

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 1901**

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

WEDNESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER, 1901.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Arthur Morgan, *Warwick*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

**AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACTS, 1894 AND 1897, AMENDMENT BILL.**

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, intimating that he had assented to this Bill.

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Annual statement of account of the Pacific Islanders' fund.

QUESTIONS.

STATE AND PROVISIONAL SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) asked the Premier—

1. Is it true that committees of State and provisional schools, after finding the one-fifth of the money necessary for the erection of schools, have been refused the usual four-fifths of the amount hitherto granted by the Education Department?

2. What is the cause of such refusal?

3. When may school committees expect from the Education Department the usual four-fifths of amount necessary for the erection of their schools?

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—

1 and 2. The usual subsidy for work approved has in no case been refused; but in some cases the granting of the subsidy or the carrying out of the work has been deferred, the money provided on the Estimates being insufficient to meet all claims.

3. When sufficient funds are provided.

## THE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to put into force the Weights and Measures Act, 1898?
2. Have regulations been prepared and gazetted under above Act?
3. If not, is it the intention of the Government to do so forthwith?
4. Are the Government aware that repeated promises were made, both by the late Minister for Agriculture as well as by the present Minister, to have an inspector appointed for Bundaberg and district?
5. Will the Government forthwith appoint an inspector under the Weights and Measures Act for the town and district of Bundaberg?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, *Mackay*) replied—  
The matter is under consideration.

## TRAFFIC MANAGERS AND ASSISTANT TRAFFIC MANAGERS.

Mr. DUNSFORD (*Charters Towers*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. What number of traffic managers and assistant traffic managers are engaged on the Southern, Central, and Northern Railways, respectively?
2. What is the mileage of the Southern, Central, and Northern Railways, respectively?
3. Has there been any reduction, either in numbers or pay, of traffic managers and assistant traffic managers during the present year?

The PREMIER, in the absence of the Secretary for Railways, replied—

1. Southern, 5; Central, 1; Northern, 1.
2. Southern, 1,523 miles; Central, 591 miles; Northern, 394 miles.
3. No.

## LOAN OF "BLOCKS" TO THE "STREET" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. DUNSFORD, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Home Secretary—

Is it true that the proprietors of the *Street* newspaper have borrowed certain "blocks" from the Government Printing Office to use for illustrating the Christmas issue of that paper?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, *Carnarvon*) replied—  
No.

RETURN *re* JAPANESE.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) asked the Chief Secretary, without notice—

Has he had any further information with regard to the return *re* Japanese, which I moved for on the 16th October last?

The PREMIER replied—

I have had the papers ready four weeks, and am waiting for the Lieutenant-Governor to receive a reply from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to whom he has cabled for permission to publish certain correspondence contained in despatches.

## WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Maranoa*), it was formally resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the law with respect to compensation to workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

## PROPOSED INTRODUCTION.

On the motion of the HOME SECRETARY, it was resolved in committee that it was advis-

able "to introduce a Bill to amend the laws relating to local authorities in certain particulars."

The House resumed; and the report was adopted.

## SUPPLY.

## RESOLUTIONS REPORTED.

Resolutions of the Committee of Supply, covering the following departments, Public Works, Justice, the Treasury, and Public Lands, were agreed to.

## RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

## AGRICULTURE.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, *Mackay*) moved that £7,544 be granted for the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*) thought that this was a department in which a lot of highly-paid civil servants might very well be done away with or they should get a little more work out of them. He remembered that the year before last, when the question of the appointment of an Agricultural Adviser was before the House, it was thought by members generally that that gentleman was only appointed to make room for someone else as Under Secretary. As far as the Agricultural Adviser was concerned, he believed if inquiry was made amongst the farmers it would be found that he did not know a great deal about agriculture. There was also the Instructor in Fruit Culture, about whom it was said that he should go a great deal more among those who were growing fruit and give them assistance instead of staying so much in the office advising them from there. The Tobacco Expert was in a similar position. Quite recently in the Federal Parliament attention was drawn to the number of white people growing tobacco in the Texas district. The other day he was adjacent to that district, and was led to believe that scarcely a pound of tobacco was grown by white people. It was grown by Chinamen, who took three-fourths of the crops, the white people who owned the land taking the other one-fourth. He thought they were running into rather too much expense in this department. Southern members seemed inclined to give all sorts of assistance to Southern farmers, but when anything was required for the mining industry there was nothing available.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*): He noticed that a change had been made in the form in which the report of the department was issued. Previously it was issued in pamphlet form, but now reversion had been made to the style adopted by other departments, which he did not consider was an improvement. He should also like to know why a departure had been made in the direction of the report being issued by the Secretary for Agriculture instead of as hitherto by the Under Secretary. Previously the Under Secretary was wholly responsible, and he dedicated the report to his Minister. Now the Minister signed it and dedicated it to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. That was not in keeping with the reports of other departments, and he did not think it advisable that it should be issued in that form, inasmuch as it happened that there were frequent changes in the Minister of the department, whereas the Under Secretary was the permanent head, and should be responsible for the statements contained in the report. It was not fair to place the responsibility upon the shoulders of the temporary occupant of the office of Minister. He noticed that the reports of the departments in other States and New

Zealand appeared to be in a much more comprehensive form, and were better got up. They were better printed, and nicely illustrated, and he would commend those reports to the notice of the Under Secretary for Agriculture. He noticed by the report that a comparative statement was made of the expenditure on agriculture in the various States of the Commonwealth, New Zealand, and in Europe, and from that it appeared that the expenditure in Queensland was 1s. 11d. per head, New Zealand, 2s.; New South Wales, 1s. 5½d.; Victoria, 11½d.; South Australia, 4½d.; Western Australia, 8½d.; and Tasmania, 3½d. In looking over the reports of New Zealand and the neighbouring States he was inclined to think that they got much better value for their money than the Queensland department did. He certainly could endorse much of what had been said by the member for Burke with regard to the many salaried officers connected with the department. More especially the appointment of the Instructor in Agriculture should be taken into consideration. It appeared altogether an anomaly that the Under Secretary of the department should have a subordinate who was receiving a much larger salary than he was receiving.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: Dr. Maxwell draws more salary than the Minister.

Mr. JENKINSON: Dr. Maxwell was paid from other sources than that of the Agricultural Department, and was not on the same footing as Mr. McLean, as the hon. member well knew.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: He spends most of his time in Melbourne.

M. JENKINSON: Yes, and it appeared altogether wrong that he should be gallivanting about down south advocating the views of a few people. On page 3 of the report he found that the Minister broke ground altogether apart from the ordinary report of departments, and it appeared as if he extended an invitation to farmers to organise for political purposes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where do you find an invitation to them to organise for political purposes? From what phrase do you draw that deduction?

Mr. GIVENS: From your own report.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: What paragraph? An imaginary one, I expect.

Mr. JENKINSON: No; it certainly was not imaginary. He was under the impression that members had read the report.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: You will not find that in it.

Mr. JENKINSON: Well, he would read the paragraph in question—

Perhaps in no field of action do the Continental societies exercise such a potent influence as in the legislative sphere. A tendency to centralisation is undoubtedly a marked feature of some Continental Governments, but that feature has little chance to assert itself very prominently where agricultural interests are concerned. Speaking generally, none of these Governments venture on legislation affecting such interests without ascertaining views of the farmers regarding that legislation. Usually those views are obtained through consultative councils composed mainly of representatives of the agricultural societies. To these societies, moreover, is in many cases entrusted much of the administrative work of the Department of Agriculture.

After that came a quotation from a recent writer, as follows:—

It is worth noting that foreign States refrain from burdening their agriculturists with taxes for revenue. They make the foreign importer contribute to their revenue, and by so doing at once relieve their people from taxation and protect their industrial enterprises. This result may be held to indicate ignorance of the true principles of political economy.

(Government laughter.) He would say, parenthetically, that that was not the proper place for a remark of that sort, but he supposed the hon.

gentleman was so used to chopping logic in that Chamber that he could not get rid of it when he got into his *sanctum sanctorum*.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: What do you mean by political economy?

Mr. JENKINSON: He was not there to instruct the hon. member, and it would be no use attempting to tell him.

Mr. MCMASTER: You can't.

Mr. JENKINSON: To finish the sentence he had mentioned—

But it at least shows the power of perfect and far-reaching organisation on the part of the farmers.

Then there was an asterisk directing them to this footnote—

The latest triumph of the Agrarians is the new German tariff.

Indicating that the agriculturists, by combining, had exercised an influence on the framing of that tariff, which was purely a political matter. That was what he had referred to. He might be right, or he might be wrong. He also noticed in going through the report that the Secretary for Agriculture suggested that it was advisable to institute a Queensland chamber of agriculture. He was led to believe from papers he had received that that had been constituted, but whether it would carry out the functions that were outlined in the report was more than he could tell; but, judging from the balance of the report that was submitted to them, the department needed the guidance of the outside people. A hint was thrown out that there was someone known to the department who would be a competent person to report on the condition of those societies. He had not the slightest idea who that gentleman was, but he thought that the Department of Agriculture had created already quite sufficient new offices without creating any more. He found, from a report that was laid on the table a few days ago, that during the last ten years about £13,200 per annum was expended by the department in new appointments, and it was a moot point with him whether certain branches of the department were really worth the money that was expended on them.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW (*Maryborough*) differed from others who had spoken with regard to the salaries that were paid, and with regard to the statement that there were too many experts in the department. The hon. member for Burke had cast rather an aspersions on the Fruit Expert. The hon. member said that Mr. Benson simply worked in his office. Now, he knew for a fact that Mr. Benson paid periodical visits to the orchards in the Maryborough district, and showed the orchardists how to spray and how to kill scale, and so on. He did not think there was any man in the department who worked better at his business than Mr. Benson. It was amusing to hear the hon. member for Burke speak of the large amount spent on dairying, when the only item in the vote for dairying was an instructor at a salary of £157 per annum. They were led to believe, more especially by the Secretary for Railways, that dairying was the coming industry, and yet that was all that was being done to help it. In Victoria, in the Loan Act of 1898 they gave £100,000 to assist the Department of Agriculture. Their export of butter in 1889 was worth £1,404,830. In other parts of the world districts that had been languishing had become thorough dairying districts; and they knew that dairying land could be bought in Queensland for a mere song in comparison with what was paid for it in other countries, and that cattle could be reared cheaper. In New Zealand butter and cheese for export had to be graded; the Government provided storage until it was exported, and reports were given by the graders, and often they were attached to

the bills of lading, and contracts were based on them. Then there was a dairy service branch attached to the Department of Agriculture, which consisted of a dairy commissioner, assisted by two dairy instructors and five dairy produce graders. Practical instruction was given, and every information was given to the manufacturers of butter and cheese. The annual export of butter from New Zealand from 1891 to 1901 increased from £100,255 worth to £790,499, and of cheese from £86,675 to £265,904 worth. Queensland was satisfied to rest on her oars, notwithstanding that everything was in her favour. It was the duty of the Department of Agriculture to make provision for the inspection of dairy herds, for giving instruction, for providing refrigerated chambers, to go in for grading, and for providing shipping facilities. Dairying had helped Victoria through the late depression, and he was sure it could be made to lift them out of the "Slough of Despond" in Queensland in the same way. He trusted that the Minister would tell the Committee what he intended to do with regard to dairying. He understood that there was to be a Bill introduced to provide for the proper inspection of dairies, and other matters connected with the industry.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): He had no intention of going into the department generally, but there was one item on which he desired to have some information. He had received a number of letters from a number of small cane-farmers with regard to the application of the Weights and Measures Act to the weighing machines. He had a letter pointing out plainly that a good deal of dissatisfaction existed amongst the producers whose produce was always weighed by the receiver, whose weight was final; also that there was no inspector to go round and see that the weighing machines were kept in order; and that when the machine was tested there was a difference of something like 2 cwt. He had here a printed copy of the correspondence between the Kolan Cane Growers and Farmers' Association and the Invicta Mill. In 1896 the association appointed a check clerk who was the paid servant of the association, and everything seemed to go well during that season. He would read some of the correspondence—

North Kolan, 8th November, 1896.

F. Buss, Esq., Bundaberg.

Dear Sir,—I have been authorised by my association to acknowledge your courtesy during the season now closed in recognising our check clerk at your Invicta Mill, and in the assistance rendered him in the performance of his duties.

Yours respectfully,

C. MARKS,

Hon. Sec. and Treas., K.C.G. and F.A.

Invicta Mill, 27th November, 1896.

C. Marks, Esq.,

Hon. Sec. and Treas., K.C.G. and F.A.

Dear Sir,—Your letter to Mr. Buss, dated 8th November, was duly received, and he has requested me to reply for him. As your check clerk, we shall always be most happy to afford officers of your association every facility for carrying out their duties.

Yours faithfully,

GROSVENOR G. FRANCIS,

Manager for Buss and Others.

It seemed that things worked equitably during that season; but on the 21st June, 1897, there seemed to have been a change—

North Kolan, 21st June, 1897.

G. G. Francis, Esq., Invicta.

Dear Sir,—We have appointed Mr. David Brown as our check clerk for this coming season, and would feel much obliged if you would kindly let me know when it is your intention to take the tare of the trucks.

Yours faithfully,

C. MARKS,

Hon. Sec. and Treas., K.C.G. and F.A.

Invicta Mill, Kolan River,  
23rd June, 1897.

Mr. Chas. Marks, Kolan.

Dear Sir.—If you or any of the other cane-growers are desirous of having a representative at this mill this season to act as check weighbridge clerk, I shall be glad if you will call and see me or communicate with me on the subject. I shall only be too pleased to meet your wishes in this or any other matter, if I possibly can, but I must beg to point out that I can do business only with the farmers themselves direct.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) GROSVENOR G. FRANCIS,

Manager.

*The foregoing notice was sent to every cane-grower.*

There was a lot of other correspondence, but he would not take up the time of the Committee by reading it all. The gist of the matter was that the manager of the mill distinctly refused to recognise the association through their secretary at all; he wanted each farmer individually to notify him the name of the check clerk. There were several meetings of the association, and the matter was afterwards placed before the late Secretary for Agriculture; and he believed it was partly on that account that the hon. gentleman introduced the Weights and Measures Act of 1898. That Act did not work satisfactorily, and he was going to introduce a short amending Bill which would provide for the proper inspection of those weighing machines, and also give the growers the right to employ a check clerk themselves, but that had not been done. He believed the matter had been brought under the notice of the present Secretary for Agriculture, who had stated that he had a Bill ready to bring forward this session. He had several letters from farmers in the Bundaberg, Isis, and Musgrave districts, all referring to the same matter, and he hoped the Minister would be able to inform the Committee that he intended to bring in a Bill giving the desired relief.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Weights and Measures Act of 1898 did not give the powers which the hon. member seemed to think should be embodied in such a measure. The Governor in Council might appoint inspectors under the Act, but it contemplated that the local authorities should appoint inspectors to do their duty. All that the Department of Agriculture could do under the Act was to appoint a general inspector to inspect the inspectors appointed by the local authorities; and as the local authorities had not appointed local inspectors, there was nothing he could do under the Act.

Mr. KERR: The Act is a dead letter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Act required some amendment, but what was required first was some action on behalf of the local authorities. That the Act was a dead letter was in consequence of the fact that those who had the power to act had not availed themselves of it. What he said at the conference at Bundaberg was, not that he would bring in an Act himself, but that he would endeavour to have a clause inserted in the Local Government Bill, which it was thought at that time would be brought before the House this session, to make the existing Act more effective. So far as he was advised, if the local government bodies would take that action which was within their power, he was sure the Governor in Council would be very glad to appoint a general inspector to carry out the object for which apparently the Act was framed. So far, however, there had been default on the part of the local bodies. With regard to the appointment of a check-weigher, he had not heard of any action on the part of the mills which had led to complaint. He believed that the millers were

always ready to offer facilities, and so far as he knew, the persons who sold cane were quite satisfied. He imagined that if the millers put any difficulties in the way of the Act being carried out, the persons who suffered would have their remedy by at once appealing to the nearest court. He was anxious to remove any difficulties that existed, but he could tell hon. gentlemen that the main reason why the Act had failed was because the divisional boards had not taken the same action as the municipalities. With regard to certain criticisms which had been made, by the hon. member for Burke among others, that the Agricultural Department was of no use, of course everyone was entitled to his own opinion, but so far as he knew it was held in all countries that an agricultural department was of use, and if that were not so, he supposed there would not be agricultural departments. He was not disposed to agree with what had been said by the hon. member for Wide Bay, who among other things had complained of innovations. The hon. member was quite wrong with regard to the report not being available in pamphlet form as it was last year. The report was supplied to members in the usual form in which parliamentary papers were put before them, but if any hon. gentleman desired to obtain a copy in pamphlet form, he could do so. There had been no innovation in that matter. In regard to the publication of the report under the name of the Minister, the Education Department published their report in the same way, and in any case he did not think it was of much consequence. He hoped the hon. member would not take exception to the remark that he appeared to be becoming most conservative in his tendencies, when he singled out a paragraph in the report which dealt with the advisability of farmers uniting together as having some special political significance. He did not know, if the Agricultural Department had recommended the farmers to combine together for political purposes—that was, for carrying into legislation any wishes that they might have—that it would be wrong so long as they did not suggest that the farmers should take one side or another. It was a fact that in the dealings that might take place between individual farmers and the department a good deal of inconvenience existed. It would be much better, say, in dealing with such a Bill as an Agricultural Bank Bill if they could deal with a body representative of the farmers of the colony.

Mr. TURLEY: You do not believe that the body spoken of there is a representative one?

Mr. JENKINSON: Why, it is a Queen street institution.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What the article said was that no central body empowered to speak on behalf of the majority of the societies as yet had been called into existence; and he was astonished that the hon. member for South Brisbane actually scoffed at the idea of farmers joining together for the purpose of spreading knowledge and for their mutual advantage. In any case the farmers at the conference at Bundaberg expressed their intention of forming some separate body where the general interests of agriculture could be discussed and dealt with, and it was merely on that act, taking the text as a topic which had exercised the minds of agricultural community at the conference, that this allusion had been made. He failed to see any objectionable reference in it. Then he had gathered from the remarks of the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Bartholomew, that he thought that there had not been sufficient activity in connection with inculcating the principles of dairying; but he would like to point out that of late years the department had

taken every opportunity of spreading knowledge with regard to dairying. They had had travelling dairies; money had been

[4.30 p.m.] spent under the Meat and Dairy Encouragement Act, whereby a great many dairies and creameries had been established; they had entered into a contract with the Adelaide Shipping Company whereby producers would be enabled to have the use of refrigerating chambers to get their produce conveyed to the mail steamers in Sydney. That had been considered a very great boon. Then they had an Agricultural College, where young men were being taught the principles of dairying. Very considerable efforts had been made by his predecessors, which had been appreciated by the public. At present they had 53 butter and cheese factories in the colony and 146 creameries, and they employed 595 white men. Last year 620 tons of butter were exported, whereas a few years ago, in order to supply the local consumption, they had had to import a large quantity of butter, cheese, and bacon; so he thought the colony could be congratulated on the strides it had made in the dairying industry. The inspection of dairying was a matter which should be dealt with from a hygienic point of view. That matter had been brought before the farmers by the department sending to them copies of the measure and asking their opinion on it. He might say that the opinions were of a very diverse character. It dealt with the production of butter and cheese and with the health of the community, and it was considered desirable that the Home Secretary, who was responsible for the health of the community to a certain extent, should administer it. The Bill which he had intended to introduce and the Bill which the Home Secretary would deal with were practically identical, but there were reasons why the Home Secretary, who had more machinery at his command, should have the administration of this Act.

\* Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): He had had the pleasure of attending the farmers' conference at Bundaberg in June last, and he had heard the Secretary for Agriculture contribute some very valuable remarks there. One portion of the report on agriculture said—

It is true that once in every year the department has an opportunity of learning the views of the farming community on some of the more pressing agricultural problems. Once in every year, at the invitation of the department, is held a conference of representatives of most of the agricultural societies of the State, at which conference papers are read and discussed, and views expressed which are not without effect on subsequent administration. One lesson taught by all these conferences is that extensive as Queensland is, and occupying as she does an area as large as that of all the European States together, in which agriculture has attained a very high degree of development, her farmers, however widely separated they may be physically, have common aims, common interests, and common difficulties. The latest of these conferences was held at Bundaberg, and was beyond all doubt the most interesting and instructive of the series. It was also the most valuable of them; for among the resolutions it adopted was one appointing a committee to frame a constitution for a Queensland chamber of agriculture. The committee has completed its work; and, probably, before this report can be tabled, the chamber will have commenced its labours. Those labours, however, will not be conspicuously successful unless the new institution is enthusiastically supported by the agricultural societies.

At the time this meeting was held they were very enthusiastic about this institution being established, but he was afraid that if the Secretary for Agriculture endeavoured to get a consensus of opinion amongst the sugar-growers around the Bundaberg district and the Mulgrave district, he would not find much enthusiasm on that particular question just now.

It was no good for the hon. gentleman to expect the farmers outside to be enthusiastic in these matters unless the department attended to the needs of the farmers and the sugar-growers. If the department was not prepared to make some effort to carry out their wishes and desires, and try to settle some of their difficulties in these districts, he was afraid that this particular institution would not be a success. He would like to say that a copy of the circular which had been referred to by the leader of the Opposition and a copy of the resolutions had been sent to every member of the Legislative Assembly.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: I have not received a copy.

MR. BARBER: He was told that a copy had been sent to every member of the Assembly. The farmers, ever since the season of 1897, had been endeavouring to get an inspector appointed for the Bundaberg district, but he had not been appointed. Another difficulty had cropped up. The Sugar-growers' Association desired to appoint a check-weigher at the mills to which they supplied cane. The owners themselves had a weigher, and it was only right that the Sugar-growers' Association should have one too. Anyone who had anything to do with weighbridges, as he had had, would know that a large amount of traffic went over them—from 1 to 5 tons at a time, including cane trucks and other traffic. Probably a weighbridge might be tested one day to within half-a-pound, yet next day it might be several pounds out. That arose through the dirt, which was very liable to get down amongst the complicated machinery. He asked a series of questions the other day on the subject because he was requested to do so. Even if a weighbridge was proved to be inaccurate, it was a very difficult matter for an outsider to bring that proof forward. In the Goodwood district there were some very serious rumours prevalent, and five small sugar-growers had waited upon him last Saturday week, and made a statement to him on the subject. If only one grower had made those statements he would not have taken any notice of them, but those five men represented the growers of the district, and he considered that the Government ought to take notice of the matter and see if those complaints could be verified or not. One of the gentlemen told him that he had tested loads on other bridges, and when similar loads were put upon a certain weighbridge that he mentioned they were found to be 2 and 3 cwt. short. That would make a considerable difference to the canegrowers of the district. One letter he had sent to him went to show that the weighbridge was packed with a pine wedge, and that made all the difference how a wagon went on the bridge. If it went one way the load weighed three-quarters of a cwt. less than if it went on the other way. In the Act, as he read it, there was provision for an inspector and check-weigher to be appointed.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: By whom?

MR. BARBER: By the Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: By the persons interested.

MR. BARBER: The proprietor of the mill he spoke of seemed to ignore the Act, and he thought it was the duty of the Government to put it into force. The people of the district wanted an inspector appointed who would be always in the district, and liable at any time to visit the mills and test the weighbridges. He did not say that the proprietors wilfully robbed the sugar farmers, but from his knowledge of weighbridges he knew that if a man liked to de-

fraud his clients he could do so. He wanted to read a couple of letters he had received from the Farmers' Association:—

Bundaberg,  
16th November, 1901.

G. Barber, Esq., M.L.A.

DEAR SIR,—At our meeting of the Council of Agriculture on Saturday, the following resolution was carried, and I was at the same time directed to forward same to you and the Hon. W. E. O'Connell, with a request that you would kindly bring the same immediately under the notice of the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture:—“That this council, representing the various branches of Farmers' Associations throughout the Bundaberg district, express their dissatisfaction and disappointment at the fact that, after repeated applications and receipts of promises to carry into effect the provisions of the Weights and Measures Act of 1898, and particularly in view of the fact that the late Minister for Agriculture expressed his full sympathy with our requests, and fully recognised the urgency of same, no further action has been taken to frame regulations and appoint inspectors under the Act, or otherwise to put same administratively into effect, and hereby again urge that action be taken without further delay.” This is a matter of vital importance to the producer, as considerable loss is entailed by defective weighing.

Yours faithfully,

C. MARKS,  
Secretary Bundaberg C. of A.  
Kolan, 21st November, 1901.

G. Barber, Esq., Brisbane.

DEAR SIR,—At a general meeting of the Kolan Cane Growers and Farmers' Association held at Buca on the 20th instant, the following resolution was adopted, and I was instructed to forward a copy of same to the members for the town and district, and to request that you will be good enough to bring it strongly under the notice of the Minister for Agriculture:—“That this association feel much chagrined at the neglect of the Agricultural Department to carry into effect the provisions of the Weights and Measures Act of 1898, it being a measure brought forward by the late Minister for Agriculture in due recognition of an urgent need to safeguard the interests of the producing community. We, therefore, again urge that his action be carried into effect as was his intention.”

Yours faithfully,

C. MARKS,  
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer,  
K.C.G. and F.A.

He thought there was ample evidence that those people felt very much annoyed and hurt that their urgent requests had been taken no notice of. By what the farmers told him they seemed to think that the department had simply ignored them altogether. He brought the matter forward in the hope that the Minister would bring in some amendment of the Act that would make it compulsory on the millowners to have a check-weigher appointed by the Farmers' Association. It was not right that big companies should be allowed to ignore the Farmers' Association as they were doing.

HON. G. THORN (*Fassifern*): All that the hon. member for Bundaberg had said might have been said in half-a-minute. He noticed on the Estimates provision for an instructor in coffee culture. In the district represented by the hon. member for Cairns there was a number of small plantations where coffee was grown, and, if sufficient protection was given to the industry, those small growers would become very large growers; but he was afraid that there was an unholy alliance between the freetrade party and the Labour party in the Federal Parliament to knock off the duty on coffee, which would prove the undoing of the coffee-growers in Queensland.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are reducing the duty by half.

HON. G. THORN thought that if that were so coffee might be grown profitably in Queensland, but he was under the impression that the duty was to be knocked off altogether. The coffee

grown at Cairns was superior to any he had ever drunk, and when such coffee could be grown here there was no necessity to import any.

HON. A. S. COWLEY (*Herbert*): It was rather difficult to understand what the hon. member for Bundaberg wanted, but it appeared to him, from the correspondence which the hon. member had kindly handed to him, that that correspondence took place before the passing of the amending Act in 1898, and therefore there was nothing in the complaint, seeing that an Act which was framed to meet the complaint was now in force.

Mr. BARBER: It is not enforced. The mill-owners snap their fingers at it.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: If the Act was not enforced in regard to the appointment of check-weighers, then the farmers themselves were to blame, because, under the Act, they had full power to appoint a check-weigher; and if a millowner threw obstacles in the way of his discharging his duties the farmers had their remedy.

Mr. BARBER: They will not recognise him.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Then they should be made to recognise him. If they were his constituents, instead of those of the hon. member for Bundaberg, he would take very good care that he was recognised. It appeared to him that there was some misunderstanding in the matter. He might not be absolutely right, but to the best of his knowledge and belief the parties to appoint district inspectors were the local justices of the peace—not the local authorities or the Government. The Act of 1898 had to be read and construed in conjunction with the principal Act, and section 7 of the principal Act provided—

As soon as conveniently may be after the passing of this Act, and from time to time as occasion may require, the justices in their respective petty sessions shall appoint one or more persons in their respective districts to be inspectors of weights and measures for the discharge of the duties hereinafter mentioned, and the Governor shall cause to be delivered to such inspectors good and sufficient stamps for the stamping or sealing weights and measures used or to be used in the district for which such inspectors respectively shall be appointed.

Then in the second schedule provision was made for the fees to be paid to those inspectors.

Mr. McMASTER: Brisbane appointed an inspector at the police court.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Under the Act of 1898 power was given to the Government to appoint a general inspector, or general inspectors, and he understood that the Government had appointed a general inspector.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not under the Act.

HON. A. S. COWLEY was under the impression that Mr. McCulloch had been appointed an inspector to control weighbridges especially. The grievance of the hon. member for Bundaberg was with reference to the appointment of check-weighers; but if the hon. member would turn to the Act of 1898—

Mr. BARBER: I know it is provided for, but it is not enforced.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Then what did the hon. member want? Was he there to condemn his own constituents for not taking the necessary action? There were a good many canegrowers on the Herbert and Johnstone in his district, but no communication had reached him from them of any dissatisfaction with the existing Act. They had done what the Act required them to do, and everything was working smoothly. The Act of 1898 distinctly stated—

The owner or proprietor who is responsible as aforesaid for providing such weighing instruments shall allow and give facilities to any person from whom he has purchased or is receiving field produce, or to whom he has sold or is delivering the same, to observe and check the weighing of such produce.

The person thus entitled to observe and check the process of weighing the field produce in which he is concerned as aforesaid shall also be entitled and permitted at his own cost to station a person (in this Act referred to as a "check-weigher") at the place appointed for the weighing of such produce, in order to check and take an account of the weight thereof.

A check-weigher, or the person entitled to appoint a check-weigher, shall have every facility for enabling him to fulfil the duties of check-weighing, including facilities for examining and testing the weighing instrument and checking the taring of vehicles where necessary; and, if proper facilities are not afforded, the owner or proprietor or provider of the weighing instrument shall be guilty of an offence against this Act, unless he proves that he has taken all reasonable means to enforce to the best of his power the requirements of this section.

Then there were other provisions. What grievance the hon. member for Bundaberg had against the Agricultural Department he failed to see. If an inspector was appointed under the Act—and he thought it was better that one should be appointed if there was friction between parties—he did not see why the whole of the cost should be borne by the Government when provision was made that it should be borne by the owner of the machine, and that certain fees should be chargeable.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) understood that on the first vote it was usual to discuss the department generally. He did not wish to deal with the matter that had just been discussed, but there was another matter to which he wished to refer.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was the practice to deal with matters of general administration on the first vote; but if any hon. member wished to refer to matters coming under various votes it would conduce to business to wait till those votes came before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The usual course is to take matters of administration on the first vote, but anything relating more particularly to subsequent votes should be dealt with when those votes are proposed. For instance, the Agricultural College is a matter that would be better dealt with on the second vote.

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It had been pointed out clearly by the hon. member for Herbert that what the hon. member for Bundaberg complained of was really the fault of the hon. member's own constituents. Under the Sugar Experiments Stations Act of 1900, of which Dr. Maxwell was the principal administrator, Mr. McCulloch had been appointed an inspector of weights, and in that capacity he had inspected and dealt with every weighing machine for sugar-cane in the colony. That was the information he had, so that the hon. member apparently had no ground of complaint, because the thing he desired to have done was done, though it was not done under the Act of 1898. The funds being provided by the assessment on sugar-cane—one-half being contributed by the millowners and one-half by the cane-growers—and that assessment depending on the weight of the cane which passed through the rollers, it was essential that the cane should be weighed accurately. In order to secure that, Mr. McCulloch had inspected the weighbridges in all the sugar-mills in the colony.

Mr. BARBER: He was prepared to accept that, but Mr. McCulloch only inspected the weighbridges once a year. They ought to be inspected every month.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a matter for the justices.

Mr. PLUNKETT asked what Mr. McCulloch was doing, and when he was appointed inspector of weighing machines?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. McCulloch was appointed on 24th June,



1889, and to his present position on 8th September, 1894. His salary was £300, his last increase being from 1st July, 1895. He received £100 also under the Sugar Experiment Stations Act.

Mr. PLUNKETT: That was not an answer to his question. He wanted to know when Mr. McCulloch was appointed to inspect weighing machines?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was appointed on 1st August of this year by Dr. Maxwell.

Mr. PLUNKETT asked whether the amount of £600 for the Agricultural Adviser included travelling expenses, or whatever other expenses that officer might incur? One of the greatest anomalies in the whole of this vote was the one to which the hon. member for Maryborough had drawn attention, and that was the £157 for the dairy instructor.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: Who is he?

Mr. PLUNKETT: He did not know. This sum ought to be increased. £157 for a dairy instructor was ridiculous. He would like to know what this officer did, and where he inspected?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It did not seem to him that this was an improperly small sum to pay. If Mr. Winks accepted this sum, and the duties he performed were compensated for by it, he did not know why the hon. member for Albert should object.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: Does he get any allowance for travelling?

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Winks reported on milk, and he tested it occasionally. He was attached to the office in town, but occasionally he lectured or gave instruction. A large proportion of the inspectors in the Agricultural Department, in the Stock Department, and under the Meat and Dairy Act, were paid £150 a year. Of course it would be possible to pay them £300 a year, but if the department could obtain men to perform the duties for £150, it was not their business to pay them £300 at the public expense.

Hon. G. THORN: He could inform the hon. member for Albert that Mr. Winks was an instructor in agriculture and dairying. He had really taken the place formerly occupied by Mr. Mahon, and was one of the most useful men in the Agricultural Department, and a man who ought to be paid a higher salary. He was one of Mr. Mahon's best pupils, and wherever instruction was asked for in dairying or in cheese-making he was sent to give it.

Mr. PLUNKETT thought the hon. gentleman was complicating matters, for the gentleman that he referred to was not at the Agricultural College.

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: At one time Mr. Winks was with the travelling dairies with Mr. Mahon. Mr. McGrath was the assistant instructor in dairying, but he did not travel round the country at all. Mr. Winks performed certain duties, and occasionally he gave information with regard to butter and cheese and so on, but he was not connected with the Agricultural College.

Mr. PLUNKETT thought that if the gentleman he referred to was worth anything at all he was worth more than £157.

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*): Some hon. members had complained about the number of experts employed in the Agricultural Department, and no doubt, looking at the list, it was rather a formidable array; still he was inclined to think that these experts were competent men. As to whether the country could afford to pay for them that was another matter. He agreed that £157 per annum seemed rather a small sum for a

dairy instructor, when they considered the importance of the dairying industry in Queensland, and when they saw that they paid £500 to the tobacco expert. He knew something about dairying, but very little about tobacco culture.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Is he a travelling instructor?

Mr. JACKSON: He understood the Minister to state that this instructor did travel.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Very seldom.

Mr. JACKSON: Looking at the importance of the dairying industry here he thought this official was worth a higher salary.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He ought to be made to travel.

Mr. JACKSON agreed with that; but it was necessary that there should be some instructor at the college. However, this was not the time to discuss the college.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The principal of the college himself is an expert.

Mr. JACKSON: Yes, he was an expert dairyman as well as a general farmer; still it did not follow that the principal of the college would have to give lessons in dairying. Something had been said in connection with the Agricultural Adviser, Mr. McLean, getting £100 more than the Under Secretary of the department. Some hon. members wanted to know if this £600 included the whole of the expenses in the way of travelling allowances to the Agricultural Adviser, as they were paid to him as Under Secretary. He was inclined to think that he got the extra £100 as Agricultural Adviser which he used to get as Under Secretary for travelling allowance, and that was included in the £600. Some hon. members seemed to think there was something anomalous in the Agricultural Adviser getting £100 more than the Under Secretary of the department; but it did not strike him in that way, although the Under Secretary was his superior as head of the department. But if they looked at the Mines Department they would see that the Government Geologist got £800, while the Under Secretary got only £700; and the same thing applied to the railways and other departments. He could assure the hon. member for Burke that Mr. McLean did his duty to the Agricultural Department and to the country by travelling about and giving advice to farmers, and that there was no more hard-working official in the service. When anyone had occasion to go to the department and see him, as Under Secretary, at any time he was always at their disposal.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He ought never to have been removed from that position.

Mr. JACKSON: He was not disposed to find fault with that statement. However, it was thought by the Minister in charge of the department that Mr. McLean's services might be of more value to the country as Agricultural Adviser travelling round the colony. They had to remember that the services of the Agricultural Adviser and of Mr. Benson had been largely availed of throughout the colony at show times by agricultural societies; and although they went to these shows as judges, he thought these gentlemen imparted a considerable amount of information to the farmers who visited these shows.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: They learn more from the farmers there than they can teach the farmers. Don't you know that?

Mr. JACKSON: He was rather surprised at the hon. member saying that, seeing he was anxious to have an agricultural college in his own district. Surely the hon. member would not argue that there should be no agricultural college and no experts there!

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: The college is all right, but it is in the wrong place.

Mr. JACKSON said he was not sure that it was in the wrong place. He would like to see not only agricultural colleges but different State farms.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. JACKSON: He was not going to discuss the details in connection with State farms, but surely he could use this as an illustration of his argument. In his opinion, the State farms should be on a smaller scale. He would like the Minister to explain why the services of the agricultural chemist were to be discontinued. Probably some hon. members would say that there were too many experts in this department, and they would be glad to see the reduction in this direction. He saw that the agricultural chemist's services were only down for six months, and there was nothing down for the horticulturist this year, so it was evident that the Government intended to reduce the expenses in connection with this department. It had been stated that there was plenty of work for the agricultural chemist, who did all the analysing of the soils for the Agricultural Department—that was his special work. He had never heard that this official was incompetent.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: He is too good.

Mr. JACKSON: He had never heard anything said against him. He recognised that it was absolutely necessary to retrench, seeing the financial position the colony was in, but he would be very glad to hear from the Minister the reasons for discontinuing the services of the agricultural chemist.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: You do not want such a high-class man.

Mr. TOLMIE (*Drayton and Toowoomba*): The report issued by the Agricultural Department was one of the best reports issued to Parliament, [5.30 p.m.] the officers of the department having gone to considerable trouble in placing matters in which the public were interested in as clear a form as possible. It showed a great amount of research, and was pregnant with a great many valuable suggestions. He only hoped that the Minister would be able to see his way to put into effect some of the suggestions which had been made. It had been said that too much money was spent upon agriculture. He was sorry to hear such a statement made. For many years to come agriculture must remain the backbone of our industries, and it was absolutely necessary that it should be encouraged to the utmost extent. The various agricultural experts had been spoken of by some in rather a depreciatory spirit, but he thought that taken on the whole they were doing exceedingly good work. It was not possible for them to do everything, and it was very likely that in going from district to district they received a great deal of information. No man could know everything about the particular subject in which he was interested. No doubt the agricultural experts learnt from the farmers, but they also conveyed a great deal of useful information as well. From the table submitted on page 2 of the report he noticed that Queensland ranked third in respect to the amount of money per head which she spent upon agriculture, and he hoped before many years were past she would rank first. The money spent in encouraging agriculture was money well laid out, and would prove remunerative in the long run. They knew that the agricultural industry had progressed by leaps and bounds, and they were now reaping some of the useful results achieved from the knowledge diffused by the department. On the Darling Downs especially had agriculture made a great deal of headway, not only as far as cereals were concerned, but in the kindred branch of dairying. The dairying industry owed the position it now occupied to the

instruction afforded by the dairying experts sent round a few years ago by Mr. Hume Black and the member for Herbert when they occupied, at different times, the position of Secretary for Lands, but he thought a great deal of work had still to be done in connection with that industry. He noticed that in Victoria the policy was still being followed out of sending round a dairy expert, not only to the agricultural districts, but to the larger schools; and in the last report from that colony he observed that the expert who had visited the schools remarked upon the amount of progress amongst his pupils. At the beginning of the session he asked the Secretary for Agriculture a question in reference to that matter—whether he would take immediate steps to follow the practice pursued in Victoria of sending round a dairy expert to the various country schools. In dairying districts, where the children had to follow the occupations pursued by their fathers, it was absolutely necessary that some training should be afforded to them. It was only carrying out the system of technical education in an efficient manner, and the children who were at a receptive age would take in the instruction afforded to them, and when they left school they could put it to practical use. In Victoria they not only afforded that instruction to the pupils, but they allowed the older people to attend the instruction classes after school hours, if they felt so inclined. It would cost a very small sum to carry out that plan in Queensland, because the number of dairying districts was limited. Among the list of agricultural countries published by the department he found that Hungary spent the largest amount of money per head of population, and there was a system carried out there which he thought might be followed here with great advantage. It was the practice of the Government to obtain stud stock, and place it at the disposal of persons who were unable to import such stock for themselves. The result was that Hungary was one of the finest horse-producing countries in the world, and that was due entirely to the action taken by the Government in seeing that stallions suitable for various classes of work were available in the several districts. He thought it would be admitted that in no part of the world could horses be bred more remuneratively than in Queensland. They had a climate eminently suited for the horse, and seeing the impetus given to horse-breeding through the action of the British Government in purchasing horses for remount purposes in Queensland, they should endeavour to carry out the Hungarian system here.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The British Government have cleared every horse out of Hungary—78,000 of them.

Mr. TOLMIE: The hon. member for Burke had drawn his attention to the fact that in New Zealand the Government carried out the very idea which he suggested, and no doubt, as the hon. member for Lockyer said, the British Government had taken out of Hungary every horse worth having. He thought the British Government were more inclined to do business with Queensland than with foreign countries. If the Government of Queensland would see its way to follow somewhat on the same lines as New Zealand—which he noticed, by the way, was 1d. ahead of Queensland in its expenditure on agriculture—and would follow in the steps of the Hungarian Government, it would be a decided advance. The same remarks applied with regard to stud sheep. Not long ago he introduced a deputation to the Secretary for Agriculture, the object of the deputationists being to impress upon the hon. gentleman the desirability of introducing stud sheep. On the Darling Downs

they had immense areas eminently suited for sheep fattening purposes, but at present the farmers on the Downs were averse to entering into the industry because they did not know the proper class of sheep. They did not want to experiment themselves, because they were not financially in a position to do so; but, with the State farm at Westbrook, the Government could make a beginning. The owner of the adjoining Westbrook property even went so far as to state that he would give sufficient grass room to the Secretary for Agriculture for a certain number of stud sheep, if they ran short; and several other large selectors in the district would also assist in that way if the Government would only take the matter in hand. The time was coming when the Darling Downs would be given over, to a certain extent, to lamb production in place of wheat production. It would be one of the finest paying industries in Queensland, as it had proved in New Zealand. In making those suggestions, he in no way spoke in derogatory terms of the work that had been done by the department in the past, because they must all give the Government credit for having tried for the last five or ten years to grapple with the agricultural problem and force agriculture ahead. But those were some of the points in which an improvement might be made. Another point he wished to bring under the notice of the Committee was with reference to the State farms. Perhaps they were not making as much use of those farms as they might for the simple reason that there did not seem to be much inducement held out to the people in the various localities to go to the farms. They felt a certain amount of diffidence about going, for fear they should be trespassing, and he suggested that certain days might be set apart for visitors, when those in charge would be able to concentrate their attention on the visitors. The adoption of that suggestion might help to popularise the institutions.

Mr. McMASTER (*Fortitude Valley*) was not prepared to hear opposition raised to the vote from the other side.

Mr. JACKSON: We are not opposing it.

Mr. McMASTER understood the hon. member for Burke to contend that some of the experts were not giving an adequate return for their salaries. The hon. member referred to the fruit expert; but they could not expect to see the result of his labours in twelve months, or even in two or three years. Fruit trees did not mature in twelve months, and it would take the expert more than twelve months to discover means for combating the diseases and insect pests that attacked orchards. Probably it would take him years, and yet the hon. member condemned him because there was no fruit from his labours already. He believed the vote was one that no hon. member should raise his voice against. If an hon. member could point to any particular officer as incompetent, he had no doubt the Minister would soon make inquiries, and if he was found to be incompetent he would very soon be replaced by somebody else. Some of the experts he did not know personally; but he had watched their careers so far as their travels through the country were concerned, and he did not think that any hon. member could honestly say that they were not carrying out their duties to the best of their ability. They were already beginning to see the fruits of the labours of those men. What was the condition of their farming and dairying industry eight or ten years ago, before the Government stepped in and sent round experts to teach the farmers how to manufacture butter and cheese? And now they were exporting hundreds of tons of those articles. Every case of butter that was exported brought wealth into Queensland. The vote ought to be

passed without a word of dissent. He was sorry that the hon. member for Wide Bay—the leader of the absent party—was not there. The hon. member very often made an attack and then ran away.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member stated that they were not getting value for their expenditure in connection with the Department of Agriculture compared with the benefit derived in the other colonies. Why had not the hon. member shown them how they were obtaining more benefit in the other colonies than they were getting in Queensland? If he attempted to do so, he would be in the same hole that he got into in connection with the paragraph from the report, when he tried to explain how the Secretary for Agriculture was endeavouring to get the farmers to organise for political purposes. The hon. member could not explain what was meant by political economy, and, as soon as he found that he was in a corner he ran away. They were doing the right thing in having those officers going through the country advising and teaching the farmers as to the best methods of cultivation. The farmers of Queensland had still a great deal to learn.

Mr. KERR: How to bag potatoes.

Mr. McMASTER: Did the hon. member think it was a disgrace to a man to grow or sell potatoes? Was it not as honourable as working at a blacksmith's anvil? For the last six or eight years hon. members opposite had been endeavouring to capture the farmers' vote; they had been clamouring all over the country, and saying that the Government were doing nothing for the farmers, and now they wanted to make out that the Government were paying too much to the officers in the Department of Agriculture. They ought to be ashamed of themselves for raising their voices against this vote. The hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba said he hoped that in a few years Queensland would be at the head of the list published in the report of the department showing the expenditure on agriculture in various countries. He believed Queensland was at the top of the list now. According to the list Queensland was only 3d. behind Hungary with respect to the amount expended annually per inhabitant, and only 1d. behind New Zealand. In New Zealand the estimates of the department included appropriations for the inspection of dairies, the collection of agricultural statistics, and the destruction of rabbits. In Queensland the amount spent in connection with rabbits was not charged to the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. STORY: It would swamp the department if it was.

Mr. McMASTER: If that amount was charged to the Agricultural Department, as it was in New Zealand, this State would be very much ahead of New Zealand. Then in Hungary a very considerable proportion of the agricultural vote was applied to the purchase of large estates with the view of dividing them into small holdings for the peasantry of the more congested districts. If we had the expenditure under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act charged to the Agricultural Department, Queensland would be head and shoulders above all the other States in the matter of expenditure per head of the population upon agriculture.

Mr. MAXWELL: That shows you are not getting as good value for the money as in New Zealand.

Mr. McMASTER: It showed nothing of the kind. Did the hon. member expect the fruits of the labours of the officers of the Agricultural Department to be seen all at once? When an agricultural expert visited a district did the hon. member expect the result to show itself within a

week? They were doing good work, and the result would be seen in years to come. He did not believe any hon. member could honestly say those officers were not doing their duty; but if any hon. member thought any of them incapable of doing their duty, let him be man enough to name them, and let them be dealt with. To say that the country was not getting value for the money expended was a gross libel on the officers of the department generally.

Mr. MAXWELL wished to emphasise the fact that the country was not getting value for the money expended. Quite recently he was in the Stanthorpe district, where he saw cherry-trees twelve years of age—trees that ought to be at their best—gumming and dying, and the Fruit Expert had never been there to give the growers advice. If the experts had gone into the district and given the farmers the benefit of their advice they would have been able to overcome some of their difficulties. He would not care if ten times

[7 p.m.] spent on this department if the results obtained warranted the expenditure. But that was not the case, and he objected to the expenditure of money for which they were not getting a proper return. He did not think they were getting full value out of the various experts. It was all very well to say that they went to shows, and that farmers could see them on occasions when there was a little "Gold Top" to be broken; but that was not the time to get knowledge.

Mr. JACKSON: What is the remedy you would suggest? Would you sack them?

Mr. MAXWELL: The remedy he would suggest was to liven up the department, and, indeed, every Government department. He ventured to say that if Ministers had to run various Government departments themselves, they would run them 25 per cent. cheaper than at the present time, and even then make a profit out of them. Then there was the Agricultural Adviser. He thought the State could do without that gentleman at the present time. He did not know that the farmers, individually or collectively, got one penny benefit from the expenditure of that £600. He knew that that gentleman was previously Under Secretary to the department; but he was shifted out of that position, and it was understood that that was simply a means of getting rid of him altogether. That, at any rate, was the opinion of the House at that time.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: No.

Mr. MAXWELL: So far as the agricultural chemist was concerned, he thought the department could do without him; in fact, the whole department seemed sick, and the sooner they got rid of it the better.

Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*): The hon. member who had just sat down had said that they were not getting sufficient value for the money they were expending on experts. That was merely a statement, without any demonstration at all. Take Mr. Neville, the tobacco expert, for instance. That gentleman was thoroughly acquainted with every branch of his subject. He had travelled through his (Mr. Hamilton's) district, and he had been particularly impressed with the value of such a man. He saw Mr. Neville on some occasions on a farm where the farmer was attempting to grow tobacco, and Mr. Neville showed where it was inadvisable to grow tobacco on that soil; and that advice probably saved the farmer years of unproductive work. On another farm he would explain that the land was very good, but it was too flat, and would not suit; at another place he indicated what sort of tobacco the soil was best adapted to grow. These things lead him to believe that Mr. Neville was a man who saved the

country a great deal of money. Then take Mr. Benson, the fruit expert. The value of that gentleman's services were not only recognised by the department, but by the farming community generally. He recollected visiting the Blackall Range lately, and a very successful farmer there, who had been twenty-five years farming, told him that he had never seen pruning done properly until he saw Mr. Benson do it. Other farmers told him exactly the same thing. One man told him how Mr. Benson had told him that what he had taken to be a pest on his trees was not a pest at all. In another instance a man told him how Mr. Benson had instructed him to clear his fruit trees of a scale successfully. It was the same right through. Mr. Benson was thoroughly up in his subject, from the selection of trees to the characteristics of the soil, planting and preparation and the packing of the fruit. In fact, the Blackall Range rang with Mr. Benson's praise.

\* Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*) objected very strongly to the agricultural experts being also employed by the department as political engineers. On various occasions during the last six months the Department of Agriculture and all its experts had been used in connection with one big political question which was now agitating the minds of all men in this colony, and one of the experts, Dr. Maxwell, was at present in Melbourne doing a bit of political engineering.

Mr. McMASTER: He was sent down at the request of Mr. Barton.

Mr. GIVENS: He was not.

Mr. McMASTER: Mr. Barton requested him to report on the sugar industry.

Mr. GIVENS: When Mr. Barton got his report he did not request him to do anything else, and when an hon. member said that Dr. Maxwell went down to Melbourne at the request of Mr. Barton, he was saying something that was not true. He went down at the request of the Government of this State. Then they also found that Mr. McLean, the Agricultural Adviser, and Mr. Newport, the Government expert, both attended meetings in Cairns denouncing the Federal Government—that was at a purely political meeting. The Minister stated it was not true they attended those meetings.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE—

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. gentleman was quite an expert at quibbling.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE rose to a point of order. It was very seldom that he bothered himself about any expressions used by the hon. member for Cairns, but he would like to know on this occasion whether the hon. member's expression was in order?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the remark made by the hon. member for Cairns may be classed as an offensive expression, and I would ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. GIVENS withdrew the expression, but he said that in dealing with all public questions the hon. gentleman was very disingenuous, to say the least of it. That meant about the same as the expression he had been asked to withdraw. Not only were experts employed by the department as political engineers, but the department itself and the hon. gentleman at the head of the department had prostituted the department into a political engineering institution.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is an insulting calumny worthy of you.

Mr. GIVENS: He would read the hon. gentleman's own statement to prove his words. The hon. gentleman sent a memorandum in connection with the sugar industry to the Premier to be forwarded to the Federal Senate, dated the 15th November of this year. All public departments

here should be free from the stain of having any political bias. The hon. gentleman would agree that that was the correct view to take of the matter, and yet in the course of this memorandum the hon. gentleman made use of the following remarks :—

Respecting the recent federal elections and the contention that they prove Queensland to be hostile to existing labour arrangements, it need only be said that no such conclusion will be drawn by those who were aware of the influences at work during those elections. The Labour party, it is true, triumphed at the polls; and the Labour party is opposed to the employment of the kanaka, even where it is admitted he is providing employment for the white man.

The whole paragraph was bristling with political bias. The paragraph went on—

But the fact is that the victory went on this occasion to the minority, as it often does when the minority are thoroughly organised and thoroughly united, and the majority are not only unprepared for conflict but are hopelessly divided, if not about measures, at least about candidates. But for the unfortunate dissensions among those opposed to Labour aims—dissensions about persons and not about principles—Queensland would now be represented in the Federal Senate by a united party determined that a great Queensland industry should be carried on according to Queensland ideas.

Probably if there had been any suspicion that one of the first Bills to be introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament would be a measure dooming the sugar industry to destruction, such dissensions would have been impossible. But it was never imagined that the sugar industry was in immediate danger. It was thought that the Commonwealth Government would not dream of interfering with it unless after a thorough investigation of the subject. Yet without any inquiry the Commonwealth Government has resolved to revive the policy which nearly ruined the industry fifteen or sixteen years ago.

It is true that the Federal Premier, before his Bill was framed, commissioned Dr. Maxwell to furnish him with a report on some aspects of the sugar question. But the instructions he gave Dr. Maxwell almost precluded any reference to the labour problem. Yet, in spite of this restriction, Dr. Maxwell was able to show that the kanaka was a necessary factor in the production of sugar in the tropical portions of Queensland.

It is to be feared, however, that Mr. Maxwell's unanswerable statement of the case will have little effect on the situation. So far from profiting by the blunder of 1885, the Federal Premier seems bent on repeating it. Possibly, after thousands of acres have been abandoned, and hundreds of farmers have been ruined, an attempt will be again made to undo the mischief, with, perhaps, less success than in 1892.

It was simply marvellous how on the one hand the hon. gentleman chose the result of one election to show that the people did not want to get rid of the kanaka, and on the other hand he quoted the result of two elections to show that they wanted to retain the kanaka. The State elections for 1893, 1896, and 1899 were not fought out solely on the black labour question. There were 101 different issues in a State election, and he might say that the Ministry of the day had the advantage of being able to fight their opponents by offering all sorts of political bribes to the different constituencies, and the result was that men were returned in some places who had not been returned on straight-out issues. And if the hon. gentleman was so sure that the people of Queensland had made up their minds, why did he not accept the challenge that had been thrown out by the leader of the Opposition.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question the hon. member is now debating is not relevant to the vote before the Committee. He is making a second-reading speech on the black labour question.

Mr. GIVENS affirmed that he was perfectly in order in discussing this memo. of the Minister's. He did not intend to discuss the whole of the black labour question, but he wished to discuss this memo. to show that this department was being prostituted into a political institution. He wanted to say also that, although the depart-

ment was one for the dissemination of information, so far as that memorandum was concerned, the information it contained was not correct. In that memorandum the hon. gentleman said that owing to the restrictive legislation passed in 1885 with regard to kanakas, disaster overtook the sugar industry, and, in support of that statement, the hon. gentleman stated that in one year—one of the lean years—the production of sugar fell below 35,000 tons. That was quite true, but it was a totally unfair statement. It was a sample of the logic that was used by such an eminent logician as the Secretary for Agriculture, but it certainly was not fair to generalise from an individual and exceptional case. They had a right to expect from the department that the information it gave either to the Queensland or to the Federal Parliament was both ample and correct. As a matter of fact, no disaster had overtaken the sugar industry in consequence of the restrictive legislation of 1885. In the ten years preceding 1885—from 1875 to 1885—the output of sugar was 177,493 tons, whilst in the ten years succeeding 1885—from 1885 to 1894 inclusive—the output had increased to 599,314 tons.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Half-a-million was spent on the industry by the State.

Mr. GIVENS: Nothing of the kind was spent on it at that time. Many of the central mills had been established since 1894. If the restrictive legislation passed in 1885 had any disastrous effects on the industry, it would be felt when that Act came into operation, and that was at the end of 1890. It was only then that licenses were refused to be issued.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The banks drew in their horns after 1885.

Mr. GIVENS: Well, he quoted the figures for the whole ten years; but if he quoted the figures for the preceding five years and the succeeding five years, it would still be seen that the statement of the Secretary for Agriculture in that precious document which they were now discussing would not bear the light of examination.

The PREMIER: Quote the years since the restriction was taken off. Quote the year 1892.

Mr. GIVENS: He had worked that out. The result showed that during the ten years succeeding the legislation of 1885 the output of sugar had been much greater than in any other ten years.

The PREMIER: You are wrong.

Mr. GIVENS: That was not so. He would read the whole of the statistics if the hon. gentleman liked. He would take the years when the effect of the restrictive legislation should have been most disastrous, they were 1890, 1891, and 1892. In 1890 the output was no less than 68,924 tons of sugar. That was the greatest output they ever had up to that year. That was the very year when all licenses were refused to be renewed. In 1890—the year when no licenses at all were issued—the output was 51,219 tons, and in the year 1892 the output was 61,368 tons. If they took the figures for the whole of the time, they would find that there were fluctuations which were due to several things besides the labour question, but if due allowance was made for those fluctuations it would be seen that the sugar industry was never so prosperous as it was during the years when the hon. member said it was ruined, owing to the restrictive legislation of 1885.

The PREMIER: You ask the sugar planters. They will tell you quite the other way. They ought to know their business better than you.

Mr. GIVENS: What was the value of those statistics if they found that there was a greater output than there ever was before?

Hon. E. B. FORREST: That is not so.

Mr. GIVENS: In the year 1890 they produced 68,000 tons of sugar.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: We produced 163,000 tons during 1898.

Mr. GIVENS: It was known to every hon. member that before any restrictive legislation was passed there were numerous failures, and large areas went out of cultivation. That was simply because either the land was not suitable, or on account of extravagance, or perhaps owing to want of knowledge on the part of the management. Even the member for [7:30 p.m.] Herbert was managing a large plantation on the Herbert River where he had an unlimited command of coloured labour, yet he made a most egregious failure of it. Several other plantations failed also.

The PREMIER: When did they fail, after 1885?

Mr. GIVENS: It was not. Hamleigh failed before 1885, and Mr. Cowley was the manager.

The PREMIER: He is not here.

Mr. GIVENS: He was not responsible for that. He had no desire to say anything behind a man's back that he would not say to his face. The Premier knew that in the Cairns district a plantation had been run entirely by Chinese, with an ample command of Chinamen all the time, yet they made that a failure.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: What was the price of sugar then?

Mr. GIVENS: The higher the price the more successful it ought to be.

The PREMIER: They had very poor plant.

Mr. GIVENS: That bore out his argument that the failure was due to other causes than the restrictive legislation. The Pyramid plantation, which started about the time the restrictive legislation was passed, and where there was never a scarcity of labour—that was a failure, too.

The PREMIER: Because of the restrictive legislation.

Mr. GIVENS: It was not. It was because of the huge interest burden every year and because of inexperienced management. There were plenty of people who would take up that land if they could get it at a reasonable price—say £5 an acre—and grow cane and make it pay. The Secretary for Agriculture said in this document that the honour of the Government was concerned in this matter—that the Queensland Government in 1892 gave an assurance to the people engaged in the industry that they would always have a supply of cheap labour. That was not correct. There was never either a written or a spoken or an implied obligation on the part of the Queensland Parliament to provide an unlimited supply of cheap labour to the sugar-planters for all time, and he objected to the Minister making misleading statements of that kind. The legislation of 1892 was passed on the express understanding that it was only for a time.

The PREMIER: Nobody said that.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member for Herbert said that if the people engaged in the industry only got another ten years they would be perfectly satisfied.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: Can you quote it?

Mr. GIVENS: He had not *Hansard* by him, or he would very soon quote it. He believed it was quoted the other night by the hon. member for South Brisbane, so there was no necessity for him to quote it again. The Commonwealth Government had given them another five years, and still they said the industry was going to be ruined. He objected to the Minister making this matter a stalking-horse to a political cry, and making this a political question to give

effect to that political cry. He had quoted from the hon. member's memorandum statements which were not true.

The PREMIER: That is only your statement.

Mr. GIVENS: He had proved by the statements of Government officials that some of the statements in the memorandum were not true. He had given the hon. gentleman the page and everything else. It could be found in the records.

The PREMIER: Don't lose your temper.

Mr. GIVENS: He was not losing his temper. He would like to refer to one or two other points. The Minister for Agriculture said in this document that if cheap labour was taken from the sugar industry the industry would be ruined that it could not exist without cheap labour. Yet, immediately after making that statement he said this—

The history of the industry since 1892 shows that time has been doing gradually, and without injury to the industry, what the Federal Premier means to do hastily, and to its detriment. The number of white cultivators has been increasing year by year, and the number of black auxiliaries decreasing at a corresponding rate. Nothing has done so much to foster this tendency as the continuation and extension of the central mill system. Since 1892, no less a sum than £500,000 has been advanced by the state in aid of that system. It was intended to advance a further £150,000 this year, but for the action taken by the Federal Government. Probably, if the industry were left to the Queensland Parliament to regulate, in another decade the central mill system would be all but universal, and Queensland would in time present the unique spectacle of sugarcane being grown on a vast scale by innumerable white cultivators with the help of an insignificant number of blacks. If anything is more remarkable than the expansion of the sugar industry between 1893 and 1901, it is the ever-increasing number of whites and the ever-diminishing number of blacks engaged in it during that period, a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of cane-growing.

In one word the hon. gentleman said, "You cannot grow sugar without black labour," and in the next few words he said, "They would see the unparalleled phenomenon of a large crop of sugar being grown by white labour." He said, "If you only give us a few years the question will work itself out, and the sugar will be grown by white labour altogether."

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: He did not say so.

Mr. GIVENS: He would go to the trouble of reading the whole of the report if the hon. gentleman liked.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: He says an insignificant number; he does not say altogether.

Mr. GIVENS: He said in time it would be grown by white labour altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He says an "insignificant number."

Mr. GIVENS: He would read the report. It stated—

Those who have observed this phenomenon were not without hope that within a generation the *régime* under which sugar is produced by whites and blacks in combination would give place to a *régime* under which sugar would be produced by whites alone.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Oh!

Mr. GIVENS: It was stated that in time all the sugar would be grown by white labour alone; but in the immediately preceding part of the report it was stated that the industry would be ruined altogether if the blacks were removed.

The PREMIER: Dr. Maxwell says so.

Mr. GIVENS: Dr. Maxwell was paid to do a little bit of special pleading, but he had not done it very effectively for the hon. gentleman. He was willing to take Dr. Maxwell's report, and to show that that gentleman's conclusions were entirely wrong with regard to the difference between North and South Queensland—

The PREMIER: Well, Wragge is of that opinion too.

Mr. GIVENS : Mr. Wragge felt himself very shaky in his position, and he wanted to make himself a bit secure. As a matter of fact, in the North—which they said was only fit for a black-fellow to work in—the heavy work in connection with the growing of sugar-cane was done in the cool months of the year, and even in Cairns they sometimes had frost.

The PREMIER : I never saw it.

Mr. GIVENS : He had proof that what he said was correct.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY : There is a heavy frost there now.

Mr. GIVENS : As a matter of fact the climatic returns showed that Deniliquin, which was far south of Brisbane, was recently much hotter than Cairns, and hon. gentlemen knew that sometimes in midsummer in Melbourne it was hotter than in North Queensland. With regard to this question—of there being frost in Cairns—he would refer hon. members to the *Telegraph* of 8th November last, and he would ask the hon. gentleman whether he would believe the statement of the Agricultural Adviser to the Government? Mr. McLean had returned from Cairns, and he was interviewed by a representative of that paper, and in the course of his interview he said—

Whilst at Cairns, Mr. McLean took advantage of the opportunity and visited the State nursery at Kamerunga, which had been established for some years. The frost of last year had done certain damage to the coffee plants, but with the present open season they are looking forward to a large crop for the next harvest.

The PREMIER : You mean the coffee plants at the top of the range.

Mr. GIVENS : No; Mr. McLean said the coffee plants in the Kamerunga Nursery.

The PREMIER : Then he is mistaken.

Mr. GIVENS : The hon. gentleman knew that there was frost there at times.

The PREMIER : I never saw it.

Mr. GIVENS : He was not asking the House to accept the opinion of biased political individuals, but the evidence of the Government's own Agricultural Adviser, who was supposed to be a reliable man, and who was paid a high salary by the State. The hon. gentleman apparently did not believe the statement of their own Agricultural Adviser.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : It has not much to do with the Estimates, that is all.

Mr. GIVENS : It had much to do with them. He was showing that this department, which cost a large sum of money every year, which mainly existed for giving advice to our agriculturists, and giving reliable information in the report or memorandum signed by the head of the department, was giving most unreliable information.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : Not at all.

Mr. GIVENS : It appeared that everything had to subordinate itself to one particular thing, and by hook or by crook brought to influence the Federal Parliament in the direction that the hon. gentleman opposite wanted, when they had the best evidence that could be furnished, in the desire expressed by the people of this State, and he challenged contradiction of that.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY : I contradict it.

Mr. GIVENS : Well, the people of this State gave a most emphatic reply to the hon. gentleman on 30th March last.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION : Hear, hear !

Hon. A. S. COWLEY : The publicans did.

Mr. GIVENS : That was very nice. The hon. gentleman wanted to account for his defeat by saying that the publicans voted against him, and he insulted the 29,000 voters who returned the successful members by saying that they were able to win only because of the aid given by the publicans.

Mr. J. HAMILTON : He did not say that.

Mr. GIVENS : That was the only inference that could be drawn from the hon. member's statement. The people of Queensland were asked for their opinion on this question, and they gave it in a most emphatic and unmistakable manner. He objected to the expenditure of money by this department in the circulation of unreliable information. He had shown from official resources that it was not reliable, and it was not a fair statement of the case. He would be only too pleased if an opportunity were afforded for discussing this question. At the same time he believed that the matter had been voluntarily given up by this Parliament, and by the people of this State, to the Federal Parliament, and it was entirely outside their province or duty to discuss it under this particular vote.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS : Then what are you saying all this for ?

Mr. GIVENS : Because he was discussing the report of the head of the department which had been issued in contravention to the principles he advocated. If hon. gentlemen liked to initiate a discussion on the whole question he would be quite agreeable. He was not one who, for the sake of a political favour, was willing to give up his right to criticise any public question. All he wanted was a fair deal and justice.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : I thought you said it was a political favour.

Mr. GIVENS : No.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS : Oh, *Hansard* will show.

Mr. GIVENS : *Hansard* did not always tell all the hon. gentleman said.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS : That is not my fault.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : Why do you abuse *Hansard* ?

Mr. GIVENS : He was not abusing *Hansard*. *Hansard* was all right if it was left alone. If hon. members only made verbal corrections in their speeches instead of altering the tenor of their speeches—

The CHAIRMAN : Order !

Mr. GIVENS : He was not going to discuss that question ; but he thought it had been conclusively shown that that had been done. But he would not be allowed to discuss that. He emphatically protested against this memorandum having been issued by the head of this department, for it did not contain a fair statement of the case, and it did not give the Federal Parliament the full information which it was desired generally to give to that Parliament. If one-sided statements like this were to be sent to the Federal Parliament, the less attention the Federal Parliament paid to them the better it would be for the Federal Parliament and for Queensland.

Mr. BOLES (*Port Curtis*) : Ever since the inauguration of this vote, the general complaint had been that the amount was too small, and he believed the time would come when some such complaint would be made again. He thought this money was fairly well spent. He thought the Agricultural Adviser might make periodical visits, say twice a year, especially to districts along the coast. That would cost very little extra expense, and those visits would be of great benefit to the agriculturists in those districts.

Mr. SMITH (*Bowen*) : He did not think there were too many experts in this department, and the criticism was rather as to whether these experts were utilised to the fullest extent by giving information to all parts of the colony. Mr. Hume Black, when he was Minister for Lands, conceived the idea of travelling dairies. The idea was taken from Victoria, and good resulted from these dairies going about the country. There were two dairy instructors; one was connected with the Agricultural College, and



the other was under the general head of "Agriculture." He would like to know where these two instructors were located, and whether the same benefits were accruing now as they did under the administration of Mr. Hume Black and the hon. member for Herbert. He had seen the great benefits that had resulted from these travelling dairies in the days gone by, but since then he had not seen the same benefits. He thought these dairies should travel more throughout the colony—that they should follow more in the footsteps of their predecessors, because in that case greater benefits would accrue. At present the travelling was limited to the Southern portions of the colony, but there was the Centre and North to be considered. He asked if the second instructor he referred to travelled? He did not know that it was necessary to keep the principal expert at the Agricultural College.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SMITH: He would go further, and say that if it was necessary, it would be much better to make new appointments in that particular direction, because the dairying industry would in the future be a very important item in their agricultural development.

HON. A. S. COWLEY believed that in his absence the hon. member for Cairns had made a personal attack on him.

Mr. GIVENS: I did not do anything of the kind.

HON. A. S. COWLEY accepted the hon. member's assurance; but he had also been informed that the hon. member had stated that, owing to his mismanagement, a plantation on the Herbert River had been a failure.

Mr. GIVENS: He had not said anything of the kind. As an illustration of what he was saying—that the question of coloured labour or no coloured labour was not the sole reason for success or non-success—he had referred to the fact that the hon. member was managing a plantation on the Herbert River prior to the restrictive legislation of 1885, when there was an unlimited supply of black labour, and yet, with the command of a very considerable amount of capital, and with such a man of genius as the hon. member in charge, that plantation was an egregious failure.

\* HON. A. S. COWLEY thanked the hon. member for his explanation. He gave the statement an unqualified denial. He started that plantation in 1881, and it went on till 1884, when 124 boys were removed from the plantation by the Government two days after they started crushing. At that time there were nearly 3,000 tons of sugar in the field. Anyone who knew anything about a sugar plantation knew that to take away 124 men just two days after the crushing commenced rendered their efforts to get off such an enormous crop entirely futile. They advertised in almost every paper in Queensland and in all the southern colonies for white men to cut the cane. They were in such a position that, rather than lose that crop, it would pay them to give double the amount they would under ordinary circumstances, because if it was not reaped ruin stared them in the face. Finding they could not obtain white labour, they sent to Cooktown—and he thought the miners owed them a debt of gratitude, because they sent to the Palmer and everywhere they could to get Chinese. He also had a gang of fifty aboriginals and their gins working; but even with the aid of white, Chinese, and aboriginal labour, he could not get more cane cut than would keep the mill going three days per week. They would cut six days and crush three. The Government, recognising that they had removed these kanakas, gave them compensation, but they only gave the difference between the

cost of the white labour and what it would have cost to keep the kanakas, and 1,200 tons of sugar were left in the field, for which they got no compensation whatever. In 1885 the restrictive legislation was passed; and, being unable to get kanakas, they sent to China and imported about 130 Chinese. The cost of landing them in the colony, including £10 a head poll tax, was £16 or £18 per head. Those Chinamen were too artful, and they had not been long on the place before ten or fifteen of them drifted away every Saturday afternoon, and in a very short time they were just as badly off for labour as ever. They tried to get out of canegrowing, and they advertised in the leading papers in the various colonies offering the pick of the land on the estate at a rental of 5 per cent. interest on the purchasing price. The purchasing price of the land was about £3 per acre, so that the annual rental was 3s. per acre, with the right of purchasing at any time at £3 per acre. If a crop was on it was to be taken at a valuation. They failed to get the land taken up under those conditions, and they tried labour of various descriptions, but were not successful. At the end of 1887 he left the plantation, and since then had nothing further to do with it. From that time till 1895 there were two other managers, and they had just as great difficulty in obtaining labour, and that was the cause of the failure.

Mr. GIVENS: Was it a success while you were there?

HON. A. S. COWLEY: If the hon. member wanted to know, the company paid a dividend one year—out of the money received from the Government, who recognised that they had taken away the necessary labour at a critical time and gave a certain amount of compensation. He repeated that the failure of the plantation was owing to the great difficulty in obtaining necessary labour.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member had omitted a most important point in his explanation—namely, that the 124 kanakas sent back to their islands by the Government were sent back because they were kidnapped.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: That was not so. There were other boys sent back besides those from Hamleigh plantation; and when they got within two days of the Louisiade Islands a Press representative on board asked them whether there was any truth in the statement that they were kidnapped and that they did not understand the nature of the agreement they made, and the boys stated emphatically that there was no truth in the statement.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*): He wished to ask the Chairman's ruling or take the sense of the Committee as to whether on every single occasion when a question having anything to do with agriculture was brought forward, the sugar industry and black labour should be discussed from all sides of the Chamber?

The CHAIRMAN: A letter has been laid on the table bearing the signature of D. H. Dalrymple, Secretary for Agriculture. I could not object to a general criticism of that letter emanating from the Agricultural Department; but I think those that have spoken on the question have gone somewhat wide of the mark, and I trust we shall now get back to the vote before the Committee.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: He was sure no hon. member would tamely sit by and allow his character as manager of a plantation to be aspersed or allow misrepresentations to pass with regard to the working of plantations without putting the matter right. He was sure that if the hon. member for Lockyer had been in his position he would have occupied a great deal longer time.



Mr. PLUNKETT: With regard to the dairying industry, there was a desire on the part of many people in the Northern part of the colony for instruction in dairying, and he thought it would be a good thing to make provision for a dairy instructor to visit that part of the colony. The hon. member for Bowen was only doing what was fair to his constituents in bringing the matter before the House, and the Minister would be only doing what was just if he acceded to the hon. member's request.

Mr. FOX (*Normanby*): He had been very much impressed with the remarks made by the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, with whom he largely agreed. In his constituency in the Central district dairy farming had been started, and it had been an immense success; and seeing the success which had attended it, every encouragement should be given to people to engage in it in that part of the colony. It was very necessary that the people should be supplied with the best stock; in fact, as the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba had pointed out, in Hungary and America the very best stock were supplied to farmers. The stock were sent round and a small fee was charged, and by that means a strain of good stock was extended throughout the districts. The same thing could be done throughout the Central districts, and there would be a large and increasing supply of cheese and bacon obtained from there, and he had no doubt from Northern Queensland also. Being only a recently elected member of the House, he had not the knowledge of the department that many other members had, but so far as his experience went he was very favourably impressed with the department, and he had been very much impressed indeed by the speeches of the chairman at the recent conference held at Bundaberg. He (Mr. Fox) was almost a personal friend of the late Minister for Agriculture, and he thought that they must all acknowledge that that gentleman laid the foundation, by his industry and his attention to his duties, of the present successful Department of Agriculture. He thought the settling of the people on the land, and the encouragement of agriculture and dairying was much more important than anything else that the department could undertake, and it was likely to lead to better results. He hoped, therefore, that the department would not be starved in the future. The Minister no doubt was glad to receive fair and kindly criticism, and so far as he himself was concerned he would endeavour to assist the department in promoting its usefulness.

Mr. SMITH: He would like the Minister to reply to his question as to whether these dairying experts were to travel?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: One devoted the whole of his time at the Agricultural College, and the services of the other were always at the disposal of any person who might desire information in regard to making cheese, and so on, but it was not contemplated at present sending the travelling dairy throughout the North or any of the various portions of the colony.

Mr. CURTIS: It would be a very good thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was recognised that they could not make butter or cheese without considerable capital—in other words, without the factory system. In Ireland they had discarded old methods, and they had now a large number of factories established which were carrying on operations very successfully. It was recognised that if they had to fight for the markets of the world no other system could be successful except the factory system, where they had the knowledge, the skill, and the appliances, which enabled them to make good butter. No doubt the travelling dairy was

a cheap and most successful method of spreading knowledge, but he ventured to say that what they wanted to see now was creameries established. If the hon. gentleman thought that in the district he represented a factory could be established, he had the right to come to the Government and get a sum of money to assist in the establishment of that factory. That was what they had done at Mackay and a great many other districts, and he thought it was in that direction—not in that of the travelling dairy—to which they would have to look for progress. The department was anxious to preserve its past traditions; the foundations were laid by Mr. Thynne, and the superstructure was partly built by his predecessor, the late Mr. Chataway, and it would be his endeavour to follow in the lines that had been laid down.

Mr. SMITH: The reply of the Secretary for Agriculture was very satisfactory, because without some central point where a dairy expert could impart knowledge, his operations would not be so successful as if there were creameries and other centres established. He hoped the hon. member's advice would be taken in the different divisions of the colony, and that the producers would form these centres, creameries, and butter factories, and that in so doing they would be assisted by the Government. He was very glad to hear that the hon. member was willing to recognise any feasible means of encouraging the industry.

Mr. ARMSTRONG thought that the tenor of this debate had somewhat lowered the standard of debate which was set up years [8.30 p.m.] ago. The Minister in introducing the Estimates did not tell what the changes were, or the reasons for the changes in this department. In a department of such great importance as this he thought the Minister should have given the Committee some particulars on those matters. It must be admitted that the question had been raised as to the efficiency, or, rather, the benefits the country received from having so many experts, and he considered the men who were least qualified to give information with regard to the work of experts were the most loud-voiced over the matter. There was no man, least of all the hon. member for Burke, who could go round the colony in one, two, or three years, and watch carefully the work of experts, and say whether they were doing right or wrong. The work of experts was not the work of a day, or a week, or a year. It had to be judged by the work of successive years. After that they could judge whether the work of a tobacco or fruit expert was of use to the country or not. Some of these experts had been lauded by the hon. member for Cook and others. The hon. member for Cook referred to the expert engaged in the culture of tobacco, who could say whether the land was fit or not for this purpose; but before such an expert could gain that knowledge he must know the analysis of the soil. Why did not the hon. member for Cook and other hon. members—the only member who asked what was the reason for the economy in doing away with the services of the agricultural chemist at the Gatton Agricultural College was the hon. member for Kennedy. He thought that the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimates might have given some information to the Committee on that point. He rose now to ask that question—what was the reason for the displacement of the agricultural chemist from the staff of the Agricultural Department?

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member who had last spoken drew attention to the fact that he had simply moved the vote and had not given any explanation; but he had followed the custom of members who

occupied more important positions than he did, and their custom was to make no explanation unless the vote was increased, but in this case there was no increase in the vote. He did not think it was becoming for a Minister in charge of an Estimate to provoke discussion, but that it was his business to give such information as was required. The hon. member also asked how it was that economy had been practised at the expense of Mr. Brünnich, who occupied the position of agricultural chemist at the Agricultural College. The reason was simple. It was generally admitted that, owing to the present financial position of the colony, there should be retrenchment as far as possible in carrying on the work of all departments. This economy was due to no other reason. There were two chemists in the department—one at the Gatton college and one not at the college.

**AN HONOURABLE MEMBER:** Who is the other chemist?

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** Mr. Gurney was the teacher of chemistry and natural science at the college. He was requested to see what officers they could do away with, and he considered that they could do with one chemist instead of two. So long as they had students going to the college they could not do away with the chemistry instructor there; that was the reason why he was not interfered with. On the other hand Dr. Maxwell had two chemists under him. Mr. Brünnich was looking for a laboratory to be put up for him, so as to be able to carry on analyses. The amount that had been received by the department for conducting analyses had been very small—£17 last year, £13 this year, and £32 the year before.

**Hon. A. S. COWLEY:** What is the fee?

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** The fees ranged from 5s. to 10s. for analysis of one element, and from £3 3s. to £7 7s. for analysing more than one element—or soils and subsoils. Mr. Gurney's services were not dispensed with, because they were most required, and he had given great satisfaction. He was engaged in February last, and even if they desired they could not very well dispense with his services. He was working in harmony with the principal of the college; he had been chemist in the Agricultural Department either in Victoria or New South Wales, and when he came to Queensland was practically promised that his services would be retained, provided he gave satisfaction. Having given satisfaction both to the students and to the principal, he was given an engagement, and his services, therefore, could not be dispensed with. He admitted that Mr. Brünnich had done good work; but, when it was necessary to economise, the question arose which officer could be dispensed with the least inconvenience, and it was decided that Mr. Brünnich should go at the end of six months. If the condition of the finances improved, he would be very glad to retain Mr. Brünnich's services at the end of that time; and, if he came to town, the department would give him any analyses that they might require.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** If the retrenchment of those two officers was necessary on the grounds of economy, there were at any rate two other instances in which they could save a much larger amount than by dispensing with such a very necessary officer as Mr. Brünnich. He asked whether the services of the Agricultural Adviser were as good value to the country at £600 per annum as the services of Mr. Brünnich at £375? Prohibitive prices were asked for analyses, and the services of that gentleman had not been made use of as they should have been. A lecturer was necessary; but a chemist to analyse soils and products was more necessary. Mr. Brünnich had

been in the employ of the Government since March, 1897, and, seeing that he had never been accused of being inefficient or with neglecting his work, surely he was more entitled to be retained than a man who came here in February last. He could not see where the economy came in in retaining a man who received a salary of £300 a year and quarters valued at £26, and dispensing with a man who was only paid £375. Mr. Brünnich was one of the best analytical chemists in Australia, and some good reason should be given why he should be shelved. He was taken from a very good position in the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company. Could the department say that their confidence had been misplaced in him in the slightest degree? Under the circumstances he felt that he would not be doing his duty if he had not brought the matter forcibly before the Committee. Every hon. member must feel with him that a very great injustice was being done.

**Mr. MAXWELL:** We do not believe in log-rolling.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG** was not logrolling, and therefore the hon. member should agree with him. When Mr. Gurney was introduced into Queensland he came at a salary of £250 per annum, and if economy was being practised, why was his salary now raised to £300? Unless a satisfactory explanation was given he would ask the Committee to support him in a motion that he intended moving at a later period.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** Mr. Gurney was not appointed at a salary of £250, which was subsequently increased to £300. It was Mr. Sutherland who was previously paid £250. It was impossible to obtain Mr. Gurney's services for less than £300, and that was the amount which the department agreed to give him. No injustice had been done to Mr. Brünnich save this—that a period had come when the department had to retrench; but he would call that a misfortune rather than an injustice. He supposed the hon. gentleman would admit that it might be necessary to retrench departments in cases where public prosperity did not continue. Nothing was more painful to anyone in his position than to have to dispense with the services of an officer of the department, but after seriously considering the matter he had taken what he believed to be the proper course under the circumstances. The following was a statement of the position:—

Mr. Brünnich was appointed as agricultural chemist three months before the college was opened, but it was understood that during term time he was responsible for the chemistry work. The agricultural chemist has, however, considered his appointment to be a departmental one, and that the instruction given to the students was subsidiary. The salary has been borne upon the departmental estimates.

Mr. Brünnich, in a letter dated 26th March, 1898, protested against matters concerning the chemist going to the principal, because "my position is quite independent from the Agricultural College, and I intend keeping it so. It was simply as a matter of economy and convenience that I proposed to have the agricultural laboratory connected with the laboratory necessary for the students of the college, and for the same reason part of my time as chemist to the department is devoted to giving lectures at the college."

The arrangements made when the college started continued until 23rd of November, 1899, when Mr. Brünnich, in a letter to the principal, stated that he found the instruction in theoretical chemistry had been cut to a minimum, and suggested the lectures in elementary and practical chemistry hitherto given by him should be handed over to the science master, and the time of the agricultural chemist devoted to experiment work.

The Minister decided that matters should be arranged upon the lines of Mr. Brünnich's letter of 25-11-99. This was done, and Mr. Brünnich gave up teaching from the close of the term ending in December, 1899.

Instruction in chemistry has since been given by the science masters (Mr. Schmidt, Mr. Sutherland, and now Mr. Gurney).

Hon. members would see that teaching was somewhat distasteful to Mr. Brünnich. He was not originally engaged as a professor at the college, and Mr. Gurney was getting on very well with the students and the principal of the college, who desired to retain his services. Mr. Gurney was appointed for the express purpose of teaching the boys, and the official whose services could be dispensed with was not the professor teaching in the college, therefore they dispensed with the official whose services it was not absolutely imperative to retain. He thought the best thing had been done, and he regretted having to dispense with Mr. Brünnich's services. He wrote a letter to that gentleman, and he would like to read it to hon. members.

MR. KERR: Are you stonewalling your own Estimates?

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was rather ungenerous, seeing that hon. members had expressed a desire to have full explanation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: On the 6th August he wrote in these terms to Mr. Brünnich, who was an old friend and supporter of his own, and for whom he entertained nothing but the most friendly feelings. He trusted that the finances of the colony would by and by enable the department to again engage that gentleman's services—

6th August, 1901.

SIR.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant on the subject of the provision for your salary in the Estimates for the current year being only for six months, and to regret very much that the necessities of the State should demand a step that may mean the abolition of the appointment you now hold. It is impossible to say definitely at present whether your services will be required next year, but it is safe to predict that they will not be unless our revenue shows a marked improvement during the next few months.

Your suggestion that the present science master at the college should be dismissed to make way for you could not be considered unless the step were recommended by the principal. Even then it might be found that this department had entered into obligations with Mr. Gurney which could not be disregarded as long as he gave satisfaction and the position he held at the college was considered one that could not be abolished.

You may be sure that if I can be of any help to you my services will be at your disposal.

He was sorry that the hon. member for Lockyer, or any other member, thought he had not done the right thing, but he had endeavoured to do so.

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*): He confessed that he regarded the action of the Minister for Agriculture with great disfavour,

because he thought Mr. Brünnich [9 p.m.] had been very badly treated, inasmuch as he was the senior officer here, and undoubtedly the most qualified man that they had got for the work that the department wished to have performed. Now he understood that Mr. Brünnich had received notice of the termination of his agreement, and that Mr. Gurney had been practically appointed in his place.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Oh, no; that is all wrong.

MR. CURTIS: You did not hear the Minister's explanation just now.

HON. E. B. FORREST: At all events, he happened to be on the deputation which waited on the Minister two months ago in reference to this very question, and it was pointed out by the Minister that he had appointed Mr. Gurney to do Mr. Brünnich's work.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was Mr. Sutherland's work really.

HON. E. B. FORREST: So far as Mr. Sutherland was concerned, he did not enter into this matter at all. As a matter of fact Mr. Gurney appeared on the Estimates last year for £200, and now he had received an increase. He had been exceedingly well treated, when they remembered that they had been told that not a single soul in the service was to have any advance.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He has had no advance.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Most certainly he had.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It has all been explained.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Reverting to the interview which the deputation had with the Minister, it was pointed out that Mr. Brünnich's services were of great assistance to the farmers when they had analyses which they wished to have made, and they recognised that he was the only man who could do their work. He (Mr. Forrest) was not aware anybody had been appointed to do their work, and so far as they were concerned, they appeared to have been left. He did not know that Mr. Gurney was any better man than Mr. Brünnich. Mr. Gurney was teaching elementary chemistry at the Agricultural College, and it certainly did not require a very highly qualified man to do that. He had not heard the explanation of the Minister, but he certainly thought that Mr. Gurney had been practically preferred to a man very much his superior. He ventured to say that if the farmers of this State were asked what they particularly wanted, they would say that they wanted Mr. Brünnich's services retained. The Minister promised, when the deputation waited upon him, that he would see what could be done.

MR. MAXWELL: So he did; he sacked him.

HON. E. B. FORREST: The Minister had practically done nothing except to get rid of Mr. Brünnich. He considered that a most improper use had been made of Mr. Brünnich. That gentleman was brought here and led to believe that he was to get a permanent appointment. He left a permanent position in the belief that he was going to a better permanent position. Now it appeared that he had been brought here simply to be got rid of because it suited certain individuals to get rid of him. There were three men in the service—and he made this statement without any hesitation—who were interested in getting rid of Mr. Brünnich and keeping Mr. Gurney there. There was no doubt that two of those individuals were afraid of Mr. Brünnich's knowledge, and the third had private reasons for wanting to get rid of him. It was most improper that they should have treated Mr. Brünnich in this way.

MR. GIVENS: Who are the persons?

HON. E. B. FORREST: He did not know that he was called upon to mention names, but he would say, so far as Mr. Brünnich's qualifications were concerned, he was in every respect qualified for the position that he had occupied.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I say so now.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Why then had he been got rid of? He was a most valuable man, and was doing his work infinitely better than these other men could be expected to do it because he had had more experience. He had come into the service to find that he was to be quietly dispensed with in order that some other man could be pitch-forked into his billet.

MR. MAXWELL: It was a curious thing that gentlemen occupying positions like Mr. Brünnich could find plenty of able men to ventilate their cause. If he (Mr. Maxwell) were in a similar position, he would think very little of his

friends if they could not find a place for him without attempting to keep him in a Government position, when the State had no need for him. He thought the people behind the Government used too much influence to keep men in positions when there was not money enough to pay them. If the Minister saw fit to do away with any person he had a perfect right to do so, and if the chemist in this particular instance was unable to get on with the head of the department, it would be quite right that he should go? There was no get away from that. One boss was quite enough to run anything in this country, and he thought the Government had done quite right in this matter.

Mr. STORY (*Balonne*): It was with a kind of tender unwillingness that he approached this vote. It seemed to him almost as audacious as sacrilegious hands approaching a monastery for him to approach gentlemen and offices with such large names as he saw under this item. But, he would ask: What were they doing? Where did they live? Where were they to be seen? Where was the record of their doings? He did not for one moment say that they did not do what was required of them, but their work was not apparent to the general public to the extent it should be, considering they had high salaries and high-sounding names. There was some doubt how they found employment. He had spoken on this subject last year, but he had not been given much information. Starting with the Secretary for Agriculture, they could all understand what he had to do. Then, the same remarks applied to the chief clerk, who, he believed, did his work very efficiently, and to the accountant; but the first one that stopped him in his approval was the Agricultural Adviser. Who did he advise? What did he advise? Did he advise the department or people in trouble? Did his advice help anyone out of their trouble? Suppose he, in his ignorance as a farmer, asked this gentleman for some advice—in fact, to have him under his charge for a time and make a success of him—would the department allow this official to do that? He had met Mr. McLean, and he liked him very well. He had met him at shows, and there he got up and addressed people from a platform just as he (Mr. Story) addressed the people at election times when he was rather in a good position, because they had to take his advice. He had often wondered what advice this gentleman should give for £600 a year, and whether the advice he gave was really worth the amount of money he received. He did not say he was not worth his money, because he did not know what he did. He was in the position of not having received advice from him, and therefore there was some part of that money for which he had had no return, although if he went to Mr. McLean no doubt he would give him advice. But that was not the position he took up. Did the Agricultural Adviser stand in the marketplace and advise people from everywhere how to get out of their trouble? The term "Agricultural Adviser" was a very big one, and he had a very big job if he was going to advise all the people of this great State how to do right when they were inclined to do wrong. Then came the Government botanist, who received £300 a year.

Mr. SMITH: He ought to get £600.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: The best man in Australia.

Mr. STORY: He didn't doubt that. The question was not whether he was the best man in Australia, or whether they had the best chemist or the best doctor in Australia, unless they were put in positions where their services would be of use to the community generally.

Mr. SMITH: You don't read the *Agricultural Journal*.

Mr. STORY said he read it regularly, and he saw in one issue that Dr. Maxwell gave good advice at a meeting held at Maryborough which the Minister also attended—that instead of wondering how certain things happened, they should examine into the causes of those things. Then the botanist had an assistant. What did he do? Next came the entomologist and the vegetable pathologist, who only got £300. Well, a gentleman with such a title deserved that. But what did he do, and where were the fruits of his usefulness? The agricultural chemist had been discussed, and it had been admitted that he was a very good man. Then there was the instructor in fruit culture. He did not know that his services had been of much benefit to the State, for they saw fruit diseased everywhere. One method of preventing diseases in trees was to put a mosquito net over them. Well, if that was the method to be adopted, he could have guessed that himself. There was also an assistant instructor in fruit culture. He supposed that he did what his superior officer did not do, and that he assisted in the work of instruction; but who was instructed, how they were instructed, and what benefit they derived from that instruction no one seemed to know. Then there was the viticulturist. He did not know whether he lived at Roma, and looked after the grapes there. The editor of the *Agricultural Journal* no doubt did very good work, and he could understand the artist and photographer.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: He is going.

Mr. STORY: Yes, he was going. Those who only had plain titles seemed to hold their billets by a very temporary security, but he supposed that the love of the Minister for literature would not allow him to dispense with an officer with such a title as "entomologist and vegetable pathologist." Then there was the tobacco expert, the instructor in coffee culture, and the dairy instructor. He believed the dairy instructor had done more good to the State than any other man the Agricultural Department employed. If he could have the assurance of the Minister that all those gentlemen were profitably—he was sure they were pleasantly—employed, it would be a comfort to him.

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The office of Agricultural Adviser had been in existence for some considerable time, and was filled by Mr. McLean. Most people knew that for many years Mr. McLean had been the working head of the department. Mr. McLean advised in a great many ways. He was sometimes sent to outside places where some problem of a practical nature had to be solved. In the course of this year he had been sent on one occasion to Roma, where the wheat had been frosted, and through his advice the farmers saved their wheat, which they otherwise would have burned. He also gave information about the value of the land, and he travelled from one end of the colony to the other attending agricultural shows. He did good service in that way, as he met the farmers there and advised them in regard to anything connected with agriculture. Then, again, they had dispensed with the services of the Inspector of State Farms, Mr. Soutter, and Mr. McLean would do that work in addition to his other duties, visiting the various State farms, from Cairns to the Darling Downs.

Mr. MAXWELL: Has he got the requisite knowledge to do that?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He believed that he had. Mr. McLean had been a practical farmer for a great many years.

It was because he was a very admirable farmer, and was very well known, that he had been appointed to the department in its infancy. Since that time, like others, he presumed he had been learning. He had been in close association with such expert knowledge as the department possessed, and he was in every way a practical man. The hon. member for Balonne had made fun of the pathologist and entomologist, but he must admit that a practical farmer was necessary in connection with the department. Mr. McLean was a practical farmer, and he had also obtained scientific knowledge in the department. He was exceedingly useful, and he really did not know how they could get on without him. If there was no other reason for retaining his services, he was necessary in order to supervise the work of the State farms, on which a great deal of public money had been expended. Not only did he think Mr. McLean was necessary, but his predecessors in office had also thought so. With regard to the botanist and the entomologist, it must be admitted that such men were necessary, seeing that all vegetable growth and all animals in a country like Queensland had a tendency to be infested with all sorts of terrible afflictions. It was quite true that the travelling dairy had done very useful work, but for three or four years after it had been established it was considered an absolute laughing-stock, and the utility of retaining the services of the entomologist and botanist would also be seen in the course of time. It was ridiculous to ask him to defend the retention of their services. They were both men of very high rank in their profession, and a credit to Queensland.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: In the last paper that the hon. gentleman had read, it appeared that the chemist in the first instance asked to be relieved of teaching work, and if the principal of the college considered that he should be relieved of that work, he presumed it was right for it to be done; but before it was proposed to remove him from the college he ought to have been given an opportunity of returning to his work rather than turn him adrift in the world. The man

originally sent to do the work of [9.30 p.m.] teaching at the college should have the refusal of doing that work. The man going there had not one-tenth of the capacity of the man being sacked. There was a well-equipped laboratory to look after, and, if a capable man were put there at £300 a year to look after that laboratory, it would be wise administration.

\* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He might inform the Committee that Mr. Gurney was recommended by Dr. Maxwell and appointed by the late Minister, Mr. Chataway. He was perfectly competent to deal with the laboratory and do good work there. Mr. Gurney taught elementary chemistry, organic chemistry, laboratory work in general, agricultural chemistry, and physics. Mr. Gurney had not turned Mr. Brünnich out. Mr. Brünnich twelve months ago wished to be relieved, and had been relieved, from teaching at the Agricultural College—a service which he never engaged to perform. If Mr. Brünnich had been on the staff of the Agricultural College, he would certainly have considered it a rank injustice to dispense with his services.

Mr. NEWELL (*Woothakuta*): If Mr. Brünnich was as good a man as he was represented to be—and he believed that to be the case—it was hardly right to dispense with his services. If the kanaka had to go there was plenty of land in the North that would have to be put to other uses, and the services of a man like Mr. Brünnich would be very useful in that part of the colony in analysing soils so that people might know how to put the land to the best use. There was a State farm at Kamerunga, and he understood that there was land set aside in the Barron valley.

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The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is an experiment station at Cairns now and a chemist. They are under Dr. Maxwell.

Mr. NEWELL: There was an insinuation by the hon. member for North Brisbane, Mr. Forrest, that there was some sort of underhand means employed to get Mr. Brünnich put out, and he thought there should be a searching inquiry either by a select committee or by some other method to find out where any injustice had been done. They should see that fair play was meted out to all officials in Government departments. If Mr. Brünnich's services were not required, there was no reason why he should be kept in the service. He did not believe in keeping any man on if he was not required—in private employment persons were not kept on if their services were not wanted—at the same time, if his services could be utilised by the department, it would be better to economise by reducing salaries than by sweeping this man out of the service. If a man was not wanted let him go, but if an injustice was being done, let them find out all about it.

\* Mr. TOLMIE: If inducements were held out to the agricultural chemist to leave a permanent position and take up service in this department he had been hardly dealt with in having his services dispensed with four years after his appointment. He was told that this gentleman was one of the finest analytical chemists in Australia, and there was a great work in Queensland for analytical chemistry. We had a vast range of climate, and a great many soils throughout Queensland, and if we were going to put those soils to the best use it was absolutely necessary that we should have a knowledge of their constituent elements. In the past a great deal of the misfortunes that had happened to growers had arisen from the fact that they had been endeavouring to raise products on soil that was absolutely unsuited for them. They hoped that the Agricultural Department would remove this disability, and that the settlers in the various parts of the colony would be able to go to the Agricultural Department, as a matter of right, and ask for the soils in their particular district to be analysed, and sufficient information given to them to guide them in coming to a right conclusion as to the most suitable products to grow. They knew that it was to their interests to make the greatest possible uses of the soil that they could, and they could not do that unless they could get to know the constituent elements of it, and unless they could ascertain the particular lines upon which they should set to work. The reason why this branch of the Agricultural Department had not been so successful as it might have been, had been on account of the prohibitive charges which had been made for analyses. It seemed to be taken for granted that settlers were able to pay a high price for work of that kind, but they knew as a matter of fact that was not so, and they should endeavour to assist them as much as they could. They must not take it for granted that the sugar industry was the only industry. He was quite prepared to assist that industry, but they had appointed an analytical chemist for the sugar industry, and though the sugar planters paid one-half of his salary the farmers had to contribute the other half.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not the farmers.

Mr. TOLMIE: The State had to do it, and in the State were included the farmers.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: And the miners.

Mr. TOLMIE: And the miners and the rest of the community, but at present he was advocating the cause of the agriculturists, and he maintained that it would be to their advantage

to have a man who possessed the qualifications of an analytical chemist retained by the department. If they had anyone in the civil service who was not making a fair return for the amount paid to him it was the duty of the Government to dispense with him, but if a man could be profitably employed, so far as the State was concerned, he should not be got rid of. This officer should be retained, even if they only employed him in making free analyses for the farmers of Queensland. Some hon. members on the other side seemed totally unaware of the amount of work that was being done by the Agricultural Department for the benefit of the agricultural industry. If those gentlemen would simply try to ascertain what was being done they would do very much more good than by talking of things of which they knew nothing. If hon. members on his side who knew nothing about mining were to get up and talk about it they would place themselves in a ridiculous position, and it was the same with hon. members who occupied time in criticising the work carried on by this department without having sufficient knowledge of the subject. He knew very little personally about Mr. Brünich; but if he had been induced to leave a permanent situation where he was receiving a fair remuneration to enter the service of the State, and then turned adrift at the expiration of four years, he could form no other conclusion than that he had been somewhat hardly treated. Further than that, he thought that if the department endeavoured to keep him constantly employed in analysing soils from the different parts of Queensland, they would be doing good work. Earlier in the evening he stated he hoped the time would shortly arrive when the Government would spend twice as much as they did now in order to encourage the agricultural industry. Several members had adversely criticised, and rightly, the attitude assumed by some members on the other side in objecting to work being done to aid the agricultural industry. He thought something was being done derogatory to the interests of agriculture by dispensing with the services of a man who if kept would render a great deal of aid to farmers and who could tell them what they were able to grow in particular soils. The reason why the farmers had not been able to take advantage of analytical chemistry was because the department had handicapped them by charging heavy fees. He maintained that the department would be doing excellent service if they held out inducements to farmers to get proper analyses of soil and let them know what they could produce in various parts of the colony. Instead of doing that in certain districts crops had been grown which were not as remunerative as would be the case if farmers could get proper analyses of soils. The most of these men were poor and could not afford to pay for analyses. This continual struggle to obtain knowledge was retarding the agricultural industry in Queensland. They were all proud of the agricultural industry here, and he thought it was going to come to the relief of Queensland at the present juncture.

\* HON. A. S. COWLEY: It was really astonishing how many advocates there were for the retention of public officers when the Government desired to retrench. He believed all that had been said about Mr. Brünich; that he was a very capable man, and would be a credit to any department in the State. But they had to face the fact that the country demanded retrenchment wherever it could be made.

Mr. TOLMIE: Why not begin with ourselves?

HON. A. S. COWLEY: If the hon. member would table a motion to do away with payment of members, he would support him.

Mr. TOLMIE: I am only a young member. You, being an older member, bring it forward.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Being a young member, the hon. member did not understand the difficulties of the position, but he (Mr. Cowley) being an old member did understand the difficulties of the position. He was not to be caught that way. (Laughter.)

Mr. BROWNE: Is this officer really required?

HON. A. S. COWLEY: The Minister said that he was not required. He (Mr. Cowley) came here with a friendly feeling towards Mr. Brünich, with a perfectly open mind, and wanted to know the truth of the matter. Having heard all that had been said on both sides, he believed if he were in the Minister's position he would do just the same as he had done. The hon. member who had last spoken seemed to think that if Mr. Brünich was retained the farmers would rush to him to get out of their difficulties.

Mr. TOLMIE: Not when an excessive charge is made.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: The fees were from 5s. to £7 7s.; it all depended on the nature of the analyses. Generally speaking he found that agriculturists and others valued most what they had to pay for, but what they got free they very rarely accepted. He did not think the farmers of the country would begrudge paying a fair price for analyses. They saw that in 1898-99 only £32 11s., in 1899-1900 only £13 15s., and last year only £13 odd had been received in fees from the farmers; so that showed that they were not very anxious to take advantage of Mr. Brünich's services.

Mr. TOLMIE: They are not able to.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: He knew a great deal better than that, for he was proud of the prosperous condition of the farmers. He was not one of those who cried down the farmers. The farmers in a great many districts had had several good seasons, and he was delighted to see that they were doing remarkably well; and if they wanted to get their soils analysed, surely they would not object to pay a small fee. It was really laughable the way in which some hon. members referred to the anxiety farmers had for analyses of their soils. They had seen Chinamen, who never had any analyses, taking crops off the same ground year after year, and each successive year their crops seemed better than the preceding years. The fact was that the farmers did not take advantage of the opportunities offered them. The hon. member spoke about the sugar-growers and Dr. Maxwell. Let the wheat-growers approach the Government as the cane-growers had done, and pay half the cost of a laboratory and the officers required. That would be a very small tax on them, and let the Government subsidise them £1 for £1, and let them get Mr. Brünich or some other first-class man. The Minister said that Mr. Brünich did not take the place of Mr. Gurney. Mr. Brünich was never an officer at the college.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: That is not true. He was engaged for the college.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: He was only saying what he had been given to understand. He was an officer of the department, [10 p.m.] and for a time his services had been made use of at the college. There were two laboratories at the college, one of which was for the use of the students, and the other for the use of Mr. Brünich, so that the students would not suffer through the retrenchment of Mr. Brünich. There was one point which the Minister had dwelt upon, and which he wished to emphasise, and that was that, if they were going to make the college a success, there must be unanimity between the principal and his assistants. Just imagine for a moment if there

was continual squabbling and bickering between the head of the college and his professors, what the pupils would think.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Has there been nothing of that sort?

Hon. A. S. COWLEY believed there was none of it at the present time.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: There has been nothing else since the college started.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY was sorry to hear it. He thought that after Professor Shelton was dispensed with everything ran smoothly and amicably. He would very much like to see Mr. Brünnich's services retained; but, at the same time, he thought that the Minister was perfectly justified in dispensing with the services of any man, no matter what position he held, if he was of opinion that the best interests of the State would be served by that retrenchment.

\* Mr. ARMS' TRONG: Up till recently he thought that the hon. member for Herbert was an expert, to a certain extent, in agricultural matters; but the more he heard him speak the less he thought the hon. member did know. He agreed entirely with the hon. member when he said that there should be absolute unanimity between the principal of the college and his staff; but had the Minister, or any of those who supported him, shown that that was not so in the present case? The Minister had not shown that the principal did not want to keep Mr. Brünnich. In the course of a recent conversation with the principal he had distinctly told him (Mr. Armstrong) that both Mr. Brünnich and Mr. Gurney were absolutely necessary for the successful working of the college. That was new to the Minister, but, probably, if the hon. gentleman had discussed the question with the principal, he would have discovered it for himself. No hon. member had shown that Mr. Brünnich's services were not necessary to the State. Everyone who read the *Agricultural Journal* knew that they were just entering on the fringe of scientific farming in Queensland, and the services of men of the high attainments of Mr. Brünnich would be more and more necessary every day. The hon. member for Toowoomba represented a very old farming district. He (Mr. Armstrong) had been brought up there, and he knew of lands in that district that required fertilising and improving. The same thing was to be found in his own electorate, and, as the owners of those lands discovered this, they sent for a complete analysis of their soil, to find out what elements had been removed by successive cropping, and which it was necessary to restore to the soil. The Minister and the hon. member for Herbert had not shown that there was no necessity for a man of Mr. Brünnich's attainments. If the hon. member for Herbert knew anything about farming, he would know that an analysis of the soil was required after years of farming. When a man first started farming, the initial expenses were so heavy that he could not afford to have four or five analyses made at a cost of £7 7s. each, because any hon. member who had been in a farming district knew that every 50 yards in a ploughed field you would see a variation in the soil. It was a very much more expensive matter than had been so flippantly dilated upon by the hon. member for Herbert. There were a hundred and one different ways in which the services of such a man would repay the country a hundredfold for the next four or five years. He would give one instance in his own experience to show this. Hon. members might have noticed, growing along the banks of the Lockyer and the creeks on the eastern watershed of the main range, a very beautiful tree known as the Moreton Bay chestnut. Unfortunately, it produced a very poisonous bean. Mr. Brünnich analysed this, and ascertained

that by simply cracking the beans and immersing them in water for a certain time, it became one of the most fattening foddors. He had lost hundreds of cattle through eating the bean, but had tried the effect of the bean under Mr. Brünnich's directions, and he found that it had absolutely no ill effects on stock. £175 was a mere fleabite compared with the saving that would be effected by the results of that one experiment alone. Then again Mr. Brünnich was entering upon an analyses of the different grasses, showing the economic and fattening qualities of each, and which it would pay the farmer best to grow. Although the cost of cultivation might be greater in one instance than another, the value of analysis was in showing which was the better of two foddors to cultivate. Economy in those matters was not to be gauged by the paltry saving of a few pounds in salary. There had been nothing shown why Mr. Brünnich should be removed, and how, he would ask the Minister, was the work of the department going to be done if the scientists of the department were removed? Were they going to grope about in the dark as they had done in the past? If the greatest benefit possible were going to be derived from the employment of scientific gentlemen, then the department must be in sympathy with the efforts at research made by its scientists, and the Minister had not only shown that he was unsympathetic, but had not shown, either by argument or fact, that there was no necessity for an analytical chemist in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He never said that an analytical chemist was not useful. All he said was that there appeared to be a necessity for retrenchment, but immediately the friends of certain persons were dispensed with then the Minister was denounced. He had not given an opinion about Mr. Brünnich, but he had no hesitation in saying that he was a competent chemist. The hon. member for Lockyer had freely expressed his opinions about the value of analysis, and he would now read the opinion given by Mr. Lee at the Agricultural Conference, and also the opinion of Mr. Brünnich. Mr. Lee was a farmer of considerable repute, and this is what he said—

Mr. J. W. Lee (Zillmere): I am very pleased that the subject of manuring has been set down as a topic for discussion, as I am sure that for the farmer there is no more important one. The gentleman who read the paper apparently went to a good deal of trouble over it, and has provided us with a good deal of food for reflection. The analysing of soils has been mentioned; but when you have obtained an analysis of a soil, what are you to do with it? No analyst that I know of can give you a just idea of what your soil requires at the time. The question is not what your soil is composed of, but whether that which is in the soil is available for plant food. If the constituents are not available, then the analysis is not worth the paper it is written on. The analysis may show potash, but it may be in that condition that it is of no use to the plants that you may have to grow on the land. Suppose a man is pulled up for starving his children. He pleads that there is plenty of food in his house; but when the policeman inspects that house, he finds that, although there is plenty of food there, it is all locked up. It is precisely the same with the soil. The food may be in the soil, but unless it is available for plant food, and unless the analyst can give you an idea as to whether it is available (and they have not been able to do so yet, so far as I am aware), then a soil analysis is not much good.

Then Mr. Brünnich said—

I may state that it is largely a fact that Mr. Lee is almost right in his expression of opinion that, so far, we really know very little as to the available plant food in a soil by a single analysis. Every farmer has, however, the power of finding out what his soil requires, and that is by simply carrying out a few manual experiments. These need not entail much expenditure, and the information gained would be invaluable.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Tell us what Dr. Maxwell says.



The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was speaking about Mr. Brünnich, and not about Dr. Maxwell.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Well, you have given the opinion of Mr. Lee, and we are not discussing him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. members for Brisbane North and the Lockyer seemed to think that because they had certain friends in the Government service therefore the country was to go on paying them whether they were wanted or not.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Make no mistake of that sort. You know that is not correct.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member had the hardihood to say that three people, whose names he would not mention, had entered into a conspiracy to get rid of Mr. Brünnich.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: I did not mention a conspiracy.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He should like to know the names of those three persons.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: The conspiracy exists in the department.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why did the hon. member use doubtful expressions imputing guilt to persons whose names he would not mention? If they were guilty, mention them. If they were not, why slander them? What was the unfortunate country to do? Would it ever be able to economise? The moment the Government made any attempt at such a thing, persons who outside clamoured for economy abused the department for adopting that course. What did it matter to him if there was a conspiracy against Mr. Brünnich if he had made up his mind that, in the interests of the country, it was necessary to get rid of Mr. Brünnich? There were two chemists, and the Government decided to get rid of one. Just as there were two photographers and two artists of whom one in each case had to go, and just as it had been found necessary to dispense with the services of Mr. Soutar. Were the public expected to believe that there had also been a conspiracy to get rid of those gentlemen? Hon. members hinted mysteriously at conspiracies, but would not commit themselves to anything. They would not help him to detect where the reptile lurked who hatched the conspiracy.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: I never mentioned the word "conspiracy."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member said something which was equivalent to it.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: I said it suited three people that Brünnich should go out of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That meant exactly the same thing—that he was going out, not because the Cabinet said it was necessary to economise, but because certain people wanted to get rid of him. If persons were plotting; if the influence of which the hon. member for North Brisbane spoke was being converted into political influence, and Mr. Brünnich was suffering an abominable injustice in consequence, why did not the hon. member say who those men were? He wanted to act in the interests of justice and for the public good, and why should he be left to do what was wrong because the hon. member would not disclose the names of those people—if they were real people and not spooks?

Hon. E. B. FORREST: They are real people.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the hon. member knew them and would not disclose their names, he thought less of the hon. member than he did before.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: No you don't.

Mr. STEPHENSON (*Ipswich*): Mr. Brünnich's removal from the Agricultural College was regarded as a positive calamity by the farmers in the district, and he did not hesitate to say that Mr. Brünnich had been exceedingly ill-treated. He was a gentleman of great scientific attainments, and he threw up a much more lucrative position to go to the college. If he had not been regarded as one of the teaching staff of the college by the hon. member for Herbert, it was only by that hon. member that he had not been so regarded. With that hon. member it was a case of "Let the galled jade wince—my withers are unwrung." Though he was not an admirer of Professor Shelton, it seemed to him that the principal of the college should be a man of high scientific attainments; and though Mr. Mahon was a very capable man in his way, no one could seriously regard him as being capable of occupying the position of principal of an institution like the Agricultural College. In the interests of the college, and of the farmers of the district, he hoped the Minister would reconsider his determination.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The Secretary for Agriculture never made a greater mistake than when he said that he (Mr. Armstrong) was arguing for a friend on the floor of that Chamber. He had raised the question of doing justice to a man who was not as much a friend of his as of the Secretary for Agriculture himself. The Secretary for Agriculture, and the hon. member for Herbert, in a flippant way, said that Mr. Brünnich was not a member of the staff of the college, but that was only a quibble.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*) rose to a point of order. An hon. member on his side had been ordered to withdraw the word "quibble," and he asked the Chairman's ruling as to whether it was parliamentary.

The CHAIRMAN: When the expression was made use of in an earlier part of the evening, it was looked upon by the member at whom it was directed as an offensive term, and I was bound to take notice of it. On this occasion there has been no notice taken of it by the members to whom the expression was applied.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: If the expression was distasteful to the hon. member—

Mr. KERR: It is not distasteful, but I want fair play to both sides.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He would give the hon. member fair play by withdrawing the word "quibble." Since 1897 Mr. Brünnich had never been out of the laboratory at the college, and he had always been available to the farmers and settlers of the district.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: With regard to the question as to whether Mr. Brünnich had been engaged at the college or not Mr. Brünnich ought to know, and this was what that gentleman said—

When engaged I proposed to the Hon. A. J. Thynne, who was then Minister for Agriculture, that it would be advisable for me to take up my quarters at Gatton, where the Agricultural College was just being built, advising for the sake of economy to build only one laboratory, which could, anyhow for a few years until we learnt what work would chiefly turn up, do duty for both the college and the Agricultural Department. I also took up the teaching of chemistry and allied subjects, lecturing to the students with apparent success for three years.

Yet they were told by the Minister that he was never at the college.

Mr. MAXWELL: He does not know anything about his department.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: He did not. It was perfectly absurd to say that Mr. Brünnich was not qualified as a professor, because [10'30 p.m.] he was engaged for that purpose, and at the request of the department he took over other duties. He took to



teaching chemistry at the college, and with apparent satisfaction for three years. A gross injustice had been done in kicking this man out and putting another man in. He would not give the names of the persons he had referred to, but if any hon. member desired he would be very pleased to give them to him privately.

\* **THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE :** He would read the *Government Gazette* of 30th January, 1897—

His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint Johann Christian Brünnich, agricultural chemist, such appointment to take effect from the 31st, March, 1897.

Mr. Brünnich was not appointed as a teacher of chemistry to the boys of the college. He would like to say that the action had only gone so far that they did not know precisely what would occur in a few months' time, and it was considered advisable only to provide for the payment of one of the agricultural chemists, and that one Mr. Brünnich, for a period of six months. If there was a necessity for retaining Mr. Brünnich's services, and the funds were available for doing so, and it would be for the public benefit, there would be no difficulty in retaining them. At the present time, however, they had not the slightest idea what the tariff would be, or what the revenue of the colony would be, and he thought it was highly desirable to make provision for such absolutely forced retrenchment as they might have to make. So far as Mr. Brünnich was concerned, he regretted that they had to dispense with his services. It would be better that he should be retained, but if it were a question whether someone had to go, it would probably be less inconvenient and less injurious to dispense with Mr. Brünnich, the agricultural chemist, than the other gentleman. If, on the other hand, it was found that there was any real necessity for retaining him, he (the Secretary for Agriculture) did not wish to dispense with him.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG :** Do not you think there is a necessity for an analytical chemist?

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE :** He thought there was an advantage. At one time they had only one chemist, and the colony did not go to pieces; and if Mr. Brünnich went, they would still have the other gentleman, who, he presumed, could do the work for all practical purposes just the same as Mr. Brünnich. If there was the necessity, and means were available, he would be glad to retain Mr. Brünnich's services.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG** thought that this was satisfactory. The Minister said if there was the necessity, and if there was sufficient money, Mr. Brünnich would be retained; but surely no hon. member would question that there was a necessity for his services. If they gave him a wider field and a sympathetic department, they would find that Mr. Brünnich's services would be of the greatest possible use to the colony.

**Mr. TURLEY (Brisbane South) :** The hon. member said that he was not only dissatisfied regarding the action of the Government, but that there were charges of corruption in connection with this matter.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG :** No.

**Mr. TURLEY :** On the part of certain officials. If the hon. member would bring a matter of that kind before the House, and he made out a good case, he would always have the support of his (Mr. Turley's) side.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG :** I did not say there was corruption.

**Mr. TURLEY :** He did not say that the hon. member stated that.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG :** Will the hon. member allow me to explain. I made no statement at any time during this evening that there had been corruption.

**Mr. TURLEY :** The charge had been made that three officers of this department—one for personal motives and two for other motives—had endeavoured to get rid of another official. He wanted to know what their reasons were. It was strange that the hon. member, after standing up as he had done, should have made a complete surrender and backed down after a little criticism on the part of hon. members sitting behind him. He thought the position that the hon. gentleman should have taken up was to hold some inquiry into the statements made; he should have seen whether they could have been proved before he had backed down. If any hon. member on the Opposition side had wasted so much time over this matter as hon. members on the other side had, they would have had two or three lectures from the Premier long ago. Only three members of the Opposition had spoken; the hon. member for Burke twice, and he occupied about fifteen minutes; then the hon. member for Cairns, who occupied about forty minutes; and the hon. member for Kennedy, who only occupied a few minutes. He thought that some of the speeches, and especially that of the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, seemed to have the strong flavour of electioneering. They did not want that, but they wanted to treat all questions honestly when they came up for discussion. The Minister should have taken up the challenge of hon. members supporting him, and have made some inquiry into the matter. But no, he had not done that; he had backed down completely. Reading between the lines, it amounted to this: that one of these gentlemen had been appointed by Dr. Maxwell and the other had not, and the sugar-planter had the biggest pull. He himself did not know anything about these two officials personally; he was only going on the statements which had been made by the Minister and hon. members sitting behind him. One gentleman was recommended by Dr. Maxwell, the sugar man, and he had the biggest pull, as far as his own nominee was concerned.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE :** What about Mr. Brünnich?

**Mr. TURLEY :** Dr. Maxwell did not recommend him.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE :** The Colonial Sugar Refinery Company—what about them?

**Mr. TURLEY :** They could hardly get away from the idea that there was some suspicion in the matter. He had only gone on the evidence which had been given by the Minister and by hon. members sitting behind him. There was one other little matter. On the 22nd October last the following questions were asked:—

1. What is the total number of Chinese and other aliens at present engaged in the cultivation of tobacco in the Texas and Ingleswood districts?

2. What was the total value of the crops grown in those two districts during 1900—

(a) By Chinese?

(b) By white farmers?

And the reply was—

1. 148.

2. (a) £2,246; (b) £8,974.

He might say that he was up at Stanthorpe last Saturday, and one of the first men he met there was a man from Texas who wanted to know where this information was obtained from—that was about the amount of tobacco grown at Texas. He said that information given in this reply was a deliberate misstatement, and he used much stronger language than that. He found out that nine-tenths of the tobacco grown there was grown by Chinese, but the white owners of the land received one-fourth of the products of the land. These white men were sorts of agents between the Chinamen and the persons

who bought the tobacco, and yet they had got information like this from the Minister for Agriculture. He thought members were entitled to get reliable information, but here this information was absolutely misleading. When the excise duty on tobacco was raised the then Treasurer, Sir Hugh Nelson, said that the impost would not be very much felt by white men, for the major part of the tobacco was grown by Chinese. Four or five years ago there were white men engaged in this industry, but they had been absolutely driven out by the Chinese. The information should have been that the Chinese grew 8,000 or 9,000 lb., and white men only 2,000 lb. That would have been nearer the mark. The idea was to gull the public into believing information that was given by a responsible Minister, although it was not in accordance with the information they got from people living in the district.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** It did not follow that the people living in the district were necessarily accurate. If the hon. member wanted to know where he got the information from, he might tell him that he got it from the Registrar-General. He got the information believing it to be reliable, and it was more likely to be accurate than the gossip that the hon. member heard in Stanthorpe. Whether it was right or wrong, the Registrar-General was generally regarded as probably the soundest source from which such information could be obtained. If the hon. member found it was incorrect, instead of passing any reflection upon the unfortunate Secretary for Agriculture, he had better go and have a battle-royal with the Registrar-General.

**Hon. A. S. COWLEY:** The men themselves supply the information to the Registrar-General.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** That was so. At any rate, that was the source of his information. With regard to the question of surrendering at the conclusion of his speech the position he had assumed at an earlier period, he simply repeated what he said at the commencement—that he had no desire to dispense with Mr. Brünnich's services, and that it was considered necessary to give him six months and see how the times went.

**Mr. GIVENS** happened to be particularly interested in the question of leasing land to aliens, as some of the staple industries of Queensland were falling into the hands of the Chinese. From private sources he believed that the statement made by the hon. member for South Brisbane was thoroughly reliable with regard to the proportion of tobacco grown at Texas by Chinese. He did not blame the Minister or the Registrar-General for not having any accurate information on the subject.

**Mr. TURLEY:** Why give information at all if it is not correct?

**Mr. GIVENS:** But when they could not give positive amounts they should have said that it was only an approximation. The Registrar-General had not the means at his disposal to find out the quantity of land in the hands of the Chinese or the quantity of tobacco that was grown by them, and no one knew that better than the Secretary for Agriculture.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** I do not know anything of the sort. I get my information from the Registrar-General, and I do not go to the hon. member for Cairns for it.

**Mr. GIVENS:** In some departments the Registrar-General had ample means at his disposal for getting the fullest and most accurate information, but that was not so in this connection. At the same time, they had a perfect right to insist that when information was given, it should be accurate, or they should be told that it was only an approximation. With regard to the

services of Mr. Brünnich being dispensed with, he had listened carefully to the Minister's explanation of the matter, and the Minister stated, in a very excited manner, that three officers of his department were charged with having entered into a conspiracy—

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** I never said so.

**Mr. GIVENS:** The hon. gentleman did say so, and every member who was present at the time he was speaking knew that he said so.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** Twaddle!

**Mr. GIVENS:** The hon. gentleman said that the hon. member for North Brisbane charged three of the officers of his department with entering into a conspiracy to get Mr. Brünnich discharged, and he demanded that the hon. member for North Brisbane should give him the names of those three officers, otherwise the hon. member would be as bad as those officers.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** I said three persons—not three officers.

**Mr. GIVENS:** Three officers of the department. The hon. gentleman repeated that statement half-a-dozen times. Now he would tell the hon. gentleman who the three officers were.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** Tell them, but no one will believe you.

**Mr. GIVENS:** It had been the common talk of hon. members on the balconies all the evening. They were the Under Secretary, Mr. Mahon, the principal of the college, and Dr. Maxwell. He had heard those names mentioned by half-a-dozen members.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** I would not believe it on that authority. It is ridiculous to offer as evidence what hon. members say outside.

**Mr. GIVENS:** The hon. member for North Brisbane was there, and several other members had mentioned the names in his presence.

**THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE:** If the hon. member for North Brisbane will state it I will pay some attention to it.

**Mr. GIVENS:** The hon. member for Brisbane

North stated that Mr. Brünnich [11 p.m.] was being shifted, not for reasons of economy, but because it suited

three officers of the department to shift him, and the Secretary for Agriculture accepted the challenge, and said if the hon. member did not disclose the names he was as bad as the conspirators. Then to wind up all, because of the pressure and criticism brought to bear from his own side of the House, the hon. gentleman, instead of promising a full inquiry into the matter, completely surrendered, and said that probably the Government would have enough money to retain Mr. Brünnich. He knew nothing of the merits of the officer, but when such a grave charge was brought against officers of the department, he thought it merited inquiry.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, Townsville):** could not allow the statements of the hon. member to pass unnoticed. There had been no conspiracy. Six months ago the Cabinet decided that Mr. Brünnich should go, and neither Mr. Mahon, Mr. McDermott, nor Dr. Maxwell had had anything to do with it, or were consulted in any way.

**Mr. GIVENS:** I did not say they were.

**THE PREMIER:** It was decided that he and others should go for the sake of economy, and the recommendation had come from the Minister presiding over the department. He hoped Mr. Brünnich's services would be retained, but he could assure hon. members that if the Government were going to "make both ends meet" they would have to economise a great deal more; and if they were to be met by opposition of this kind there would be no chance of economy. There were two chemists in the employ of the Government at the college, and the question was which

one should go? Personally, he thought the one who had been employed latest should retire. The matter would be reconsidered. The Government had no wish to do an injustice, and if there was work for Mr. Brünich he would be kept on, but no one would be employed unless the Government could find work for them.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): He had been listening for three hours to a debate which, if it had emanated from his side, would have been criticised as waste of time. Charges of corruption had been brought against the Government by members on their own side. The hon. member for South Brisbane expressed his surprise at what had taken place, but he would point out that they were getting used to that sort of thing from the Government side. That was the second occasion this session when the hon. member for Lockyer had brought charges against the Government. Last session the hon. member for Maryborough brought charges of corruption against the Secretary for Works, Hon. J. Murray; and on another occasion the member for South Brisbane, Mr. Stephens, brought a charge of corruption against Sir James Dickson. Charges of that sort were continually coming from Government supporters, and yet they continued to support the Government!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Dickson was not a member of the Government when those charges were brought against him.

Mr. BROWNE: He was not at the time, but he was shortly after. Charges had been made to-night against the Secretary for Agriculture, and they had been backed up by the hon. member for North Brisbane. He thought they might occupy their time more profitably than by discussing the retrenchment of an officer drawing £300 a year. With regard to the Agricultural College, the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, who was a new member, threw all sorts of aspersions on members on the Opposition side. If that hon. member had always taken as much interest in the Agricultural College as members on the Opposition side he would never have talked as he had done to-night. He (Mr. Browne) was present when the first stump was laid, he was there at the opening of the college, and he had been there a good many times since. He did not know the cause, but there had always been bickering amongst the officials of the college.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Perhaps it is because you have been there so often. (Laughter.)

Mr. BROWNE: If the hon. gentleman who was now trying to fill the shoes of previous Ministers for Agriculture had taken matters seriously and looked after his department, and recollected that he was representing the farmers in administering the department, he would have been doing a great deal more good to the country than by splitting straws in that Chamber and casting interjections across the floor.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If hon. members on the Government side, who were twice as numerous as members opposite, took up an hour or two in an intelligent criticism of the Estimates, members on the other side seemed to regard it as an unjustifiable invasion of their monopoly. He wanted to get on with business; but of course he was in the hands of the Committee.

Mr. BROWNE: Members of the Opposition did not object to members of the Committee criticising the Estimates intelligently; but he objected to sitting two or three hours listening to charges of favouritism and corruption, and then finding that the Minister was going to back down in order to retain his position as Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The man who was not prepared to have charges

of all kinds made against him, especially from the Opposition side, should never come into the Legislative Assembly. He regarded the criticism of those hon. members as merely a piece of stage property—something which conduced to hon. members getting votes; and that was how it would be regarded by the public in time.

HON. A. S. COWLEY asked what was the term of the engagement of the tobacco expert?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The term of his engagement was three years, one of which had expired.

Question put and passed.

#### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved that £5,280 be granted for Agricultural College.

HON. A. S. COWLEY asked how many wages men were employed continuously, and what was the amount of wages paid?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There were twelve permanent wages men, and the amount expended in wages was £1,200.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: If there were twelve permanent wages men required at the college, there was something wrong somewhere. The amount of £3,000 for contingencies, house, servants, etc., for a small place like this college seemed enormous. He would like some particulars with regard to this item.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE explained that he had not the papers dealing with this matter with him, or otherwise he would have been pleased to have given all the information which he possessed. If there was any other information which hon. members desired, he would be pleased to give it.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: He was sorry the hon. gentleman had not the information that he required, because if the Agricultural College was to fulfil its purpose, an accurate record should be kept of all the work that was done there.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So there is.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: It was all very well to keep records, but what they wanted was to have them available for the House. An account should be kept of the live stock and the profits made. Then, if any experiments were made in the field, an accurate record of the cost of the operations should be kept so that farmers might be able to ascertain whether the cost was greater or less than their own. All this information should be forthcoming when the Estimates were going through. There were some sixty students, and if they could not run a farm like this without so many wages men, there was something radically wrong. Some two years ago, when a party of members visited the college, the principal, Mr. Mabon, stated that he expected to make the college self-supporting in a year or two. He (Mr. Cowley) thought at the time that this was probably a statement made at random. He did not expect the college to be self-supporting, but he thought it would be an advantage to the students and to the colony if some progress were made in that direction. He could not conceive that many wages men could be required, except at vacation time.

\* Mr. ARMSTRONG: The hon. member for Herbert had said that the college should be self-supporting, but it would be one of [11.30 p.m.] the worst days for the college if ever it was self-supporting. If they showed people how to avoid making failures on their farms they would be doing a huge benefit to the country; and these experiments cost money. The hon. member for Herbert had had the control of large organisations, and he must know that to properly work them they could not rely on boy labour altogether; that

was absolutely impossible. Did any practical member mean to tell him that the valuable horses and other things at the college should be handed over to the control of the boys there? If they did that, they would be making a very great mistake. There were four warders there; one cook at least; and they employed men to look after the stock. Say there were twelve men employed there; their wages, with stores and incidentals, came to £1,200 out of the £3,000, and the rest of the money went in general maintenance—food, washing, keeping up the clothes of the establishment—and that amounted to something when there were sixty boys there. A good deal went in rations, but some of this money would be refunded to the department. What did the boys go there for? Surely they did not go there to be made failures of! They went there to learn their business; to learn how to carry on practical work; but this practical work could not be taught entirely by boy labour. They had to employ practical men to control that work. It was a great pity that the hon. member for Herbert was not principal of the college; but he said that everything was working smoothly under the present system. He (Mr. Armstrong) was constantly passing through the college lands, and could see the boys at work; and they all knew that the present principal had turned out very good young men who were making their own living—some of whom were in responsible positions. There had been one mistake which he thought was due to the administration in Brisbane. Several applications had been made by parents to have their sons taken into the college, but they could not be taken in on account of the want of accommodation. No boys should be turned away from that institution for lack of accommodation, because they could never tell what loss the colony might sustain by excluding boys whose inclinations lay in that direction. Sufficient accommodation should be maintained at any cost.

Mr. BROWNE: He was inclined to agree with most of the remarks of the hon. member for Herbert. To have one teacher or attendant for every three students was rather overmanning the institution. He did not think there was such a state of affairs as that in any other part of the world. The hon. member for Lockyer had referred to things that these boys should not do, but he (Mr. Browne) had been at the college, and he had never seen finer specimens of humanity than he saw there; and, as they were Australian youths, he thought they could manage horses far better than the hon. member for Lockyer could.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I admit that.

Mr. BROWNE: It was not a department where there were a lot of orphans in cots, who required a lot of nurses to look after them. They were a collection of strong able-bodied young fellows sent there expressly for the purpose of turning them out farmers—so that they would be able to take up land and work it properly when they left the college. And they should do the practical work in all its branches there. People sent their sons to sea, but did not have a steward and a teacher at every corner to look after them; they were forced to earn the price of their keep by doing practical work. So it should be with these students. A great many of them were pleased to do a lot of practical work.

The PREMIER: He would like to say a word for this college.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It had done a great deal of good work, and he thought it would continue to do a great deal of good work in the future. There was some trouble there at the start, because the principal could not manage the boys. He was an American; they were Australians, and

he could not get on with them. But the present principal got on with them very well. He had turned out a number of good boys, and he thought there was nothing at the college that these boys could not do. But they were not there from the 1st January to the end of the year; they had their vacations, and some men had to be there always to look after the place. They had 300 acres under cultivation; and they had valuable cows, horses, pigs, and appliances which had to be looked after. The cost of the college to the State for the year 1899-1900 was £6,239. Last year the cost to the State was only £3,790, and he believed that this year it would be a great deal less.

Mr. BROWNE: That is information that we desire.

The PREMIER: It was information that was available to every hon. member—it was in the annual report of the Secretary for Agriculture. The report of the principal of the college covered seven pages, and that of Mr. Brümlich occupied one page. There was a lot of valuable information in the report, and if the hon. member for Herbert wanted more information he had only to ask the Secretary for Agriculture, and he would get it for him.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: I do not want it for myself. I want it for the farmers, and I have asked for it in this House.

The PREMIER: He thought the proper way was to ask the Minister for the information that was wanted. He knew personally that the college had done a great deal of good for the colony, and had been the means of sending young men on the land who would not otherwise have gone on the land, and he believed that in time the institution would be self-supporting. There were sixty boys there, each of whom paid £25 a year, so that the college should be almost self-supporting. The more work the boys did the more they would learn, and so far as he knew they were not idle. He did not believe in working boys night and day, but these boys were up at day-break in the morning, and they had not done their work much before 6 o'clock in the evening. He believed that the boys were fit to do anything on a farm, and that they were doing so, but still it was necessary to have men on the farm. They wanted fencers to teach the students how to fence, and they wanted men to look after the very valuable machinery they had at the institution. On the whole, he was of opinion that they had reason to be very proud of the success of the college, considering the short time it had been in existence.

Hon. A. S. COWLEY: He had not said a solitary word against the college or anybody connected with it, nor had he cavilled at anything, as stated by the hon. member for Lockyer. He had simply asked for information to see if there was a system of farming and a system of experiments carried on at the college, the results of which were available to anybody who wished to visit the institution. So far from wishing to cavil at anything in connection with the college, he agreed with the Premier that they should do their utmost to further the advancement of institutions of this description. As for the students being boys, as alleged by the hon. member for Lockyer, many of them were men. He knew that he induced a young man of twenty-five years of age who came out from England to go to the college, and there were others who had reached the age of manhood. Of course, when there were sixty students many of them must be in the college at their lessons, but thirty of those would be outside doing work about the farm. He knew all that, and how many acres of corn a man could look after, and so on. What he particularly wished to know was whether an accurate account was kept of the

operations with regard to certain crops in certain fields, and whether that information was available to our farmers. He quite agreed that they could often learn a great deal more from a man's blunders than they could from another man's successes. If then there were failures, let them have them in black and white, just as they had the successes in black and white. It was a very simple matter to keep a record of experiments in the field. They could get a field book printed, and every operation in each field could be entered at the close of each day, each man and each horse employed being debited at a certain price. By that means they could ascertain exactly the result of any experiment in pounds, shillings, and pence, and the only true test of farming was what they got for the energy and capital expended on the soil. The net cost of the college for last year was stated to be £3,790 16s. 1d., and the revenue was given as £2,940 12s. 7d. Could the Minister tell the Committee how much of that revenue was derived from the sales of stock and how much from the sales of agricultural produce?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The revenue of the college from students' fees for the year 1901 was £1,119. Altogether £1,821 12s. 7d. worth of produce was obtained from the farm. When Mr. Mahon spoke of making the college self-supporting, he did not mean, as some hon. members imagined, that it would be made to pay the salaries of the principal and the teaching staff, but that he would not need to buy any vegetables or other farm produce. He believed that the boys at the college were well employed, and he did not think it would do any good to make them work any harder. Of course half the time they were studying, or in the laboratory, or in the lecture rooms; and if farmers could make a profit by remaining half their time idle, then it must be a very profitable occupation indeed.

Mr. KERR: There would not be that number of hands on a farm that size.

HON. A. S. COWLEY asked whether the £250 for buildings and improvements was to be expended in building additional dormitories, or was it to be spent in connection with the farm?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A lot of sheds were required for poultry and that sort of thing. Besides that, there were always some small additions required on a large farm during the course of the year.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Then it was not intended to increase the accommodation for students? He understood from the hon. member for Lockyer that students had been turned away on account of the lack of accommodation. Up to a certain point, it was more economical to have a greater number of students, and, if the dormitory accommodation was insufficient, it would be good policy to increase it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The last time he was at the college the principal informed him that the house that was at present occupied by Mr. Brünlich might be used for the purpose. Then, again, temporary provision could be made by utilising a portion of the accommodation under the building—which was built on high piles—as bedrooms until other arrangements could be made. He would bring the matter before the principal who, he had no doubt, would do his best to provide accommodation if the present accommodation was insufficient.

Mr. JACKSON thought that one of the best tests of the success of the college was the number of those who had gone through the course who had taken up agricultural pursuits; and it appeared from the principal's report that a good many had taken up with agriculture or with

some kindred occupation. It was important to make the college as nearly as self-supporting as possible, and he agreed with a good deal of what had been said by the hon. member for Herbert in connection with keeping a record of results, and of the expense incurred in cultivating various crops. But, in order to get all the information the hon. member wanted, it would be necessary to have a bookkeeper at the college.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: I used to do mine every night, and I had 1,280 acres to look after.

Mr. JACKSON: Probably the principal was not so clever as the hon. member, although whatever his capacity might be, no one could deny that Mr. Mahon was a very hard-working man. There was a good deal of information contained in Mr. Mahon's report in connection with the various crops grown on the farm, although it did not give all the details the hon. member wanted. He noticed from the principal's report that 2,484 persons visited the college, not including the district people who went on the usual visiting days; and at least 95 per cent. of those who visited the college did so for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the work carried out in connection with the various departments. If that was so, no one would be inclined to object to such a large number of visitors. At the same time, it must be evident that such a large number must seriously interfere with the work of the college. He had heard the complaint made that visitors to the college did not get what they [12 p.m.] expected in the way of liquid refreshment or intoxicating liquors, but he certainly had no sympathy with any complaint of that sort.

Question put and passed.

#### STATE FARMS.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved that £6,821 be granted for State farms.

Mr. BRIDGES (*Nundah*) noticed that only six months' provision was made for the inspector of State farms. Would the same treatment be accorded to him as to Mr. Brünlich?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE would be happy to retain the services of Mr. Souter if they were required, and if money was available. He might mention that an opening would probably occur shortly which would provide him with a permanent appointment.

Mr. CURTIS (*Rockhampton*) thought it would have been better if the amount for the Botanic Gardens was specified. It would be more satisfactory to the curator if he knew what money would be available during the year. He also thought the salary paid to that gentleman was much too low, as compared with the salaries paid in other States. He should be glad to know if the amount available for other botanic gardens was included in the vote?

HON. E. B. FORREST: It appeared that the vote for the Botanic Gardens was disappearing altogether, as the only provision made was £240 for the director, £120 for the propagator, and £100 for the ranger. He could not see what was to justify the Botanic Gardens being included under the heading of "State farms." Formerly provision had been made for the Botanic Gardens under a separate heading. In 1897, for instance, there were separate votes for the curator, propagator, and ranger in addition to £1,600 for incidentals, labour, and plant collecting. Under the present arrangement it was impossible to discover what amount of money was to be spent upon the gardens during the year, and he should like to know whether any provision was to be made beyond the salaries of the three officers he had mentioned.

It was very desirable that that vote should be taken under a separate head so that everybody interested might know what amount of money was applicable for that particular purpose. There was a sum of £3,000 under the heading of "Miscellaneous services." How much of that was to be spent on the Botanical Gardens at Brisbane, and how much elsewhere? That was information to which the Committee was entitled. The sum devoted to the gardens was getting smaller by degrees, and the next thing they would find would be the disappearance of the gardens altogether if they were left in the hands of the Agricultural Department. Who was supposed to be in charge of the Botanic Gardens? At one time they were in charge of a trust. Of those trustees Mr. Bernays was the solitary survivor. By Act of Parliament, the gardens were supposed to be managed by trustees. As a matter of fact, they were managed by the Agricultural Department, who apparently took no interest in them. Was there to be any money spent on those gardens, and, if so, what was the amount? He did not wish to see the trustees re-established, but as the gardens must be controlled by somebody, why not put them under the control of the municipality? They would look after them far better than the Agricultural Department. Some time ago a representative deputation waited upon the hon. gentleman's predecessor and offered suggestions as to how the gardens should be better utilised. One suggestion was that the gardens should be lighted up at night, so that the citizens of Brisbane might go there to enjoy the fresh air. The gardens were undoubtedly beautiful; the only fault to be found with them was that they were too small; but a great deal more use could be made of them. The influential deputation to which he had referred were practically fired out. The department was proof against suggestions from any quarter. One-third of the population of the colony was within reach of the gardens, and most certainly they ought to be made as attractive as possible.

HON. A. S. COWLEY said he was delighted to hear the remarks of the hon. member. The Botanical Gardens at Brisbane were the only gardens in Queensland that were entirely supported by the State. But the hon. member wanted a great deal more spent upon them. The demands of some people were astonishing. No doubt the item for contingencies, £5,382, was ambiguous. How much of the contingencies was spent on the Brisbane Botanical Gardens? There was £460 paid in wages by the State. He believed it would be found that the State contributed as much as in the previous year, less the £50 paid then to the curator, and the £120 to the overseer who had left. He enjoyed a walk in the gardens, and liked to see the children rolling about and enjoying themselves in the grass. He would like to see fewer flower-beds and more grass. Visitors to the gardens and the kiosk thought they were ahead of what existed in their own colonies.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The amount paid out of contingencies for the Botanical Gardens was £1,500. That principle had been adopted since 1898, but he thought it would be clearer if the amount were allotted specifically to the Botanical Gardens instead of being included in contingencies.

MR. MAXWELL: Recently he had been to the gardens on a Saturday and on a Sunday afternoon, and he had found the fernery closed. He thought it should be open on those days. Considering the amount of revenue derived by the Government from railway refreshment rooms, he thought they should get considerably more than £25 a year on account of the kiosk. He believed that if it were put up to auction to-

morrow it would bring £200 or £300. He believed the gentleman who had the kiosk had applied for a private key to enable him to go there at night; but he hoped the Minister would set his back against that.

MR. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*) endorsed what had been said about the nice appearance of the gardens in Brisbane. It was a wonder to him how the curator managed to carry on with the amount of money expended. He remembered a deputation waiting on the late Minister for Agriculture, and asking for a slice of the gardens to make a Rotten Row—a drive for the society swells—but Mr. Chataway told them that the gardens were intended for the people, and he would not allow anything of the kind. He was to be admired for having given that answer to the deputation. He could endorse what the hon. member for Herbert said about the children enjoying themselves rolling on the grass. Public gardens and parks were regarded as the lungs of a city, and no encroachment by tennis clubs, or by any section of the community, should be allowed. There were lawn tennis clubs which claimed an exclusive right to portions of the gardens, and he had seen children hunted off their preserves.

The same thing occurred in other [12:30 a.m.] public reserves about Brisbane, and he protested against it. In no other city in the colonies was such a thing allowed. In the Botanic Gardens, he understood that the tennis clubs paid £30 a year to the department, and the department had to keep their grounds in order, which cost the country £75 a year. He objected in the first place to any person, or combination of persons, claiming the exclusive right to use any portion of a public reserve, and if the Minister for Agriculture allowed them to do so, the least they could do was to pay for the cost of keeping their portion of the grounds in order.

At 12:35 o'clock,

THE CHAIRMAN: Under Standing Order 171, I call upon the hon. member for Lockyer, Mr. Armstrong, to relieve me in the chair.

MR. ARMSTRONG took the chair accordingly.

THE PREMIER: He had never been a member of a lawn tennis club, but he had been a member of football and cricket clubs, and at that time they used to play in Queen's Park. He thought it was a very good thing to encourage all outdoor sports, and if they spent £30 or £40 a year in keeping lawn tennis courts or cricket pitches in order it was money well spent. These lawn tennis clubs had no exclusive right, and they only played during certain portions of the day. He thought they ought to encourage all these kinds of games.

MR. W. HAMILTON: He did not object to any game being played. What he objected to was to anybody claiming an exclusive right over any portion of these gardens, or any public reserves.

MR. JACKSON: He would even go further than the hon. member for Gregory. No portion of the gardens should be leased at all to the lawn tennis players, for the gardens were too small as it was.

THE PREMIER: They are not leased.

MR. JACKSON: Well, these clubs had the right to play there, and they paid so much per annum for that right. A good many years ago he advocated making a road round the gardens and the domain—not a carriage drive, as referred to by the hon. member for Gregory—he would be against that—but there was no reason why there should not be a promenade there. The objection to that was that it might affect the privacy of Government House, but a suitable fence could be erected to remedy that. He agreed with the remarks of the hon. member for

North Brisbane with regard to the various items in connection with the expenses of the gardens not appearing as they used to. If those items were omitted from the Estimates, people in outside constituencies might think the only expense in connection with the gardens was the salaries of two or three officials. He advocated that the gardens should be handed over to the local authorities of Brisbane to manage.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: On the same terms as in other places?

Mr. JACKSON: Yes. The only thing that the local authorities had done towards making the gardens attractive was by providing band music there on Saturday afternoons; but the State had paid the cost of the band-stands. He thought the proprietor of the kiosk should pay a bigger rental, as anyone could see that he was making a large amount of money. He noticed that the plants were not looking so fresh as usual just now; but he did not know whether that was on account of a diminished water supply. He would like to know what was the cost of the water supply?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: £40 a year, part of which went in supplying water to the dredges, which would be refunded.

Mr. CURTIS thought that the best thing that could be done with the Botanic Gardens in Brisbane was to place them on the same footing as public gardens in other parts of the colony, and let the people of the metropolis contribute something towards their upkeep. There should be no differential treatment in favour of Brisbane. With regard to having a larger extent of grass lawn and a lesser space devoted to flowers, he was not sure that they would not err if they went too far in that direction.

\* Mr. GIVENS asked if the Government would consider the question of establishing at an early date a State nursery or State farm in Barron Valley on the reserve which had already been set apart for that purpose? The Government had sold between £700 and £800 worth of cedar taken from the reserve, and he thought that should be placed to the credit of the State nursery or State farm. The reserve was in an elevated position, was eminently suited for a State farm, and was situated in a district where considerable farming was carried on. There were five State farms in Southern Queensland, and the only one they had in North Queensland was at Kamerunga.

Mr. TOLMIE: Until this evening he had been under the impression that the Botanic Gardens in Brisbane were on exactly the same footing as other public gardens in Queensland, and thought it was hardly fair that the whole cost of the upkeep of the Brisbane gardens should be borne by the State. In Toowoomba they had public gardens 60 acres in extent, and all they received from the Government in connection with those gardens was a subsidy of £250 a year. The people of Brisbane should contribute something towards the cost of maintaining the Botanic Gardens. But what he chiefly rose to say was that he did not think the best advantage was being taken of the various State farms which had been established as centres of instruction by the people who lived in the vicinity of those farms. He knew that many farmers who lived near the Westbrook State Farm did not care to visit the farm as frequently as they would like, because they feared that their visits would interfere with the work of the farm. With a view to making these farms of more value as centres of instruction he would suggest that regular visiting days should be appointed, say one or two days a month, so that visitors would receive every consideration and have the work of the farm explained to them.

Mr. GIVENS wished to know what the Secretary for Agriculture proposed to do with regard to establishing a State farm in the Barron Valley?

HON. A. S. COWLEY would also like to know whether a State farm or test station could not be established at Geraldton or

[1 a.m.] Ingham, as there was nothing of the kind between Cairns and Mackay,

and that was too far for farmers desirous of obtaining information to travel.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE could only promise that, when the state of the finances permitted, the requests that had just been made would be considered, in conjunction with a great many similar applications from other districts.

Mr. MAXWELL asked the Secretary for Agriculture for an answer with regard to the kiosk in the gardens. Did the Government intend to let the present occupant retain possession, or did they intend to try and get a little more money for the place?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was quite true that only £25 was paid by Mr. Mühlberg, but it had to be remembered that he had built up the business. If he did a good business there, it was because he was very attentive, and everything was kept clean. He considered that some advance might be obtained, but if they disturbed the present occupant they would have to build a place for themselves.

Mr. MAXWELL: Why not keep to the tender system?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the Government owned the building it would be very simple, but it had been erected by Mr. Mühlberg. He was desirous of doing the best he could for the State, but they had to act with equity towards Mr. Mühlberg.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: As he was responsible for Mr. Mühlberg being there, he could give the Committee some information about the matter. In 1892 he thought that it was very desirable that there should be some such place established in the gardens. He made inquiries, and this man and his wife were recommended as very capable of undertaking the work, and an arrangement was made whereby Mr. Mühlberg put up the building, and paid £25 a year. At that time he considered that was a very fair ground rent for the small area of land supplied. The lessee was bound down by certain conditions with reference to keeping the place respectable, and with reference to the hours when it should be open. Since the place had been opened he had never heard a solitary word of complaint with regard to the way it was kept. The time might have arrived when a new arrangement should be made, but there was a great deal more than the mere rent to be considered. For a long time the place scarcely paid.

\* Mr. NEWELL: It must be remembered that the lessee of the kiosk had made the business there, and that fact was worthy of consideration. The kiosk had made the gardens very attractive, and even a little more money might be spent upon them to make them more attractive to the public. Touching what had fallen from the hon. member for Cairns, he would point out that it was the hon. member for Herbert, when Secretary for Lands, who had set aside the reserve in the Barron Valley for an agricultural college. The land there would grow anything the Darling Downs would grow, and the Government had such an exalted opinion of its richness that they were afraid to throw it open to selection. They were told recently by the Secretary for Agriculture that the lands of the colony were yearning for settlers, yet the Government insisted upon attracting all settlers



to the Southern part of the colony, to the detriment of the splendid agricultural lands to be found in the North. At Herberton some years ago he saw growing there a remarkable crop of wheat, the seed of which had been sent to the district by Professor Shelton for experimental purposes. He would suggest that the department should turn its attention to that district, and show people who desired to acquire land that wheat could be produced there as good, if not better, than on the Darling Downs.

HON. A. S. COWLEY wished to say, before the question was put, that he particularly stipulated in the agreement with regard to the kiosk that the lessee should not be allowed to sell intoxicating drinks of any kind. It would be seen by the hon. member that the lessee could afford to pay a much higher rent but for that stipulation.

Question put and passed.

#### MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved that £21,572 be granted for miscellaneous services.

Mr. CURTIS noticed an item of £2,400 for agricultural and horticultural societies, and another of £2,400 for reserves. From which of those items would come the amounts available for gardens other than the Brisbane Botanic Gardens?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Amounts for those purposes would come out of the vote for reserves.

Mr. MAXWELL wished to know where the item, "Government Domain, £500," was spent?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was spent on the grounds round Government House and Parliament House.

HON. E. B. FORREST: It includes the river frontage right round Parliament House as far as the kiosk.

Mr. BROWNE: It was a fact worth placing on record that, while only £2,400 was spent on all the public gardens in the colony outside of Brisbane, no less than £500 was spent on the private domain attached to Government House, to say nothing of £125 voted for Mount Coot-tha, a neighbouring hilltop covered with empty jam tins.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE explained that this expenditure was under the control of Mr. McMahon, who was away in Melbourne.

Mr. KERR asked how was the £600 for the destruction of noxious weeds expended?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was expended on the eradication of noxious weeds on Crown reserves to which attention was drawn by the local authorities under

[1.30 a.m.] the provisions of the Divisional Board Act. The work was done by contract as a rule. £388 was expended last year. In his opinion there was not enough by £10,000 a year spent on the eradication of noxious weeds in the colony.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: With respect to the item "Sugar Experiment Stations Act of 1900—half cost of expenses," the 10th section of the Act provided that in every year the director should furnish a report upon the experiment stations under his control, the administration of the fund, and generally upon the condition of the sugar industry; also that the report should be laid before Parliament. The Act had been in operation only eleven months; and, in the absence of the report, would the Minister state whether any stations had been established; where they were; what work had been done; and how much money had been expended under the Act?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Dr. Maxwell had expressed his intention of furnishing a report, which would be laid before Parliament when completed. He presumed that some time would have to elapse in order to find out, in the first place, the amount of revenue that would be derived. It could not possibly be laid on the table of the House until after the sugar season was over.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: There was another difficulty about that. The Act provided that the report should be furnished every year to Parliament. He would like to know whether the report would be forthcoming before the House rose?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He understood that the report would have been prepared, but owing to the other matters which had occupied Dr. Maxwell it had been delayed. He had been informed that the report would be prepared and laid on the table of the House as soon as Dr. Maxwell could do it. If the Act said that the report must be furnished to the House during the year, he was quite sure Dr. Maxwell would comply with the Act.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Section 7 of the Act stated that an assessment should be levied on all canegrowers. Could the hon. member tell them whether that assessment had been made, and whether any notice was given before 31st May? If not, the assessment could not legally be collected.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was informed that the first notice was sent out before that time.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Was the necessary notice sent out before 1st May in every instance?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. He was instructed that the provisions of the Act were complied with.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Then he understood the hon. member could not tell the Committee how many stations had been started, how many men were employed, and whether the report was to be made this year or not?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He could only tell the hon. gentleman that he was informed by Dr. Maxwell that the report would be placed on the table of the House in due course. Dr. Maxwell was responsible to the House.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Could the hon. gentleman tell them how many stations had been formed?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There had been two stations established—one at Bundaberg and one at Mackay.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Was it contemplated establishing any stations further North than Mackay, beyond which he did not think cane would be grown in the future?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it will be grown in Cairns.

HON. A. S. COWLEY repeated that he would like to know what Dr. Maxwell had done?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The matter of establishing sugar stations was entirely in the hands of Dr. Maxwell, who was supposed to know more about it than anyone in the southern hemisphere.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Dr. Maxwell had been eleven months in office, and he (Mr. Cowley) had expected that a report of what had been done would be available to members before this. The report had to be made this year, otherwise Dr. Maxwell would be acting in defiance of the House. Then, had any rate been levied?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: 1d. per ton.



HON. A. S. COWLEY: What was it estimated that that would give? The sugar-growers would not pay until they were compelled to. Under this vote £4,057 was asked for. On what was that based?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This was their quota of the sum expected to be raised, and there would be another amount raised by way of assessment. This was their portion of the cost of the expenses.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: The sugar people only wanted to pay half the cost in connection with this work, and the State should pay the rest. He thought a correct account should be kept, and he would ask if Dr. Maxwell's accounts would be audited in the same way as other Government accounts? If full and free information was given, that would go a long way towards showing that the money had been wisely and judiciously spent; but if this information was not forthcoming, he doubted whether the contributions would be made. He would, for one, in that case, be very loth to contribute.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The accounts the hon. member referred to would be audited by the Auditor-General.  
[2 a.m.] Although the responsibility of making the assessment was left with the Minister, yet practically the responsibility of administering the sugar experimental stations rested with the director, Dr. Maxwell.

HON. A. S. COWLEY asked if the only information the department received as to Dr. Maxwell's actions during the year, and as to the contributions levied, would be contained in the report which Dr. Maxwell was required by the Act to make once a year, or whether the department was advised otherwise as to the amount of the collections, and as to the general working of the Act? He also wished to know whether any regulations had been issued under section 11 of the Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Regulations had been issued, and had been on the table of the House for forty days. It was obligatory on the part of Dr. Maxwell to furnish a report, and he had not the slightest doubt that Dr. Maxwell would give the department all the information he considered necessary in order to enable them to act in concert with him in carrying out the Act.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: The hon. gentleman had not answered his question. Could the hon. gentleman tell the Committee what was the cost to date of the stations which had been formed?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot tell you at the present time.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: The only information the hon. gentleman would have would be contained in the report of Dr. Maxwell?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It will come from Dr. Maxwell.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Had Dr. Maxwell a separate bank account, and did he operate personally on that account, or did his expenditure go through the department?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Dr. Maxwell had obtained an advance from the Treasurer, and he operated on that account under the Act.

HON. A. S. COWLEY regretted that he could obtain no information from the hon. gentleman, and he would now ask him if he could tell why it was proposed to renew the bonus on the export of chilled meat when chilled meat was bringing so much better prices?

The PREMIER pointed out that Dr. Maxwell was only making a start. He had not been

here twelve months—two or three months of which time he had been at Mr. Barton's beck and call—and now he was preparing a report for the Queensland Government. Dr. Maxwell informed him that he was exceedingly satisfied with the result of his experiments so far at Mackay with some cane which had been brought from New Guinea, and he had also given offence to one big company by his remarks to some of the farmers with reference to the manures they were using which, he said, were not worth the freight. He was telling them what sort of manure they should use, and was doing a great deal of good to the industry. When he went to Louisiana the yield was 2 tons to the acre, and when he left it was 2½ tons; and he had increased the yield in the Sandwich Islands from 3 tons to 5 tons per acre. He was an exceedingly hard-working man, who did not spare himself, and he was certain that it would be found, before his engagement expired in Queensland, that the Government had made a good bargain, although he did not say that the yield would increase by tons per acre.

Mr. BROWNE: Nothing derogatory to Dr. Maxwell had been said during the debate. The hon. member for Herbert had asked a number of very pertinent questions, and the Secretary for Agriculture had to confess that he knew nothing about the matter. Towards the end he thought the hon. member for Herbert ought to be satisfied. The Minister did not know what the expenses in connection with the sugar experiment stations were going to be, and yet there was an item on the Estimates of £4,057 for half the cost of those stations. The whole cost therefore would be £9,014; and when a department that did not know what the expenses were going to be could calculate up to £14, he could not understand the hon. member for Herbert not being satisfied. One matter to which he wished to refer was the item—special prizes to railway station-masters and lengthsmen for their little gardens. He believed there were 400 station-masters and lengthsmen who went in for the prize, giving them about 5s. each; and the Government were now in such straits that that small vote had had to be withdrawn.

Mr. TOLMIE drew attention to the fact that while the National Association received a subsidy of £750, other agricultural societies only received 10s. for every £1 subscribed up to £200. The total vote was £23,400, and he hoped when better times arrived the grant would be increased. He thought the item of £200 for prize money at various shows was altogether too small, and compared very unfavourably with the grants made in the other colonies. As to the encouragement to be given to country societies, he trusted they would be treated, at least, as liberally as the National Association, whose exhibitions had degenerated into a shopkeepers' bazaar.

HON. A. S. COWLEY repeated his request for information in reference to the amount of chilled meat and butter exported and the amount spent last year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There was a contract with the Adelaide Steamship Company for the carriage of chilled meat and butter. In reference to the special prize vote to railway station-masters and lengthsmen, he wished to explain that there had been no competition, and for that reason the vote had been withdrawn.

HON. A. S. COWLEY: Could the Minister tell them how much meat and butter was sent away last year for the £1,000?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Adelaide Company did not run their vessels last year for the reason that there was no chilled

meat to ship, but latterly a new agreement had been made which shippers had come into, and it appeared likely to be satisfactory.

HON. A. S. COWLEY : Then nothing was spent last year?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : The £1,000 was spent last year, but the butter was not exported.

HON. A. S. COWLEY asked for an explanation of the vote of £100 for a chemical laboratory. Was that in connection with the Agricultural College?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : Yes, for the purchase of appliances.

HON. A. S. COWLEY : Would it not be better to include it in the vote for the Agricultural College?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : Certain chemical appliances were [2 30 a.m.] ordered some time ago for the laboratory at the Agricultural College. When they were ordered there was no expectation of being compelled to retire Mr. Brunnich. The things were ordered. They came out ; and they would have to be paid for.

HON. A. S. COWLEY : There was an item of £4,000 for inspection of slaughter-houses. Did any portion of that amount come back to the Government in the shape of inspection fees?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : About £2,000 would be refunded to the Government from fees paid for inspection.

Mr. MAXWELL : He would again ask, with regard to the item "Printing of Queensland Flora, £450," who was that money to be paid over to?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : That was the cost of printing a work prepared by the Colonial Botanist, and the money would be debited to the Government Printing Office.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported progress, and leave was given to the Committee to sit again at a later hour of the day.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to 3 o'clock a.m.