr. THOMAS.—Does the honorable member suggest that the Queensland Government will tender?

Mr. SAMPSON.—I understand that in South Australia the Government tender for Government work.

Mr. THOMAS.—Yes, for their own work; but would the Queensland Government tender for Commonwealth work?

Mr. SAMPSON.—The honorable member for Brisbane suggested that we should get the Queensland Government to construct this line.

Mr. THOMAS.—That is a different thing.

Mr. SAMPSON.—If the Queensland Government have all the necessary equipment, why should they not undertake the work? The honorable member for Wakefield has placed in my hands some very interesting figures in regard to South Australia. In the case of the Brownlow railway, a line 90 miles in length, tenders were called from outside contractors, and the Government itself also put in a price. The figures show that the Government tender was £155,000. The next tender was submitted by a private contractor for £105,000, and the tender that was accepted was from a private contractor for £89,000, or 60 per cent. lower than the Government tender.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—But what extras did he get?

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—There were practically none.

Mr. SAMPSON.—I think it must be clear that if we are to carry out our important works by day labour, without having any of the disciplinary elements of competition, our works will necessarily be expensive. I do not intend to talk about the element of "Government stroke" referred to by some honorable members; but when we eliminate competition we set up an expensive system of carrying out works, whether under private or under Government supervision. In my own district, postal work has been done by day labour, and it has been fairly expensive. I quite realize that there are small works that may be carried out by the Government under the day-labour system, because the Government have their own plant, and contractors cannot be got to tender for work in every part of the country.

The CHAIRMAN.—I cannot allow anything but an occasional reference to matters outside railway construction.

Mr. SAMPSON.—I was merely using the outside work as an illustration. I was saying that the day-labour system may be employed by the Commonwealth in certain small works; but I hold that important public works, involving the expenditure of hundreds of thousands, should be treated in a different fashion. The Commonwealth Parliament, as trustees of the public money, should not spend that money in the way it thinks fit, or as a matter of patronage, or at the dictation of any section of the community. It is our duty to spend the money of the public to the very best advantage, and, in accordance with our wisdom, to devise means of carrying out public works in the most economical way. We are not justified in introducing a system which prevents the Government carrying out those works with the elimination of those elements of competition that are necessary to bring about the best results from the expenditure of public money.

Mr. RILEY (South Sydney) [12.50].—I hope that supporters of the Ministry will look at this question from a different stand-point. If we are to invite contractors to submit tenders for the construction of a railway in the Northern Territory, quite away from regular supplies and from bodies of men, they must add to their prices a very large margin.

I know something about contracting. If I tendered for this work, I would put on a certain margin, because of the great risk I should run in getting labour there.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The Government run the same risk.

Mr. RILEY.—But the difference is that if the Government frame a high estimate for the work, and there is any saving effected, the Commonwealth benefits by the saving; whereas the contractor who submits a high price on account of the risks, and effects a saving, gets all the advantage. Another point is that a contractor must take a complete plant to the Northern Territory, and it will not pay him to take it away again.

Mr. RICHARD FOSTER.—The Government will have to do the same.

Mr. RILEY.—No. As the Government intend to continue a railway policy there, the plant required for the construction of 50 miles of railway will come in handy for future extensions, and it can be stored in the Northern Territory. We must look upon the building of this railway as an experiment. If we call for tenders certainly there will be a very high price placed upon the construction of the line; but if the Government decide to build the railway, though the estimate of the Department may also be very high, any saving effected will be secured by the Government. The Government will be able to get people to go there and work for them more readily than private employers can. Men always prefer Government employment, because their money is secure, and, as a rule, they are not bullocked so hard. Not only has the contractor to reckon on paying higher wages to induce men to go to the Northern Territory, but he must add 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. for emergencies, which there is no need for the Government to do. The surveyors may alter a route, or build two arches instead of one over a river, and if the work is being carried out by contract, and the specification is altered in one detail, the contract is broken.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—And then the fun starts.

Mr. RILEY.—When a contractor gets a contract, especially from the Government, his first aim is to get away from the contract.

Mr. FALKNER.—If he can do so, does it not show inefficiency on the part of the Department?

Mr. RILEY.—No surveyor or draftsman can be absolutely accurate in that country. There will certainly be alterations to the original plans; and it is no reflection on the Department if they are made. Choosing a lighter grade may save hundreds of thousands of pounds in haulage. These things always happen, but when they do occur the contractor claims that the contract has been broken, and that he need not build the railway in a certain time. All these things tend to keep up the price of a work under the contract system. Under the departmental system of carrying out a work by day labour the best brains in the Department can be employed. The line can be shifted, the grades can be altered, and yet there is no risk of running into large expense for extras.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I wonder if we have not ever discussed this question before.

Mr. RILEY.—We have; but we cannot let the statements of honorable members go without some reply.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I am afraid honorable members on both sides are alike.

Mr. RILEY.—Honorable members representing South Australian constituencies have said that the construction of railways in New South Wales under the day-labour system has cost more than construction under the contract system. There has been a great deal of criticism, for example, of the North Coast railway. That line has been constructed at less than the Government estimate, though heavier rails have been laid down, and the grades have been altered, and Mr. Wade, Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales, notwithstanding the onslaught he made on this railway, has been compelled to admit that the line has cost less than the original estimate. Mr. Holman, the Premier of New South Wales, has pointed out that the policy of building railways in New South Wales by day labour has cost £1,000 less per mile than building under the contract system. The Railway Commissioner in New South Wales is not bound to carry out any deviations in railway construction by day labour; he can let contracts; but all the deviation work on the Blue Mountains has been carried out departmentally under the day-labour system, and the work had been

done cheaper than under the former system of contract work.

Mr. FALKNER.—If the supervision is effective it should be cheaper.

Mr. RILEY.—That is the whole thing. If the supervision is right, and the men employed are not delayed in the matter of material, the Government ought to construct a work by the day-labour system at least as cheaply as any contractor can do it.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Do you not think that we might experiment in a better place than in the Northern Territory? Why tie the hands of the Government in regard to the Northern Territory, when the great thing is to get anything done in any circumstances?

Mr. RILEY.—I was pointing out at the outset of my remarks that it was a great experiment to ask a contractor to take labour to the Northern Territory and build this railway, and that as the contractor would be taking so many risks, he would be sure to put up his price, and thus the building of the line would be more expensive.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—But why tie the hands of the Government up there above all other places?

Mr. RILEY.—The Government have announced their policy as a policy of assisting contractors. We, on the other hand, stand for a policy of day labour.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Are you not madly running your theory by starting it in the Northern Territory?

Mr. RILEY.—No. The Government have the land surveyed and the plans, and all they require are the men and material, so that there will be no risk in building this railway by day labour.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—You are dealing with this Bill as you never thought of dealing with the Bills of your party. Is that fair treatment or fair play?

Mr. RILEY.—If the Labour party were in power we would insist on this railway being built by day labour.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—You would not give a thought to it.

Mr. RILEY.—In my opinion, the Senate had a perfect right to amend the Bill in this direction, and I shall give my vote to support their action, because it is in the interests of the country. I resent the attacks that have been made on working men. It is said that because men work with picks and shovels they go in

for the Government stroke. I resent this slander upon them. Workmen have done just as good work for the Government as has been done for private contractors. The Prime Minister will remember that when he was Postmaster-General in New South Wales he carried out that splendid work of constructing telephone tunnels through Sydney. He increased wages to the men, and the tunnels were made three inches larger, necessitating the use of millions of bricks more, yet the whole work was done under the day-labour system in better style and at a saving of £29,000. The first section of the tunnels was carried out by contract at so much per cubic yard, and when the work was measured up and compared with what was done with day labour, this saving was shown to have been made. In addition the Government paid men with horses and drays two shillings a day more than the contractor paid. With these facts before me, I cannot support any proposal to bring about the pernicious system of letting contracts. The contractor always tries to get more out of the worker. I have worked as builder on contract and on day labour, and my experience is that the Government will get a better class of men, that the men will get a better deal from the Government than from private contractors, and that this work will be constructed cheaper by day labour than by letting a tender.

Mr. WEST (East Sydney) [12.59].—I have no desire to be dictated to by the Senate. The Senate is supposed to represent the States, and two States—New South Wales and Queensland—have decided that the work of building railways shall be carried out by day labour.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr. WEST.—Whether the Senate, in making the amendments, is playing a sensible game, or is merely endeavouring to show its strength, is a matter that does not concern this Committee, so long as the Senate has not exceeded its constitutional powers. It may be thought that there would be a loss of dignity in accepting this amendment, but that consideration should not receive much weight, because we have already accepted another amendment made by the Senate in this Bill, and have accepted amendments made by it in several other Bills. Those who have visited the Northern Territory will agree that it would be

absurd to attempt to construct the proposed railway by contract. No contractor would tender for the work except at an extravagant price: For one thing, the proposed line begins at a place 150 miles away from Port Darwin, and there is no timber suitable for railway construction between Port Darwin and Pine Creek, so that practically all the material required would have to be carried over the existing railway. Again, were a private contractor to tender for the work, he would have to make a heavy charge to cover contingencies. He would be greatly handicapped in the obtaining of labour. The nearest place at which he could get the necessary labour would be somewhere in Queensland, and it would cost a good deal to take men to the Territory, even from Queensland. Men going there would require some security, and it would be much easier for the Government to obtain labour than for a contractor to do so. The proposal of the Senate is one whose adoption would serve the interests of the taxpayers. We are told that the measure is urgent because it is desirable to proceed with the making of the railway at once. But if the contract system be adopted, there must be delay, because no contractor will tender until he has gone over the route and carefully considered the specifications. There are not many engineering difficulties along the route. The country is level, so that there would be no grades of more than 1 in 200, and not many bridges will be needed. The McDonald, the McIntyre, and the Ferguson Rivers will have to be crossed.

Mr. GLYNN.—And the Edith River.

Mr. WEST.—Provision will also have to be made for crossing the depressions which in the rainy season become water-courses. The honorable member for Riverina has spoken of the need for supervision, but, if the work were done by contract, the Government would have to employ an army of supervisors to see that it was being done properly, and these men might equally well be employed in directly supervising Government employees. The plant required would not be very expensive, and could be used afterwards for the maintenance of the existing line, and for carrying out extensions. The honorable member for Wakefield is always in a state of excitement, and seems to lose his reason when

he speaks, but he makes statements that almost compel an answer. The saving on the Queensland railways by the adoption of day labour in their construction has been from £900 to £1,200 a mile. The Queensland railways that were constructed by contractors were for 8-ton axles, whereas those which have been made with day labour are for 12-ton axles, as are also those of New South Wales, where the saving has been from £1,000 to £1,900 a mile. The present Secretary for Public Works in New South Wales was forced to adopt the day-labour system in the public interest on one line, for which the lowest tender was £300,000 above the estimate, a saving of 33 per cent. being made by the adoption of the day-labour system. The States are all adopting that system now, not only for railway construction, but also for the building of railways and rolling-stock, and we should follow their example. The railway from Port Darwin to Pine Creek was constructed with Chinese labour, a fact that accounts for the presence of so many Chinese in the Territory. The contractors employed that labour because they said that it was more certain than white labour in the Territory. It being one of the principles of the Liberal party to encourage the contract system in connexion with the Commonwealth public works, we on this side naturally fear that it will apply that system to the construction of the proposed line, and therefore we are making a fight for our own views and our own opinions. The majority in the Senate is sure to insist on this amendment. If there were twenty-nine Liberals in the Senate, they would turn down every proposal made by a Labour Government, and this Government, although Ministers may dislike it, must recognise the position. In the present position of parties, we on this side cannot be expected to forego our principles. What has kept us in power so long, and has made our supporters so loyal, is that we hold our political principles as sacred as our religious beliefs. If there were any disagreement between the Department and the contractors at that distance from the main centres of population, the cost would be enormous. There will be no loss of dignity to the Ministerial party in accepting the amendment. I am sure the people will indorse the Minister's action if he agrees with the Senate instead of trying to create a

bogy to frighten honorable members on the other side of the House. There is really nothing for them to fear.

Mr. THOMAS.—His own party in the Senate were not in favour of it.

Mr. WEST.—The position is really laughable.

Mr. GLYNN.—This amendment would render impossible the letting of small modified contracts to the men.

Mr. WEST.—I believe that is so. I do not think it is possible to find anybody to take the responsibility of carrying out that 50 miles of railway by contract, it would be something like putting your money on a horse. A man would have to take the contract at a ridiculous price, in order to have a possibility of making something out of it. The Prime Minister knows all the facts with regard to day labour, and if he were allowed to speak the truth he would say that that was the proper way to carry out this work. I have some sympathy with him in his position, because I know that if he consulted his own views in the matter he would not hesitate as to what he would do. If he had a knowledge of the Northern Territory he would be more convinced than ever that it was impossible for a man to take a contract there unless he got an extraordinary price. A very large army of officers will be needed to supervise the contract, and there will be great difficulty in getting them there. It is really a day-labour line. I quite understand that the Ministry object to being dictated to, and if the Senate were not strongly in favour of the day-labour system I am sure they would not have proposed the amendment, knowing as they do that the Government are opposed to it. If the Government do the work by contract, and make a loss, people will have to put up with it through having put into power a Government which is in favour of that policy. I would like to see the Bill passed, and I hope the Government will not throw it out, but will accept the amendment. I am sure the Senate proposed it in the interests of the taxpayer; and that fact should be a consideration to the Government.

Mr. BAMFORD (Herbert) [2.48].—I should not have risen, but for the remarks of the honorable member for Wakefield. I deprecate the manner in which he associated my name with the transcontinental railway. I am quite willing to support the honorable member

in everything he has said regarding the maladministration of the Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie railway, but he should not imply that I said that the fault was due to day labour. The fault was entirely due to mismanagement. The line has been grossly mismanaged, and it is not owing to day labour that the cost has been so high. From information I have received from a credible source the work is being done more cheaply than on any other line of a similar character in Australia, or than it ever was done in Australia. The cost of the plate-laying is less per yard than it ever has been on any other line of the same gauge or the same weight of rails—80 lb. The earth-work is done as cheaply, if not more cheaply than elsewhere. It is all a question of management, and if the Government were to adopt a similar policy of management in regard to the Northern Territory railway construction I should be entirely opposed to it. It would be much more costly than is necessary, and the time taken in the construction of the line would be much longer than is needed. There is no reason why the Government should not get the work done economically and well by day labour. If properly supervised, day labour is the cheaper method.

Mr. FALKINER.—Is not that the whole trouble?

Mr. BAMFORD.—Supervision is the whole trouble. I have been on railway work where men have been sent to the man in charge with a note recommending that they be put on. If the man in charge is a strong man, who knows his work, he will select his own men, and not take anybody selected by the Minister. That is the position which should be taken up, but it is not taken up with regard to these railways. If it was, there would be no reason why the work should not be constructed by day labour. If it is a question of sub-contract, or giving a guarantee that the contractor will do the work more cheaply, it will mean taking a good deal more out of the men, but the benefit of that will go into the pockets of the contractor, and not into the coffers of the Treasury. The contractor does that sort of thing for his own benefit. I have been a contractor myself, and know how things are worked. Three or four men meet together, and say, "We do not want a job; let A have it, as he wants it." A then shows his estimate to them,

and they put in their tenders in such a way that A's is the lowest, and he gets the work. Everybody who has been in the swim knows that that is done. Local supervision of the work will be required. We need local men if possible, or, at any rate, men who are acclimatized, to act as supervisors. I am going to make a sporting offer to the Government. I will supervise the transcontinental railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie for £3,000 a year, and guarantee to do the work in less than three years, and save the country at least £250,000. I hope that the Government will accept the Senate's amendment; but, if they insist upon adopting the contract system, I trust that they will at least modify their attitude, and let more than one contract for the work.

Mr. GLYNN.—We have not done anything, but the recommendation was that, assuming that we adopted the contract system, we might modify it to some extent. That, however, cannot be done if this amendment be accepted.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Contracts might be let for so many miles of earthworks, the building of a certain number of bridges, and so forth.

Mr. GLYNN.—If this amendment be agreed to, it will not be possible for men to tender separately for such works.

Mr. BAMFORD.—As a matter of fact, we are opposed to the contract system altogether.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Are honorable members opposite opposed to all co-operation in construction?

Mr. BAMFORD.—No.

Mr. GLYNN.—There is a bad season coming on up there, and there are seventy men whom I should like to place in work at the present time.

Mr. BAMFORD.—We are wedded to the day-labour system, and rightly so, because in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria it has been shown by experience to be the best.

Mr. FLEMING.—Experience in New South Wales has been against railway construction by day labour.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Not at all. Taking all the conditions into consideration, we find that the day-labour system, even in New South Wales, has been a pronounced success, and we are perfectly justified in the attitude that we are now taking up.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [3.3].—I should not be at all apprehensive as to what the Minister of External Affairs

might do if he were left to himself in this matter, but I am apprehensive of what the Government as a whole may do. There is a strong desire on the part of the Cabinet to give preference to contractors at all hazards, and I am inclined to think that contractors will get a very big pull on Government moneys. I do not know how many workmen the Minister has in the Northern Territory.

Mr. GLYNN.—I was advised, in August, that about seventy men could be placed at once.

Mr. FENTON.—I know one man up there who is described by the Administrator as a very valuable officer. He is not in the permanent service, but he married a native of the Northern Territory—a daughter of a school teacher—and is likely to become a permanent resident. Letters that I have received from him lead me to believe that the Territory is not nearly so bad as it is painted. He and several others now engaged on Government works would be able to play an important part in the construction of this line on the day-labour system. The work involves, not merely the laying of sleepers and rails, but the erection of a number of buildings, and we have a number of practical builders in the Territory.

Mr. GLYNN.—Some of the building work now in hand in the Territory is nearly finished, and we shall have these men unemployed if we do not get this Bill through.

Mr. FENTON.—We should avail ourselves of the labour already in the Territory. We have experts there.

Mr. PATTEN.—Yes, 180 of them.

Mr. FENTON.—I have always objected to the employment of a number of experts to prepare plans and specifications for contracts, and thereafter to watch the contractors to see that they are doing their work properly. Why should not these experts undertake the whole work for the Government under the day-labour system? It must be remembered that we already have steamers of our own which could carry rails and sleepers for less than a contractor would have to pay.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—The Government will have to pay for the carriage of rails and sleepers if we let a contract.

Mr. FENTON.—If the Government are going to carry the rails and sleepers to the spot, why should they not go a step further and place them in position

under the day-labour system? We have in the Northern Territory a splendid opportunity to put that system into operation, and I am sure that we could construct the line for less than any contractor could do. Even such a Tory newspaper as the Brisbane *Courier* confessed in a recent issue that the day-labour system was far preferable to the contract system. It said that—

The contract system was discarded in Queensland, in the first place, because it was too expensive. The Government have carried out works—railway and others—to retain the profit, which went to the contractor.

That is a very strong point. A man who takes a contract can make money out of it, only by getting more out of his men than he ought to do—by working them long hours on small pay—or dipping into the Treasury. If we let a contract for this line we may find it necessary to alter it later on. As the honorable member for South Sydney has pointed out, as soon as a contractor enters upon a work he endeavours to point out something outside the contract that ought to be carried out, and directly the contract is departed from he gets his extras. I want to stop that sort of thing. The Minister says that he has men available for this work.

Mr. PATTEN.—Why not give them an opportunity to take small contracts?

Mr. FENTON.—The evidence is overwhelmingly against the contract system. With proper supervision the day-labour system will save us thousands of pounds. That has been the experience in Victoria, where the contract system, in connexion with railway construction, has been abandoned for years. In reply to the honorable member for Wakefield who referred to the Government Printing Office in Adelaide, I would say that, a few years ago, private printing firms in this city declared that they could do the Government printing for less than it was costing in the State Printing Office. The Government Printer said at once, "Call for tenders." His advice was accepted, tenders were invited, and those put in by the Government Printer were hundreds of pounds below those of the outside contractors. The contract system everywhere is being discarded. Municipalities prefer the day-labour system, and a big business man, like Mr. Angliss, M.L.C., who erects many large buildings, has them built by day labour. He says that he has no time for the contract system. In advocating day labour we believe that we should get a fair re-

turn for fair wages. We are not going to support the loafer and the waster. We want a fair return for a fair wage, and if we get that we shall be satisfied.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [3.15].—This proposal opens up a great vista, but I do not propose to detain the Committee at any length. I regret that I have not with me a quotation from the *Age*, which shows that millions of money have been saved by the adoption of day labour in railway construction in Victoria. In many cases where contracts were availed of, there were subsequent legal proceedings, which cost more than the estimate for the railway itself, and, in one case, was represented by no less a sum than £350,000. Further, in no case when day labour was used did the actual cost of the railway work come up to or exceed the Departmental estimate. When the advantages of day labour were realized, the Department were naturally more careful in preparing estimates, and, as I say, never was an estimate exceeded. In the Queen's Hall of this Parliament House, the plaster work is supposed to be very fine, but it is what is known in the trade as "rotten."

The CHAIRMAN.—I must ask the honorable member not to discuss these matters more than incidentally.

Dr. MALONEY.—In the case of this Parliament House, the contractor failed to bribe the inspector of plastering, and the result was that the latter was dismissed. Sir Bryan O'Loghlin, and also Sir John Madden, endeavoured at the time to have an inquiry into the whole question of the plastering of Parliament House, but were not successful. I myself, in two separate Victorian Parliaments, sought to have a Committee appointed, but the contractors, plus the Commissioner of Public Works, were too strong for me. Then, again, I suggest that the next time the Minister of External Affairs is at the Law Courts in Melbourne, he should look at the stonework of the second story, which was erected by contract, and he will see that every stone is marked with decay, like an old-fashioned carriage dog. In the case of the Law Courts, the model stone was stolen, and, though the Government offered £500, and the contractor offered £50, as a reward, it was never found; and the building was completed with inferior stone taken from the upper layers of the quarry. Such is the work we get.

from contractors. I protest against contract work in connexion with this railway, on the score of health. Railway contractors are as careless in this respect as a Government is careful. The Government have every means of looking after the sanitary welfare of workers in their employ, and they, in the present instance, will have the assistance of the head of the Institute of Tropical Diseases at Townsville. If any honorable members vote for contract work to-day, I am sure they will regret the fact in the future. It may be necessary, under the advice of the medical expert, that the men on the railway shall work four hours in the early morning, and four hours in the evening, instead of eight hours when the sun is at its strongest. There is no desire, I am sure, that the men employed, who may leave their dear ones in the south, shall mark the track of the railway with graves. I protest against contract work on this railway because day work has proved to be the cheaper, because the health of the men employed can be better looked after by the Government, and because, as I say, I have no desire to see the track fringed with wooden crosses.

Question—That the Senate's amendment be disagreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	28
Noes	25

Majority	3
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AYES.

Ahern, C. J.	Manifold, J. C.
Atkinson, L.	Orchard, R. B.
Bennett, J.	Palmer, A. C.
Boyd, J. A.	Patten, R.
Chapman, Austin	Pigott, H. R. M.
Cook, Joseph	Rodgers, A. S.
Falkiner, F. B. S.	Ryrie, Colonel
Fleming, W. M.	Sampson, S.
Forrest, Sir John	Smith, Bruce
Foster, Richard	Stumm, J.
Glynn, P. McG.	Wynne, Agar
Groom, L. E.	
Irvine, Hans	<i>Tellers:</i>
Irvine, W. H.	Greene, W. M.
Kendell, W.	Thomson, John

NOES.

Anstey, F.	Mathews, J.
Archibald, W. O.	McDonald, C.
Arthur, J. A.	O'Malley, King
Bamford, F. W.	Riley, E.
Burns, G. M.	Sharpe, J. B.
Dankel, G.	Smith, Laird
Fenton, J. E.	Thomas, J.
Finlayson, W. F.	Tudor, F. G.
Fisher, A.	Watkins, D.
Higgs, W. G.	West, J. E.
Howe, R.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hughes, W. M.	Charlton, M.
Maloney, Dr.	Hannan, J. F.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.
Amendment disagreed to.

Clause 13—

The Minister may charge such fares and rates for the carriage of passengers and goods on the railway, and make such incidental charges in connexion with the railway, as he thinks reasonable.

Senate's Amendment.—That after the word "charge" the following words be inserted:—"or in the case of a contractor operating any portion of the line before it has been declared open for traffic may permit the charging of."

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [3.25].—I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This condition must be included, because it is one that is in every contract.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Senate's Amendment.—After clause 14 insert:—

(1) In the construction of the railway provision shall be made for the payment of not less than the prescribed minimum rates of wages and for the observance of the prescribed conditions of employment, and also for the recovery of penalties for non-payment of the prescribed rates of wages or for non-compliance with the prescribed conditions of employment.

(2) The minimum rates of wages and the conditions of employment shall be prescribed by the Minister and shall be set forth in a Schedule.

(3) Where a dispute arises as to the rates of wages to be paid to or the conditions of employment of any employé the dispute shall be referred to the Judge of the Northern Territory, whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties to the dispute.

(4) For the purposes of the settlement of a dispute referred to him the Judge of the Northern Territory shall have all the powers which under the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904-1911 belong to the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration with regard to the summoning and examination of witnesses, the production of books and documents, and the entry and inspection of any place, premises, materials, machinery, or appliances as if the proceedings were proceedings before that Court.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [3.26].—I move—

That the amendment be disagreed to.

As originally drafted in the Senate, there was some sense in the proposed new clause, because it applied to contracts. The Government will see that proper and reasonable wages and conditions are observed. There are rates and conditions already laid down, and there is no idea of reducing wages generally acknowledged under awards and decisions of the Courts. The clause is so modified that it does not apply to contracts, and it really imposes on the Government an obligation to provide penalties against itself.

Question resolved in the affirmative.
Amendment disagreed to.

Senate's Amendment.—After new clause 14A insert—“14B. In the supply and sale of stores to the men employed in the construction of the railway by the Government the prices charged shall not be more than the prices for such stores obtaining in Darwin, plus freights.”

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [3.28].—I move—

That the amendment be disagreed to.

With all respect to another place, I must say that this is an ill-considered amendment. It provides that persons who supply goods privately to the contractors or to the Government shall take prices fixed by the Government. There might have been some sense in the clause if it had been a declaration that the Government, in constructing the railway, should supply workmen with goods at a certain price plus freight. The clause, however, does not say that; it simply says that the Government is to fix the price of all supplies, by whomsoever provided.

Question resolved in the affirmative.
Amendment disagreed to.

Resolutions reported; report adopted.

Motion (by Mr. GLYNN); agreed to—

That Sir John Forrest, Mr. W. H. Irvine, and the mover be appointed a Committee to draw up reasons for the House of Representatives disagreeing to certain of the amendments.

Mr. GLYNN, on behalf of the Committee, brought up such reasons, which were read and adopted, as follow:—

As to Amendment No. 2 (in clause 8)—Because the Minister may find construction by contract the best method to be adopted, and it is undesirable to bind him to any particular manner of construction.

As to Amendment No. 4—

Clause 14A. (1)—

Because the Government will provide for the payment of fair wages and the observance of reasonable conditions of employment, and it is not expedient to provide for the imposition by the Government of penalties on itself.

Clause 14A. (2)—

Because it is not expedient to provide that the Minister shall prescribe and set forth in a schedule all conditions of employment.

Clause 14A. (3) and (4)—

Because adequate provision for this purpose of settlement of a dispute is provided by Ordinance.

As to Amendment No. 5—

Clause 14B—

Because it is not expedient to regulate the prices to be charged by both Government and private suppliers of stores to men employed in the construction of the railway.

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS BILL (No. 2).

In Committee (Consideration resumed, vide page 4616):

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [3.35].—Progress upon this Bill was reported to enable me to consider the suggestions of the Leader of the Opposition with regard to the prevention of perjury. I have drawn up a new clause, which is the same as that incorporated in the Public Works Committee Bill, and adopted by the late Government in their legislation dealing with Royal Commissions. I move—

That the following new clause be inserted:—“Any person who wilfully gives false evidence on oath or affirmation before the Committee shall be guilty of an indictable offence. Penalty: Five years' imprisonment.”

Mr. BAMFORD (Herbert) [3.37].—It is most unfair to expect members of the proposed Committee, who may reside in Western Australia or Queensland, to come to Melbourne to investigate public accounts at their own expense. Some provision should be made to pay their expenses from their homes to Melbourne, and from Melbourne to their homes.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [3.38].—The Government cannot see their way clear to make a provision for the payment of expenses or any remuneration in connexion with the work of this Committee. Its work will be of a totally different character from that to be done by the Public Works Committee. The members of that Committee must travel and take evidence in different parts of the Commonwealth where public works are required, and they will necessarily have to leave their homes for considerable periods and incur great expense. The members of a Committee of Public Accounts are not paid expenses in any of the States. Their work consists of the examination of public documents, and the bulk of the work of our Committee will be done in Melbourne when Parliament is in session. It will be seldom that the examination of documents will require their remaining at the seat of Government after a session has closed.

Mr. BOYD (Henty) [3.39].—I was a member of the Public Accounts Committee in the State Parliament of Victoria, and all the work of that Committee was done during the session. We used to meet in the morning and get through

everything. I think our Committee can do the same. There will be no justification for paying the members of the Committee.

Mr. FENTON.—The Commonwealth Committee will have a bigger task, having to deal with the whole Commonwealth.

Mr. BOYD.—But there will be only one set of accounts. The number of States does not make the work any larger. As there will be no necessity for the Committee to travel, the members of the Committee should not incur any expenses.

Mr. BAMFORD.—State members are not in the same position as Federal members, who come from all over the Commonwealth.

Mr. BOYD.—The Committee of Public Accounts will be essentially different from the Public Works Committee. The latter will travel to get their information. The Committee of Public Accounts will call their witnesses to Parliament House, and they will only meet during the session.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The matter is beyond discussion; because we have not brought down a message from the Governor-General.

Mr. BOYD.—There is no necessity to bring down a message. There will be plenty of honorable members on both sides who will be glad to work on this Committee, and give what experience they have, and what advice they can.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—We should allow sufficient to enable a man to offer an ice-cream to a witness.

Proposed new clause agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

Standing Orders suspended, and Bill passed through its remaining stages.

POSTAL VOTING RESTORATION BILL.

Bill returned from the Senate, with a message intimating that the Senate insisted on its amendments disagreed to by the House of Representatives.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That the Bill be laid aside.

INSCRIBED STOCK BILL.

Bill returned from the Senate without amendment.

DEFENCE LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

In Committee (Consideration of Governor-General's message):

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [3.47].—I move—

That it is expedient that an appropriation of revenue be made for the purposes of a Bill for an Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue a sum for the purchase of land for defence purposes.

The Senate, in the exercise of its powers, having eliminated from the Loan Bill an item providing for the borrowing of £300,000 for the purchase of land for defence purposes, we must make this special appropriation, or throw our proposals aside, and I suppose honorable members do not wish us to do that, because there are various defence works to be carried out in many electorates.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported, and adopted.

Ordered—

That Mr. Joseph Cook and Mr. W. H. Irvine do prepare and bring in a Bill to carry out the foregoing resolution.

Bill presented, and read a first time.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [3.50].—I am pleased to know that this money is to be provided out of revenue instead of being borrowed. I understand that £120,000 is needed for the purchase of a manoeuvre area in New South Wales, which was practically decided on by the last Administration. I wish to know, therefore, if the Defence authorities intend to purchase manoeuvre areas in other States.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I presume that the Department is already in possession of adequate areas in the other States.

Mr. FENTON.—Not in Victoria.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I suggest that the honorable member should reserve his question for another occasion. In this matter we are merely shouldering a burden left to us by our predecessors.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 (Appropriation).

Mr. HIGGS.—Is the money that is being appropriated to be spent only on

the purchase of land for defence purposes? The clause is specific on the point, but I understood, from something said either in this Chamber or in the other, that part of the money was to be devoted to some other purpose.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The appropriation is merely for the purchase of land for a manœuvre area, rifle ranges, and so on.

Clause agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; report adopted.

Standing Orders suspended, and Bill read a third time.

COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [3.54].—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I have already explained the purposes of the measure. Its introduction has become necessary by reason of the taking over of the Lighthouse Departments of the States, and the trained men who have been doing the work of those Departments. The Bill will prevent these men from being prejudicially affected by the transfer, because it will preserve all the rights and privileges which have accrued to them under State employment.

Mr. THOMAS.—Will the Commonwealth have to pay the pensions of the men taken-over?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is a matter of arrangement with the Government of the State. We are doing in connexion with these men what was done under the Constitution in connexion with the transfer of the officers taken over by the Commonwealth at the beginning of Federation. A defect has been discovered in our Public Service Act which this Bill will remedy.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [3.56].—The Bill practically amends section 33 of the Public Service Act, which reads—

Any person not more than sixty years of age who at the establishment of the Commonwealth was engaged in any office or employment in the public, railway, or any other service of any State shall be eligible for appointment to a position in the corresponding division in the Public Service of the Commonwealth. On the recommendation of the Commissioner the provisions of this Act relating to the examination of candidates to appointments on probation to the division or class or subdivision of class and the age of persons who may be so appointed shall not apply to any such person. Provided

that any person in the Professional or Clerical Divisions of the Public Service of a State may be appointed to the Administrative Division.

I understand that the Bill provides that men transferred from State Services to the Commonwealth shall be put in the same position as those who were transferred at the beginning of Federation. It is proper that the accrued rights and privileges of transferred officers should be preserved, but we ought to take care not to make it possible for men to get into the Commonwealth Service through the State Services more easily than they can get into the Commonwealth Service direct. It may be that entrance to some of the State Services can be obtained without passing an examination, or by passing an examination which is easier than the Commonwealth entrance examination.

Mr. GROOM.—This measure will be applied only where large bodies of men are transferred, as in the present instance, or in odd cases. Its provisions are not intended to be used generally.

Mr. TUDOR.—I grant that, and I admit that the Public Service Commissioner is very careful, and will always exhaust the Commonwealth Service before going to a State Service for a man. And rightly so, too. But if we make it easier for the men to come in from the States than to enter the Commonwealth Service direct, they will not be going up for our examinations, but will go up for the State examinations. I want to make it as easy for men to come directly into our Service as possible, as well as to come in by the by-way of the State Services, if I may say so without offence to the States, because capable men have been in exempt positions in the Commonwealth Service for over twelve months, fulfilling the duties of their positions well, and are unable to come into the Public Service on account of the working of the Public Service Act. Had they gone for the State Service, they might have got into the Lighthouse, or some other Department, and have been transferred to the Commonwealth Service to-day. I have no objection to this Bill, but I hope the Ministry will take the matter I have mentioned into consideration in any amendment of the Public Service Act.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH (Denison) [4.2].—I should like to know from the Prime Minister whether this measure will apply

to lighthouse officers now being taken over by the Commonwealth?

Mr. GROOM.—That is the reason for it.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—I am glad to hear it, because I have in my mind the case of a lighthouse engineer, who is really an excellent man, and under the existing Act it is impossible for him to be retained in the service of the Commonwealth. It is exceedingly difficult to get engineers capable of carrying out the work as that gentleman has been doing, not only in Australia, but in the Old World. I am heartily in accord with the measure, because it will do much to enable us to take over some very efficient men who are now in the lighthouse services in the various States.

Mr. THOMAS (Barrier) [4.3].—Personally, I have no objection to the Bill, and am not going to oppose it. Do I understand that the Bill enables an officer to come over from the State Service to our Service, and bring his rights with him? If a State servant is entitled to a pension, and we take him over under this Bill, would we become liable for his pension? The Prime Minister said the Bill was to enable us to take over a State servant if we required him, and we agreed with that, but I understood him to say that, in taking him over, we made his rights secure. Does that imply that if he has a right to a State pension, we have to pay that pension? If so, there will be a tendency to two classes in our Service.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—No; you only secure his accrued rights up to the time he is transferred.

Mr. THOMAS.—Then it means that we would have to pay his pension.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—No; it means that the State would pay it under the terms of his transfer.

Mr. THOMAS.—The States will have to agree to that.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I understand that that is so with all transferred officers.

Mr. GROOM.—We take over these officers, and this Bill provides for their continuing as Commonwealth public servants.

Mr. THOMAS.—We agree to that. The question is who pays the pension.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I think the States do.

Mr. TUDOR.—They pay their proportion for the time he was in the State Service.

Mr. THOMAS.—I suppose the States would be prepared to do that; but I understand the Bill goes further.

Mr. GROOM.—It makes a State officer eligible for appointment.

Mr. THOMAS.—Decidedly. This Bill goes further than the existing Public Service Act, but I am not objecting to it. The Public Service Act enables the Public Service Commissioner to take over a State officer if he was in a State Service previous to 1901.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The Act makes it mandatory on him to exhaust the Public Service before going outside.

Mr. THOMAS.—That is quite a different matter. The Bill enables the Public Service Commissioner, not only to take over a transferred officer, but any officer who entered the State Service after 1901. I think that is a very good thing. The Prime Minister said that they brought over their rights and privileges with them. I am quite prepared to support the Bill to the extent of enabling the Public Service Commissioner to take advantage of the offer of any State officers who are prepared to come over. I shall be glad to see the Public Service Act so amended as to enable the Commissioner to go outside if he can get an abler man than there is in the Federal or State Service.

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.6].—Will this Bill allow a system of pensions to creep into the Commonwealth Service? If so, I should object to that.

Mr. GROOM.—No.

Dr. MALONEY.—Do I understand that the State will undertake to pay an officer whatever pension he is entitled to under the State law when he retires from the Commonwealth Service? If he had remained in the State Service, that pension would have increased as years went on. Will the Commonwealth have to pay that increase, or will it simply pay him his salary from the time he enters the Commonwealth Service? Section 61 of the Act says—

For the purposes of this Act service in the public, railway, or other service of a State by any person who becomes an officer in the Public Service of the Commonwealth shall be reckoned as service in the Public Service of the Commonwealth.

I take it that if an officer had ten years' service with a State, it would give him a position in the Commonwealth Service as if he had served the ten years in that

Service. All I want to know is whether a system of pensions will be brought into the Commonwealth Service, because I am absolutely opposed to it.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders—Attorney-General) [4.7].—The object of the Bill is to render eligible certain persons who would not otherwise be eligible for appointment. With regard to the questions how it may affect the rights of persons in a State Service having accruing pension rights, and to what extent the Commonwealth incurs any responsibility with regard to those rights, and whether they will increase under the Commonwealth régime, we have nothing to do so far as this Bill is concerned. Probably there will be no pensioners taken over, but let us assume that some are. Section 84 of the Constitution makes full provision for officers who are transferred. These are not transferred officers, because this Bill does not deal with transferred Departments. The Lighthouse Department has not been transferred, so that that section does not apply, and there is no constitutional or statutory provision giving these officers who come over any statutory pension rights whatever. The question is what becomes of any pension rights they have. There is no compulsion on them to enter the service of the Commonwealth. The Bill merely renders them eligible should they desire it. Supposing we take over in this case a public servant who is already entitled to accruing pension rights, the question is what is to become of those rights, and who is responsible. That must be entirely a matter of agreement. The man need not come over. Supposing he has a pension right worth a capitalized value of £200, what becomes of it? We may say we invite him to apply, with others, to enter the service of the Commonwealth, but he need not if he does not like to, and he still has his existing rights under the Public Service Act of the State. The State is bound under the Public Service law still to provide him a place, unless it abolishes his post. If it does, the State has to make provision to do what is just regarding any accrued rights. We are not compelling him to come over, but if he chooses to come, he must make his own arrangements with the State Government. We shall be prepared to give opportunities for such arrangements being made, but shall take no financial responsibility. He will enter our service

as a newcomer. The only thing that will differentiate him in any way from a man who enters the Commonwealth Service for the first time is the provision in this Bill which brings him under section 61 of the Public Service Act. That section is quite general in its terms. Taken by itself, however, it would not apply to such a man, because it deals obviously with those transferred under section 60. But it is expressly made applicable by this Bill, and we have to see what it means. It declares that—

For the purposes of this Act service in the public, railway, or other service of a State by any person who becomes an officer in the Public Service of the Commonwealth shall be reckoned as service in the Public Service of the Commonwealth.

It is to be reckoned in relation only to such matters as seniority with regard to subsequent promotion, or furlough. If we brought in, say, an elderly man who had been in the service of a State for some years, we ought to offer him for these purposes the same rights that he would have if he had been from the commencement in the service of the Commonwealth. But the Commonwealth will not take over any responsibility with regard to that man's accrued rights. In all probability he would be a non-pension officer, but would have an insurance policy, and if he chose to keep it in force well and good.

Mr. THOMAS.—I think the explanation is quite sufficient.

Mr. FENTON.—Suppose he came over with pension rights?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—He could not come over with pension rights. Before he came over to the Commonwealth Service he would make his bargain with the State Government as to what was to become of those rights. No doubt the State Government concerned would treat him fairly.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—But if he resigned from the State Service he would forfeit his pension rights in connexion with it.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Yes; if this Bill were not passed he would.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Therefore, this Bill is designed to conserve his pension rights.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—It is to give him an opportunity to enter into an agreement with the State which will preserve his pension rights.

Mr. FENTON.—If a man had been thirty years in the State Service, and only ten years in our Service, should we have to pay him his pension when he retired?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—We should pay him no pension whatever. It would be entirely a matter of arrangement. The State might say, "If you like to go over to the Commonwealth Service, we will abolish your office and give you now the value of your pension rights."

Mr. THOMAS.—Or it might offer to find another billet for him.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Quite so. This is simply to get over a technical bar to applications by men who desire to apply, and whom we might like to take over.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time, and reported from Committee without amendment.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That the report be adopted.

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [4.22].—I should like to draw attention to the magnanimity which is being displayed by the Opposition. We find in clause 1 a number of provisions which ought really to be dealt with in separate clauses. This is only another instance of inefficiency on the part of the Government and of the undue haste with which legislation is being passed.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Report adopted.

Standing Orders suspended, and Bill read a third time.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [4.25].—I wish to suggest, with the concurrence of the House, that the sitting be suspended until 8 o'clock this evening.

Mr. HIGGS.—No.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Will the honorable member be good enough to listen? A number of Bills have been passed so rapidly that the Clerks at the table have not had time to prepare them for transmission to another place, and it is to give them a little time to do this work that I submit this proposal.

Mr. THOMAS.—Why not adjourn until to-morrow?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I should not hesitate to move the adjournment of the

House until to-morrow but for the work that will be coming down from the Senate.

Mr. HIGGS.—We want to discuss private members' business.

Mr. FENTON.—The Leader of the Opposition asked this morning whether an opportunity would be given for the discussion of the Constitution Alteration Bills brought down from the Senate. Could we not go on with their discussion?

Mr. HIGGS.—I beg to call attention to the state of the House. [Quorum formed.]

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We have put through a number of little measures today; and I am suggesting this brief adjournment to enable the Clerks to catch up to their work. By 8 o'clock this evening, I hope that some of the Bills now before the Senate may find their way here. I make the suggestion with a view to the winding-up of the business of the House; and the courtesy I ask is never denied to a Government at this stage of the session. Under the circumstances, I ask the honorable member for Capricornia not to press his objection.

Mr. HIGGS (Capricornia) [4.30].—The Prime Minister has said—

Mr. SPEAKER.—I remind honorable members that there is no question before the Chair—that no motion has been made. Is it the desire of the House that I leave the chair until 8 o'clock?

Mr. HIGGS.—I object.

Mr. TUDOR.—We cannot keep the Speaker here if he chooses to leave the chair.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Why not go on with the consideration of the Referenda Bills?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Do honorable members not see that, in order to enable us to deal with Bills, the Clerks must be in the chamber; and it is to give them a little respite, and to enable Bills to be prepared for the Senate, that I am suggesting an adjournment.

Mr. TUDOR.—Why meet to-night at all?

Mr. HIGGS.—I have been prevented from speaking, and I must say—

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Very well, then, let us go on. Honorable members are "bossing" things in the Senate, and wish to do so here!

Mr. SPEAKER.—As there is nothing before the House, and this discussion is irregular, I shall suspend the sitting until 8 o'clock this evening.

Sitting suspended from 4.35 to 8 p.m.

NORFOLK ISLAND BILL.

Bill returned from the Senate with a message intimating that it insisted on two amendments disagreed to by the House of Representatives.

DEFENCE LANDS PURCHASE BILL.

Bill returned from the Senate without amendment.

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 12th December (*vide page 4260*), on motion by Mr. JOSEPH COOK—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. HIGGS.—I draw attention to the state of the House. [*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. FALKINER (Riverina) [8.2].—The honorable member for Hume dealt with this Bill from the scientific aspect. I shall not say anything about it from that point of view, but I would inform the honorable member for Capricornia that this kind of legislation cannot be called Socialism and an aid to the farmers and stock-owners in New South Wales. They are very heavily taxed by the Pastures Protection Board for the prevention of stock diseases, and the whole community benefits; but even if it be so called, farmers and stock-owners are the pioneers of the country, and it is due to their efforts that the towns exist, and, therefore, they are entitled to some consideration. The farmers and stock-owners of Australia give the city workers all the monetary assistance they can by supporting a protective policy, and all they ask for now in return is an expenditure in the shape of higher research in agriculture and stock diseases, which will have the result of bringing about a large national production and tend to cheapen living. As a matter of fact, it will also help to do away with a great deal of the Socialistic legislation that is now necessary in the form of direct aid. The State institutions can still continue their experimental farms, while the Federal Bureau of Agriculture can pursue research work. So far, the

State institutions have done very little for agriculture. They have certainly advised the farmers in regard to the use of superphosphates, but the use of these superphosphates was not the result of their original research, because they were well known in England before they were spoken of in Australia. There is the necessity for increasing the yield of our primary products because of the increased cost of government and production, and because of the claim for higher wages. If the producers have to meet these demands they must have increased yields, and they can only be obtained by applying science to production from the soil in a greater measure. In the past, Australia suffered, as America did some time back, from having too much land. When land is plentiful and cheap the farmer is not obliged to put the labour into it that he must when he has to adopt intense culture. The State institutions are really very little ahead of the methods of the Romans in what they recommend to the farmers. *Virgil* mentions the necessity for hand picking to get clean seed, and also the need for thoroughly working the land after ploughing by harrowing, and fallowing, and the rotation of crops. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, there are sixty institutions in the United States of America. Fifty-five receive Government aid, and they employ 795 people, including seventy-one directors and 163 scientific chemists, who deal with all phases of agriculture and diseases in stock. They have men going all over the world looking for plants and seeds which may improve their own production. By the improvement in seed alone, the farmers in the cotton belt of the United States of America have been raised from absolute poverty to plenty. There is no end to the scope of this proposed bureau in Australia. A large part of the Commonwealth has a hot climate and a light rainfall, and is of light carrying capacity. In the western division of New South Wales there are 88,000,000 acres which, fully stocked, will carry 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 sheep, but America would send men all over the world to similar hot districts looking for grasses that would improve the carrying capacity of their land. I suggest to honorable members opposite that the time is coming when the pastoralists

and the farmers, so far from being regarded as of no consequence to the city workers, will be aided and supported, as they—the city workers—are absolutely dependent on them for their meat supplies. If we can increase the carrying capacity of that district to which I refer, and dry areas generally, leaving aside the question of making the land suitable for agriculture, we should so increase our exports that it would be a national benefit. There is a dry district on the transcontinental railway route between Adelaide and Albany. The rainfall there is between 10 inches and 12 inches, and it should be our endeavour to grow suitable grasses there, and also a suitable wheat. I understand experiments are now being made in South Africa with the Durum wheat, which is obtained from Italy, and they are trying to breed a wheat which will grow with practically none but the conserved moisture.

Mr. SHARPE.—The Beef Trust has all the land available there, and you know it.

Mr. FALKINER.—If the honorable member is talking about South Africa he may or may not be correct, but if he is talking about the land along the transcontinental railway, Mr. Chinn and a number of members of the Labour party in Western Australia own the bulk of it. However, there are millions of acres of land there, and we need a wheat that will grow upon them. The State Department in Victoria has recommended the pastoralists to grow saltbush in these dry districts, but saltbush has a very light carrying capacity, and will not carry as many sheep as grass will. The State Departments have not done anything in regard to stock diseases. The Queensland Department has certainly done a little for the tick trouble, but nothing new has been done in regard to the ordinary diseases of sheep, such as foot-rot, enlarged sheath in male sheep, blow-fly, and liver rot, things for which, so far, no cures have been discovered. The stockowners had to rely on a private individual to get the vaccine that made it possible to hold sheep in districts subject to anthrax. Farrar, in New South Wales, and Marshall, in South Australia, private individuals, have bred for the farmers wheat which has increased the yield enormously. If we have a Federal Bureau employing men of higher scientific attainments than there are in the State Departments, we shall greatly increase our pro-

duction, and so help to pay our annual interest Bill, leaving a surplus for internal development. There seems to be an idea in the minds of some people that for a nation to be prosperous it must place men on areas of land so small that they are practically only hod-carriers, with no hope of bettering their conditions. I think that we should try to raise the status of the agriculturists by applying science to their calling, and making it more productive, so that they may be enabled to live lives of comfort, and have conveniences equal to those of city workers, and so that country life may be more attractive to the young people who now, in some instances, regard it as a drudgery, and, therefore, flock to the towns. We have now the benefit of telephones and motor-cars. Every farmer should be in the position to be able to afford these things, so that his life will be pleasant and attractive, and, instead of people flocking to the towns, they will be content to live in the country, and aid in the primary production of Australia.

Mr. SHARPE.—Pay the young people a good wage, and they will remain.

Mr. FALKINER.—If you wish to see them better paid, you must help the primary producer to increase his yields. If it were not for the increase in the yield of wheat, due to the farmers' own efforts, and in the weight of wool, due to the sheepbreeders' own efforts, the rural worker would not be getting as good pay as he gets now, nor would the town worker, who is dependent on them. I hope that our Labour friends will not, like the honorable member for Capricornia, try to talk the Bill out, but that they will, on the contrary, give it their hearty support.

Mr. SPEAKER.—A little while ago, when a quorum was called for, an honorable member, I am informed, walked out of the chamber. I direct the attention of honorable members to the fact that to leave the chamber when a quorum is called for is an infringement of standing order 34.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY (Darwin) [8.16].—I look upon this as a very important measure; but, in the interests of system and of organization, the Government ought not to carry it into effect until there has been a conference with the States.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That would be a waste of time.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—For the past thirteen years we have been wasting time by flouting the States. We have gained nothing by that.

Mr. MATHEWS.—They have flouted us.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—They were here first. The Commonwealth arose out of the States, through their action in voluntarily surrendering certain specified functions. A thing created ought not to persecute its creators. The Agricultural Bureau of the United States of America has done wonders, because the State authorities have worked in conjunction with the Federal authorities. To visit Washington and not to see the operations of that immense institution is not to see Washington at all. The Washington Agricultural Bureau enables the farmers of America, by the co-operation of all the States, to have soils investigated, to have new kinds of plants and cereals created, to study the conditions of the whole earth, and to bring from all parts of the world the various kinds of growth that are required, crossing them with other growths already in the country, to increase production. Let me give one illustration: In the State of Illinois they were producing about 15 bushels of wheat to the acre. Six counties in the Multnomer district joined together, and the United States Department sent out to them a professor, who, crossing a wheat brought from Africa, or Siberia, with an American wheat, in three years increased the yield to 27 bushels an acre. The crop grown on 200,000 acres is thus increased by 12 bushels an acre, and, as wheat was worth 4s. 2d. a bushel in America then, the wealth of those six counties was increased by nearly 2,500,000 dols., or £500,000. That happened in districts where the land has been deteriorating through continuous cropping.

Mr. RILEY. — Did it make wheat cheaper to the consumers?

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—Even if it did not, it enriched the neighbourhood, and gave more work. I believe that if the Government conferred with the States, they would willingly join to make their bureaux part of the national bureau, working in co-operation with it. Eventually we should in this way establish one big institution. But if we start with a little institution of our own, there will be overlapping, and various kinds of interference, until, at last, there will be a universal cry that our institution is not

wanted. Men can sit round a table, and agree on certain things, but they soon get into diametrical opposition if not asked to take part in what is being done. The wonderful success of the Labour party is due to the fact that every member of it has a voice in the government of the country. I have never heard of any of our State bureaux finding a cure for the diseases which affect stock in this country; but I well remember that when we used to send cattle across from the Panhandle country, to ship them at Kiawa, for Chicago, and pleuro-pneumonia, and other diseases, broke out, scientific men were immediately sent down by the National Government to prescribe cures. This was done at the expense of the nation. We did not pay a penny for it. But, of course, the nation profited by the industry. If you had 20,000,000 head of cattle in the Northern Territory, even though they were all owned by the Beef Trust, they would create wealth for Australia. But I do not wish to talk out the Bill. I hope that the Government will confer with the States, and next session establish a real institution; that is, unless, in the meantime, there is a double dissolution, and the present Ministry gets knocked out.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Minister of Trade and Customs) [8.25].—This is a measure that I have very deeply at heart. Early in the history of Federation, I was associated with one who was deeply interested in trying to get Parliament to take up a scheme of this kind. The powers of the Federation were intended to assist those engaged in primary production as much as any other class in the community. Australia depends, to a very great extent, for its prosperity on the productions of animal and plant life. In 1911, our agricultural output was worth £38,774,000; our pastoral output, £50,725,000; dairy, poultry, &c., £19,107,000; forestry, &c., £5,728,000; a total of £114,334,000. That was the contribution of the animal and plant life of Australia to our material prosperity. It is upon the prosperity of our primary production that our secondary industries exist. For the full development of a nation, you must have primary and secondary industries side by side. It is by the establishment of the secondary industries in the cities that you produce the skilled artisans, whose presence is evidence

of a very high state of civilization. But the foundation of our national prosperity must be our primary industries. We have to consider, first, how we are to preserve what we have, and, secondly, how we are to increase our output. At the basis of this Bill is the desire to preserve what we have in the plant and animal life of Australia. We propose to establish a Bureau of Agriculture whose primary object will be research and the scientific investigation of the diseases which affect our animal and plant life. We have already taken action through the Quarantine Department to keep out of Australia many of the diseases which are to be found in other parts of the world. That in many countries is part of the work of an agricultural bureau. We have also a Commonwealth Meteorological Department, and, in the United States of America, meteorology is part of the work of the Agricultural Bureau. Thus, we have already made a start. As regards the investigation of diseases, that is being asked for by persons in nearly every part of Australia. When the honorable member for Eden-Monaro was Minister, I visited with him the sugar-cane growing districts of Queensland, where we were informed of a pest that diminished the cane crops. The Minister was asked to put money on the Estimates for its investigation with a view to prevention. That pest alone has cost the sugar industry thousands of pounds. In Victoria, the fruit-growers asked for the investigation of the disease known as bitter pit, and my predecessor in office, by co-operation with the States, appointed Mr. McAlpine to conduct investigations. Some very high tributes have been paid by persons outside Australia to the work that he has done. For instance, the consulting agriculturalist in the United States of America says this of his work—

I secured the loan of a copy of your *Handbook of Fungus Diseases of the Potato in Australia*, perused it carefully, and find it to be the best treatise on the diseases of potatoes I have ever seen.

With regard to his progress report on bitter pit, Professor White, of the New York State College of Agriculture, said, "I have gone through this pretty carefully; it is certainly the best contribution we have yet to date." I have only quoted a few of the many opinions about this gentleman's work. Those are the opinions of men capable of speaking and judging on the work of this scientist whom we have

working in Australia, and of whose excellent work we may well be proud. Excellent as his work is, yet what Professor McAlpine is doing is only a small contribution to the great work that has yet to be done. The States have done splendid work, but so far have not been able to take up the work on an adequate scale. For instance, Queensland covers an enormous area. We have the possibility of all sorts of diseases springing up through all the industries in that State and going across into New South Wales. It would be infinitely better for Australia to get three or four highly-paid scientists to make a thorough investigation of these questions, and report for Australia as a whole.

Mr. SHARPE.—You have not provided for that in this Bill.

Mr. GROOM.—I am afraid the honorable member has not read the Bill. That is the intention, as the Bill says distinctly, "the investigation of pests and diseases affecting animals, plant life," and so on. We have many of these arising throughout Australia. The idea of this Bill is not to supersede or do away with the existing State Agricultural Departments. You can divide the work being done by those Departments into three or four different functions. There is the administrative work, educational work, experimental work, and research work. A great deal of the administrative work will have to be continued to be done by the States, such as appointing inspectors of orchards and stock. The educational work will continue to be done by them through their agricultural colleges and high schools. The experimental work referred to must also remain with them to a great extent, as they have their experimental farms. I have had prepared by the Commonwealth Statistician, for the information of honorable members, a complete chart, showing the whole scope of the different Departments of Agriculture, what they are doing, and the different measures prepared by them. It shows at a glance the whole of the work that is being covered in Australia at present. The research work, to a great extent, can be usefully done by the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau. Some time ago I communicated with Queensland, and the Acting Premier of Queensland replied—

I have received a long report from the Department of my colleague the Secretary for

Agriculture, the last paragraph of which I append hereto, and in which I fully concur:—"The Minister desires that the Commonwealth Government be informed that if the Bureau is established, this Department, recognising that it will be for the common good, will be prepared in every way to fully co-operate in any work that lies within its sphere, in which this Department may be able to help."

Mr. Swinburne, speaking on behalf of Victoria, pointed out that the Commonwealth—

could with advantage confine its attention to research rather than administrative work. At present each of the States maintained a staff of experts to conduct research work. These experts included entomologists, vegetable pathologists, and veterinary officers, who were inquiring into many problems of vital importance to the producers of Australia. Among these problems were rust in wheat, bitter-pit in apples, and stock diseases, for which no scientifically-based cure had yet been found. Were the Commonwealth to assume control of this work much good could be done. Instead of half-a-dozen States working for the same ends along different lines with expensive staffs, the Commonwealth would be able to co-ordinate the work and secure for its advancement the very best scientific and practical experts that the world offered. The bureau could be maintained by contributions from the States and the Federal Government, and its establishment would open up a new era in production.

That was in 1908. When the Scottish Commissioners came out, they inquired into our agricultural conditions and educational institutions, and studied closely the conditions under which our Governments were working their Agricultural Bureaux. In their report, at page 172, they stated—

A strong and well-equipped Federal Department would be more likely to cope with such diseases than the weaker and less well-equipped Departments of the States. There are many problems which are common to the whole of Australia, or to the greater part of it, and it would appear that time and money would be saved by placing some of the work of research in the hands of the Federal Department.

This Bill is not intended to unnecessarily duplicate the work that is being done. It would be the duty of the Federal Department to work with the States in every way possible, carrying out experiments and investigations all over Australia.

Mr. SAMPSON.—Will it mean a reduction of State expenditure?

Mr. GROOM.—The States will have to be consulted, as they should be. I believe they will be able to assist, and when we get into practical operation, we shall find it to our benefit to take advantage of the Australian universities also. I asked Professor H. A. Woodruff, of the

Veterinary School of the Melbourne University, to tell me to what extent scientific research work is being carried out in Melbourne, and he wrote as follows—

The original research which is being carried out at this school has reference to two diseases of considerable economic importance, namely contagious pleuro-pneumonia of cattle and bovine contagious abortion.

The former is of particular importance in connexion with the export of any live stock from Australia. The latter is chiefly of interest because of the great loss it entails to dairymen.

What is being attempted is to discover more exact methods of diagnosis, and then, subsequently, improved methods of immunization.

The scope of this work is necessarily limited by the fact that the staff is engaged primarily in teaching work. For special research it would be necessary to retain one or more skilled persons to do nothing else, and little extra in equipment would be required. Experimental animals would from time to time have to be procured. The two items requiring money are (1) the salaries of the men set apart for the work, and (2) purchase of experimental animals.

It appears to me that the best and most economical method of conducting pathological research is to appoint the most suitable person available for a stated period to investigate the particular problem in hand, and not to create a permanent staff.

The work of this school is fairly well defined, and in so far as investigations were on a large scale and called for by the Federal authorities (Agricultural Department) that special staff and extra cost would have to be met from Federal sources.

So far as I am personally concerned, every effort would be made to co-operate. No doubt you would be able to secure the consent of the Victorian Government to any necessary arrangement.

I think Australia will find, as the United States of America has found, that it will be a benefit for us to take advantage of the work of the scientists wherever they are throughout Australia. It may be necessary to subsidize and assist them, so that our experiments may be carried out on as wide and extensive a scale as possible. I want particularly to emphasize the fact that the scope of this Bill is not intended to supersede the State Departments at all, but is to undertake a big branch of work that is absolutely vital to Australia's production. I believe that if this Bill is carried, we shall have the same experience as the honorable member for Darwin said that the United States' Department has had. Many discoveries have been made in the United States of America, the results of which have been to save more money to the producers than would pay for the cost of the equipment of the whole of the Department for years. The appointment of scientists is not a

mere useless expenditure. Scientific investigation has to be made, and although the first stage may appear to produce no material advantage, experience has shown that in the long run the result has been greatly to the benefit of the producers in the country concerned. Science is coming more and more into play in every department of life. Agriculture is one of the oldest callings in the world, and yet no calling is so dependent upon every advance and discovery in science. Every latest discovery is being turned in some way to the improvement of agriculture. The two great problems before us are to cheapen the cost of production and to increase the output. If we take advantage of science to increase the production of material wealth in Australia, the national wealth will increase, the higher standards of civilization that we desire to see throughout Australia will be made possible, and the fuller development of a greater Australia will be realized.

Mr. SHARPE (Oxley) [8.40].—I am sorry I have not heard all the speeches of honorable members representing the agricultural portions of the Commonwealth, but I have had the pleasure of hearing one speech to-night, and am not too well pleased with the effort that the honorable member made to convince the Chamber that he was in favour of the Bill. The measure is of serious importance to the people, undoubtedly the most serious introduced this session, yet it is only brought forward at the eleventh hour, and the Government are handling it without any serious consideration.

Mr. FLEMING.—It was the first Bill brought in.

Mr. SHARPE.—It is the more discredit to the Government and their supporters that they allow it to be the last measure dealt with. If they had been sincere about it, and desirous of seeing it become law this session, we should, in all probability, have allowed them to pass it, and given them our assistance to do so.

Mr. RODGERS.—You are going to do it now, are you not?

Mr. SHARPE.—We are not going to do it now, because the hour is too late, and the provisions of the Bill are not sufficient to satisfy honorable members on this side. Honorable members opposite are not sincere in their effort to bring it into operation in order to improve the conditions of the men on the land.

Mr. GROOM.—Are you opposed to the Bill?

Mr. SHARPE.—I am in favour of it; but I am not in favour of it being rushed through in its present form.

Mr. GROOM.—How do you think it ought to be altered?

Mr. SHARPE.—We should have some opportunity to discuss the Bill and know its principles. The man on the land desires more opportunity to improve his condition; but this Bill will not help in that direction. We are told by honorable members opposite that many people in different parts of the world grow three or four times the amount of produce on their land that we can grow here, because they have a proper analysis made of their soil, with the assistance of their Governments.

Mr. FALKINER.—Where is this?

Mr. SHARPE.—Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and France. The men who came into this Parliament as champions of the farmers, have remained silent so far as this Bill is concerned. They have not raised their voices in favour of the farmers.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—What suggestions does the honorable member make?

Mr. SHARPE.—I think that the Bill should be drafted on more liberal lines. Provision should be made for the analysis of soils and the teaching of farmers as to the crops for which their lands are most suited.

Mr. RODGERS.—Read the Bill.

Mr. SHARPE.—It would be idle to read it at this hour. I know that the Government are not sincere in bringing it down. If they were they would tell us what it is going to cost the country.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The honorable member must not impute insincere motives to the Government.

Mr. FLEMING.—Surely the Government have not placed on the Estimates merely for fun an item of £5,000 in connexion with this Bureau.

Mr. SHARPE.—That amount should be expended in carrying on the work of the Bureau. Of the new members supporting the Government, only two or three representing rural districts have addressed themselves to this question, although when they were before the people they were all most emphatic in their declarations that they intended to do much to bring about improved conditions for the man on the land. This Bill should have been brought down earlier in the

session. The Opposition are most anxious to improve the conditions of the man on the land, and we feel that a Bill of this character, if drafted on broad lines, must tend to help them considerably. We have been told that the Scottish Commissioners, who visited Australia recently, were not altogether pleased with their trip to Queensland, because they found that all the most suitable land had already been taken up. As a matter of fact, we have in Queensland vast areas that could be put to a more profitable use than that to which they are at present devoted. I cannot vote for the Bill in its present form.

Mr. GROOM.—Let us get into Committee, and the Government will be prepared to consider any reasonable amendment that the honorable member may propose.

Mr. SHARPE.—If the Government will accept certain suggestions, which I think will tend to improve the Bill, then I shall be prepared to let the second reading go. A few years ago Sir Hector Carruthers, when Minister of Lands in New South Wales, decided to institute a most rigid inspection of dairy cattle, and the result of that inspection was that probably nearly one-half of the dairy cattle of the State were condemned.

Mr. FLEMING.—Nothing like one-half.

Mr. SHARPE.—The honorable member knows nothing about the matter. I can speak from experience, because I was living at the time in a dairying district.

Mr. FLEMING.—And I was representing a dairying district in the New South Wales Parliament.

Mr. SHARPE.—The dairymen of the State were greatly incensed at this action on the part of the Government, and shortly afterwards the system was dropped. Since then, however, dairymen in the South Coast district, from which Sydney draws its milk supplies, have expressed their regret that the inspection was not continued, for if it had been they believe that there would have been healthier and more profitable dairy herds in the country. Do the Government propose, under this Bill, to provide for the inspection of stock? They occupy their present position only temporarily, and we must take them for what they are worth, but if this Bill be not passed this session, they will probably tell the people that it was impossible to pass it, owing to the opposition of the Labour party.

Mr. TUDOR.—Members of their own party have "stone-walled" it.

Mr. SHARPE.—I am prepared to meet whatever criticism they may indulge in with regard to our attitude, and since the Minister of Trade and Customs has promised to give us an opportunity to move amendments in Committee, I shall not further detain the House.

Mr. ARTHUR (Bendigo) [8.57].—It is not my intention to detain the House by entering upon a discussion of the general merits of this Bill, since I believe that they are well recognised. Nearly every member of every party who has sat in this House has at one time or another expressed his approval of the proposal, and if it were for no other reason than that it will extend in some degree the activities of the Commonwealth into an area where beneficial results must be achieved, I should give the Bill my support. This question came before the House as far back as 1901, when the ex-member for Bendigo moved—

That, in the opinion of this House, a National Department of Agriculture and Productive Industries, on the same lines as that of the United States of America, ought to be organized and maintained in connexion with the Government of the Commonwealth.

Mr. TUDOR.—That was one of the first motions to be submitted in this Parliament by a private member.

Mr. ARTHUR.—That is so, and I find that it was supported by the greater part of the talent of the House. If it were necessary, I would refer honorable members to the very elaborate memorandum on the proposed Australian Bureau of Agriculture which was prepared by the present Minister of Trade and Customs when he was Attorney-General in 1908. It will benefit honorable members if they read that document, and consider in detail all the ramifications of the matter. But what I wish particularly to refer to is the question of the constitutionality of the Bill. I have not come to any conclusion on the point, but a great number of doubts have been raised by constitutional authorities as to the power of the Commonwealth to appropriate money for any purposes other than those mentioned in section 51, which specifies the powers that may be exercised by the Commonwealth. In that section, there is no reference whatever to encouraging or fostering agriculture, or anything of the sort, and therefore it is a question whether the Commonwealth can

spend money for the purposes of this Bill, or any purpose not there mentioned.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—The honorable member does not think that as a lawyer?

Mr. ARTHUR.—Mr. Speaker just now called an honorable member to order for imputing motives of insincerity, and I think that the honorable member for Kooyong is imputing such motives to myself. I ask that the honorable member shall withdraw the words.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I ask the honorable member for Kooyong to withdraw the words complained of.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—If the honorable member is serious, I shall, of course, withdraw the words.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I took the remark as being merely jocular.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Of course it was.

Mr. SPEAKER.—If, however, the words are regarded as offensive by the honorable member for Bendigo, they must be withdrawn.

Sir ROBERT BEST.—Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw them.

Mr. ARTHUR.—Perhaps I made too much of the honorable member's jocular remark. In support of the view I am indicating rather than expressing any support of—a probable view for a constitutional lawyer to take—I may say that Mr. Justice Higgins, when a member of this House, expressed one exactly similar in 1903. He was then dealing with the Naval Agreement Bill, which was something outside the ordinary purposes of defence as laid down in the expressed powers of section 51. When Mr. Justice Higgins was speaking, Mr. Deakin said—

The honorable and learned member's argument implies that the power to make appropriations is limited by the legislative powers conferred by section 51.

Mr. Higgins.—Yes. Under the States Constitutions, very much wider powers are conferred. and so on. We know, as a matter of fact, that the United States of America has established a National Bureau of Agriculture, but the powers under the United States Constitution are very much wider than our own in this respect. Congress is given expressed power to spend money for the purposes of the "general welfare." On anything that may be considered for the general welfare, the United States Government may spend money, but our Constitution, as I say, is much more limited. Section 81 of our Constitution says—

All revenues or moneys raised or received by the Executive Government of the Common-

wealth shall form one consolidated revenue fund, to be appropriated for the purposes of the Commonwealth in the manner and subject to the charges and liabilities imposed by this Constitution.

That that excludes any appropriation of this kind is borne out, I think, by sound constitutional reason. If we are able to spend money for this purpose, we are able to spend money for any other purpose which seems good to us—that is, if our power of spending money for the "purposes of the Commonwealth" is equivalent to spending money for the "general welfare" of the Commonwealth. We may, from this point of view, spend the moneys raised by taxation for any purposes we choose, and it is the doubt in that regard that I desire to express. Can this be done? Can we spend the money we raise for any purpose, whether that purpose is, or is not, outside the scope of our legislative powers? Professor Harrison Moore, in his *Commonwealth of Australia*, which is well known to many honorable members, deals with this subject; and if the honorable member for Kooyong, who is also a lawyer, will read what is said by the Professor, he will see that there is some substance in the position I present. I personally hope there is no substance in it, because I desire this Bill to go through, regarding it, as I do, as a measure which will prove of benefit to the Commonwealth. But we do not desire to pass such legislation if there is any doubt, without having that doubt expressed and considered by the House. It is for that purpose only I rose to make this contribution to the debate.

Mr. AHERN.—Which way is the honorable member going to advise us?

Mr. ARTHUR.—Unfortunately, it is not my function, but that of the Attorney-General, to advise the House on such matters. At page 523 of his book, Professor Harrison Moore says—

A very important question arises as to the extent of the power of appropriation. By section 81, the Consolidated Revenue Fund is "to be appropriated for the purposes of the Commonwealth." Unquestionably the Commonwealth may appropriate money for the maintenance of its Government and for the execution of any of the objects which have been committed to any branch of it. Does the power of appropriation extend beyond this so that the Parliament, having a general power of taxation, has an equally general power to extend the proceeds of that taxation as it thinks fit without regard to whether the object of expenditure is for the purpose of an incident to some matter which belongs to the Federal Government?

That is the question he puts, and he goes on to say—

In the United States, after keen controversy, it is now agreed that "the power of Congress over the Treasury is, in effect, absolute, and extends to the appropriation of money for any object which in their judgment will conduce to the defence of the country or promote its welfare." This, however, is under an express power to "provide for the general welfare."

Professor Harrison Moore deals with a similar position in Canada, which has also expressed powers, and on the following page he says—

There is, moreover, what appears a vital distinction between the United States and the Commonwealth Constitutions in that, in the former, the proceeds of taxation are the unqualified property of the Federal Government, subject to no claim by any one else.

Professor Harrison Moore points out that in our Constitution there is a claim which the States may have on the surplus revenue, and that, therefore, there is somebody, or there was before the Financial Agreement came into operation, who could make a claim if the money were spent for purposes other than those specified in the Constitution.

Mr. AHERN.—Was that claim not dissipated by the Financial Agreement?

Mr. ARTHUR.—Professor Harrison Moore says that the claim might go, but that does not affect the construction. The Constitution must be construed, not by future events—not by things which happen afterwards—but by the document as it stood originally. And in the Constitution we have the fact that the States can claim the surplus revenue, and, therefore, they have some power to say whether the Commonwealth shall spend its money on this or that thing. Professor Moore points out a further fact that is important. If honorable members will look at section 51, they will see that there are all sorts of directions as to the ways in which the moneys may be spent. If the Commonwealth has power to spend in any direction it pleases, what object was there in placing in the Constitution those particular directions? Honorable members will remember that there is power to give bounties; and there would be no necessity for that, if the Commonwealth has power to spend for any purposes it chooses.

Mr. GROOM.—Could we not spend money in connexion with quarantinable diseases affecting animals and plants?

Mr. ARTHUR.—That would probably come under the power relating to quarantine.

Mr. GROOM.—The proposed appropriation is one for the investigation of those diseases.

Mr. ARTHUR.—I am speaking of the general position. The Commonwealth is taking up a position which, I hope, it can take up; and I hope that, if it has the power, that the power will be exercised.

Mr. GLYNN.—This was discussed at great length last session, and we thought we had the power.

Mr. ARTHUR.—That was for another purpose altogether, namely, the maternity allowance.

Mr. GLYNN.—But the points that would guide us now were taken into consideration.

Mr. GROOM.—The maternity bonus goes all to pieces if the honorable member's contention is correct.

Mr. ARTHUR.—Honorable members who were then in Opposition, but are now on the Government side, apparently had not the courage to tackle this important point.

Mr. GROOM.—I can assure the honorable member that there was courage here even before he came into the House.

Mr. ARTHUR.—The opposition to the maternity allowance on this ground was not, I think, pressed with any great eagerness.

Mr. GLYNN.—I was one of the then Opposition who supported the contention that we had the power.

Mr. ARTHUR.—The point is whether it is right or wrong to appropriate money for such a purpose.

Mr. GROOM.—The honorable member is questioning the whole power of appropriation except for specified objects.

Mr. ARTHUR.—I am questioning the power to appropriate moneys for any purposes other than those specified in section 51 and purposes incidental thereto. The Minister of Trade and Customs apprehends the position, because, in his memorandum, he deals with it most elaborately and fully. On page 7 of that report we find, if I may say so, the error which I conceive the honorable gentleman, as the Attorney-General of that day, fell into, namely, he did not discriminate between the powers expressed in the Constitution of the United States of America and those expressed in the Constitution of Australia.

Mr. GROOM.—I think the honorable member will find that I rested my argument on the combined effect of all the expressed powers.

Mr. ARTHUR.—The honorable gentleman went on to deal with the matter from another point of view. He dealt with it first by way of analogy between the Australian Constitution and that of the United States of America, and, apparently, found the analogy perfect. He then went on to deal with it from the point of view of the expressed powers, and he says—

Moreover, the power to organize such a department is incidental to the grant of the various specific powers under the Constitution. Under section 51, sub-section (i), Parliament under its powers of trade and commerce may appoint officers to inspect both imports and exports of agricultural products and stock.

How can that power apply to the scope of this Bill?

Mr. GROOM.—There is the combined effect.

Mr. ARTHUR.—I will take the powers piecemeal, and then see whether taking them in conjunction carries them any further. The power as to the exports and imports does not assist us, for that does not refer to the general encouragement of the agricultural production of the Commonwealth. The next mentioned is the power to grant bounties on the production or export of goods—to grant bounties to encourage persons to produce a certain class of commodity. That in no wise carries the general power to spend money on the general encouragement of agriculture; because this alone indicates the extent to which the Commonwealth is given power to encourage agriculture. The Commonwealth is given power to encourage agriculture by granting bounties, and that, in itself, indicates that the general power to encourage is not given. The Minister of Trade and Customs knows that one of the most important principles in the construction of a document is that the expression of one thing excludes the implication of another. The Minister of Trade and Customs goes on to deal with the question of quarantine, and the appointment of officers connected therewith. These are the only powers he mentions. Standing alone, they would not include this power, and, in conjunction, I submit, they do not give it, and therefore the matter is one that should be taken into consideration. I am not raising this doubt in order to oppose the Bill. I

merely wish to point out that we must be extremely careful.

Mr. GROOM.—These doubts were considered by Sir John Quick and by Mr. Justice Isaacs also.

Mr. ARTHUR.—According to the record in *Hansard*, Sir John Quick dealt very briefly with it. Apparently, he fell into the same error as the Minister of Trade and Customs in using an analogy which does not exist between the powers of the United States and the powers of the Commonwealth in their respective Constitutions. We do not wish to fall into any error. We require wider powers for the purpose of the welfare of the Commonwealth. An effort was recently made to get those wider powers, but they were refused; and though we feel that we live under a very narrow Constitution, we must appreciate the limits of that Constitution. It is for that reason that I make these few remarks on the constitutionality of the measure, while repeating that I support the Bill in every particular. I hope the law advisers of the Government will find that the points raised by Mr. Justice Higgins, Professor Moore, and other people are not valid.

Mr. PIGOTT (Calare) [9.18].—I congratulate honorable members on the unanimity displayed in the direction of forwarding this measure. I think it would be an advantage to the Commonwealth and the whole community if the Commonwealth could control quarantine in regard to diseases in animals and plant life. Many farmers in my district send potatoes to Deniliquin. These potatoes have to pass over the Victorian railway system to reach Echuca, where they re-cross the border, and are forwarded to their destination. At the time that Irish blight was prevalent in the Commonwealth, New South Wales was not quarantined, but Victoria was, and though potatoes on the way to Deniliquin could cross the border from New South Wales into Victoria, when they reached Echuca they were classed as being affected by blight. It would be well if we could have effective legislation dealing with this matter, so that a particular disease might be confined to a portion of a State irrespective of State boundaries. If there is blight at Warrnambool, the quarantine need not apply to the whole of Victoria.

Mr. TUDOR.—That is a matter for the State Departments. The Commonwealth has not the power.

Mr. PIGOTT.—In America, the Federal Bureau has absolute power of quarantine in regard to diseases in plant and animal life, and I consider a Commonwealth Bureau should be given the same power. The tick is prevalent in some districts of Queensland, but I think the quarantine should be restricted to those areas. We are all concerned in the passing of this Bill, because it deals with the most important industry in Australia. It applies not only to the farmers, but also to the farm labourers. In many homesteads and farmhouses, I have seen the farm hands engaged at night in reading agricultural gazettes to improve their minds. They already have the practical knowledge, and it is our task to give them the theoretical knowledge. The farm labourer of to-day should be the farmer of to-morrow, and should have every opportunity given to him, so that he may attain a better position in life. Our land laws are being considerably liberalized to enable him to get a footing, and with his practical knowledge, combined with a theoretical knowledge, he should be thoroughly equipped.

Dr. MALONEY.—The scientific farmer is the best asset any State can have.

Mr. PIGOTT.—There is ample evidence of that in Denmark. With a population of 2,000,000, that country has captured the butter and egg market of England, and exports annually £20,000,000 worth of agricultural products. If Denmark can do that with her small population, surely we in Australia, with our wonderful potentialities and opportunities, should be able to do more. In New South Wales it is said that every farmer needs to get a thorough grip of the three F's—Farrar, fallow, and fertilizers. It was Mr. Farrar who made the discovery of that wonderful wheat called Federation, which is now used throughout Australia. We must put the farmers in the way of selecting the very best seed wheats. We need to put the best fertilizers on the market to give the people an opportunity to examine their qualities, and use the very best, instead of mixing with their wheat a lot of sand and rubbish, as they have been doing in the past. The Agricultural Bureau could analyze fertilizers, and act as advisers to the farmers in this very important matter. Fallowing is no new system, because a Roman ruler named Cincinnatus centuries

ago wrote largely on the subject. I think the Federation wheat has lately been eclipsed. I was 168 miles west from Melbourne the other day in this wonderful State of Victoria, and I saw a great deal of Federation wheat growing. Fully one-third of the area under crop was sown with Federation, but alongside I saw a better wheat, namely, the Wallace, which should go one bag to the acre more than Federation.

Mr. FLEMING.—Is it as hardy as Federation?

Mr. PIGOTT.—It is rather thin in the stalk. I do not know whether it will stand the weather as well. Mr. Farrar, at the experimental farm at Windsor, in New South Wales, experimented for six years before he discovered the Federation wheat, which produces something like 3 bushels an acre more than any other wheat previously hybridized. If we estimate that a third of the wheat grown in Australia is Federation, then on 8,000,000 acres under wheat the 3 bushels per acre increase, at 3s. per bushel, should bring to the farmers a net profit per annum, owing to the efforts of Mr. Farrar, of £1,215,000. If one man can accomplish that, then by spreading these agricultural bureaux throughout the country, and getting men to devote all their attention to the hybridization of wheat, the whole community should benefit. We must realize that the farmers produce all our food-stuffs and all our materials for clothing. The honorable member for Darwin was on the right lines in suggesting a conference with the State Departments. There is danger of overlapping; we need co-ordination, but I can see no harm in passing the Bill. It will only cost the modest sum of £5,000, which, divided among the population of the Commonwealth, means 1d. per head. It is not much to ask the House to grant this amount to encourage the biggest industry we have. A national agricultural bureau would deal with such things as the diseases of sheep, horses and cattle, poisonous plants and weeds, and other matters common to the whole of Australia, leaving to the State bureau the investigation of agricultural methods under the conditions peculiar to our various districts. It would be unwise to interfere with the good work that is being done by the State Departments; but we should

give the national bureau power to deal with subjects concerning the whole continent. In this connexion I should like to read the following returns, showing the number and proportion of persons in Aus-

tralia engaged as primary producers in relation to plants and animals in 1891, 1901, and 1911. They have been prepared by the Government Statistician, and contain some very interesting figures—

(i) MALES.

Occupation.	Number.		Percentage on Total Male Breadwinners.			
	Census of 1891.	Census of 1901.	Census of 1911.	Census of 1891.	Census of 1901.	Census of 1911.
Agricultural Pursuits	227,569	251,372	277,232	20·89	19·57	17·69
Pastoral Pursuits, Dairying and Poultry Farming	63,074	97,684	143,591	5·79	7·61	9·16
Capture, &c., of Wild Animals	2,597	3,925	4,768	·24	·31	·30
Fisheries	3,048	6,578	7,795	·28	·51	·50
Forestry	5,587	11,112	24,303	·51	·86	1·56
Total	301,875	370,671	457,779	27·71	28·86	29·21

(ii) FEMALES.

Occupation.	Number.		Percentage on Total Female Breadwinners.			
	Census of 1891.	Census of 1901.	Census of 1911.	Census of 1891.	Census of 1901.	Census of 1911.
Agricultural Pursuits	21,636	24,702	7,468	8·11	6·97	1·89
Pastoral Pursuits, Dairying and Poultry Farming	12,467	14,118	8,270	4·67	3·98	2·10
Capture, &c., of Wild Animals	32	63	25	·01	·02	·01
Fisheries	20	17	10	·01
Forestry	4	9	12
Total	34,169	38,909	15,785	12·80	10·97	4·00

The amount which it is proposed to expend on the proposed Bureau of Agriculture is equivalent to only 4d. per head of our population. The Fisher Government, during the last Parliament, spent something like £4,500 to foster agricultural development in the Northern Territory, where the white population is only a little over 1,000. That expenditure was, consequently, equivalent to £4 5s. per head. Those who supported the Fisher Government's expenditure in the Northern Territory should certainly support that now proposed—4d. per head—for the whole Commonwealth. The expenditure of the States on agricultural bureaux is £748,000, or 3s. 4d. per head of population.

Mr. SPENCE (Darling) [9.37].—The Ministry has made two attempts to explain its proposal for assisting the farmers; but I hope that whatever may be done will not in any way interfere with the excellent work of the State Departments. I protest against the idea that it is only in America and in other parts of the world that they do things. The people of America recognise the value of the training which our institutions give to agricultural students, and those who have gone there after passing through the Hawkesbury Agricultural College have had no difficulty in securing good positions in the States. Even the Japanese realize the value of our institutions. The desire to go abroad for information reminds me of

an incident which occurred in this chamber some years ago. The Vice-President of the Executive Council, who was then a member of this House, attended a great conference on dry farming in the United States, and returned full of the wonderful discovery that he had heard of there—the profitable growing of crops with a 12-inch rainfall. But a member of this House showed him that in his own electorate farming was being successfully carried on in districts which had only that rainfall. I have been pleased to hear one of our greatest scientists, the late Mr. Farrar, referred to. His loss was mourned more in other parts of the world than it was in Australia, where he is only just beginning to be appreciated. I know another scientist, a constituent of mine, whose knowledge of our native grasses is recognised and appreciated in the United States of America. He frequently receives requests from the Agricultural Bureau there for grass seed and for information about grasses.

Mr. FLEMING.—What is his name?

Mr. SPENCE.—He is a Mr. Greig. Those who visited the last show of the Royal Agricultural Society in Sydney will remember his magnificent display of grasses there. He is a great authority on saltbush, too. At several shows he occupied a whole section with things that he had produced himself—clothing, leather, vegetables, and many other things. He has demonstrated that certain plants will grow in country where it had been said they could not grow. There are a number of men like him whose investigations have been encouraged by the State bureaux. The State Departments are doing work that a central bureau could not do. In South Australia there is a college and three experimental farms; in Victoria two colleges and five experimental farms; in Queensland a college and six experimental farms; in New South Wales, the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, which is known all over the world, and sixteen experimental farms; in Western Australia five experimental farms; and in Tasmania one. In New South Wales, under expert advice, experiments are continually proceeding with different soils and under different climatic conditions. The farmers themselves are encouraged to experiment. The best results are obtained from observations taken under natural conditions. It was thus that Mr. Farrar, by his experiments,

produced that splendid wheat which has enabled country that was previously thought capable only of producing grass to be used for agriculture. In driving through country districts you will sometimes see tin plates on the fences with the names of different wheats on them, showing that the farmer is experimenting and keeping records under expert direction. This is being done a great deal in Victoria.

Mr. FENTON.—Has much experimenting been done with natural grasses?

Mr. SPENCE.—Mr. Greig has experimented chiefly with natural grasses, of which an immense number are known and appreciated by pastoralists, but by few others, because it is generally thought that to get anything good we must import. It is time that that idea was knocked on the head. Mr. Greig has quite a big correspondence with other countries, including the great United States of America, on the subject of Australian grasses. Years ago Baron von Müller, of Melbourne, sent the saltbush to America, and thus alkali plains, which had previously been valueless, became worth 5s. per acre for carrying stock. It is nonsense to talk of sending to other countries for experts. We have experts here, and we should give them more encouragement. I read as many of their reports as I can for general information. The honorable member for Capricornia showed samples of them here, and deserves credit for doing so. They gave some idea of the fine work which all the States are doing in the way of publications. They are educating the men on the land all the time. Each State has varying conditions, and six separate sets of officers are more likely to discover something of value than is one central bureau. With one central bureau you would have one man's idea only. With six sets of officers you would have different opinions and methods. I object to the work of the States being duplicated in this regard. A strong case has not been made out, even by the Minister, although I am not opposing the Bill, because, possibly, the Federal bureau will find something to do. The only thing of importance he has mentioned has related to diseases in stock. These are already being investigated by all the State Departments, which have most excellent officers. I doubt if cleverer men than the States have doing

this work can be found. It would be difficult to find a man more capable than an ordinary stock inspector whom I know away back in New South Wales, engaged in looking after the sheep, &c. He conducts his own experiments, and has his own microscope and specimens. Such men are worthy of every encouragement, and get it under the present system. We must be very careful before we interfere with the splendid work they are doing. This department of activity, while highly important, is non-revenue producing, and we have seen a good deal of readiness on the part of the States to hand over all their non-productive Departments to Federation. The States may be only too ready to hand over this matter, which is costing, in the aggregate, for their six Departments, over £751,000 a year. In order to save cost, we must see that efficiency is maintained, and it would be a retrogressive step for the Commonwealth to attempt to centralize the work altogether. This could not be properly done, as means of communication are not too easy. A farmer at Swan Hill sends down to Melbourne for a regular supply of seeds and information, but a farmer in Queensland would not be so ready to send to a central bureau in Melbourne. I do not know that the Minister has shown that there has been any neglect by the State Departments of necessary work. I am inclined to resent the implied reflection on the States and the work they have been doing.

Mr. GROOM.—There was no reflection, either expressed or implied.

Mr. SPENCE.—There is an implication that some work is neglected; but the States have not neglected any of the things which the Minister has mentioned. His idea, and the idea of some honorable members, seems to be that there are some geniuses elsewhere to be brought to Australia to tell us some things we do not know. I do not think he will find that any one of them can tell us more about diseases in stock or plants than the Australian-trained men can. The Australian is the best of the lot. Some of our weeds are indigenous to Australia, and imported men have to learn all about them when they come here. It is time we set to work seriously to encourage our own men. One of the greatest losses Australia has sustained was in the death of the late Mr. Farrar. I am glad the honorable member for Calare has given him

credit for his magnificent work. I have mentioned Mr. Greig, and there are others whom I know. Mr. Greig and Mr. Farrar were friends, and co-operated largely. One took up the investigation of saltbush and grass, and the other wheat. Some of my constituents who met Mr. Farrar have continued experimenting with different kinds of wheat in the dry area, and are doing valuable work that is unknown to the general public. This work ought to be appreciated and encouraged. I am not in opposition to the measure, because, probably, the Minister will find some work to do in addition to what the States are doing when he starts the bureau. He has not told us anything that he is going to do that the States have neglected. I do not know how the Commonwealth is going to carry out its experiments. We have not found the States too ready to grant land for Commonwealth purposes, although they will probably sell it if the Commonwealth is willing to buy it. I do not think we shall reap the immense gain that the Minister seems to think. I have a very high opinion of the work being done so well and quietly by the various State Departments, and if we can help them it will be a good thing. The modern farmer, to be successful, must be scientific, and the Australian farmer is getting away from that old conservatism which thought that what was good enough for a man's grandfather must be good enough for him. The fact that he is abandoning those ideas is due to the educational methods now adopted. The record shows that 95 per cent. of those who have passed through the Hawkesbury Agricultural College have either gone on the land or taken positions associated with the land, many in other parts of the world. I hope the Minister will realize that we have plenty of trained men of our own to do experimental work of this kind miles ahead of any persons who can be brought from other parts of the world.

Mr. FLEMING (Robertson) [9.55].—I cordially indorse the remarks of the honorable member for Darling with regard to employing our own talent where it is available. Any one who knows the bush knows that there are plenty of men available who understand our conditions better than an imported man could hope to do. They have been brought up on the land, and trained to observe. They are producers

by instinct and by training; but the honorable member and I differ on the question of whether this matter should be left in the hands of the States, or whether the Federal Parliament is to create a Bureau of Agriculture. I have here some remarks made by the New South Wales Government Entomologist, Mr. Walter Froggatt, F.L.S., who is an authority on this matter. He says—

As in Washington, a Federal Bureau here would include an economic entomologist to cope with the many insect pests that are common to all the States of the Commonwealth. This is one of the questions that will have to be considered by the Federal Government, as it has already formed an agricultural branch in the Northern Territory, with an experiment farm.

If we had nothing else to deal with, the Commonwealth Parliament has at least the Northern Territory and the Federal Capital Territory, which should give any amount of scope for all the experiments that we can call on our authorities to make. Mr. Froggatt goes on to say—

Among the questions affecting the whole of Australia may be noted the following:—First, the locust, or grasshopper, plague.

That is a growing plague, increasing in intensity every year, most federal in character, and knowing no boundaries. The time is coming when Australia must treat the matter seriously, as they do in South Africa. Mr. Froggatt says—

The time is rapidly approaching when Australia will have to deal with the locust question. The locust plague is growing every year, and whereas a few years ago we used to look on a visitation of locusts as a matter of merely a few days and some slight trouble, when they come into a district now we know they will not leave it until a considerable amount of damage has been done. Mr. Froggatt mentions one of the most important matters with which Australia has to deal—the fly amongst sheep. Our sheep have practically ceased to increase. All over the world there has been a great decrease in the number of sheep, but we in Australia have been priding ourselves on the fact that all along ours have been increasing. There can be no doubt, however, that unless we take steps to cope with the pests that trouble our flocks we shall have before long a positive decrease. The fly pest is causing more destruction amongst our sheep than is anything else.

Mr. SPENCE.—The destruction of birds as the result of the laying of poison for rabbits largely accounts for its existence.

Mr. Fleming.

Mr. FLEMING.—The poison cart has a lot to do with the existence of the pest, and, undoubtedly, some action must be taken to deal with it. As Mr. Froggatt rightly points out, the Commonwealth Parliament is the right authority to deal with the matter, and no more important question than this could be threshed out either in this or any other House. Despite what may be said by honorable members opposite, I think it must be admitted that the wool-growing and meat producing interests of Australia are of the utmost importance.

Mr. FENTON.—The export of lambs must be reducing our flocks.

Mr. FLEMING.—The trouble is due not so much to the lamb exports as to the fact that we are not getting nearly so high a percentage of lambs as we used to obtain. The falling off is largely due to the fly pest. Mr. Froggatt says—

It has been estimated on good authority that this new and increasing pest has cost the sheepmen of Australia nearly £1,000,000 annually in loss of wool, sheep, and lambs, not including the increased expenditure in station management in dressing the blown sheep.

In my estimation, Mr. Froggatt has understated the position. As he points out, this is an Australian rather than a purely State matter, and if the Bureau of Agriculture does no more than enable us to get rid of those two pests it will have justified its existence. The productions of this country need to be fostered, and I hope that a Federal bureau will soon be established. Whilst the honorable member for Darwin was speaking, an honorable member of the Opposition inquired whether the Bureau of Agriculture in the United States had lowered the price of wheat. That has nothing to do with the question now before us. We are face to face with the serious fact that our productions are not increasing at anything like the rate at which our markets are extending. It is surely essential for Australia, if we are to keep up the balance of our exports over imports, that our production shall be increased. In that way alone can we hope to maintain the high standard of civilization and living which we enjoy, and which we all hope will improve rather than decrease. I trust that this bureau, which will extend its operations all over Australia, will do much to help our producers, and that it will so increase our production that we shall not only overtake our markets, but have more than

sufficient to pay the annual amount of interest on our public debt.

Mr. FENTON (Maribyrnong) [10.3].—I was very much struck by a paragraph, which I made prisoner, setting forth a statement made by Professor Watt, of the Sydney University, that—

If all the dairy herds in the State were as good and as well cared for as the best, the output of butter would increase 50 per cent. without an additional acre of land being utilized for the purpose—

And further, that—

If all the wheat farmers in the State were farming to the standard of the best the average yield would be increased 50 per cent. with very little increase in the cost of production.

Those are weighty words. I find that if we could improve the average to the extent suggested by Professor Watt, our annual wheat yield would be raised from 92,000,000 bushels to 184,000,000, representing an increase of £13,000,000 to the wheat-growers of Australia, whilst our yield of butter would be increased from 187,000,000 lbs. to 374,000,000 lbs., or an increased value to our dairy farmers of £9,350,000. In addition to this, there would be an increase in the returns from milk, cream, and cheese. I know something of the butter industry, and I do not hesitate to repeat the statement which was questioned when I uttered it the other day, that the return from our dairy herds is only about one-half what it ought to be. The honorable member for Corangamite seems to be surprised, but we have to remember that he resides in a dairying district where the farmers get a return of from £13 to £14 per cow per annum. Those figures show how low must be the average in respect of some of our dairy farms, inasmuch as we are not getting throughout Australia to-day more than £7 per cow per annum. In Denmark the average return is £13 10s. per cow per annum.

Mr. FLEMING.—But remember the care they get.

Mr. FENTON.—No doubt they are well cared for, but as against that, feed has to be imported for their use. They have to be housed for the greater part of the year because of the severity of the climate. In Australia, however, we can leave our dairy herds unrugged for nine months of the year.

Dr. MALONEY.—And it is only in a few districts that our dairy cattle are rugged at all.

Mr. FENTON.—The failure to provide proper protection for dairy cattle during the winter months is responsible for heavy losses to our dairymen. The figures I have given should be interesting to honorable members, and if the Federal Bureau of Agriculture helps us to increase our average returns to the extent mentioned by Professor Watt, it will have achieved something of which we may well be proud. I wish now to quote a few figures showing what the States are doing for the man on the land by the employment of experts to assist him. According to a paper laid on the table of the House by the Minister of Trade and Customs, the Department of Agriculture in New South Wales employs the following officers:—Agriculture, 405; forestry, 125; stock, 205; and botanic, 147, making a total of 882. The annual expenditure is £273,916. In the Victorian Department of Agriculture the list of officers is as follows:—Head office, 32; agriculture, 50; stock and dairy, 83; export, 65; or a total of 230 officers, the cost being £154,858 per annum. In Queensland 336 officers are employed by the Department, and the cost is £100,857 per annum. In the South Australian Department of Agriculture the experts employed are as follow.—Agriculture, 128; stock, 24; produce department, 179; total, 331. The cost of the Department is £125,019. A Liberal Government in South Australia some time ago established a Produce Department in connexion with which the largest butter factory in the State is conducted. It receives cream from the farmers, manufactures butter, and exports any surplus over local requirements, thus setting a very excellent example to the dairymen of the State.

Mr. SAMPSON.—There is only a deficiency of about £350,000 in connexion with that Department.

Mr. FENTON.—The whole cost of the Department, including the agriculture, stock, and produce branches, is only £125,019.

Mr. SAMPSON.—That is not correct.

Mr. FENTON.—Then the honorable member had better quarrel with the Minister of Trade and Customs, who presented to the House the paper from which I have taken these figures. In the Western Australian Department there are 110 agricultural experts, 14 stock experts, and 174 miscellaneous officers, or a total

of 298, the annual cost being £87,122. In Tasmania there are 16 agricultural experts and 7 stock experts, the cost of the Department being £9,472. The six State Departments are thus spending £751,244 per annum, and employ 2,100 experts.

Mr. GROOM.—Would the honorable member say they were all experts? The figures include fruit inspectors and administrative officers.

Mr. FENTON.—That may be. The fact remains that the States are expending three-quarters of a million pounds per annum in carrying on work similar to that with which this bureau will deal. Care must be exercised that we do not overlap. This bureau should work in harmony with the State Departments, and should make an effort to branch out upon new lines of investigation. Another matter which should also receive the attention of the bureau is the underground water supplies of Australia. We have far more water underground than we have in sight. Our artesian water supplies are the greatest we have. Mr. Symonds, an agricultural chemist in the Department of Agriculture in New South Wales, said some time ago that if we could extract from these artesian supplies the minerals that are so destructive to vegetable growth and life, we should be able to open up millions of acres in the western and north-western divisions of that State, and to profitably cultivate them. I hope that the matter will receive the attention of the Commonwealth bureau, for if experiments in this direction proved successful we should be able to open up new country, and settle many people upon it. I heartily favour this Bill, and would like to see a really live Department of Agriculture established in the Commonwealth.

Mr. SAMPSON (Wimmera) [10.14].—There is a general consensus of opinion that the Federal Bureau of Agriculture is to be endowed with functions that are highly essential to the advancement of the agricultural section of the community. Anything that will tend to increase primary production should command the hearty support of all honorable members; indeed, there is no room for any opposition. The only question is, how far the States are prepared to relinquish some of their present functions in order that a Federal Bureau may have full scope for its activities. My idea is that this

bureau, instead of being established for research work only, should be a practical as well as a theoretical institution. Comparisons have been made between the proposed bureau and that of the United States of America; but, as a matter of fact, there is no analogy between the two. The United States Agricultural Department covers a wide field of research, experimental and practical administrative work, such as we cannot possibly undertake. In the first place, we have no command of the public estate, while the American Department has been enabled to achieve the great results it has, simply by the fact that, in the early days, two-thirds of the public lands were vested in the Government. This great distinction between the two Constitutions ought to be borne in mind in discussing these matters. In America, the Bureau of Agriculture has the advantage of liberal financial support from the revenue raised by the sales of the public estate to cultivators.

Mr. RILEY.—I beg to call attention to the state of the House. [*Quorum formed.*]

Mr. SAMPSON.—In view of a general desire to pass the second reading now, I shall not further detain honorable members.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 (Short Title).

Dr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [10.20].—This is one of the most important subjects any Government or Legislature could consider; and there will not be, I know, any opposition to the proposal now before us. I trust that this bureau, as a central body, will follow the splendid example set in the United States. There any farmer or settler, on written application, is supplied with a small booklet, and sometimes a large one, informing him how to cultivate any special products. An interesting fact is that, great as the value of the wheat harvest of America is, it is now second to that of the poultry industry. Some fifteen or twenty years ago, Australia lost a very valuable customer for her wheat in the French Government, because the article supplied was not up to sample. In other words, the wheat did not contain enough gluten; and the French have always been very particular in this regard, whether the bread be for their citizens at home, or for their convicts and soldiers in New Caledonia. Since then, however, various agricultural

colleges, especially that at Dookie, where the experiments in regard to the Federation wheat were carried on, have succeeded in producing a wheat that will ultimately take the place of flesh, so much have the food constituents been developed. Over 20,000 varieties are planted at Dookie every year; and I may refer to the success that has been met with in connexion with what is known as macaroni wheat. Even in Italy, the white of an egg has to be added to the flour in order to make macaroni, but in the case of the wheat grown at Dookie, the flour alone is sufficient. That needs only to be known to create a demand for our seed from all parts of the world. In this connexion, I wish to pay a compliment, not only to Mr. Potts, of Hawkesbury, but also to Mr. Pye, of Dookie, because these colleges, and others like them, are engaged in friendly rivalry that must prove of benefit to the whole community. The best asset that a country can have is the scientifically trained farmer. When we compare the farming methods of England generally with the farming as carried on in nearly every part of the Continent, we realize that the old-fashioned ideas must give way to the advance of science. It has been said that Denmark takes more sovereigns from England for her produce than are represented by all the gold produced in Australia. In that country, they have learned to develop what are known as the heath lands, which, after twenty years' work, have been rendered fruitful. If we are going to import specialists, I should say we ought to get them from Denmark or Holland, but only to supply us with information in branches regarding which Australian-trained men have no experience. We have university men now teaching, not only at Dookie, but at Hawkesbury; and they have, beside the necessary brain power, opportunities for acquiring knowledge to the same extent as workers in the same directions have in other countries. I look forward to the time when every young Australian, who has passed a certain standard of education, will have the right to choose his agricultural college, if he wishes to become a farmer. Forty years ago, one would have thought it would be easy to obtain land in Victoria, but I, a miserable little bank clerk, was sent to Gippsland, which is the heaviest timbered country in the State. I do not know how I

faced the difficulties; but though I did not make much money, I think I acquired a good constitution and a big chest. However, for the land laws under which citizens could be sent to such a place, I have only contempt and loathing. I welcome this Bill, and trust that this Agricultural Bureau will become a centre of advice for the six different Agricultural Departments in the States.

Clause agreed to.

Progress reported.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [10.28].—I have a series of Bills covering Supplementary Estimates, relating to the expenditure of previous years, which I desire to put through now. These Bills have to be introduced under the law to regulate payments made out of the Treasurer's Advance, and there is an appropriation of the kind every year. These have nothing to do with the current finances, but are Supplementary Estimates and Works and Buildings Estimates for 1911-12 and 1912-13. I propose that in order to save time, the abstracts only should be submitted to the Committee.

In Committee of Supply:

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1911-12.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That the following further sums be granted to His Majesty to defray the charges for the year 1911-12 for the several services hereunder specified, viz. :—

	£	96
I. The Parliament
II. The Department of Prime Minister	...	1,143
III. The Department of the Treasury	...	28,136
IV. The Attorney-General's Department	...	1,621
V. The Department of External Affairs	...	22,119
VI. The Department of Defence	...	34,555
VII. The Department of Trade and Customs	...	8,412
VIII. The Department of Home Affairs	...	31,520
IX. The Postmaster-General's Department	...	120,159

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR ADDITIONS, NEW WORKS, BUILDINGS, ETC., 1911-12.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That there be granted to His Majesty to the service of the year 1911-12 for the purposes

of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c., a further sum not exceeding £46,876.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1912-13.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That the following further sums be granted to His Majesty to defray the charges for the year 1912-13 for the several services hereunder specified, viz.:—

	£
I. The Parliament	433
II. The Department of Prime Minister	10,267
III. The Department of the Treasury	16,289
Refunds of Revenue	22,382
IV. The Attorney-General's Department	1,386
V. The Department of External Affairs	33,261
VI. The Department of Defence	24,056
VII. The Department of Trade and Customs	15,957
VIII. The Department of Home Affairs	66,035
IX. The Postmaster General's Department	188,173

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR ADDITIONS, NEW WORKS, BUILDINGS, ETC., 1912-13.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That there be granted to His Majesty to the service of the year 1912-13 for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c., a further sum not exceeding £62,689.

Resolutions reported.

Standing Orders suspended; resolutions adopted.

Resolutions of Ways and Means covering resolutions of Supply adopted.

Ordered—

That Mr. Joseph Cook and Mr. W. H. Irvine do prepare and bring in Bills to carry out the foregoing resolutions.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL 1911-12.

Bill presented by Mr. JOSEPH COOK, and passed through all its stages.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) BILL 1911-12.

Bill presented by Mr. JOSEPH COOK, and passed through all its stages.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL 1912-13.

Bill presented by Mr. JOSEPH COOK, and passed through all its stages.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION

(WORKS AND BUILDINGS) BILL 1912-13.

Bill presented by Mr. JOSEPH COOK, and passed through all its stages.

NORFOLK ISLAND BILL.

In Committee (Consideration of Senate's Message):

Clause 10—

The Governor-General . . . may make grants or other dispositions of Crown lands in Norfolk Island.

Senate's Amendments.—Leave out “grants or other”; add to clause—“Provided always that no Crown lands in Norfolk Island shall be sold or disposed of for any estate in freehold except in pursuance of some contract entered into before the commencement of this Act.”

Mr. GLYNN (Angas—Minister of External Affairs) [10.42].—The Senate has given way on one amendment with which we disagreed dealing with the method of election of the executive body, but they insist on their amendment dealing with the matter of land tenure. It is a pity to have the transfer arranged with the Imperial Government, through the New South Wales Governor, frustrated by a matter that can be dealt with at any time by an Administration Bill. It will be a disappointment to the Governor of New South Wales and to the Imperial Government.

Mr. ARTHUR.—You could save all that by accepting the amendment.

Mr. GLYNN.—I am merely asking that things should be left as they stand until we can bring in a measure dealing with the whole subject-matter. The test on the question of freehold and leasehold can be taken then, but let us first get what is offered to us—the control of the island. Afterwards, we can say that freehold tenure shall not be perpetuated on Norfolk Island.

Mr. TUDOR.—Will the Government bring down a Bill embodying the leasehold principle?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—In other words, will the Government agree to your policy?

Mr. GLYNN.—The Government will bring down a Bill at the earliest opportunity upon which the test can be taken. All I am asking now is that we shall not put anything in the Bill that is not in the government of the island as it now exists.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Let us take over the island untrammelled.

Mr. GLYNN.—This Bill is to give authority to accept a grant from the Imperial Government. Afterwards we can do what we like with the island. It is an urgent matter. Two or three months ago the Governor of New South Wales wrote several times, and pressed reasons for urgency. In the circumstances, I hope that if we send the measure back again to the Senate for consideration, the amendment will not be insisted on. I move—

That the Committee insists on disagreeing to the amendments.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [10.44].—In order to get this Bill through, I am prepared to undertake that no further lands of those remaining unalienated on the island shall be alienated until this House has pronounced upon the whole subject.

Mr. ARTHUR.—That is a fair arrangement.

Mr. WEST.—But what is the good of the Prime Minister's word?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—If I am not here, honorable members opposite will be. We wish to get this little Bill through. Norfolk Island is suffering from want of adequate control. I think that my honorable friends will get all that they want if they accept an undertaking from this Government not to alienate any of the Crown land in Norfolk Island until Parliament has dealt with the subject of land tenure.

Mr. TUDOR (Yarra) [10.47].—The Prime Minister promises that none of the unalienated land in Norfolk Island will be sold until we pass a Bill for the government of the country?

Mr. GLYNN.—Yes.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is not contemplated, in any case, to disturb existing tenures.

Mr. TUDOR.—I am desirous that the Bill should pass; but, as the Senate has given way on other points, I think that we should meet them on this matter. The provision which the Senate wishes to insert was put into the other Acceptance Bills. If the Government will promise to bring in a Bill providing for the application of the leasehold principle in Norfolk Island, the difficulty can be met; but if Ministers insist on sticking to their opinions, we have a right to stick to ours.

Otherwise, if we give up the little advantage we have now, we shall have to fight the whole matter over again.

Mr. BEUCHE SMITH.—And so shall we.

Mr. TUDOR.—I hope that the Government will see their way to accept the amendment. It has been pointed out several times that there is very little unalienated land in Norfolk Island.

Mr. GLYNN.—There is another arrangement possible, if we do not accept control of Norfolk Island.

Question put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	23
Noes	19
Majority	4

AYES.

Ahern, C. J.	Manifold, J. C.
Atkinson, L.	Palmer, A. C.
Bennett, J.	Pigott, H. R. M.
Chapman, Austin	Rodgers, A. S.
Cook, Joseph	Ryrie, Colonel
Falkiner, F. B. S.	Sampson, S.
Foster, Richard	Smith, Bruce
Glynn, P. McM.	Stumm, J.
Groom, L. E.	Wynne, Agar
Irvine, Hans	Tellers:
Irvine, W. H.	Greene, W. M.
Kendell, W.	Thomson, John

NOES.

Arthur, J. A.	McDonald, C.
Bamford, F. W.	O'Malley, King
Brennan, Frank	Sharpe, J. B.
Burns, G. M.	Smith, Laird
Charlton, M.	Spence, W. G.
Dankel, G.	Tudor, F. G.
Fenton, J. E.	West, J. E.
Fisher, A.	Tellers:
Hannan, J. F.	Mathews, J.
Maloney, Dr.	Watkins, D.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.
Resolution reported; report adopted.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) agreed to—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until 11 a.m. to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

CADET OFFICERS' UNIFORMS—LIVERPOOL ENCAMPMENT—BUSINESS OF SESSION—NORFOLK ISLAND ACCEPTANCE BILL.

Motion (by Mr. JOSEPH COOK) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

Mr. CHARLTON (Hunter) [10.55].—I have had several complaints about the food at the recent encampment at Liverpool, and letters on the subject have appeared in the Newcastle *Morning Herald*.

It is said that the supply of food was short, and not up to requirements, and it is also said that the work was rather severe. I wish to say nothing about that; but I bring these complaints under the notice of the Minister with a view to their investigation.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I believe that both statements are correct.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I have had numerous complaints from the mothers and fathers of lads. Another matter to which I wish to refer is this: Many lads, who have passed the necessary examinations, and have been appointed officers, find it difficult to obtain uniforms, and do not like to appear on parade without them. They are informed that they can get their uniforms made at private tailors; but this costs £3 or £4 more, and in some cases they cannot afford the extra expense. I ask the Minister to expedite the supply of uniforms.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [10.58].—I ask the Prime Minister to say, when replying, what business will be taken tomorrow. I am desirous that the business in the name of private members should be taken, and there are some Bills of which I have charge that I wish to have an opportunity to deal with. I understand that the Minister of External Affairs and the Prime Minister have stated, in regard to the Norfolk Island Acceptance Bill, that they have no objection to making the unalienated land on the island a permanent reserve.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We undertake that there shall be no more alienations until Parliament has decided the question of tenure.

Mr. FISHER.—Various Parliaments, when confronted with difficulties of the kind now before us, have arranged for the insertion in a Bill of a provision for a permanent reserve, which could be revoked only by subsequent legislation.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The Bill that we are discussing is only an enabling Bill.

Mr. GLYNN.—We might pass an Ordinance making the unalienated land a permanent reserve until the question has been dealt with by Parliament.

Mr. FISHER.—I do not wish to lose the Bill, but there is a serious difference between the Houses concerning it, and I

think that it would be well to permanently reserve the unalienated land in Norfolk Island in such a way that it could not be interfered with except by subsequent legislation.

Mr. GLYNN.—We can give a promise that it will not be dealt with, but will be kept as a reserve until the House has an opportunity of dealing with it.

Mr. FISHER.—It would be unwise, when there is a difference of this kind arising, to leave the matter to a promise. It can be done in a perfectly straightforward way.

Mr. GLYNN.—It can be done in an Ordinance.

Mr. FISHER.—We should have something tangible, something in writing, because verbal statements do not count for much. I think most honorable members desire to see the Bill carried. I will do my best to get a Constitution voted, but we should have something more than a mere verbal promise in this matter of tenure.

Mr. GLYNN.—That could not be done now, but when the Executive Council is dealing with the matter provision could be made by Ordinance that this land should be kept as a reserve. It will not be sold in any case, because it is rocky country.

Mr. FISHER.—Not only should no land be alienated, but it should be reserved in some legal form. It should be made impossible to alienate it except by Act of Parliament. An Ordinance can be set aside by the Government by another Ordinance, and we ought to have a clear statement that the Government will not deal with this reserve land in any way other than was indicated by the Minister in charge of the Bill. If that assurance can be conveyed through the representative of the Government in another place, perhaps the difficulty can be got over. I have not had an opportunity of consulting with my colleagues in another place regarding the matter, but I know they hold very strong views on it, and if that suggestion will bridge the difficulty I shall be very glad to co-operate as far as possible and practicable with them. Will the Prime Minister state when an opportunity will be afforded to discuss private members' business? I want particularly to discuss some business in my name, and desire one matter particularly to be brought forward.

Mr. ATKINSON (Wilmot) [11.4].—Owing to the peculiar nature of the situation, private members' business has been in a very precarious position. One never knew when one would have a chance to bring a motion forward. I had a motion on the notice-paper which was discussed slightly with reference to the inspection of produce passing from State to State. Is it the intention of the Minister of Trade and Customs to look into that matter during the recess to see if some better and more satisfactory conditions can be brought about for the producers than they have at the present time, either through the Commonwealth agency or in conjunction with the States. Perhaps they can induce the States to come to a more satisfactory and amicable arrangement amongst themselves. I am not particular how it is done, so long as a generous and real effort is made on behalf of the producers.

Mr. GROOM (Darling Downs—Minister of Trade and Customs) [11.6].—When the honorable member's motion was being considered, I pointed out that it was impossible for the Commonwealth to take over Inter-State inspection at this stage. I promised him and other members at the time that we certainly would make representations to Western Australia with respect to their regulations. We received a telegram from Mr. Scaddan on Monday, informing us that a despatch dealing with the matter is on its way to the Department. I can assure the honorable member that the matter will be looked into during the recess. Certainly any inclination on the part of the States to use their inspection regulations for other than purely inspection purposes will receive the attention of the Department.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta—Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs) [11.7].—I hope the Leader of the Opposition will let the matter of private members' business rest till to-morrow morning. Everything depends on what they are going to do in another place. I hope to find some time for private members' business to-morrow.

Mr. FISHER.—Why not go on with some of the more important of it if you have no other important Government business?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We have other Government business here which should

have been through long ago if the Opposition did not block us. They are rolling all our business over in another place like ninepins, mauling it out of recognition. The Opposition will not pass the little we have here, and on the top of it my honorable friend says, "We think we have a claim for time to discuss our own business."

Mr. FISHER.—It was promised, and it is done in every Parliament that I know of.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—In no other Parliament is the Government treated as the Opposition are treating this Government.

Mr. FISHER.—Always wailing!

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I am not wailing at all. I am only trying to show the right honorable member what his position really is. He has destroyed the little of our legislation that we have tried to pass this session, Bill after Bill, and point after point, and will not let us get on with useful, non-contentious business.

Mr. FISHER.—Who is interrupting it?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The honorable member and his party will not let us get even the Bureau of Agriculture Bill through.

Mr. RILEY.—Your own men were "stone-walling" it to-night.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We shall try the honorable member with it once more to-morrow. We have given it half-a-dozen trials already this session.

Mr. LAIRD SMITH.—Half-a-dozen of us refrained from speaking. I was going to speak on it.

Mr. FISHER.—I am in favour of the Bill, and refrained from speaking on it, as I want to help the Government in every possible way. They can have the Bill put through if they will restrain their own supporters.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We cannot get it through; we shall try it again in the morning with, I hope, a better chance of success. In the meantime, I shall see what I can do to afford the honorable member the opportunity he wants. I cannot undertake to say that I am going to allow the honorable member to put the questions to which he refers to the vote of the House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 11.10 p.m.