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WHITE AUSTRALIA

THE EMPTY NORTH THE REASONS AND REMEDY

BY

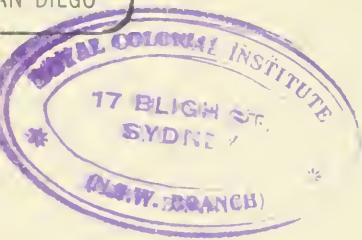
J. N. MACINTYRE

SYDNEY

W. C. PENFOLD & CO. LTD.



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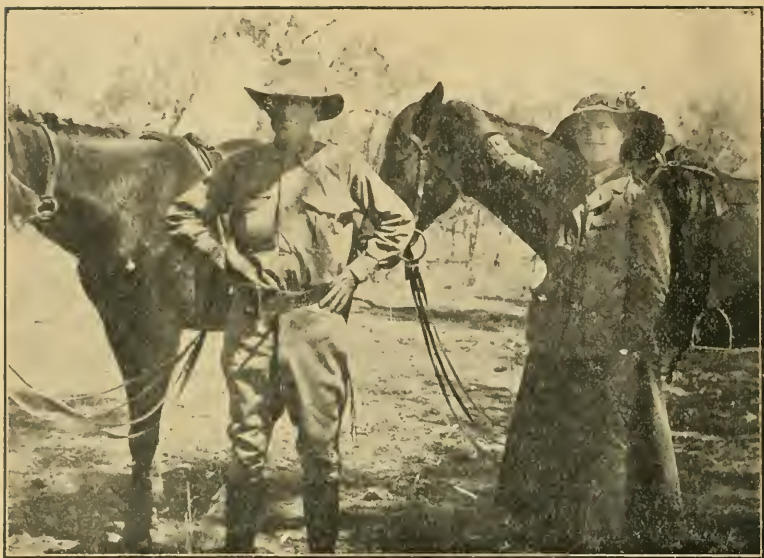
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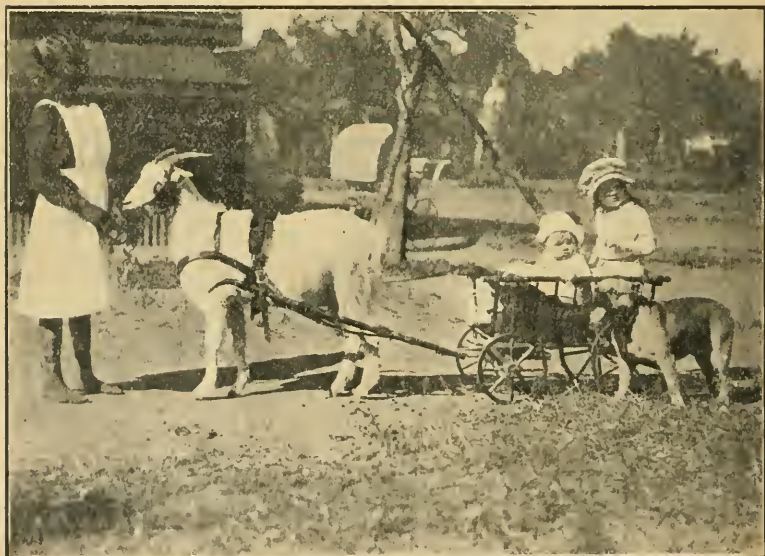
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With the compliments
of the author
J. S. MacIntyre
22 '21

WHITE AUSTRALIA



Mr. and Mrs. J. N. MacINTYRE



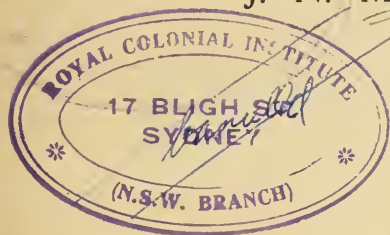
PEGGIE and JOCK MacINTYRE

WHITE AUSTRALIA

THE EMPTY NORTH
THE REASONS AND REMEDY

BY

J. N. MACINTYRE



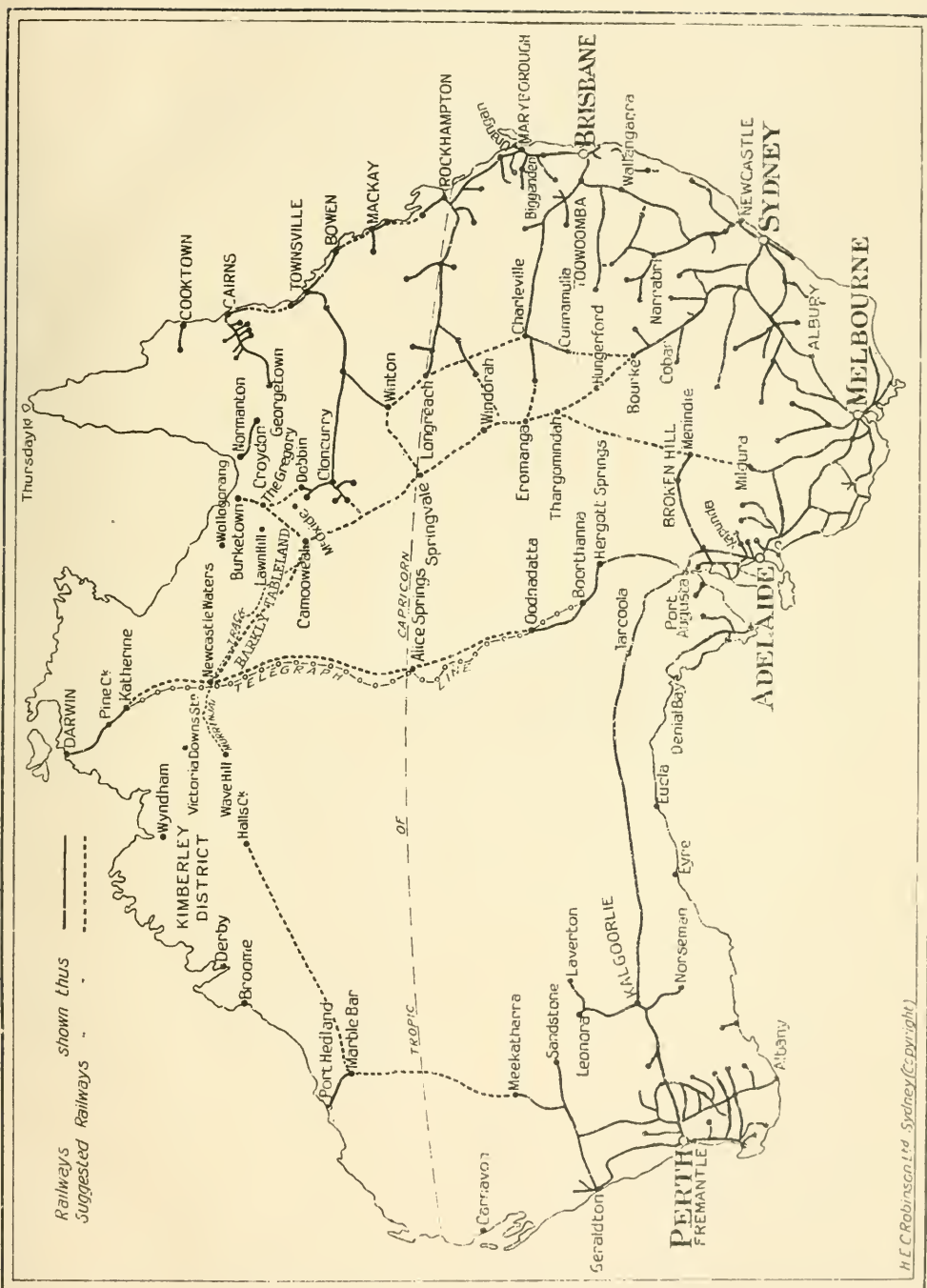
SYDNEY

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INTRODUCTION

Mr. MacIntyre is to be commended on calling attention to the need for populating our Northern areas. The empty North menaces Australia. Its continued existence as a nation depends on our first line of defence being manned. It is not our *back* door we are leaving unguarded. It is not our *back* yard that is empty. The historical processes, the evolution of Internationalism, has made Northern Australia our front garden. That we have allowed it to be neglected, that we have built behind a wilderness, and then slothfully neglected to improve and beautify and protect the area from which our well-being may be assaulted, our independence be threatened, is unthinkable stupid—and criminal. If Australia is to be held—it will be held in the North. If Australia is to be free from the aggression of marauders, it will only be because we have taken time by the forelock, and made it impregnable. It can only be made impregnable by settling the empty, inviting, healthy—but now neglected—North, with men who will make it their homeland, their holy of holies, their own. Empty North Australia menaces all Australia. The problem is Australia's. The menace must be removed by Australian action. Whatever differences, mental or moral, may exist in the minds of man, the truth of the old adage remains unfractured, "God helps those who help themselves." To-day Australia can help herself effectively. If she continues in the "to-morrow" habit, a not distant "to-morrow" may dawn with an alien flag afloat over Northern Australia, and then the only continent, with "one people, one flag, one destiny," will have become a land of warring interests, a land of clashing strife, a land on which the sun of peace has set, a land facing the blood-real dawning of discord, schism and dissension. Mr. MacIntyre preaches a sane doctrine of Australianism for Australians. He shows where we have failed to make Australianism efficient. He points out our duty, not as the man of letters in polished periods, but as the man of action, the man who has lived in the empty North and has seen all that its "vacuity" portends, who has read the portents and speaks as an Australian from the depths of his first-hand knowledge, the man who knows that until we set out to do our duty to Australia by making Australia safe for Australians, by utilising to their uttermost our Australian assets and potentialities, by making full use of our glorious heritage, the motto upon our coat of arms is a braggart's boast, or worse still, a weakling's aspiration. In his own way, the author has shown how to make good, the words that inspired the earliest Australians—*Advance Australia*.

JOHN H. C. SLEEMAN,

Cliveden Mansions, Gregory Terrace,

Brisbane, 31st Jan., 1920.

“ He that hath truth on his side is a fool, as well as a coward, if he is afraid to own it, because of the multitude of other men’s opinions. ’Tis hard for a man to say, all the world is mistaken but himself, but if it be so, who can help it ? ”

—DEFOE.



CARPE





Scale of Miles

Unoccupied country, indicated by hatched lines

TIMOR SEA

PORT DARWIN

GULF OF CARPENTARIA

TORRES STRAIT

CORAL SEA

CAPE YORK PENINSULA

NORTHERN

TERRITORY

TABLELAND

QUEENSLAND

RIMBERLEY DISTRICT

DRUMMER

JARINA SP. DISCOVERY #

ADVERSE #

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of

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DEDICATION

In dedicating this book to their Excellencies, I am actuated by three distinct motives :

Firstly—It was on the occasion of the reception at Burketown of their Excellencies that I first had the pleasure of helping to entertain a Representative of His Majesty the King and of making my first speech in public.

Secondly—Lady Goold Adams was the first wife of a Governor to pay Burketown a visit for many, many years ; and on being presented with a separate address by the good ladies of Burketown, we were pleased to learn that it was the first separate address she had received from the ladies of Queensland.

Thirdly—His Excellency was so interested and impressed with what he saw and learnt on his visit through the country, that I feel sure we can thank him for the interest that has since been taken by the Government in our District, which at last looks as if the claims of the Gulf for prosperity will get a chance of proper recognition.

PREFACE

In June, 1917, there came to little, forgotten, decaying, ill-used, unknown Burketown, an outpost of the Empire in the Gulf of North Queensland, known as the town of goats, claypans, and glass bottles, their most Honourable Excellencies, Sir Hamilton John Goold Adams and Lady Goold Adams, determined to do his duty honourably and nobly to the glorious Empire that placed under his jurisdiction the State of Queensland. The Governor left no place unvisited that his valuable time permitted him to visit, and see for himself and to bring into closer contact even these despoised outposts of the Empire, the courtesy and spirit of affection and nobleness that is the birthright of most of the nobility of John Bull, and which his determined, dogged, democratic, and peace-loving rulers have the tact of choosing out of his millions to act as envoys for this purpose of Empire-building.

We can all from our infancy look back with affection, reverence, and honour to our first knowledge of our State Governors. Mine dates from that glorious old gentleman, Sir Henry Wylie Norman, and with a particular reference to Lord Chelmsford, who also visited Burketown, the list is complete up to his present Excellency.

New South Wales can also echo, I feel sure, the same sentiment, and also the other States.

In referring to his Excellency Sir Walter Davidson, also, I can only quote from the press of the day. Great as this admiration is for our State Governors, there are those who exclaim that our Commonwealth Peer, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, is the "daddy" of the lot, and no one who feels and sees the sentiment towards his Excellency but can concur with those people (even although they have never come in contact with or set eyes on him).

PART I

WHITE AUSTRALIA

In the opening of the Annual Conference of the Municipalities of the State of New South Wales quite recently, his Excellency thus spoke:—

“Sir Walter Davidson said it gave him special pleasure to attend the conference, as he liked to be associated with the men of the country who were identified with primary production. He liked to be associated with the pioneers and descendants of the men who pioneered the country, and especially the men who stood for decentralisation of Government works in the interests of the community. Referring to the occurrence in the annual report of such old country terms as village, parish, and country, his Excellency remarked that he was pleased that the old style still applied in this new country. They could make another England in the South. He liked to be associated with them, because in wisely using their heads they could make their civilisation a greater and better one than that of the old country.”

The speech is typical of his contemporary in Queensland.

I feel certain that the earnest wish and desire of all good Australians is to build up and make a better England in this glorious land of freedom that is set in the Southern Hemisphere and watched over by the “Southern Cross,” and that the millions of all races of the old world will come to it and make an Australian nation; that in the far distant future, when the sands of time have perhaps altered the map of the world and its races, Australia will be a monument of glory and strength and sentiment of the British Empire of its day. If ever human nature so changes as to forget its duties to that Empire—anyhow, it will not be able to deny the British Empire her living monument.

It is open without doubt for Australia to become the wealthiest and most prosperous democratic nation in the world, and there is no doubt but that in due time that glorious position will be attained.

Now, and for the immediate future, I would also say to the citizens of the Commonwealth, forget not the man who wears the “returned soldier’s badge.” Whatever his position, manner, or crime is, remember the badge is the emblem that has helped to save and protect for democracy the ideals of Christianity, this glorious flag of the Southern Cross; and if its wearers are needy or in distress—if no better gift can be offered, give at least courtesy and honour. One must not forget, either, that there are hundreds of those who wear not this badge whose soreness of heart for its absence should not be intensified either by reference to its absence. Not only can this be said of dozens of Scotchmen, Englishmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen, but hundreds of Australians, too.

So that when those sons of the old land retire to the scenes of their early youth, their kinsmen can well be assured that their hearts were never out of step with the glorious patriotism of their kinsmen, and perhaps they were fighting a nobler battle in tending the home fires in their particular spheres of residence, and doing their duty not one whit less noble for Australia and the Empire than their kinsmen at home or on the fields of sacrifice.

Yes, I would coo-ee a message to the old land, especially to the hills and glens of the North country afar off, the land of the "bagpipe and kilt," which I have never seen, but heard its Gaelic spoken nearly as soon as I first heard the good Australian, as my parents disguised, by the use of it, that which was not for youthful ears to hear. Aye, and so I love the bagpipes and kilt, as I can still hear their shrill notes of hope, honour, and glory in the empty North so ably squeezed out by old Donald Miller, of Bowen, ever since I had ears to hear. Aye, and old Donald is still with us in the empty North, playing his pipes, and still helping to shoulder the burden of the empty North as he has so nobly done for the last 50 years or more. There is no doubt but that the "North Countree" and our "Empty North" are tied by a bond that will last for ever, and that it is to be hoped this book will draw her attention to this grand land of ours that wants more of her sons.

Sweet, indeed, is the music of the praises of our Anzac lads for the charm, hospitality, and fervour of Scotland's ain folk to them, when they were their guests in between whiles of fighting the enemy in France. Glorious and noble is their love for the lads of the kilt alongside of whom they fought in France, and there are many who state that an Anzac and a kilt can and will storm hell and through it, and return with the bacon. Aye, and her lasses are as the salt of the earth. And it is to be hoped that the empty North will see more McNabs, and MacKays, and McIlwraiths, and Kidstons, and Philips, and Burns, and such-like in the near future. Nor must we forget the Duracks, Quiltys, and Fannings of our broad empty lands, and they serve to remind Ireland of her valorous sons also who have toiled and won out in the North for the glory of Australia and the Empire. And no camp of men is complete without a son of the Emerald Isle to liven up the solitudes of the North. A whole history of fun and wit and humour could be written of one Michael O'Grady, nicknamed "Mick the Rager," an old Dalgionally man, who in that disastrous year of 1902 was the station envoy to travel with those mobs of sheep and pilot them safely through the run, and not let them dally on the grass or water; and Mick's name, indeed, was a mighty one throughout the land, as each drover in his turn would long afterwards have tales to tell of that "hard case," big, raw-boned Irishman on Dalgionally, who used to make the hair stand on end of the raw sheep station, uninitiated, Southern jackeroo drovers' men by his language and actions.

Wales knows well of her gallant son, William Morris H. John Bull has no cause to complain of the reception awaiting the sons of his moorlands, either, or that we forget the deeds of Adam Lindsay Gordon and others of the David Carnegie type and their journeys over spinifex and sands. We have our places in the North of Dunbar, Stirling, Bannockburn, Lochingar, and such-like; also Killarney Station and Cork Station; also Westmoreland Station, Northampton Downs, and such; with also a whole State of New South Wales in the South, and also a New England district—

in fact, and a nation in the making, so that ye sons of Britain and Ireland need not feel lonely or cut off from the hills and lands of your fathers; and that although ye go so willingly to Canada because it is closer, I feel sure when the charms, wealth, and opportunity of the empty North of Australia are explained to you that it is the better land of the old, homely hymn of our youth, the earthly better land of "Far, Far Away," and it wants ten millions more of people in it, and of that number we require at least one million of Britishers to keep in order the other nine of perhaps doubtful beginners, and you will be all helping to make this better British Empire in the Southern Hemisphere, and prove the strong fluxing material in the melting pot of the new ten millions that is to keep the new nation true and honourable in their actions in the future for the British Empire. Gladly, however, would Australia wish to have the whole of the ten millions of the bulldog breed alone for her new citizens of the empty North; but, as in the case of old, when a big station here in the North of Queensland wanted new blood and bulls, they, when they could not find one stud herd big enough in the South to supply their wants, went around and made up the mob from the countryside, so Australia will have to make up her stock from the best herds of Europe, but is willing to pay the best price for the boys of the bulldog breed. "It's an ill wind that blows no one any good." The bond of friendship, love, honour, and respect has been strengthened by the hospitality of all classes of the Motherland to our Anzac lads when they were their guests in the old country. The Anzacs one and all will tell you they only played the game of the breed, the glorious bulldog breed, when they rushed to see and take part in the scrap and help to get justice done for the Empire's allies. In their own way, true to themselves, they succeeded, and their deeds were felt and appreciated by the citizens of the seat of Empire; but deep down in the hearts of most of these Anzacs will always remain, long after the horrors of war are forgotten, the hospitality and goodwill of the home people, and the sentiment has added on another two centuries to preserve for humanity the solid foundation of the stability of the Empire, which, as long as it lasts, will act for the peace and prosperity of the world as it always has done, as the keynotes of its success are, and always have been, Freedom, Justice, Truth, and Honest Dealing.

Many, many years ago, a son returned to his "auld mither," who lived on the banks of the Clyde, and recounted over to her tales of the wonderful land of Australia, and, spellbound, she was willing to believe nearly all about this wonderful country; but there was a limit. "Aye, aye, my son, I can quite believe the mountains of sugar and the rivers of rum in North Queensland, but I canna and willna believe about the flying-fish—nae, nae, I canna."

However, strained as her credence may have been about the flying-fish, what would she have thought of the tree-climbing fish or kangaroo? And yet one would be quite within the limit to say the "jumping" jack, a little piscatorial subject that grows up to 5 or 6 inches long, and inhabits the mangrove creeks of North Queensland, and climbs or jumps up on to the roots of the mangrove trees some feet out of the water, and basks in the sun all day, is called a tree-climbing fish.

However, we can only smile and forgive the old lady, as her world was not our world, but not the people of Victoria or N.S.W. many years

ago, who held their tongue in their cheek and their finger at the nose when her old pioneers returned from the Gulf country and spoke of the wonderful running river fed by a subterranean stream called the Gregory, and of its magnificent lands, also of the presence of shale on the Macarthur River. They now know the truth of the matter, but have been too tired, listless, and disinterested to bother about it.

We can still tell the people that live on the banks of the Clyde and Yarra that the mountains of wheat stacked around the cities of the South would not altogether overshadow the mountains of sugar that are waiting to rise up from the sugar lands of the empty North, which would run a river of rum if wished; the mountains of copper rising above and going down below the sea level, all waiting to be exploited; and the millions of acres of sheep lands that grow the golden fleece.

However, I would not dare to invite these people to come yet and partake of these riches, as, the way they are situated now, they will stop there as they have ever been, unexploitable, until railways are built to open up the means of communication to exploit them.

At the present time they are like a jagged nugget of gold some ten feet deep in the sea, weighing some tons weight. Hundreds of people can dive down and view same, and some of the more determined break off bits of the nugget where it thins out and can be broken off easily. The Authorities have been notified that the wealth is there, and some years ago boomed and boosted it, but only understood the method of fishing for it with a fishing line baited with gold, and when the bait was lost—ten millions in all—they only understand that they will yet fish it up if they can get more bait of the same kind. Although the water is safe and free of sharks, only one-twentieth of the people are interested enough or too lazy to dive down and have a look at it themselves, but want toll from the lucky ones who have broken off bits here and there for themselves after strenuous diving work. And, to make matters worse, disturbing elements are allowed to muddy the water at the particular spot, which only hampers the efforts of the divers, and the majority of the public of the South now say that the nugget is only a mass of rock with bits of gold here and there, and call it a "White Elephant," and are growling about the loss of the good bait lost.

There is only one policy for Australia—that is, increased production. Already the announcement has stirred up black hatred among the proletariat, but when it is shown that only Nature is to be allowed to produce more, and no call for harder work from her citizens required, then, no doubt, a lot of the doubting ones will see the light better, and perhaps admit that it is the only way to success for all.

A glance at the productiveness in the South of Australia as regards its stock is here shown, but herewith is also shown the atrocious management of the Empire's "sheep and cattle station of Australia," the largest, fairest, finest land and climate in the Southern Hemisphere. However, we are on the eve of light ahead, and once the people of Australia are shown that the empty North equals, or rather that it is nearly as good as the settled South, they perhaps will listen to the voice of reason. Then only will they find out that the empty North is not only as good, but will far outweigh in wealth the Southern half of Australia in later centuries.

On their limited knowledge now, will or can they dare to say that its pastoral lands will not carry the numbers of stock that the South carries, and, if so, why are they not there? And if this book has not explained that question aright even yet—well, a more able pen is necessary. It is not the fault of the empty North—only mine.

“Man wants but little here below, and that not long,” answered the Highlander, pointing from his waist downwards, and quoting from the Bible, when asked why Highlanders wore the kilt. And if he is a good man, and the material good also, his equipment is sufficient to lead him on towards wealth, health, and prosperity. And so I would say that millions of acres of the pastoral lands of the empty North, some day when it is opened up by railways, will be settled thousands upon thousands of small men well equipped for their own battles of life and the future prosperity of Australia.

And now I can truthfully quote from that delightful and true novel written by Mrs. Aeneas Gunn, entitled, “We of the Never Never,” and agree with the Maluka of old. The empty North is so called the Never Never because they who have lived in it and loved it Never—Never voluntarily leave it.

A lot of our best pioneers, unsung and forgotten, will Never Never leave it, and their only memory is their monument. Those, however, who were unfitted for it will tell you that it is so called because they who succeed in getting out of it swear they will Never Never return to it. But we who have lived in it and love it, and know its worth and wealth, know that we will Never Never leave it or rest away from it. 'Tis a land that bewitches her people with strange spells and mysteries until they call the sweet bitter and the bitter sweet, and one can say that the first known white man, Capt. Stokes, gave voice to that spell when he first gazed on the Plains of Promise and named them on August 4, 1841. From that day onwards there have been men who have toiled and sweated and loved its bitter sweets and overcome its long delays and wait-a-whiles, thinking to cut down and expedite “the years to come” by their industry and energy, and conquer that same Never Never and lay it at the feet of great cities, or, better still, lay great cities at its doors. knowing, like the Kaffir woman, that the British-born can and will conquer anything and everything that man can conquer, except death. And so I would say, turn your eyes to the vast, glorious, wealthy lands of the empty North of Australia, and open it up with railways, and let them undo and explain the silence of all these years, and lighten Australia's burden of debt and doubt of the future as a vulnerable portion for enemies to assail the Commonwealth.

“The world is always wanting something new—
Sensations only last a day or two;
But there's a feeling that I'd like to bet,
If once you've known it you won't forget—
And that's the love of going up—up—up to the North.”

And when a sufficient number get the craze, Australia is going up—going up—going up.

If the manhood of Australia are shown its charms, which are, indeed, as great as those of the delightful little Lady Graceful on the stage at Her Majesty's, and the manhood as romantic and game as the pleasant-faced author in the play, and risks the do-or-die for the prize, Fortune—who always favours the brave—will land the lady in his arms, and in both cases she is well worth the risk.

It is, indeed, a pleasure in life to return to the civilisation of the South and see the good things of life that are provided for one, but only those who have deserved those pleasures from Australia can only fully drink in the pleasures of the city, and far too many want to hang around the cities and live for its pleasures alone; and by the way the people of the back country are treated, one is a fool not to join their ranks, too, if circumstances will let him, as now the man from the back country is only looked upon as the legitimate prey for the city. But it must and will come to an end some day, if not altered, and the city folk be more and more confined to the old adage of "dog eat dog," which to a great degree now makes city folk so grasping, unreal, and profiteering.

The city folk see old Dad and Dave on the stage and applaud and love them, but give him and his interests over to the Philistines of Politics without a qualm, and they gorge on his wheat and produce until the situation is disgusting. Dad and Dave are not the products of the empty North, quite. The man of the wide, far-reaching spaces of the empty North is not the type of the small man in the settled areas, only in character and honesty, and so the citizens of the South know him not, as he is not depicted on the stage. It would, indeed, be difficult to depict him properly (and in reality), as his moods and difficulties in flood, drought, and fire are rarely to be seen, and the "Roman Holiday" for its city citizens does not want to show the stern realities of life. 'Tis a great pity, however, as then perhaps, the North would get a chance and its splendours entice many of those who now occupy the gallery of the theatre, to try going up there, and if they prove to be the right sort they will never, never leave it only for a trip south now and again to taste of the pleasures of the city.

The empty North has streams and lands that captivate far more than the South, it is tinged with a romance more noble than the tame rivers of the south. A little birch canoe and you and a fishing line and a rifle for alligators has more charms for bold spirits than the trout streams of Tasmania and New Zealand, and give the bolder spirits of the south the chance to see these charms in a few days journey and it will soon be tenanted and prosperous.

Since 1890 and up to 1916 that is for 26 years the drought losses in Australia have been £541,173,565 in sheep and cattle.

But dating back from 1870 the amount of national asset lost to the Commonwealth and Empire, through bad management is £691,692,462, and as no full returns of this year's losses are yet to hand or yet done with no doubt the final squaring up will bring the amount well over £700,000,000 Who is to blame?

The politicians of the country. Had Western Australia her back spell paddock of the Empty North of Western Australia linked up with a railway

South Australia linked up with Darwin, New South Wales, Bourke, Thargomindah, Springvale, Camooweal on to Burketown, and a cross line, Camooweal to Newcastle Waters to Hall's Creeks, and Mildura, Menindie, and Thargomindah, well two-thirds of that could have been saved, or say at least half.

The man at the helm is wholly to blame except in McIlwraith's case, where the people of Queensland were.

Now Australia is again about to decide and I would throw down my cards and play a "Lone Hand," as until this is done Australia has only one sane, safe, and sure policy, and that is create railways and open up your empty North, and cater for the man on the land. Where is the money to come from? Well, just ask oneself the question. What man is ever likely to get it from other countries for Australia's use? There is only one man. The little man with the big white heart, who got up at the Peace Table and shouted, "I am for Australia." The man who now shouts, "There is no country in the world which offers such a fine field for the worker and for the man who wishes to invest his capital as this Australia of ours," and his actions all along have borne out his words. What have his opponents to offer to the world as security for their money. An Australia only, that stinks in the nose of Capital all over the world, and makes the hearts of her citizens bleed for the way they have ill-used it and them. With Mr. Hughes in charge and backed by the sons of Australia, who will give to him of their best, this station holding of Australia is going to be a gold mine which will pay off the mortgage in a very very few years. The pastoral men have been the pioneers and princes of Australia that have led it up to victory, there have been men in politics whose only claim to glory has been to hold up and filch from them, their life's blood, and boasted of being able to make those Beef Barons squirm, and the Pastoral industry is the backbone of the Commonwealth, and its very heart's blood. Without it the cities would soon fall and fade away and the hundreds of thousands that live on its pleasures alone, find their occupation gone.

Australia formerly a group of five stations, is now one big Company holding, it wants a first-class general manager. There appears to be two claimants for the billet. The one man as the former manager won out to fame by dogged hard work and sincerity and love of his country and straight dealing, the other small manager sat back and told his men to go out early and late and brand any calf that showed up, whether it was a clean skin or running with a neighbouring mother, and play the game for all it was worth like a lot of the old cattle station managers used to do, and kill only strange brands of beef. And got his name up second only to that of the Kenniffs, and so his name as a manager in some ears is wonderful, but like all reputations of that sort, they cover a rottenness that is only glossed over. And so shortly, Australia has to decide who is to be general manager of this wonderful cattle and sheep station of Australia. But whether they decide rightly or wrongly is not the primary object of this book.

The Book is only to show the reason of the Empty North, and show the remedy. It is propoganda for the next and next and next general elections until the general manager of Australia completes these improvements and makes Australia a Nation, and a well paying station proposition, for the benefit of us all, you and I and the other chap which we call democracy.

We want a general manager to manage continentally, and be able to take his place at the Peace Tables of the future, who will command respect and admiration; one to whom Patriotism for Australia and Empire is as the breath of life as it is the only spirit that will make any land happy and contented which breeds up in its turn health, wealth and happiness for all.

Mr. Chairman, Your Excellencies, My Lord Bishop of Carpentaria, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

I think I can claim to know something of the pastoral industry of the North, as my father before me was one of the oldest pioneer pastoralists of North Queensland, and I have followed in his footsteps. About the year 1865, my uncle, Duncan MacIntyre, led an expedition formed by the ladies of Melbourne to these parts, not only as an exploring expedition, but primarily to make a search for Leichhardt, as just previously he (my uncle) had discovered two horses on the Dugald River which were supposed to have been the property of Leichhardt, as their ownership could not be otherwise placed, and the discovery resulted in the new expedition. My uncle, unfortunately, did not discover Leichhardt, but previously found good pastoral country on the Flinders, near Julia Creek, some 90 miles from Cloncurry, and in 1866 my father stocked it, naming the property Dalgonally, and held it until he died in 1907. In its best days Dalgonally was considered to carry more cattle than any single run in Australia, and my father was known as the first cattle king.

I myself came out to Dalgonally in 1897, and have had 20 years' experience in the Gulf and know the country well—from the mouth of the Mitchell River to the border of the Northern Territory. In 1905 I assumed the management of Augustus and Fiery Downs stations, and for some years managed these places successfully. I then acquired Escott station, just 10 miles from Burketown. Since residing in this part of the Gulf, I have been brought into close touch with the enormous potentialities of the mineral area, and have speculated in some of the mines. I have also been a bit of a renegade from a pastoral standpoint, as I have embarked in a mercantile business, also motor lorries for the purpose of quick transport, etc., and have been in sympathy with the men who scour the hills for copper and other minerals. We must have industries other than pastoral. If the pastoralists had complete possession of the Gulf, and were left in control, it would never be anything else but a big back paddock for Townsville. Your Excellency was evidently amused at the term "citizens" as embodied in our address of welcome, and hoped some day that Burketown would really be a city and the inhabitants entitled to the name of "citizens." I feel sure this will come to pass with regard to Burketown. If a port were made, and the railway continued from Mount Oxide on to the Gregory, thence to Burketown, with a branch line to Camooweal from the Gregory, Burketown would be a city. The mineral belt extends from Mount Oxide right across to Boorooloola, in the Northern Territory. The possibilities of Mount Oxide are well enough known, and do not require any elaboration on my part. The possibilities of the Lawn Hill silver mines are not too well advertised, but I feel sure when they are properly developed they will prove of immense richness. The ore is very rich, going 33 per cent. silver, and 69 per cent. lead. The great drawback is the means of

transport. The road is a heavy one, and carriers have to be paid a high price for carting the ore to Burketown, a distance of 120 miles. This does not leave a margin of profit. Last year was the most successful since the inception of the mine, as some 900 tons were shipped from Burketown. Some three years ago I put a five-ton motor lorry on the road, and it brought in four tons of ore in seventeen hours. However, the road was soon cut up by the teams. I then purchased an eight-ton lorry with winding gear. This machine, however, I regret to state, could not travel on the bad road. I have the honour, I believe, of owning the largest motor lorry in the Commonwealth. Some of my friends say I am "the biggest fool in the Commonwealth" for purchasing it. However, that is my business, and if we get suitable roads its value will be proved beyond a doubt. When the road was found unsuitable for motor traffic, I was to be allowed by the station-owners to make a new road through Lawn Hill (which would be over black soil), if I could get permission from the Hon. the Minister for Lands to do so, for motor traffic only. I requested my solicitors to interview the Minister in Brisbane, and explain to him the circumstances, viz., that I had expended £4000 on machines alone, and was out of considerably more money by their not paying, and that if I was given the concession not only would it be the means of making the Lawn Hill silver mines a payable concern, but would greatly add to the importance of the port of Burketown, and also make motor traffic a payable proposition. The cutting of the road over the roughest of the "devil-devil" ground with a fire plough was to cost me at least £200. Not only did the Minister refuse the concession, but he would not even promise that the Shire Council would be made to refund me the cost of making the road if I undertook to do the work. Here is a very rich area, practically undeveloped and languishing for want of a railway; the wealth is known to exist, there is no doubt of that, but unfortunately private enterprise is not encouraged in Queensland.

There is another mineral area, the trade of which also belongs to Burketown. I refer to the Wollgorang copper mines in which I am pleased to state, I hold an interest, and have brought some specimens in for your Excellency which will assay 60 per cent. In the very near future everything points to the Wollgorang field being, not only a large, but a permanent one. The great drawback to the Gulf has been the want of railways. When I first came to this part of Queensland, Cloncurry and Dalgonally were designated "Gulf country." The railway had only reached Hughenden, and we had to travel the remainder of the journey by coach—that is, between Hughenden and Cloncurry and adjoining stations; in fact, you could only count about half-a-dozen stations, and Cloncurry itself was no bigger than Burketown is to-day. It was only visited by station people, and was looked upon as the "back of beyond," and it was considered cruel to ask women-folk to live there. Look at the difference now, primarily brought about by railway communication. The people look quite as well as the people residing in the more favoured localities, such as Charters Towers and Townsville. Your Excellency mentioned that North Queensland is apparently a white man's country. Of course it is. The chief drawback is the deadly monotony and the feeling of isolation; the man does not feel it, but the women further out in the back country, with no pleasure or amusement to break the monotony, soon pine away; and then the climate is blamed. Put railway lines through the back country, so that the women-folk can get out to their friends and to larger settlements whenever they feel inclined in a few hours, just as they can from Cloncurry to-day. You

will then soon hear very little about the climate. I think we have fewer pests about the Gulf, say, than at Longreach; certainly fewer flies, and down there it only means living in flyproof structures. The great need of the Gulf country, let me reiterate, is railway communication, with an accessible port. If we had had a suitable port, Mr. Corbould would have erected smelters here years ago. Now the smelters are at Bowen, and look at the cost of sending the ore there. However, the matter of erecting smelters at Burketown here has not, I think, been lost sight of, and in the near future will, perhaps, be an accomplished fact. I can only again point out that if the Government is desirous of developing the Gulf, they should continue the construction of the railway from Mount Cuthbert to Oxide and on to the Gregory. This Gregory district is one of the finest in Australia, and has the only running streams in the State where irrigation can be carried on to an enormous extent. The country is capable of supporting thousands of settlers of the rural class. If your Excellency will permit me, perhaps I shall have an opportunity of going more thoroughly into the matter before you leave Burketown. I will have the pleasure of showing you Mr. George Phillips's report. This report is comprehensive and accurate to a degree. As regards the facilities for making a port at Burketown, they are undeniable. I do not suppose any port in the world has the latent wealth of minerals, pastoral and agricultural lands which Burketown possesses within a distance of 150 miles. Mr. Phillips, in his report, states that if the Albert Bar was dredged a distance of $4\frac{3}{8}$ miles it would enable vessels drawing 17ft. to enter safely at any season at neap tides, and vessels drawing 22ft. could enter at spring tides, whilst the maximum draught might be 25ft. or more if entry were made during calm weather.

Now, let us look at the ports which have been made on the eastern coast of this State. I shall read you some information furnished me by our member, Mr. W. S. Murphy, M.L.A.:—Brisbane Bar cutting is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length; distance from mouth of river to town, 19 miles, of which 11 miles are dredged. Lengths of Townsville harbour entrance cutting, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Fitzroy River, from Rockhampton to Keppel Bay, 40 miles, in which are various dredge cuttings. Now, if the work of cutting the Albert River bar was carried out, we would have very deep water in the river for some six miles to a point known as the Ballast Ground. Here the wharves would be made, and a railway of 13 miles in length would connect with the town of Burketown; and a further continuation should be made to Camooweal, via the Gregory, there tapping the famous Barkly tableland country, perhaps the finest pastoral country in Australia.

The port at the Ballast Ground would be practically similar to what Port Alma is to the city of Rockhampton to-day. Unfortunately, the time is inopportune to again agitate for a railway; besides, there is no money available, and the opposition from Townsville and other centres is much too strong, but the extension of the line to Mount Oxide and thence to the Gregory will benefit all and must eventually be brought about. Mr. Corbould, of Mount Elliott, is again endeavouring to have the money placed on the estimates for this line, although the Works Commission turned down the proposal the first time it came before them, as in their opinion the evidence adduced was not convincing enough to warrant the construction of the line. I may here state that the real facts were not placed before them, and I was much disgusted at the meagreness of the intelligence furnished. I am now in communication with Mr. Corbould,

and am helping to bring forward all the facts I can possibly obtain, and I would most humbly ask your Excellency to try and help us in this matter in any way you can, as it will be the means of settling a large population upon country with splendid soil and watered by perennial streams.

You will see from Mr. Phillips's report that, in addition to all classes of vegetables, tropical fruits can be produced. He also states that sugar cane can be grown there. Of course, one cannot have everything without a little trouble. If we had things made too easy for us, life would not be worth living. It is a well-known fact that men from portions of the world where they have to scratch for a living are of the very finest stamp. If I may be pardoned for digressing, I would like to mention that, in my humble opinion, a big factor in bringing about the present war was that the British were too well off, careless and off their guard, and the Germans, who were ambitious for world power, made a "bloomer" in thinking the nation was effete. However, they have since discovered such is not the case. By the way, his Lordship the Bishop made me forget a lot I desired to say when he made such an interesting speech on the war. War news and any reference to our soldiers always makes me forget local matters, and if I had had my own way I would have been in khaki long ago. However, I am very proud, indeed, to say that one of my brothers is a lieutenant with the second Cameron Highlanders at Salonika and another is in France, and I hope before long to be there myself. Such a statement can be accepted as equal to going to the recruiting office.

There is more I would like to tell your Excellency, but the facts have quite escaped my memory for the moment, and I could express myself much better in writing. I long ago recognized the wonderful potentialities of the district and the wealth to be won by opening it up. I saw a good cartoon in a recent Sydney "Bulletin." It refers to Mr. Hughes and Mr. Cook. Mr. Hughes as Caesar is saying, "Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much; such men are dangerous." Well, I think sometimes I am like Cassius, and am getting a lean and hungry look from thinking too much. There is another matter I would like to point out to your Excellency: the closing up of our bush telegraph offices. This was not economy on account of the war. It was done before the war began. In your journey to-day, you passed Floraville office, which is now closed. Donaldson was also closed some years ago. However, you would not pass it by the road you travelled. I consider the closing of Floraville scandalous. Had the office been there to-day, we could have known exactly when you arrived there, and what was happening. If you had broken down on the road, we could have sent post-haste to bring you in. If anyone was sick on the neighbouring stations, it was a short ride to Floraville, and one could telegraph for medical advice, and so on. It really looks as if the Postal Authorities were trying to close up the Gulf. I wrote some time ago regarding this matter to Mr. Chas. MacDonald, our Federal member, and pointed out to him that if this portion of Australia was of no use to them, as was quite evident by their actions in trying to close up rapid means of communication, it would be more honest and less "Dog-in-the-manger" style if they sold it or gave it away to some other nation. Next to my father, I claim to have expended more money in the Gulf in improvements on Escott station, and in speculations for the benefit of the district, in motors, a mercantile business, mining, etc., than any private owner belonging to it. My father in his time, I suppose, expended more than any six private

individuals together for the welfare of the Gulf. I have expended from £15,000 to £20,000 since I came to the district, quite apart from the purchase of Escott, and I don't regret it, and would send another after it, for I know it will only be a few years before I get it all back, and more with it.

I think I have said all that I can think of just now. I hope some time later on your Excellencies will again visit us, and have time to run out and see the Gregory district, and some of the copper and silver mines, and also partake of our best Gulf hospitality.

(COPY.)

"A LETTER THAT WAS NEVER PRINTED."

"Escott," Burketown,
N. Queensland.
Nov., 1912.

The Editor, Sydney "Bulletin."

Dear Sir,—Being a constant reader and subscriber to your paper, and a North Queenslander born and bred, I admire your efforts to bring closer a united Australia.

I am one who thinks there is no place like Australia, and no place in Australia like North Queensland. Perhaps it is only my ignorance; still, I am satisfied. I have travelled over a part of the Territory from Port Darwin to Pine Creek, on to the Katherine, down the Roper, to the Bar, and inspected Hodgson Downs and the "Elsie." Got a knowledge of the Territory sufficient to make me close for my present home, "Escott," at Burketown. My opinion is (and I have acted on it), the Territory in every way is inferior to the Gulf of North Queensland. Still, the Territory is alright, and with markets made accessible I would have jumped at the low rents to be had there; but with no means of getting your stock to market, a man is an idiot to bury himself out there at present for no financial gain whatever. I can instance a mob of cattle that have just left this district; they have been over 12 months from their Territory home, being agisted about here about four to six months, man and plant in charge all the time. The original number to leave the station was 1200; number to go on the road after the forced halt, about 700. One meat works inspector inspected them and offered £3/10/- for them. Of course, owners would not take it, but in my own opinion that's all they were worth here. If, however, after being put on to good country now, and they sell for full current prices next year, and they sell for about £5/10/- per head, what will the nett value per head on the original mob that left the station (1200 head) be?

This, however, is only a diversion on my part, but it may serve the purpose to show you that, although the Territory wants shoving ahead, the Territory of North Queensland is a better country, and the Federal Government should not penalise it to help the Northern Territory.

On December 29th, 1910, I wrote to the Marine Board, as enclosed copy, and tried to get some change.

This is what I learnt. That the A.U.S.N. Co. were given a subsidy by the Federal Postal Department to run mails (only). The Company

were not making anything out of this Gulf trade, and only for the mail subsidy would only run a boat when they could get a full cargo, and if the Marine Board forced them to put on a better boat for the accommodation of passengers, they would refuse to carry passengers altogether, as the passenger traffic was too small to cater for. As it is now, the A.U.S.N. Co. run a boat with mails every three weeks, and if such a thing came to pass that they would not carry passengers at all, we would be in a hole, indeed.

I interviewed the General Manager of the Shipping Company, and he explained the situation: the trade wasn't paying, and it was only the mail subsidy that kept the boat running regular at all (which I knew from my own knowledge of the sizes of cargoes coming into Burketown to be feasible enough). His Company were only too willing to cater for the comfort of the Gulf people, if they could only see their way clear to get some return for the outlay, and asked what I should suggest, as it was only the comfort of passengers that was the matter. I suggested a motor boat to run passengers direct to the mail boat and direct from mail boat to the town, a distance of only 46 miles. He promised to help us in every way, if we could get the mail subsidy increased. Mr. Robert Philp and Mr. T. Nevitt, our member, and myself interviewed the Premier, Mr. Kidston, and he promised to look into the matter for me. But in three days' time he resigned, and we are still going on in the same old way. A man can put up with anything, but you ask for better treatment for your wife and children.

The last time my wife and a lady visitor came up they avoided the Burketown landing, but got off at Normanton, where a better state of affairs reigns, and I drove the party 150 miles overland to Burketown. Escott is 10 miles out of Burketown. Last month my wife and youngster went south; we left Truganina (which is five miles below the town) at six o'clock on Thursday morning. To save trouble in the morning, we camped on board all Wednesday night. We got down to the mouth of Albert River at about five o'clock Thursday afternoon; we anchored there until three (3) o'clock Friday morning, then we had to go out over the Bar and wait at the anchorage until four o'clock in the afternoon before the mail steamer came. The weather was splendid, indeed, but the continual movement of the water bumping the tender up and down for 13 hours had us all sick. We were all sick, and longed for that boat to come and put an end to our troubles. To take your chances of sickness with a running steamer is not too bad, as every minute brings you nearer your destination; but to be hobbled out for 13 hours, the continual bumping will shift the best of sailors' insides.

A big feature of this traffic, on the female side especially, is maternity troubles; for that matter, sickness on the male side, too. We have had no doctor in Burketown for nearly five months. Half the people that travel it is for to go south to get medical attendance. I am well aware of the new £5 bonus for giving birth to a child, although in plenty of cases an acceptable help to defray expenses, still there are plenty that can do without the help, and, if the share accruing to the population of this part of the world were given towards the mail service to better conditions of travel for the sick travelling public, it would meet the case admirably.

I am fully determined to try and better conditions, although as you can see by the correspondence, about two years ago I did no good.

The question now arises, should the State Government give a subsidy to

the A.U.S.N: Co., to cater for the passenger trade? We pay rents and taxes enough. The rents paid by the Stations, that should naturally use this port, but who avoid doing so are as enclosed list. A single man welcomes the alternative of a weekly coach drive to Cloncurry, but how are a family party of wife, maid and youngster to get on, it is out of the question, and, just see how later on the Postal Authorities are treating our mail routes, so what are we to do? Who are we to approach?

Since I came here to Escott, three years ago, I have put into it, in the way of improvements, fencing, buildings, bulls and stallions, five thousand pounds. In rent alone I have paid for lease and occupation licences £400, this and working expenses are apart from the improvements.

My wife is quite content to live here and keeps in splendid health, we are in a position to go South whenever we wish, but dread the journey. We would not ask any female to visit us on account of the Waterlily experience. The climate here is as acceptable for nine months out of the year, as anywhere else, and in my opinion a lot better even in the summer than the Eastern Coast.

Is it right to ask the wife to go through the Waterlily experience? If not it means I will have to buy a home in Sydney for them and only run up here myself now and again. Does anyone imagine I will continue improving Escott if I only have a Manager living here? Is this the way to open up the country? Both Governments, the State and Federal, talk of populating the country. If the people born here are not to be catered for, how can the emigrants make a do. We can make a do, but we won't under these conditions, not when we needn't. In the opinion of others, I am mad to live up here and it is not right to bring my wife up here.

It is certainly not right to ask the wife to face the journey to Burketown from the big boat (the 46 miles of the Waterlily). once on board the Suva, it is a glorious trip, as to the climate, the wife has health and happiness, and like myself, glories in the life.

But this last trip down to the mail steamer has brought out the wish that she never again has to face the Waterlily.

Financially we are well able to live in Sydney and help swell the population, personally we don't wish to, only to go down for a month or two now and again.

Of course later on I look forward to a home in the South, but not for a long time yet. Perhaps you can ventilate the grievances and disadvantages that we are under, which could be removed in one act of either the State Government or the Federal one, in the way of an increased subsidy on the part of the Federal Government or a fresh one by the State. I also wish to bring under your notice another intimation from the Postal Authorities, which speaks for itself, the Wollgorang Mail. This mail is a fortnightly one and calls in at Escott here, Egilabria Station. Turn off Lagoon Police Station and cattle head station, Westmoreland Station, and on to Wollgorang, ten miles or so across the border on to Northern Territory country. About 20 miles from Wollgorang in the Territory the Wollgorang Copper Company have opened up a copper mine and are very pleased with the results, and they are still working it and mean to double operations after the New Year after the wet season is over, when they can export the ore, etc. Twelve months ago this spot had only seen an odd stockman at times, now Mr. Linedale and party are fast bringing civilization into it, and have already spent hundreds of pounds around it, and the Burketown Shire Council have

also given their share with financial assistance for the opening up of the new road to the mine, and with all these prospects of a coming wave of prosperity to this part of the wild wastes of Federated Australia the local post-master is instructed to send out the enclosed letter re the Wollergorang mail. It is a lonely road indeed to travel, a pack horse mail, no chance of passengers, few parcels to carry, to increase his subsidy. To run the mail with ease in an ordinary year he will want at least 22 horses, pack saddles and turnout which will cost him at least £120. For the twelve months he will want three changes of horses as horses won't work long up here on natural grasses and he must spell them about, at £150 per annum, it is not a living wage, at £115 it is a disgrace, at £300 per year there is very few that would rush it.

Up to a few months ago, Westmoreland only paid for one block of country occupations license £50, lately I have taken up a lease of 655 square miles at 10/- per mile, £327/10/-, and now the Authorities are going to deprive us of the only link to civilization given to us by the Government up to now. My rates on the lease are £40 extra, but they don't take things like this into consideration at all. If this is not hindering settlement, what is? I for one won't make up the deficiency from £115 to £150; if my Manager does for his own self, he can, but I smile when I think how he will take the suggestion. Does all this help to open up the country? Last year the Donaldson Post Office was closed. It was opened for many many years, and drovers could get information from it, the surrounding people could wire for instructions from the doctors in the cities in cases of illness, and in every way it was a link to civilization. But the office was closed.

Lately word was given out that the Floraville Post Office was to be closed and the Progress Association here heard in time and kicked up a row, and this place has been kept on, but had it been allowed to be closed like Donaldson, all the fuss out would not have opened it again. This latter office is the nearest telegraph office to Mt. Oxide Copper Mine, just lately brought before the public.

Do all these facts go to developing the country? Are they in keeping with the cry to bring more emigrants into the country? Do the Government think the emigrant will do as much for the development of the country as the people bred in it. We want railways, and a lot of things, but we can do without them, so long as we have access to and from a place, and are in touch with civilization a bit.

Perhaps you will be in sympathy with our grievances, and find space to ventilate them in your widely circulated paper. Should you decide to do so, I will willingly pay for the insertion. So if you will drop me a collect wire stating the price of same, I will wire the amount if not too costly, myself. If, however, this is not in your line of business, you might return the letter and documents as I will push the matter elsewhere, if I can do so, as I think we should try and get better treatment meted out to us, from either the State Government or the Federal one. Should you decide to take it up, make the article up to suit your own style, personally I don't want my name to crop up more than necessary, although I am far from being afraid of the publicity of same.

Thanking you anticipation,

I am yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

Escott.

(COPY.)

Hotel Cecil,
BRISBANE,
December 29th, 1910.

The Secretary,
Marine Board,
BRISBANE.

Dear Sir,

I wish to point out to your Board the scandalous state of affairs existing at the Port of Burketown.

The "Waterlily" that is used to convey passengers from the large steamers up to the Town of Burketown is not suitable, and I wish the Board would look into the matter.

The "Waterlily" is about seventy feet in length, overall, she is licensed to carry sixty passengers, but in my opinion there is not sitting accommodation for twelve persons. The Authorities—I am given to understand—are led to believe that the trip of forty-two miles, from the steamer to the town, is only a short daylight trip, but this is not the case.

The "Waterlily" leaves Burketown Wharf when able, or more often Truganini Landing, some five miles further down the River, on Thursday afternoon, goes down to the mouth of the Albert and anchors and on Saturday morning meets the "Aramac." If the "Aramac" is not up to time the "Waterlily" anchors out in the open gulf to await the steamer—she tows the cargo lighter all the time. She has absolutely no accommodation whatever; should rain fall there is not sufficient shelter, and cases can be cited where women and children have lain out all night wet through to the skin, and had to continue so until relief came in the shape of the steamer.

On this last trip south we left Truganini Landing at 6 o'clock on Thursday afternoon, December 15th. The Government had wired the Agents at Burketown that the new mail service would be altered and instead of the Mail Steamer meeting the "Waterlily" on Saturday morning it would meet it in future at 5 o'clock on Friday afternoon, and we would arrive in Brisbane a day sooner. As a new captain was in charge of the "Waterlily" for the first time and being anxious to get down in time, he intended leaving Burketown on Wednesday night, but as the old Captain (Captain Kneen) would also be a passenger, he prevailed on the Captain to leave at the usual time—Thursday evening. We did so and anchored out at the anchorage at 3.45 o'clock on Friday afternoon to await the steamer "Aramac." The "Aramac" did not arrive until her usual time (8 o'clock on Saturday morning) and we had sixteen hours tossing about in the open Gulf on a boat that tosses like a cork.

I counted twenty people on board; the only accommodation for the ladies was the floor of the deck, a space of 10 feet by 8 feet, and on it were huddled three white ladies and a young baby, two female aboriginal servants and two lads. The ladies were sick all night and I myself was sick the whole sixteen hours. The only available space for the other passengers and crew was the hatch and spaces in between the winch and ropes, etc. I counted twenty persons altogether and the child.

There is no attempt at accommodation whatever and the trip from the steamer to the town is dreaded by males as well as females alike. It is not

only a disgrace to the age we live in, but a most dangerous undertaking in the months of January, February, and March, both as regards the health if it is raining, and danger of stormy weather. When spending the night in the River sleeping accommodation is got over by stretching out on the barge as they go up the River side by side, but out in the roadway the barge is towing astern and all passengers are necessarily cooped up on the "Water-lily" itself.

However well the arrangement suits for the carriage of the mails and cargo, there is no attempt whatever for the accommodation of passengers, and as Burketown district people have no means of getting south overland in the rainy seasons, the steamer is the only way. We pay £24 for a return ticket to Brisbane, also the exchange on a cheque, and sign to all the conditions of the ticket accepting all the risks, so passengers are under no compliment to the Steamship Company.

I wish your Board would look into the matter and try and ameliorate the existing conditions somewhat.

Thanking you in anticipation.

I am, sir,

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

Hotel Cecil, City.

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Postmaster-General's Department,

MELBOURNE, 29th November, 1913.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of the communication, dated the 3rd instant, recently presented by you from Mr. J. N. McIntyre, Burketown, North Queensland, on the subject mentioned below, and to inform you that the matter will receive attention.

Yours faithfully,

JUSTINIAN OXENHAM.

Secretary.

The Hon. Chas. McDonald, M.P.,

Parliament House,

MELBOURNE.

Subject—The desire that the Post Office at Floraville be not closed. The lack of accommodation for passengers on the steam tug "Water-lily" running in connection with the mail service to Burketown, etc

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND.

Postmaster-General's Department,

BRISBANE, 8th December, 1913.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you a communication has been received from the Shire Clerk at Burketown intimating that the Burke Shire Council had learnt with much surprise that this Department had declined all tenders

for the various mail services to and from Burketown consequent on the subsidies quoted being too high, and asking that no action be taken to curtail the facilities in question.

In this connection it may be stated that suitable quotations were not forthcoming in the first instance, but the difficulty has been got over and tenders have since been accepted for mail services No. 218, Burketown and Camooweal, 229 Burketown and Kamilaroi, and 179 Burketown and Wollongorang.

These are all the Burketown services for which tenders were called this year, and there will therefore be no curtailment of facilities as feared by the local Shire Council.

I shall be glad if you will kindly advise the Shire Clerk in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) H. B. TEMPLETON,
Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Honourable C. McDonald, M.P.,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND.

Postmaster-General's Department,
BRISBANE, 10th October, 1913.

Registered No. E. 3467/13.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. W. Murphy, M.L.A., has submitted to this office a telegram received by him on the 6th instant from Mr. McIntyre, Burketown, enquiring whether it is the intention to close the Floraville Telegraph Office, and deprecating such a proposal.

The Floraville Post and Telegraph Office is situated in a very sparsely populated district. There is no township at Floraville and the only holdings in the neighbourhood are Wernadinga, Augustus Downs, Inverleigh, and Lorraine, distant 6, 28, 45 and 64 miles respectively. The office was established for line-repairing purposes, and not to meet local requirements, but it is now found that the line inspections can be made from Burketown and the Floraville Office closed with considerable advantage from the point of view of economy and without any detriment to the public interests.

It is the intention of the Department, therefore, to close the present official office at Floraville, but a Receiving Office and Telegraph Office will be opened at Wernadinga to meet the requirements of the locality.

I shall be glad if you will kindly advise Mr. W. Murphy, M.L.A., and Mr. McIntyre accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) H. B. TEMPLETON,
Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Honourable C. McDonald, M.P.,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

(COPY.)

The Hon. C. McDonald, M.P.,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of 14/10/13 to hand with enclosure, a letter from the Postal Department, for which I have to thank you.

The letter plainly points out that it is the intention of the Department to close this office. However, I would like to point out to you the inconveniences we labour under and ask your help to secure to us these links of civilization.

Certainly "Floraville" is only an office and no township near it. But let me point out to you some of its uses:

All the surrounding stations use it in time of sending their cattle away to make sales, etc., and it is their nearest and quickest way to business. It is about 50 miles out of Burketown and 100 miles out of Normanton. If any one is sick he can go to Floraville and wire for advice, etc.

The nearest office to Floraville is Donors Hill, some 200 miles away. The Department have already closed Donaldson which has inconvenienced us Pastoralists more than the Department can know. It is true there is a telephone at Donaldson. While drinking at the Donaldson Hotel bar, every word of a telephone message can be heard spoken being sent to Granada.

At Granada quite recently a meat works buyer (I can give his name and get his authority for saying this) was buying fats at Granada. The Manager, like most others out this way, could only make sales through his General Manager. He was wiring his Manager and the Cattle buyer was wiring to the Manager of the Meat Works. The Storekeeper and Manager of the Station know what is going through the office and from the result of the telegram it was very evident the Station Manager was fully acquainted with the messages sent by the Cattle buyer to the Meat Works with the result the business was a farce and there was no privacy.

Why should the Station Storekeeper and Station Manager know the private business of every individual that used the Granada or Donaldson 'phone.

There was as is generally understood a nice little game worked to close the Donaldson office.

The officer in charge complained of there being no water at this stand, he wanted to get away as it's a lonely spot and said an office was not wanted there. The station people of Granada backed up the idea as they wished to close the public house at the Donaldson and thought by taking away the inducement for people to collect there, the trade of the public house would fall off and the owner shift off.

Now, Donaldson is the junction of the Normanton and Cloncurry roads, most years thousands of cattle pass through here, and after Floraville it was the first place to get a telegram from to hear how our cattle were getting on—whether they had pleuro or redwater, or were dying, etc.

We had to swallow the closing of Donaldson and now we are asked to put up with the closing of Floraville and get in its place a very bad substitute.

In the letter from the Deputy Postmaster-General—he states with a view of economy and without any detriment to the public interests.

I would point out that Wernadinga is eight miles off the main Burketown-Cloncurry Road, and Wernadinga has very little traffic on it and no cattle pass along it and the general public and our drovers, etc., will have to go eight miles off to send their wires away.

As regards economy, would it not be wise if such is the case, to ask the public if they are willing to make up any loss so that the office will pay its way, instead of closing it. The public are the best judges whether they will be inconvenienced or not, and I am sure would willingly pay to keep this link to civilisation in their immediate district open.

As one of the beneficiaries in the Estate that owns Augustus and Fiery Downs (the boundary of Augustus is within two miles of the office) and owner myself of Escott and Westmoreland Stations, whose only reason for being in the district is for breeding and selling cattle, I point out this closing of Floraville is going to be a great drawback to us all who have to send cattle on the road.

On the one hand the Federal Government are trying to open up the Northern Territory, on the other hand they are taking away our civilisation in the Gulf.

Another matter that wants looking into is also one of great importance in our district. The Federal mail service from Brisbane to Normanton and Burketown does not cater for the travelling public, only for the mails. The result is that the Mail Contractors run a steam tug named the "Waterlily" to carry the mails and passengers from the steamer up to the town of Burketown. The accommodation, if it can be called accommodation for passengers, is a disgrace and no humane man cares to ask any female to travel by it, but if you want to bring your wife here you have to do so.

I interviewed Mr. Kidston, when Premier, also Mr. Denham early this year and nothing is done yet. It is the same old tale, "it is a Federal matter."

Does the Federal Government want to throttle Burketown, and so in time close the district up?

We should have all the Mt. Oxide trade coming through Burketown, and all the Barkly tableland trade.

What with closing the bush telegraph offices one by one and not catering for passengers in the mail contract, we, who wish to live here and open up the country are forced to make a journey of two days from the big mail boat in a dirty small packet that is over 20 years old with no accommodation in keeping with civilization at all.

Mr. Tom Nevitt wrote you on this matter some three years previously, but it is still the same.

If you see your way clear, please try and help us, as what with ticks and drawbacks with our stock, also being such a long way from markets, surely, we are deserving of some consideration, especially, for our wives and families, who are willing to share our isolation and help to pioneer the country, which is a good one indeed, and with a little Government help to cater for the travelling public, population would soon come.

Now, the trip on the "Waterlily" is heard of far and wide and is notorious for its roughness and so deters people from coming here.

Thanking you for even a friendly perusal of the foregoing, and thanking you in anticipation—

I am, yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

House of Representatives,
MELBOURNE, November 28th, 1913.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,

I desire to acknowledge your most interesting letter. I have been for some time working on the same lines. I think it is a standing disgrace both to the State and Federal Governments the way the Gulf portion of Australia is being treated. I have had many talks with Ministers in relation to the development of that portion of Australia. I think that the action of the State Government in not making the earliest possible construction of a railway from the Gulf which has for its purpose the tapping of the tableland country, is a crime to the State. If the back country was opened from the Gulf, I feel sure that a large development will take place. However, I will do what I can in relation to the matter mentioned in your letter.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

(Signed) CHARLES McDONALD.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Postmaster-General's Department,

MELBOURNE, 18th December, 1913.

Q. 13/3138.
Sir,

With reference to the letter recently presented by you from Mr. J. N. MacIntyre, of Burketown, North Queensland, respecting, inter alia, his desire that the vessel called the "Waterlily" of the Australasian United Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., which conveys passengers from the mail boat up to the town of Burketown be replaced by a more suitable and commodious one, I am to inform you inquiry has been made into this matter and the following is copy of a report which has been received from the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, in regard thereto:—

I desire to refer to previous correspondence on this subject and to point out that in their recent offer to continue the Gulf mail service for a period of four or five years, the contractors (the A.U.S.N. Co., Ltd.) stated that it was necessary for them to replace the "Waterlily" by a more suitable vessel. With this end in view they urged that if tenders were invited for continuance of the service under a fresh contract ample time should be given to tenderers to enable them to supply a suitable boat.

From inquiries made, I have ascertained that the matter is a difficult one, inasmuch as a boat must be used that will cross the bar and at the same time be able to traverse the necessary distance by sea to junction with the mail steamer.

I am also advised that there is very little passenger traffic on the line and that the Company will only be too pleased, should sufficient inducement be offered, to make the best possible arrangements to meet the passenger traffic.

However, the low state of both Normanton and Burketown, and the very little business transacted there together with the bar

difficulty, preclude them from supplying a boat suitable for passenger traffic such as is readily provided in other more satisfactory and less difficult districts.

Yours faithfully,

JUSTINIAN OXENHAM,
Secretary.

The Hon. Charles McDonald, M.P.,
Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Postmaster-General's Department,
MELBOURNE, 21st January, 1914.

Q. 117/14.

Sir,

With reference to the letter recently presented by you from Mr. J. MacIntyre, relative, inter alia, to the alleged lack of privacy in connection with telegraphic business at Donaldson and Granada, Queensland, I beg to inform you that inquiry has been made in the matter and attached, for your information, is copy of a report furnished by the Acting Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, which indicates that under the circumstances the Department cannot arrange for better facilities than those now provided by the "Allowance" office at Granada.

Yours faithfully,

JUSTINIAN OXENHAM,
Secretary.

The Hon. Charles McDonald, M.P.,
Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

(COPY.)

Q. 117/14.

I have the honour to advise that the matter has been the subject of special enquiry; and so far as can be ascertained there appears to be no valid cause for complaint against this Department.

2. In that remote portion of the State the telegraph traffic is comparatively small. Mails from Normanton are handed over to the Kamilaroi-Cloncurry mailman at Donaldson, and telegrams from stations en route are telephoned thence to Granada Public Telephone Office. The wire from Donaldson to Granada, however, is a private one, and the transmission of messages over that line is purely an arrangement between the owners and the public, and solely at the risk of the senders. It may be pointed out that the Kamilaroi-Cloncurry mailman passes through Granada, and if so desired envelopes containing telegrams could be addressed to the last-named place (only 16 miles away) where, it is reported due arrangements for privacy of telegraphic business are observed.

3. In the case of the person represented to have been purchasing fats at Granada, it may be suggested that the buyer in question, if communicating frequently with his principals on such matters, might easily and fully safeguard himself by the use of a code.

4. The volume of telegraphic traffic transacted in the district is not sufficient to warrant an official office; and it is regretted that the Department cannot arrange for any better facilities than those now provided by the "allowance" office at Granada.

(Sgd) Acting Deputy Postmaster-General,
BRISBANE.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Postmaster-General's Department,
MELBOURNE, 18th November, 1913.

Q. 13/3137.

Sir,
With reference to the letter recently presented by you from Mr. J. MacIntyre, Burketown, Queensland, respecting the closing of the Donaldson Post and Telegraph Station, I beg to inform you inquiry has been made into this matter and the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, reports that the closing of the office in question was the outcome of investigations made by the District Inspector (who visited the locality) in connection with a proposal which had been made to add to and renovate the building, and that no representations were made by the people at Granada Station and the action taken was not the result of any complaints by the lineman in charge.

2. The Deputy Postmaster-General adds that the office was established for line repairing purposes, but that it was found the line work could be satisfactorily arranged for otherwise, also that an allowance office could be established at Granada which would meet all reasonable public requirements.

3. There does not appear to be any justification for departure from the decision already arrived at.

Yours faithfully,
JUSTINIAN OXENHAM,
Secretary.

The Hon. Charles McDonald, M.P.,
Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

"Escott,"
February 13th, 1914.

The Hon. Charles McDonald,
House of Representatives,
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

It is with much pleasure I have to thank you for going into the several matters of importance to the welfare of the district, that I have written to you about.

It is already bearing fruit. I have it on the best of authority that the "Waterlily" is to be replaced. The A.U.S.N. Co.'s Manager at Brisbane, stated that all they are waiting for now is the mail contract for a period of three years and they will start on the new boat at once. Hitherto the contract has only been yearly with an inclination to discontinue it altogether

so that the shipping people were not going to build a new tender to have it on their hands if the mail were abolished. And this latter was very much on the cards, if we can believe report. And does not all this correspondence, read in the cool of the day, plainly show the fact that the Deputy Postmaster-General at Brisbane is actually trying to cut us off altogether from the benefits of civilization.

Perhaps now they have heard a little about the inconvenience at Donaldson and Granada, they will keep open the office at Floraville, which has been open and available for so many years already.

I am enclosing one of their letters re Floraville, and would ask you to read No. 2.

This clearly shows what they know of and care about our facilities for communication here.

On behalf of all concerned except of course the Inverleigh Co., who will benefit, the department can well (if they close Floraville) keep Inverleigh Head Station office closed.

Such a ridiculous suggestion is well in keeping with their actions in all postal and mail matters in the Gulf the last few years.

Why close Floraville? At least by keeping it open, now after we have had it for 30 years, it is some inducement to stay in the district, as one can keep in touch with the inside world when he wants to.

However, the department by their correspondence mean to close it and as we all especially at this time of the year get that tired feeling and don't care a damn attitude. I begin to think also, what's the use writing.

It has been rather a pleasure to see by the correspondence that you have gone into the matter so well on our behalf, and I must thank you for same.

There is only one way to get people to settle in an out of the way part of the world, and that is to give them quick communication with the inside world, and then they don't feel the isolation so much.

Thanking you again,

I am yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

13th October, 1914.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,

I have received from the Postal Department a letter in reference to conduct of its business at Floraville. I have sent a copy to Mr. McCallum and now enclose a duplicate for your information.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. MacIntyre,
Burketown, Q.

CHARLES McDONALD.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

STATE OF QUEENSLAND.

Postmaster-General's Department,

E. 2953/2/14.
Sir,

BRISBANE, 6th October, 1914.

I have the honour to inform you that on the 29th April last Mr. C. J. McCallum, Pastoral Inspector for Mr. Edmund Jowett, Aramac, notified

this office that he could arrange for a caretaker to conduct this Department's business at Floraville. Mr. McCallum asked that arrangements be made with Mr. S. Pointon, Mr. Jowett's Manager at Arm-raynald Station, Floraville.

This Department is now installing a telephonic service between Normanton and Burketown, via Floraville, and as soon as the installation is completed, probably in about a month's time, the existing official office at Floraville will be transferred to Mr. Pointon and conducted as a Receiving, Telegraph, and Telephone Trunk Line Office.

I shall be glad if you will kindly advise Mr. McCallum accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. TEMPLETON,

Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Hon. C. McDonald, M.P.,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

(COPY.)

"Innisfell,"

Salisbury Road,

ROSE BAY, SYDNEY.

The Hon. C. MacDonald,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

I am enclosing correspondence from the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, also my reply which speaks for itself. I hope you will do something in the matter for us, or point out to your Federal Colleagues that it would be far more honourable and less dog in the manger policy to give away or sell to another nation that part of Australia that is of no use to the Commonwealth as seen from the present rulers' point of view.

I don't know how you will view this matter, but as you know personally the conditions of the Gulf, and what we all cheerfully put up with when we have Government encouragement, I think you will willingly try and get this decision altered, £150 per year for a weekly mail?

In the first place, the Authorities should be brought before the law for sweating. Three pounds per week for his own labour and use of buggy and plant of about 20 horses over a lonely, God forsaken track.

However, that's the mailman's business, if he is content to do it. Needless to say every station helps him in every way, as it is. Surely the Postmaster-General does not really think that half the bush mails can be run at a profit by the mailman, for the paltry prices they tender for the mails, unless they get concessions from all the stations, such as horse paddocks, conveniences, tucker, and the putting up of passengers for the night. I have had eighteen years experience in the North and I know what I write about. And the mail contracts that I have full knowledge of, would not run three months before they would have to give them up, if they had to pay for, and

make all the conveniences themselves, that the stations now and always did, give to them freely.

Thanking you for your help in this matter of the Burketown-Wollogorang Mail.

I am, yours truly,

J. N. MacINTYRE,
"Innisfell,"
Rose Bay ,SYDNEY.

Postmaster-General's Department,
BRISBANE, 2nd November, 1916.

F...../15.

Sir,

Service No. 179—Burketown and Wollogorang S.A.

The present contract for the above service will expire on the 31st December next, and for next year's running thereof a tender has been received in which the subsidy asked for is at the present rate of £150 per annum.

As the revenue derived from the service was only £25 the Department is not disposed to accept the above mentioned tender unless those connected are prepared to share the loss by contributing £62/10/-, being one-half of the difference between the revenue and the subsidy demanded.

Kindly confer with others interested with a view to my receiving definite advice at the earliest moment as to whether the required contribution will be forthcoming. It is of course to be understood that in the event of the revenue increasing, the amount of the contribution would be correspondingly reduced.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. TEMPLETON,
Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Owner (or Occupier),
Escott,
Via BURKETOWN.

ESCOTT STATION,
Via BURKETOWN,
10th December, 1915.

H. B. Templeton, Esq.,
Deputy Postmaster-General,
BRISBANE.

Dear Sir,

I have your communication of 2nd November, re Burketown and Wollogorang S.A. Mail Service.

Before going further into this matter I would point out the following facts:—

The lessees of the stations for whom this mail is run, by the latest Government Gazette, pay per annum £2362/12/6 for leases and £96/12/- O.L.'s. making a total with O.L.'s of £2459/5/-. Of this I myself pay for Westmoreland and Escott £1129, also for taxes to the Shire Council this year, I have paid some £100, making a total of £1229.

There are also other taxes which I say nothing of.

On top of this, along comes your letter now asking me how much I am going to contribute towards our mail service. I consider it is the most contemptible communication I have ever received.

Within the last three years the department has closed the Donaldson Office and also emasculated the Floraville Office. Two offices which I should be pretty correct in saying have been running for thirty years, until they were closed.

I have had considerable correspondence with our Federal Member, Mr. MacDonald over this Floraville business, with the result that a telephone is still to be made use of to send telegrams, which is in charge of any stockman that may happen to be employed by the station people, who now own the office. Our correspondence may be on the tongue of any Chinaman or blackfellow that may be in touch with the man in charge who is under no bond of secrecy to keep to himself the contents of telegrams that go through him.

The cutting down of this Wollogorang service is not economy, on account of the war at all, as the closing of these other offices shows. I also notice by the papers, other small mail contracts are to be discontinued, if not paid for by the lessees, and hope those concerned will make a stir.

As far as I am concerned, I will not pay one penny towards running the mail, and hail the time when it is discontinued, so that I can bring the matter before the public press both in Melbourne and Sydney. Although we far back bush people are doing more for the progress of outback Australia than all the people of the cities, we are now made to suffer for the cost of the conveniences heaped upon the city and suburban residents, also the asinine costly bungling of the Postal Officials, as is pointed out by the Sydney "Bulletin's" article re the Balfour episode. The cost of which I have no doubt would run the Wollogorang mail for two years at least.

As I have had considerable correspondence with our Federal Member over the Floraville business, and have these facts to go upon, I hail with delight this opportunity to point out, what I consider on your part (as Deputy Postmaster-General for Queensland) is a contemptible willingness to sacrifice our conveniences for the benefit of Southern Centres. And I am sure is only one instance of what would happen in other directions if the referenda were passed.

I am sending a copy of this letter to our Federal Member, Mr. MacDonald, and I hope he gets into communication with the Postmaster-General as these matters are reaching the height of ridiculousness and should be stopped, or advertised largely in the press for political purposes.

I am yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

Escott.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

14th February, 1916.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,

Your letter to hand re the question of a mail service in the Gulf Country. I quite agree with you that something should be done to facilitate, as far as possible, the desires of those in that portion of Australia. If there

is one part requiring population it is the Gulf Country, and while I do not claim that a mail service will settle people on the land still I consider that it will give some facilities which will help to make life a little more comfortable in such places.

I will do what I can in relation to the matter.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) CHARLES McDONALD.

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre.

BURKETOWN,
QUEENSLAND,

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,
ESCOTT.

4th April, 1917.

Sir,

It has been decided to dispose of the Floraville Post Office building, same to be removed within a reasonable time after same and not to be occupied in its present position.

Offers may be lodged at this office on or before 30th April, 1917.

F. W. GERISH, P.M.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

House of Representatives,
MELBOURNE, July 9th, 1917.

Dear Sir,

I am herewith enclosing an interim letter received by me from the Postmaster-General's Department re the Floraville Post Office.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre,
Escott,
BURKETOWN, N.Q.

CHARLES McDONALD.

Enclosure.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA,
QUEENSLAND.

Postmaster-General's Department,
Brisbane, 25th June, 1917.

No. E.1589/17.

Sir,—

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication dated the 19th instant, urging that the sale of the Post Office building at Floraville be withheld for the present, and, in reply, to inform you that the matter will receive careful consideration.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. TEMPLETON,

The Hon. Charles McDonald, M.P.,
Federal Parliament House,
Melbourne.

Deputy Postmaster-General.

October 29, 1916.

Copy of Letter and Telegram addressed to:

Hon. Charles MacDonald,
Parliament House, Melbourne.

Floraville telegraph office building not sold yet but tenders have been received. Please try and block the sale of it as later on we may get the office re-opened.

J. N. MacINTYRE,

ESCOTT,

Burketown.

I wired you from Burketown before I left to say it was locally reported that the Postal Authorities were about to sell Floraville Post Office building, and I wanted you to try and block same. They took away the post office from there, but left the telephone; now it is a certainty that once they sell the building it will be shifted away by new owners, just the same as the Donaldson building was sold and carted away, and we will have no telephone at Floraville at all. This action will not only be damnable, but it will be a disgrace to the Government. Why should the present men in power wreck the working of the results of the pioneering of this part of Australia? First, they close the Donaldson, then Floraville, now they will take away the telephone.

By referring to my letter to you dated about the end of 1913, re Floraville, you will there read of the inconvenience we will be put to if same is closed.

I hope you will do all in your power to stop this devastating policy.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am yours faithfully,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

29th October, 1917.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of Mr. McDonald, who is absent from Melbourne, I desire to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 9th instant relative to the Floraville Post Office.

The matter has been brought under the notice of the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, pending Mr. McDonald's return, when you will be further advised.

Yours faithfully,

A. CANTWELL,

Secretary.

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre,

Burketown,

North Queensland.

CLONCURRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND MINES.

Cloncurry, November 19th, 1917.

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,—

With reference to overtures made by this Chamber on behalf of the residents of Burketown and others concerned with reference to the closure and disposal of the Floraville Post and Telegraph Office, I enclose herewith copy letter received from the Deputy Postmaster-General, which speaks for itself. I regret that the overtures of this body have not been very successful.

Yours faithfully,

E. GRENFIELD,
Secretary.

Sufficient for my purpose is the compilation of the foregoing facts, but I am sorry to say it could be further drawn out. But why exhume a buried murdered body for a post-mortem, when we can prove the murder?

The closing of the telegraph offices is not a midsummer madness of one season, but a settled mania of years. In the case of Floraville, the intention to close it was first mooted in October, 1913, and up to the end of 1917 we tried hard to stop the sale of the building, hoping that after the "final settling at the peace table," which every Britisher knew in his own heart that a representative of the British Empire would be Chairman of, even if it did not sit for ten years, we would get the office re-opened in the long run. However, despite getting the Cloncurry Chamber of Commerce to act, and others also, and protest, the building was finally sold and removed.

Even as an accommodation house untenanted, it was a boon. From Augustus Downs to Floraville is some 30 miles, and from Floraville to Burketown is about 47 miles. Is it possible for the coach to do the run without camping out? And often has a benighted, mud-begrimed traveller breathed a sigh of relief to reach the shelter of the cottage and get a dry camp for the night in the wet season. One of the stipulations to the buyer of the building was its removal within a certain time of its purchase, otherwise I would have bought it myself, if it was only just to spite the Authorities; and now even I make bold to say that it will soon be re-opened with a new building.

Before introducing the limit of endurance that is still in vogue, not only to close up the North, but keep it closed, you will read of the encouragement for men to go out and work at "Kidston," and open up the district to civilisation. But who are humane enough to allow their wives to stay in civilisation until Kidston is civilised enough to accommodate them?

Is this encouraging settlement?

In introducing the correspondence for the erection of a telephone to the mouth of the Albert River, I can only say that in any other part of the world Authorities would not permit of a boat like the tender to be away from touch of civilisation for five or six days whilst carrying the general public, men, women and children. But here we have the Federal Authorities, not only shutting their eyes to it, but persisting in it being continued. More calloused, inhumane, and despicable actions never came

from the Bolsheviks of Russia. Moreover, you will read that the Musgrave is only allowed to carry 12 saloon passengers, and here the Deputy Postmaster-General is notified again that 21 women and children were on board the tender for some three days, 12 hours of that time tossing about in the Gulf, on the Taranna, that is like a washing-tub in comparison to the Musgrave.

However, all the foregoing is partly sufficient to educate the people of Australia as to the reasons of the empty North, and before the end of the work is reached I don't think there will be much doubt that it has as much to do with the black labour question as the settling of empty Manchuria.

Here is a country explored by Dr. Leichhardt in 1845, and who named Beames Brook on August 20th, 1845, and spoke as follows about the climate:—

The most interesting fact, and which had been observed by Capt. Stokes, was the moderate temperature of this part of the country. If my readers compare my observations on the weather from lat. 15 deg. 55 min. at the East Coast to lat. 17 deg. 39 min. on the West Coast of the Gulf, they will be struck by the complaint of 'cold nights.'

So much for treatment No. 1 that this wonderfully fertile and rich country of Northern Queensland has received for the past decade from the Authorities of the South.

KIDSTON NOTES.

("N.Q. Register.")

Kidston, September 13/18.

It is very awkward for those living in Kidston that the postal authorities will not allow money to be telegraphed from that field. A petition was recently signed by everyone on the field and sent to the Postmaster-General, and back comes the answer: it is not allowed because it is not in the regulations; which means that if the wife of a miner is living in Cairns, and she wants some money urgently for urgent matter, and she wires her husband in Kidston, he receives the wire Thursday morning, goes to the post office, pays for a telegraph money order. It then has to lie in the office until the next Thursday—eight days; then it goes to Einasleigh, and lies there until the next day; then goes by train to Mount Surprise telegraph station, and then sent to Cairns. All this rotten delay simply because it is against the rules to allow the postmaster here to 'phone the order the same day it is paid. No, the regulations say it must take ten days to send the order from Kidston to Cairns, and regulations must be obeyed, never mind if someone is dying for the want of the money. The postal regulations need badly overhauling.

(COPY.)

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland,

29th January, 1917.

Sir,

I have the honour by direction to make application for the instalment of a telephone service between here and the Heads at the mouth of the Albert River.

I enclose copy of letter on the subject received from Captain Bruce, the master in charge of the Burketown Branch of the Carpentaria Lighterage Coy., Ltd., which will explain how urgently this service is required.

Trusting that this application will meet with your favourable consideration.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. H. SHADFORTH,

Clerk.

The Deputy Postmaster-General,
Brisbane.

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland,

24th December, 1916.

The Chairman,
Burke Shire Council,
Burketown.

Dear Sir,

I have sailed out of nearly all ports (both large and small) from Burketown to Fremantle, and I can honestly say that for inadequacy of shipping this Port of Burketown is the worst.

There are many small ports on the Australian coast which have only a very small trade in comparison to Burketown, yet at these port entrances either a pilot or signalman is stationed at the Heads with either telephone or telegraph communication with the town, but Burketown has neither pilot, signalman, or even an unattended telephone installed at the river heads, and from the time the tender leaves the wharf until she returns all communication is cut off, and as it sometimes happens that from six to eight days elapse in the completion of the return trip from the wharf to the mail steamer, the inconvenience of not being able to keep in touch with the movements of the tender is flagrantly apparent.

At the present time our only way at arriving at even an approximate time of the arrival of the mail steamer is on the receipt of a wire from Thursday Island when the vessel takes her departure from that port. We have then to calculate her steaming time to the Norman Bar, allow the time for discharging and taking in the Normanton cargo, then apply the time she occupies in steaming from Norman to the Albert Bar, and thus arrive at an approximate conclusion as to what time she is due at the anchorage, and on many occasions we have been as much as two days out in our calculations, caused by various delays of which we knew nothing. These delays and miscalculations are bad enough in themselves, but the greatest inconvenience is suffered by the passengers, who are compelled to submit to the tossing about in strong winds and seas while lying anchored in the Gulf awaiting the mail steamer's arrival; and I consider that by installing an unattended telephone at the Albert Heads it would be a great source of convenience in many ways. If a telephone was placed there it would be only necessary to ring up Karumba and ascertain what time the mail steamer would depart from the Norman Bar. The tender then could proceed out and await the mail steamer without any delay to either steamer, and with

many inconveniences reduced to a minimum. Furthermore, on our inward trip we could ring up from the Heads and notify all concerned what time we would arrive at the wharf with the passengers, mails, and cargo, as owing to the shallowness of some of the crossings in the lower reaches of the river it is very often necessary to anchor at the Heads for a good many hours.

In kindly requesting the Council to take immediate action for the instalment of communication between Burketown and the river Heads, I am of opinion that the authorities will not demur one minute in complying with this most very reasonable request, as the trade of the port has warranted its existence many years ago, and its early instalment may serve a great convenience in case of serious accident.

(Signed) W. BRUCE,

Master in charge of the Burketown Branch of the Carpentaria
Lighterage Coy., Ltd.

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland,

29th January, 1917.

Sir,

I have the honour by direction to advise that we are endeavouring to have a telephone service established between here and the mouth of the river, and have written the Deputy Postmaster-General to this effect, enclosing him a copy of letter received from Captain Bruce, of the Lighterage Plant here, and which points out very fully how really necessary this is, the benefits that would be derived to the public generally.

The Council would much appreciate your assistance. You, personally knowing the conditions at present existing, would personally be able to explain to the Deputy how really necessary this matter is. Will you kindly do so?

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours obediently,

R. H. SHADFORTH,
Clerk.

W. S. Murphy, Esq., M.L.A.,
Parliament House.

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland,

29th January, 1917.

Manager,

Carpentaria Lighterage Coy., Ltd.,
Normanton.

Dear Sir,

By direction I beg to advise that this Council is endeavouring to get the authorities to instal a telephone service between here and the Albert Heads, or mouth of the Albert, and have written the Deputy Postmaster-General to this effect, enclosing him a copy of letter received from Captain

Bruce, which speaks for itself, and wou'd ask you to support this request by every means in your power.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

R. H. SHALFORTH,

Clerk.

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland.

Commonwealth of Australia,
Postmaster-General's Department,
Brisbane, 5th May, 1917.

Sir,

With further reference to your communication of the 29th January last, requesting that a telephone service be installed between Burketown and the Heads at the mouth of the Albert River, and forwarding a letter addressed to you by the master in charge of the Burketown Branch of the Carpentaria Lighterage Co., Ltd., in support of same, I have to inform you that, as the result of careful inquiry, it is found that owing to the large amount that would be involved in construction, and the comparatively small revenue that would be derived from the service, the erection of the line cannot be undertaken as a public trunk line facility.

In the circumstances, it is suggested that those concerned arrange for the erection of the line as an ordinary subscribers' line with connection to the Burketown Exchange, and I am forwarding herewith, for their information, copy of a pamphlet dealing with telephone lines in country districts. Attention is specially invited to the provisions of Telephone Regulations XIV. and XV.; copy attached.

If desired, terms will be quoted for the provision of a subscribers' line in accordance with the regulations.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. TEMPLETON,

Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Shire Clerk,
Burketown.

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Burketown, Queensland,

29th October, 1917.

Sir,

With reference to an application submitted by this Council for an installation of a telephone service between Burketown and the Heads at the mouth of the Albert River, and your reply thereto, dated the 5th May last, number A.457/1/18, suggesting the erection of the line as an ordinary subscribers' line.

After careful consideration the Council finds that the finances will not permit of the erection of the line under the conditions embodied in Telephone Regulations XIV. and XV., owing to a small community, the expenditure being quite impossible.

As the matter is of the utmost urgency, and in the light of humanity, I am instructed to make a further representation to you for an arrangement whereby this facility may be provided as a public trunk line; and as an instance of the necessity of same, recently, owing to the late arrival of the Gulf steamer delayed at Normanton Bar, our tender, with 21 women and children on board, was subjected to the dangers of the open sea for twelve hours, having to lay out five miles outside, hourly expecting the arrival of the steamer. Fortunately, the weather being normal, no mishap occurred other than much sickness and discomfort of the passengers, but in the event of rough weather the probable loss of life and the wreck of the tender may have occurred. In the event of a telephone connection to the Heads, a danger of this nature can be averted.

Owing to our inability to provide the facility, we are compelled to again approach you, hoping for a more favourable reply.

Yours obediently,

R. H. SHADFORTH,

Clerk.

Deputy Postmaster-General,
Brisbane.

(COPY.)

BURKE SHIRE COUNCIL.

Brisbane, 16th Nov., 1917.

Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your communication, dated the 27th ultimo, further relative to the desired installation of a telephone service between Burketown and the Heads at the mouth of the Albert River, and, in reply, to inform you that the financial outlook is so very poor that the provision of the line at the cost of this Department is not warranted. It is, therefore, regretted your request cannot be acceded to.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. TEMPLETON,

Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Shire Clerk,
Burke Shire Council,
Burketown.

Now, on top of all the foregoing correspondence we read in the papers that that superman, Mr. Webster, the Federal Postmaster-General, has been steadily increasing the Postal revenue.

We very rarely read, however, of the consequences to the far empty North; and, also, that his self-aggrandisement is at the expense of granting ordinary civilisation to the pioneering men and women of the North. It is very little satisfaction to us that that same "superman" has been written of in the press of the South in terms that only a man of such calibre could read and still hold on to his sinecure. Surely the Federal Postmaster-General is responsible for the actions of his State Deputies? However, this Federal policy of closing up the empty North is not of recent date, but dates back to my complaint in 1913, and started with the closing of

the Donaldson telegraph office some time before this, and four Federal Postmaster-Generals have been in office during that time, so that it is not intended to accuse the latest of them only; but it clearly shows that the Federal Parliament never at any time sympathised with the empty North, but have damned it to the best of their power. And the people of the South and the world marvel at its emptiness. To say that our Federal representative, Mr. Chas. McDonald, did not ventilate our grievances and try to educate the Government to the needs of the North in the face of these departmental letters, would be absurd. In fact, it was only the reading of Mr. McDonald's correspondence in answer to mine, and his courtesy and business-like attention to my growls, that softened the chagrin for me.

"THE SUPERMAN."

POSTAL FINANCE.

MR. WEBSTER SATISFIED.

August, 1919.

"To those who are ever ready to challenge general statements of finance, the following figures furnish a complete and conclusive reply," says the Federal Postmaster-General, Mr. Webster.

The figures which he proceeds to quote show a gradually increasing postal revenue for the Commonwealth, from just over £5,000,000 in 1915-16, to nearly £6,200,000 in 1918-19. And the expenditure from ordinary votes in those four years is shown to have increased slightly every year, except in 1916-17, when there was a slight decrease.

The postal revenue for the Commonwealth for the last four years respectively has been £5,053,596, £5,498,517, £5,762,190, and £6,188,506.

ENCOURAGING SETTLEMENT.

In March, 1910, I was returning to Augustus Downs, in the Gulf, with my wife; we had only been married three months. Just before reaching Townsville in the Gulf boat we were caught in what the captain assured us was only the tail end of a cyclone. However, I think we must have been right up at the butt of the tail, as we had a very wild night, indeed. On arriving at Townsville next day, we were told that there was a cyclone ahead of us.

Now, I was also shipping up a new buggy, but as the freight around to Burketown was to be almost as much as the new buggy cost, I was only shipping it to Townsville, and railing it to the Gilliat, on the Cloncurry railway line, and going to send a man and horses up from Augustus for it. This would save me about £20.

Now, we thought that the experience on the tail end of a cyclone was lively enough, and we were not looking for a livelier ride up near the horns of the beast, so with the chance of this latter ahead of us, we decided to get off at Townsville and go with the buggy and get horses at Eddington to take us to Dalgona, where I got the necessary number of horses to drive us home. All went well until we got to Coollulah, and here the wife took very ill. We camped here two days, and then decided to return to Cloncurry, about 90 miles. On the return to Cloncurry, the Coolullah manager and buggy travelling with us, we arrived at Donaldson telegraph

office about 11 o'clock a.m. (the wife on a mattress in the bottom of a buckboard, very ill). I sent a long urgent telegram into the doctor, and after a reasonable delay he wired out wanting to know what age the lady was, etc., and a lot of other things, to get further ideas of the malady. The telegraph master was away on the line, but his wife was there. She suggested a talk with the doctor on the 'phone which was there, and used by the Donaldson Hotel people whenever they wanted to have a talk into Cloncurry. As we wished to continue on the 75 mile journey into Cloncurry as soon as possible, and not seeing much chance of doing much good with the telegraph, we jumped at the chance. However, after a while we were informed that the Cloncurry postmaster absolutely refused to let us use it, although he was informed by the telegraph master's wife of the whole circumstances. All hands were surprised, as the use of it was so common to the Donaldson people, but just remarked it was like the actions of the "pig" in authority at Cloncurry. This man worked himself out of the department some few years later. Of course, no more could be done, so we did not wait, but journeyed on into town. The illness was not really serious, but my wife was laid up eight weeks in the Cloncurry Hospital when she got in there.

Thinking I would report the "fiendish cruelty" of the actions of the local postmaster, I wrote a full account to the Deputy, and as I was rather hot over the matter at the time, ended my letter by remarking that "one could not blame people if they took the law into their own hands and gave a cur like that a severe handling." In due course along came the reply. A full inquiry had been made; the Cloncurry postmaster was *perfectly correct* in all his actions—had he switched on the 'phone for our use, it would have disorganised the whole business on the *Normanton-Cloncurry line*. A business that in his own handwriting some few years later was not enough to keep the Donaldson office open, and so it was wiped off altogether. Further on, in his reply, he told me the proper way to act in a case of this kind. (To my knowledge it was as idiotic and putrid as his want of common humanity and ordinary decency.) He wound up his reply by saying that great exception was taken to the latter part of my letter.

The noble-minded man who signed that letter is the same that has signed all the correspondence that has wiped off the means of quick communication to civilisation of hundreds of pioneer men and women that are helping to make Australia a nation, that keeps too many louts and snobs and knaves in good, soft, well-paid Government billets, to her own undoing.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE.

BURKETOWN HOSPITAL.

Dec., 1918.

Medical Staff.—During the year the committee had great difficulty in securing a doctor. We had Dr. Fullard with us for a short term, but his stay was very short; therefore, you can say we have been without a doctor for the twelve months.

Nursing Staff.—We still have Mr. and Mrs. Tarmey with us as Wardsman and Matron, and the committee are well satisfied with their services.

Treatment of Patients.—During the twelve months 37 indoor patients were treated—30 males and 7 females—whilst about 239 outdoor visits were

made. During the period five deaths occurred in the hospital—four males and one female—the majority of these being serious accident cases, which were impossible to save.

It will be thus seen that during 1918 the hospital was without a doctor. I can also say that for the fourteen years I have been in the immediate district, half the time the hospital has been without a doctor. It is not the fault of the hospital authorities; they have always given a liberal salary for a little place like Burketown. And, moreover, I have been informed by doctors that have put in some time there, and it is on record we had kept some good men two years or more. They have been well paid for their monotonous sojourn in the God-forsaken and decadent town of Burketown, what with private practice and salary. But we can imagine the surroundings would not keep a good, smart medico there. Not only does he lose touch with the medical profession, as it were, but the want of social life is the drawback, and no particular complaint of the climate.

It is also on record some eight or nine years ago a new doctor and his wife came to Burketown with the intention of staying there, but after the handling they got on the Waterlily and arrived in Burketown at midday on Sunday, they left per coach on Monday night for fresh fields, leaving behind some awful expressions of disgust. However, one of the worst tragedies of Burketown occurred in the death of Mrs. Brown, a station manager's wife, in 1917. There was no doctor, or rather he had left in the boat just previous to Mrs. Brown being sent in to the hospital; so that there was no doctor, only a nurse. The complaint turned out to be abscess on the side of the jaw, between the neck and the ear. She suffered terrible pain, which was only alleviated by hot fomentations. However, when it looked to be really serious, a doctor was wired for from Cloncurry. The only doctor available was an eccentric, although admittedly clever, German doctor. The resident Cloncurry doctor could not leave his hospital patients. This German doctor would not leave Cloncurry until £150 was placed to his credit in the bank at Burketown; a guarantee was not sufficient, and a full day was wasted in fixing this matter up. When he did arrive, he lanced the abscess and told the nurse it would now be alright, but blood-poisoning had set in, and in a few hours the good lady had passed away. The doctor informed those in attendance that had the lancing taken place 24 hours sooner it would have effected a speedy and simple cure. So that for the time wasted over the lodging of the fee, one of the kindest, best and most capable of good "old bush" ladies went to her death, which can be accounted nothing short of being one of the tragedies of the empty North. The fee was not out of the way; it is 260 miles by the road to Cloncurry, and the hire of the car is £50, so that as far as the professional charge was concerned it was alright.

Now, a tragedy like this is enough to deter anyone from bringing his wife to the North, and, although I don't suppose anyone can be blamed, yet the "powers that be" in the South know of all these risks to life in the empty North; and what provision has the Government ever made to see that medical aid is extended to the Gulf? No, it's sink or swim; and then the ignoramuses of the South advocate the remedy of the empty North to be black labour. If they think that it is only a blackfellow's country, and only fit for blackfellows to live in, perhaps the reading of this book will open their eyes to a better knowledge of the truth of the matter.

"SHIPPING."

In these chapters you will read: Firstly—the damnable actions of the Federal Government, doing their best to close up North Queensland to the people already settled there; also, practically conspiring with a soulless Shipping Company, by letting them ill-use the inhabitants of the Gulf, without stepping in, which looks as if they were willing to use these people to further their own ends—that is, gradually close the Gulf up.

Secondly—the so-called State Liberal Governments of Queensland standing calmly by, and letting this Cormorant Company work its own sweet will and cripple the Gulf, although two different Premiers were interviewed in the matter.

It was not that the Federal Postmaster-General was not aware of the facts, as you will see by the correspondence to and from our Federal Member, Mr. Chas. MacDonald.

Dealing with the shipping problem, the position was this:

In the first place, the Federal Government were giving to the shipping people an annual subsidy to run a monthly or three-weekly mail service from Brisbane to the Gulf.

After my complaint to the Marine Board in 1910, I found out that the Federal mail contract did not cater for passengers, and as the subsidy was only then a yearly one, with the probability that it would be discontinued, the shipping people gave that as the excuse that they would not better the passenger accommodation on the chance of them losing the subsidy, and on account of the trade not paying them, discontinuing the shipping altogether. However, the results of our efforts were, that the Shipping Company were given a five years' contract for the carriage of mails to Normanton and Burketown for delivery every three weeks, dating from January 16th, 1915, at an annual charge of £6,500.

The improvements made for the comfort of passengers on the s.s. *Waterlily*, after my complaint of 1910, were half-a-dozen wooden canvas stretchers, notwithstanding the fact that it was doubtful if the six had space enough for them to be opened out on the available space, and also a new canvas awning to cover the hatchway, to provide shade; secondly, a ladies' w.c., comprising a space of about 2-feet 6 by 3-feet. The only one before was a cupboard about 4-feet deep by 3-feet, and one foot of the 4-feet depth was shelves with the paints, oils, and greases of the ship. This latter was the only sanitary convenience on the s.s. *Waterlily* that the Marine Board of Brisbane licensed for years to carry 60 passengers from Burketown to the anchorage of the big mail boat, a distance of 42 miles.

Despite the fuss and promises of better and suitable tender service, the old hulk *Waterlily* was not taken off the run until she was prohibited from travelling from the mouth of the Albert over to Normanton, but was still allowed to meet the mail boat, and her last run was on November 9th, 1917.

Last year, on 13th November, 1917, we were given the s.s. *Tarana*, which is in accommodation a 50 per cent. better boat, and is a step nearer what it should have been 20 years ago; but in this year, Anno domini, the nineteenth century, it is a disgrace to civilisation, let alone the Commonwealth of Australia. Another complication is that it is a different company that owns the lighterage plant, which is called the Carpentaria Lighterage Co. But what's in a name? I might have called that old *Waterlily* w.c., a privvy or lavatory.

In law or in the records of the Marine Department, I suppose it could be called one; but to the sick and sorry people who had to put up with it, it was a black hole of Calcutta.

I can well remember the late Captain John Mackay's (of Marine Board) disgust and anger after reading my complaint, and calling in the secretary and asking him to read the registered marine survey report of the *Waterlily*. He fairly exploded, as he had seen the boat himself alongside the mail boat on one of his trips up to the Gulf.

However, once one starts to rake muck, it's a game man who will see it out to the end. However, the years have rolled on since 1910. Use, or rather habit, becomes second nature, especially when one is experiencing discomforts with the good fellows whose living it is, perforce, to carry out the ends of calloused and unsympathetic shipping companies. No self-respecting man or company would run a business or mail or anything if he had to thieve or belittle the public in order to make it a paying concern. And the public have never asked the Shipping Company to be a philanthropic concern; and if the £6,500 subsidy was not enough, why did not they produce their books and show the Federal Postmaster-General, and if he did not then make it worth while to literally throw the contract in his face, and tell him to give it elsewhere. No; the shippers got the contract renewed for five years, on 6th January, 1915, and we did not get a change from the *Waterlily* until November 13, 1917. Now, don't imagine that the conditions that the war made, that it was necessary for all loyal people to cheerfully put up with, in other parts of the Empire and Australia, made any difference as far as our grievances were concerned (between the year 1910 and the present) in this Gulf mail contract—it did not. When it was absolutely necessary to replace the *Waterlily*, the *Tarana* was soon on the spot. Perhaps it cost the company double the price it would have in the year 1910; but that is poor satisfaction to us. Perhaps it will be poor satisfaction to the fair-minded shareholders of the company to know that the extra money gained by patching up the *Waterlily* every year since they got the five years' contract in 1915, sooner than buy a new boat, was gained at the expense of the pioneers of the Burketown district, men, women and children.

Cheerfully did all Gulf residents early in the war welcome the fact that the s.s. *Suva* was to be taken away from the Gulf run to aid in the transport of troops to the seat of war, and that for the future we would have to put up with the passenger conditions of the s.s. *Musgrave*.

The difference in accommodation is from one extreme to the other; but, as before mentioned, both on the *Waterlily* and the *Musgrave* the camaraderie and geniality of the captains and crew are so typically North Queensland that one hesitates at complaints in case it should be thought it was the fault of the ship's company.

Now that the war is over, it will behove the Marine Board to read up the marine survey of the *Musgrave* and inspect the ship personally to ascertain if it is correct.

It would, indeed, be interesting to produce here the figures of the number of passengers, saloon and steerage, that travelled South in her in December last year, 1918, from the Gulf. However, all were glad to be able to get on her at all, so that under the conditions we are not out to blame anybody; but are those conditions to continue, and the Federal Government paying a £6,000 per year mail subsidy?

It is a matter of much mirth to know that when the s.s. *Dugong* brought out a boatload of passengers from Normanton to board the already overstrained accommodation of the *Musgrave*, the captain of the *Dugong* was asked, "Did you bring any meat with you?" as this is where the ship takes in a meat supply. "No," says the *Dugong* captain; "there was no meat in the State butchers' shop at Normanton, and has not been any for some days." (Nota bene: The State stations, carrying some 50,000 or 60,000 head of cattle, are within 150 miles of Normanton.) "Well, unless you go back to Karumba and get some meat, all these passengers will have to be taken back, as there is only sufficient meat on board for the passengers here now to last to Thursday Island," says the *Musgrave* officials. "Right-oh," says genial and peace-loving little Captain Swyers, of the *Dugong*, and goes off to Karumba, and got ten or a dozen store-conditioned mixed goats.

That being settled, in due time we got going; but when the stewards started to call out the menu next morning at breakfast, lamb's fry, mutton chops, etc., the protesting bleats from off the forward hatch of the remaining goats could be plainly heard at the table, which added to the gaiety of the good-humoured, easily-contented, assembled company. However, our next facer was the prevailing state of the dry weather, which had also affected our water supply. Fresh water was at a discount, and one morning one enlightened individual who was not used to these North Queensland picnics found himself, when half shaved, that the water supply of his cabin was defunct, and the situation was only saved by a lucky chance that there was a little left in his cabin water-bottle. The appeal to the stewards was answered like the prayers for rain about the same time that the inhabitants of Longreach were uttering, but the real climax was reached when I was assured that on arrival at Thursday Island, about 6 o'clock in the morning, the water for the ship's tea had to be taken off the jetty at Thursday Island, as there was none available on the boat for breakfast.

To the people who cheerfully live in the North, these are humorous incidents; but to the people of the South they are warnings not to go to the Gulf, and look upon people who do as imbeciles. However, in case there are people who don't dream that these conditions really obtain, I will give the whole position in its entirety, and perhaps the people of the South will then understand why the Gulf is decadent. Unless the heads of past and present Labour and Liberal and National Governments, State and Federal are idiots, they should know why the North of Australia is not populated; but the masses of the public presumably do not, and it is my object in writing this tale of woe to enlighten them. As it is now, those enlightened leaders of Governments only cater for the votes of the populace of the South, and cater for their wants only, and the Northern part of the Commonwealth is only a minor consideration. Surely the reading of these letters bears out all I state more fully than if a thousand rabid socialist malcontents preached them every Sunday afternoon in the domains of Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.

However, to my tale:—

In August, 1918, this press message was wired away to our firm supporter and good Northerner, Mr. C. Hensley, of the "*Cloncurry Advocate*," and appeared therein on the 23rd August, 1918:

"Last week an old, respected resident, Jack Davidson, met his death in a horrible manner. As he was riding past a fully loaded team, carrying twelve tons, his horse stumbled in a gutter and threw him under wheels, crushing both legs. He died some hours later."

Great dissatisfaction is expressed here at the notification from A.U.S.N. Company, that, after the date 6th August, Carpentaria Lighterage Co. were advancing freight from Albert Bar to town 20/- a ton, original freight 17/6; three months ago same was raised to 30/-, now rate 50/-. On occasion of first advance local business men protested, and asked for reduction. Reply was, in effect, "Can't be did—the company is being conducted now at loss." As far as company transactions plying between Albert Bar and Burketown concerned, in months March, April, May, June, payments one firm alone in and out freights lighterage amounted to £694. If company being run at loss, same must be at Normanton side. Knowing this, company was approached by local syndicate to put a price on tender and lighter here. Reply was, matter could not be entertained on account of mail contract. However, consider reply only subterfuge, as would be easy matter to take over the plums as well as unprofitable part of venture. Matter will not rest at this. President of Progress Association in communication with member for district to ascertain if absurd demands in keeping with workings of War Precautions Act. If so, it only remains for us to equip ourselves with another lighterage plant, as we have men here who state that anything can be and will be "did," and very shortly, too, sooner than continue to be fleeced. Musgrave left Brisbane with 148 tons cargo, and increased tonnage to 170 tons at Townsville. Freights now stand, from Brisbane to Albert Bar 62/6, from Albert Bar to town 50/-. Distance from Brisbane to Albert Bar 2050 miles by water, and Bar to town 36 miles. Compare these rates with rate, Brisbane to London formerly 40/- per ton, distance 12,000 miles. Is it any wonder the Gulf country, the richest portion of Australia in minerals and pastoral country, taking in its natural back country, which now is fed into Townsville and eastern coast, is now only existing, and actually gone back the last twenty years?

Rumour states Premier, Mr. Ryan, will shortly visit Normanton and Burketown. Rumour as welcome as latest good advices from seat of war. We only want chance to show the Premier our natural, national, undeveloped assets, and feel sure the result will be momentous for Queensland and Australia, and will result in the extension of railway to Gregory, and immediately eventuate schemes to place thousands of our gallant lads when they return from the Front. It is up to us to keep the home fires burning and have others ready for them to light when they return, as we can thank them partly for present result now obtaining, and hopes of the early successful termination of war."

To get the subject advertised properly in the South, I also wired Mr. Hensley as follows:—

"Ryan, wires secretary Progress Association, making representations Commonwealth Government re lighterage dues. Please get 'Courier' insert Burketown notes printed yours last week. If any small cost to insert same, I will pay. Reply collect."

And Mr. Hensley replied:—

"Wired 'Courier.' They reply—no; if publication desired, 'Courier' matter should be supplied first hand."

However, that was not the reason the "Courier" would not publish it, and I later got the reason in black and white privately.

I also wired a Brisbane man as follows:—

"Shipping freights risen again here. Would 'Daily Mail' or 'Courier' receive press wire re same and district, about seven hundred

words? I suggest wiring you same, and you arranging it, or inquiring cost of publication. Reply collect."

I got an unsatisfactory reply to that, and the message never went into the Brisbane press. However, I got a letter which reads:—

"The editor of the 'Courier' wished to take on your proposal, but other influences were adverse, and it is my opinion that the papers dare not publish anything concerning the shipping combine that is against them. As it is, they have the greatest difficulty as to paper shipments, for all the papers are here living from week to week practically by favour of the shipping companies. You will thus see the difficulties they are faced with should they make unpleasant disclosures of the nature indicated in your telegram."

Freights are now regulated by a Government Board in Melbourne, and the companies have practically no voice in the arrangements, but it would still be possible to inflict loss and inconvenience upon those requiring paper. However, our Progress Association president wired to our member (Mr. D. Riorden) as follows:—

"Shipping company has notified further increase lighterage dues. Rate now 50/- per ton. Considering service is subsidised, is not increase rate contravention War Precautions Act? Will be glad if you will make strongest protest our behalf through proper channel. The increase out all reason, and inimical best interests long-neglected Gulf."

We also, on 27th August, received from the Premier this urgent wire:—

"Your telegram to D. Riorden, M.L.A., regarding lighterage dues, am making representations to Commonwealth Government on matter. —RYAN, Premier.

We then replied to the Premier:—

"Re shipping charges. Many thanks your very courteous reply ours. Position most acute, but we feel sure your negotiations with Commonwealth Government will bring about tangible results. The Gulf steamer service is not only our very existence, but extortionate rates, freights retard further development this valuable portion of State. Commonwealth Government is much alive their own Northern Territory, and it is time they gave us some consideration."

However, this is not the limit of the iniquity dealt out to the district. Very often circumstances so happen that the large boat has not time to unload all the cargo, but takes it back to the Norman Bar, and either the Normanton or Burketown tender brings it back to Burketown—that is, if it suits the Lighterage Company.

On the 10/4/18, this wire was despatched to Burns, Philp, the agents for the Carpentaria Lighterage at Normanton:—"Referring cargo short landed (No. 117). Fifteen tons ours short, including 116 sacks flour, 15 sacks sugar and salt, several large cases repacks. Agents here inform us approximately six tons landed yours, and Lighterage Coy. does not intend delivering before arrival next Musgrave. Teams have already waited month for loading, and will now have to wait further month. Taranna and crew have nothing do but lie at wharf until arrival Musgrave. Surely you can arrange to deliver in meantime. Considerable amount cargo going Tablelands through Cloncurry owing dilatory manner cargo handled this port. Already Lawn Hill mines closed through treatment last year, and

wool will be diverted that direction next year. Our cargo landed disgraceful state. Pillaging rampant this port, major portion being between anchorage and final delivery to carters. Respectfully suggest you make fullest inquiries. Please reply quickly.—(Signed) MURRAY & SCHOLÉS.”

The reply was:—“Your telegram received. Have wired urgent Brisbane; will advise you their reply later. 10/4/18.—BURNS.”

Later, 11/4/18:—“Unable send cargo, surplus here, until next Musgrave; quantity too small.—BURNS.”

Now, these would be the first teams to travel out to Camooweal and the Barkly Tablelands stations with rations for the new year. They would not be able to travel earlier on account of the wet. It is not good policy for the merchants to have old flour on hand to send out to the stations, as they have to get in a four or six months' supply at the one time, so the least the merchants can do is to work it out to get in fresh flour to put on the teams; and so you see here is a case that, although I suppose that the rates of freight paid from Brisbane to Burketown would just about be on a par with or higher than any paid in the whole British Empire, in normal times, for a saving of a paltry few pounds, the inland Tableland station people could starve for all the shipping people cared. It would be in November at the latest that they could have got their last supply, so that six months' stock would be just about out in April.

Now, as regards back freights. One would think that the company would impose only a nominal freight to encourage back loading for an otherwise empty ship, but not so, as the schedule will show. Negotiations were opened earlier in the year to get a cheap back freight for salt, as at that time there were some 40 to 50 tons of good white salt that could have been sent to Townsville or Brisbane for consumption, as there was at the time a great scarcity of salt all over Australia. The answer was that the directors of the company were agreeable to a rate from Burketown to Albert Bar of 20/-, and from Bar to Townsville 32/- and to Brisbane 36/-, making a total freight of £2/16/-, but only in lots of 100 tons or over. It was only coarse butchers' salt, and just about then the prices were fixed by the Government, so that it was not worth bothering about. We also were reading about the great scarcity of bottles in the South, and the shortage was really serious, so the papers lead us to believe, and here at Burketown was a large stock of some 5,000 dozen of good bottles, which had collected there for years, as back freights very rarely warranted the sending back of any empties from the Gulf. Here was a chance of a rise, but once again was the adage realised, “All that glitters is not gold,” and the would-be windfall ended with this letter from the Brisbane Bottle Exchange Company, Ltd.:—

“South Brisbane, June 17/18.

“Messrs. Murray & Scholes,

“Burketown.

“Dear Sirs,

“In reply to yours of 22nd ulto., we unfortunately cannot offer you a price for your bottles at Burketown.

“We have endeavoured to make arrangements for securing a special freight, but without success.

“The lighterage to Albert Bar and freight to Brisbane is about 75/-

per ton of 40 cubic feet. On these figures we cannot quote you as before mentioned, but are prepared to offer you $\frac{2}{3}$ per dozen for plain quart chams. and crown lagers, and $\frac{1}{4}$ per dozen for pint cham. and lagers, delivered on wharf Brisbane; all charges paid by you. Oily and broken bottles not allowed for. Bags will be paid for according to market rates.

"Yours faithfully,

"(Sgd.) JOHN G. SOBEY,

"Secretary."

As you will note, this letter is dated June 17; the further rise in lighterage freights was on August 6th. Now, if the company were running the service at such a loss, why did they not jump at the offer and sell to the "poor local fools" that were willing to "hop" in? We always understood that the Lighterage Company were given £150 for each trip of the tender with mails from the big boat by the A.U.S.N., and we know what we have paid away for freight, so surely to goodness one can put two and two together.

By the way, I am told the prices of bottles in February, 1919, offered by the same company, plain quart chams. and crown lagers is $\frac{1}{6}$ per dozen, and pint chams. and lagers 1/- per dozen, delivered at station or wharf, Brisbane. The price of quart chams. before the war was 1/- per dozen.

(COPY.)

Burketown, July 1/18.

J. Hamilton, Esq.,

A.U.S.N. Co., Brisbane.

Dear Sir,

I am enclosing you a long outstanding account for claims against the A.U.S.N. Co. Please be good enough to see that the matter is fixed up without delay, as times are bad up this way, and goodness knows we pay high enough freights for what we do get up.

I would also like to know whether there is any chance of getting the lighterage charges and freights reduced on the backward journey to the South. I will shortly open up a salt industry here, but the success of it now, and more so later on, will depend on the freights South. Also, I have a lot of old Meat Works stuff at Normanton, big tanks, etc., that I would bring over from Normanton when the opportunity offered—when lightly loaded tenders were coming over direct from Normanton to here that I would bring over if the freights were reduced and reasonable. As you know, a 1000-gal. tank empty does not weigh much, but measures a devil of a lot; and to cut them up and so save freight means the waste of a competent man's time to cut them up and to get them put together again when over here. It is a waste of money and a waste of time, and at a time like the present we know and read continually that waste of labour and time is criminal, not only for the welfare of the Gulf, but to the Empire. (Eh, what?) Now, it means also that I won't do it, and I won't get them over here unless the freights are distinctly reasonable, and so another stab at the welfare and progress of the Burketown District is accomplished.

It is to the benefit of the Shipping Company to foster all attempts for the advancement of the Gulf, more especially the Burketown District, as it means more freights up here and more back freights. But if they go hand-in-hand with the rest of the Townsville clique and ignorant politicians

who know not the potentialities of the district to close up or at least cripple the place, all the trade will come through Townsville and Cloncurry to the Duchess or end of this end of the line, and so the Barkly Tableland will be served from there and the volume of trade will be limited and the A.U.S.N. lose the freights, and also bar the progress of the whole district; whereas the alternative, if the Shipping Company would only reduce the coastal freights and cut down the lighterage to one-third ($1/3$), the volume of trade to the North-west of Queensland and the vast expanse of Barkly Tableland territory, whose only available port is Burketown, would increase alarmingly, and the Government would be compelled to make a port here, and so facilitate shipping and reduce your difficulties which now exist. The result would be the Northern Territory trade would be, and continue to be, a valuable adjunct to the State of Queensland; the increased freight profits would be a much-desired adjunct to the A.U.S.N. shareholders' pockets—a distinct gain in every way to the Commonwealth, and to the glory and stability of the British Empire.

These views may sound big to unbelieving and cynical and unprogressive staid city folk, who only live to collect dividends, and enjoy their ease in the comfort of established civilisation and placidly mouth the sentiments of patriotism. What-oh?

I am trading on our friendship in thus airing my views to you, but underneath it all is real solid business inquiry. Is there a chance of us getting our freights to the Gulf reduced, and especially the extortionate charges of the Lighterage Co.? Believe me, the prosperity of the Gulf, especially Burketown, is on the eve of accomplishment, and I am going to leave no stone unturned to further this end, and may have to severely criticise different matters that bar our progress, through the press.

The key to the situation is money and influence, but the only hand that will turn that key is enthusiasm, integrity, and energy; and perhaps we may find a man who possesses it, and who has sufficient "guts" to try conclusions with "the powers that be" and attempt to turn the key.

Secondly (in fact, the main object of this letter) is to collect my store debt against the A.U.S.N. for claims, £80/19/1. "Money makes the mare go," and my mare wants the spurs sharpening, so please try and get it fixed up as soon as possible.

Thanking you for a friendly and not critical view of my letter, and hoping you will use your influence on our behalf up here to get the shipping freights made more reasonable.

I am, yours sincerely,

J. N. MacINTYRE.

(COPY.)

AUSTRALASIAN UNITED STEAM NAVIGATION CO., LTD.

Brisbane, 12th July, 1918.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,

Messrs. J. N. MacIntyre & Co.,

Burketown.

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your circular letter of 1st inst., together with communication addressed to our Mr. Hamilton, contents of which we note.

So far as claims referred to are concerned, we regret no statement was sent with your letter, so that we are unable to investigate at this end.

However, all claims which have been referred to us by our Burketown agents have been dealt with up to the present, and as claims must be settled at port of destination, we can only refer you to our Burketown agents in connection with any matters outstanding, and have no doubt that any amounts that we are legally liable for will be settled without delay.

On the question of freights to Albert Bar, we very much regret to advise that there is no hope of any reduction from any port to Albert Bar, as the service is being conducted at a loss. Some months ago we had occasion to alter the system of booking cargo, and decided to book to the Bars only, leaving the Carpentaria Lighterage Co. to frame their own rates for the lighterage of cargo to and from the Bars. From our knowledge of this company's operations we are afraid that there is no hope of any reduction in their charges, as we know that the work performed by them for some considerable time past has been conducted at a loss.

Yours faithfully,

FOR MACDONALD, HAMILTON & Co.,
Managing Agents.

(COPY.)

“THE COUP DE GRACE.”

AUSTRALIAN UNITED STEAM NAVIGATION CO., LTD.

6th August, 1918.

Dear Sirs,—

We wish to advise you that on and after this date all cargo per The Carpentaria Lighterage Coy. has advanced 20/- per ton.

Yours faithfully,

AUSTRALASIAN UNITED STEAM NAVIGATION CO., LTD.
ALFRED J. SMITH & CO.,

W. DELANEY,
Manager.

CARPENTARIA LIGHTERAGE COY., LTD.

INWARD.

Lighterage Rates from Albert Bar to Truganini Landing, to take effect from 6th August, 1918:—

Basis Rate, Measurement or Deadweight	50/- per ton
Minimum up to 2ft.	6/- „ package
Minimum over 3ft.	12/6 „ „
Acids	100/- „ ton
Bur Hogsheads	17/- each
do. Half-hogsheads	8/6 „
Bran	62/6 per ton
Bicycles, with or without Passengers	25/- each
do., Motor, do. do.	50/- „
Birds in Crates	75/- per ton
Bricks	175/- „ 1,000
Benzine	100/- „ ton
Boats, Ordinary Rowing or Motor	38/- „ „

Carbide	100/-	per ton
Chaff, Dumped	75/-	" "
do., Undumped	100/-	" "
Coal	50/-	" "
Cartridges, Safety	75/-	" "
Empties not returned	50/-	" "
Explosives	26/-	" package
Fibre	175/-	" ton
Fireworks	100/-	" "
Fruit	67/-	" "
Gas in Tubes	100/-	" "
Glass Plate	75/-	" "
Gold or Bullion	20/-	cent. & Meir.
Hay	75/-	per ton
Kapok	175/-	" "
Horse and Cattle	120/-	each
Sheep	10/6	"
Dogs	20/-	"
Methylated Spirits	62/6	per ton
Medicines, Patent	62/6	" "
Pipes, Cast Iron, up to 20ft. Lengths	50/-	" "
do., Cast Iron, over 20ft. Lengths	75/-	" "
do., W. Iron, up to 20ft. Lengths	50/-	" "
do., W. Iron, over 20ft. Lengths	62/6	" "
Paints	62/6	" "
Salt	50/-	" "
Tanks, Full	50/-	" "
do., Empty	50/-	" "
Timber, Sawn, under 12 x 12 & up to 30 Lengths....	15/-	" 100ft. (5)
do., do., under 12 x 12 & over 30ft. Lengths....	17/-	" "
do., Logs, up to 30ft. Lengths	5/6	per lineal foot
do., do., over 30ft. Lengths	6/-	" " "
Tobacco, Cigars, Cigarettes	57/-	" ton
Vehicles—Single-seated Buggies, Drays, and Four-wheeled Vehicles	200/-	"
Double-seated Buggies, Single Horse Lor- ries, and Waggonettes	275/-	"
Double Horse Lorries and Waggonettes	187/6	each
Wines and Spirits	52/6	per ton

All Other Cargo at Basis Rate.

Brisbane, 8th August, 1918.

LIGHTERAGE FROM TRUGANINI TO ALBERT BAR.

	£	s.	d.	
Basis Rates, Measurement and Deadweight	2	5	0	ton
Minimum up to 2ft.		5	0	package
do. over 2ft.		11	0	"
Bicycles	1	2	6	each
do., Motor	2	5	0	"
Empty Bottles	2	5	0	ton
do., Casks	2	5	0	"
Hides, Loose		1	3	each
do., Bags or Bales	2	5	0	ton

Horns, Hoop Hair, Bones	2	5	0	ton
Ore	2	5	0	"
Skins	3	7	6	"
Tallow	2	5	0	"
Wool	2	5	0	"
Travellers' Samples	2	5	0	"
Timber, Sawn	13	0	100	super feet
Sandalwood	2	5	0	ton
Vehicles—Single Seat Buggies, Drays, and Two- Wheel Vehicles	9	7	6	each

Now, compare the treatment that the Federal Authorities allow to be dealt out to the Queensland Gulf and to Darwin. They give an annual subsidy of £200 per month (north and south trips) to Burns Philip to run steamers monthly to Darwin, although the Australian Oriental Line and the Royal Mail Packet Company (Dutch) provide a regular service also. Now note the freights and passenger fares to Burketown and to Darwin. The cost to get to Burketown in a dirty packet like the Musgrave is £17 saloon, which for further enlightenment one might read Mr. Webber's letter of February 24, 1919. The general freight rate is 50/- plus 70/- equals £6, from Brisbane, £6/13/6 from Sydney and £6/18/6 from Melbourne, as against £2/17/6 from Brisbane or Sydney to Darwin, and £3/5/- from Melbourne to Darwin. As regards Stock—it costs to land a bull or stallion at Burketown £18/11/0, as against £8/10/0 to Darwin.

A glance through the freights of both places will give one an idea of what the Gulf of Queensland has to contend against. Compare the freights also of Benzine, double seated Buggies, etc., and if these charges are not prohibitive to successful occupation of these far Northern lands, well, I don't know what is.

On further inquiry, it is found that the A.U.S.N. Coy had a contract for five years from 16th January, 1906, at £6,000 per annum. This was extended yearly at the same figure until 1915, when a five years' contract was entered into, at £6,500 per annum, but was reduced in 1918 owing to the service being reduced from a three weekly service to a monthly one, to the old sum of £6,000. This no doubt explains the rise of the Lighterage freights. A perusal of the Carpentaria Lighterage Co., Ltd., shows that it is registered as a Company with a capital of £25,000 in 25,000 shares of £1. The original shareholders were James Burns, Adam Forsythe, James Forsythe, B. H. McDonald, F. C. Burns, T. W. Robinson 1,000 shares each, and Baxter Bruce 1 share. The last return of shareholders on the 26th March, 1918, shows that the present shareholders are James Burns 1667 shares, James Forsythe 1666 shares, Adam Forsythe 1667, Burns Philip & Co. Ltd., 2,500 shares, Alexander McNab 1 share, B. W. McDonald, 4,999 shares, David Hamilton 1,333 shares, Frederick Charles Barnes 1,667 shares. The last four shareholders hold in trust for the A.U.S.N. Co. Ltd.

Nota Bene.—After all my efforts, the subsidy as well as being made a five years one from 1915 was put up £500, and not a penny to my knowledge was spent in any way in improvements until they were forced to replace the "Waterlily" in November, 1917. Simply pocketed the three years £500 extra, without a smile, and we all the time believing their tale of woe, and ignorant of the rise in the subsidy. It sort of galls me now to think I wasted so much energy in the matter, as the fruit although it did ripen, was plucked by this soulless Company, and winked at by the Federal Postal Authorities.

If the "Inch-Cape Rock" bluffs off Commonwealth shipping from competition to other lands, there is no reason why it should not operate for the Commonwealth in Australian waters. Can any man read this chapter on shipping and deny that it was high time that the Commonwealth ran their own shipping to the north and pocketed these subsidies, instead of as it were only subsidising others to impose voracious freights with travelling accommodation not in keeping with present civilization, to the damning of settlement in Northern Queensland. Is there any reason why a service should not be running direct to Thursday Island, the Gulf and Darwin in one run? Is it not high time our complaints should be voiced all over the Empire, so that for very shame's sake, the authorities will wipe them away? It will be funny to read the history of the future, when the North is opened up and settled and producing wealth in millions, how those people who now advocate in their ignorance black labor to be the panacea for the empty North, will take the proof of their blatant ignorance!

CURRENT RATES.

6th March, 1919.

To	From	From	From
<i>Norman Bar</i>	Melbourne	Sydney	Brisbane.
General	78/6	73/6	60/-
Horses & Cattle up to 8 head ..	222/6	208/6	175/-
Bulls & Stallions	232/6	218/6	185/-
Single-seated Buggies & 2- Wheeled Vehicles	292/-	272/6	221/6
Double-seated Buggies	308/3	288/9	237/9
<i>Albert Bar</i>			
General	88/6	83/6	70/-
Horses & Cattle up to 8 head ..	241/-	228/-	195/-
Bulls & Stallions	251/-	238/-	205/-
Single-seated Buggies & 2- Wheeled Vehicles	328/-	310/-	259/-
Double-seated Buggies	344/3	326/3	275/3
From	to	to	to
<i>Albert Bar</i>	Brisbane	Sydney	Melbourne.
General	52/6	57/6	62/6
<i>Norman Bar</i>			
General	50/-	55/-	60/-

SYDNEY, April 1st, 1919.

	Melbourne to—		Sydney to—		Brisbane to—	
	Per Norman Bar.	Albert Bar.	Norman Bar.	Albert Bar.	Norman Bar.	Albert Bar.
General	40 ft. or 20 cwt. 71/-	81/-	66/-	76/-	52/6	62/6
Horses and Cattle up to 8 head each	207/6	226/-	193/6	213/-	160/-	180/-
Bulls and Stallions do.	217/6	236/-	203/6	223/-	170/-	190/-
Single-seated Buggies and Two-wheeled Vehicles do.	267/-	303/-	247/6	285/-	196/6	234/-
Double-seated Buggies do.	277/-	313/-	257/6	295/-	206/6	244/-
Benzine 40 ft.	142/-	162/-	132/-	152/-	105/-	125/-

	Per Albert Bar to—			From Norman Bar to—		
	Brisbane.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Sydney.	Melbourne.
40 ft.						
General or	45/-	50/-	55/-	42/6	47/6	52/6
20 cwt.						

Live Stock—Same as upward rates.

BURNS PHILIP & COMPANY LIMITED.

SYDNEY, 24th March, 1919.

Dear Sirs,—

We are in receipt of your favour of 22nd inst., enquiring the rates of freight to Darwin, which are as under:—

General Cargo—

Per ton of 20-cwt. or 40 cubic feet:

Melbourne to Darwin	65/- per ton
Sydney & Brisbane to Darwin	57/6 „

Benzine in drums only:

Sydney or Brisbane to Darwin	82/6 „
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Motor cars at rates per ton of 40 cubic feet:

Minimum	£20
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from Sydney and Brisbane only, other vehicles by special arrangement according to size.

Yours faithfully,

FOR BURNS, PHILIP & COMPANY, LIMITED,

(SGD.)—McMaster.

COPY.

24th February, 1919.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,—

With reference to Bottles I should certainly estimate the number available in Burketown to be 4,500 dozen if not 5,000 doz.

I was very pleased with the attitude you have taken with Shipping Co. There is a small matter which I would like to bring under your notice—It has greatly hurt my feelings and if you would give it publication in some way I would thank you.

Early in February I went to the Shipping Office of the A.U.S.N. Co. and asked for a saloon ticket for Burketown by the Musgrave. I was told that all the berths were booked. I replied that I would take a shake-down as I wanted to get back and explained that the boat only ran once a month and if I missed this one I would have to wait for another month—and as there were 30 or 40 sleeping on the deck coming down surely it would not make any difference one upon the deck going back.

He said the steamer was only allowed to carry twelve according to regulations and he would not book more as there was a Marine Board.

I said it was a pity that the Board didn't carry the one act out in all parts of Queensland.

He said, why don't you take a steerage ticket, and I said surely you wouldn't ask anyone to travel by steerage in such a boat.

Now, I think this is the limit, a Company getting £6,000 a year and only take 12 saloon passengers, Normanton, Burketown and other ports once a month, how in the name of goodness does the Government ever expect anyone to go North when such a boat is allowed to run on this voyage and especially in the wet season when one can't go overland.

And again on the Saturday the 22nd February, I went to book up a saloon passage for Mrs. Webber and four children, I was told that there were only two berths available as there were only 2 (two) ladies' cabins altogether, if I could put the four children in the one berth I could book up. Of course, I had to submit as there is no other way of going as one cannot take one's family overland.

Mrs. Scholes is the other lady passenger with her family.

Fancy a company like the A.U.S.N. allowing a boat like this on the line. Does anyone wonder why the Gulf is at a standstill?

Why, it's cruelty to women and children when one takes into consideration that four children and a lady have to sleep in two berths like there are on the Musgrave.

Ah, well, I think I will have worried you enough, so will stop; only the damned thing makes me wild when I think of it—after all the years the Gulf has been battling and the enormous sums of money they get out of us and the way the Government charge the Gulf people rent on holdings, etc., and allow the people to be treated like this I think it's over the odds.

Kind regards,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) F. J. WEBBER.

P.S.—With such handicapping as the Gulf receives it must be a wonderful country to survive at all.

F. J. W.

THE BURKETOWN MINERAL FIELD.

SILVER-LEAD & ZINC MINES.

To quote from the reports of Lionel C. Ball, B.E., Government Geologist and others, this field is well worthy of systematic development. Locality called the Lawn Hill Silver Mines, it has a computed area of 317 square miles, although this includes only a small part of the known metalliferous tract and does not even take in all the properties described in Mr. Ball's report. Its elevation above sea level is about 400 feet, so that it evidently should be a white man's country. It is 100 miles south of Burketown, but on account of the road used being sandy and heavy in places, *transport* to and from the mine is difficult. Mr. Ball concludes his report by saying:—"It will be shown below that the quantity of high grade lead-silver ore developed on the Company's holdings is comparatively insignificant. Small outputs may be expected from Bell's, Coglan's, the Greater Britain, and the Star groups, but only the Lilydale, Mended Hill and Silver King mines have continuous shoots of galena been proved by driving. The future of the field depends on the low grade formations which have yet to be prospected and opened up.

Briefly, I consider that with railway communication and with modern installations it should be possible to profitably exploit such low grade formations as that exposed on the Silver King where a large tonnage of ore has been brought to light as the result of development work.

The zinc lead contents are equivalent in the present state of the metal market (1911) to 6 per cent. of copper and it has been noticed that mining and treatment costs may be taken as about the same for the two classes of ore. The Mine Manager should have no difficulty in supplying the future mill with 300 tons of ore a day in order to maintain a weekly output of 350 tons or two train loads of concentrates. With this quantity assured, the

freight charge per ton mile requisite to cover working expenses and to pay interest on the cost of construction of the railway might be brought down to the normal rate for such lines even if there were no other freight forthcoming—a highly *unlikely* contingency.

Further, I believe that numerous other deposits of a similar character will be exposed on this field. The Banner, South, Funnel Hill and Watson's are likely to yield large quantities of milling zinc ore and the Anglo American, Britannia and Greater Britain may possibly also become low grade producers, etc., etc."

Resuming, he states:—"This will require a large expenditure and meanwhile there will be no immediate return for with the present want of *transport facilities* it is useless to mine and ship any but the very highest grade of lead ore, and even on this the profit is problematical.

The presence in the formations of zinc (in quantity approximately equal to the lead) of Cadmium (traces) and of anthracite coal are the main points to which attention should here be drawn.

The holdings or groups of mines that Mr. Ball reported on are seventeen in number, Anglo-American Group, Banner, Bell's Britannia, Coghlan's, Dorothy, Greater Britain, Hann's Lilydale, Magazine Hill, Silver King, Mended Hill, Sirdar, Star, Tunnel Hill, Waanyee and Watson's Groups.

The Waanyee Group is a copper deposit and a most promising one.

Speaking of Watson's Group, this is one of the largest and poorest looking on the field, but in one place where a shaft has been sunk the formation has been proved to be highly zinciferous below water level and there is every reason to believe that an immense quantity of zinc ore could be obtained here, but without further blocking out it would be foolish to attempt to indicate the probable tonnage. I followed the crop westwards for a distance of nearly half-a-mile through the P.P.A. into special lease No. 56 and again in special lease No. 60 I observed a large silverified out-crop, but there was not time to inspect leases Nos. 59, 73, 72 to the eastward.

The earliest official report on Lawn Hill is that of Mr. A. S. Wells, the Warden, at Burketown.

A year after Mr. Well's visit, Mr. W. E. Cameron, B.A., Assistant-Government Geologist in 1900, examined the mines and reported on the Silver King, Mended Hill, Lilydale, East Star, Watson's Bell's, and Coghlan's, describing the first four as well worthy of vigorous development.

Several holdings not visited by Mr. Ball are described in Mr. R. A. F. Murray's second report, which include Britannia, Copper, Anglo-Saxon, Glencoe, Federal, Anglo-Australian, Bobs, Teeki and Thistle. Several other eminent Geologists reported on these mines, all in the same strain, namely, D. R. Logan Jack, R. W. Pringle, G. V. S. Dunn, Mineralogist and Mining Engineer, and A. Johnson and Mr. Fred. Danvers Power, but this latter's report is distinguished from all the previous generally highly optimistic accounts by its very cautious tone—but Mr. Power agrees with all the other experts that the lodes are on true fissures.

The history of the field appears to be this:—It was somewhere about the year 1888 that the attention of prospectors was drawn to it. The first Geologist to examine the field was Mr. Reginald A. F. Murray, who visited it in 1898. From then on as stated, nine eminent Geologists as above mentioned, were sent out to report on it. It would appear that different Governments and companies were determined to send out a reliable man who

would condemn it, but they all appear to tell the same tale, except Mr. Danvers Powers, who does not condemn it, but is very cautious in his report. I suppose he was expecting to see a Broken Hill in the embryo, and was disappointed, but I feel sure his view most certainly is like the others—that this mineral field is well worthy of systematic development. And so we come to the present deceased Company, that holds it, or that was in being until lately. Believing my own eyesight and willing to go nap on my own opinion, I acquired 1000 £1 shares. I know nothing of mining whatever, but if the “Shrewdies” and “Know-alls” of this world try and tell me that a mineral area of at least 317 square miles with twenty-five groups of lodes opened up and are worthy of the attention and time that the eminent Geologists above mentioned spent on them and report on, are not worth speculating in, especially as they are in his own immediate district, well, I plead guilty to being a damned fool.

I knew that as long as former Liberal politicians in power could be controlled to bolster up Townsville at the expense of the Gulf country, we would never get the field opened up by a Government railway, still I snapped up the shares, hoping by hanging on to them that some day a strong, sensible, far-seeing and fair-minded man of either Liberal or Labor persuasions would yet come to the fore and open it up with a port and a railway. And the writing is on the wall now, that such a man is soon to be in power that will do so if he can raise the necessary loan money. We have been told that Mr. Theodore will be the next Queensland Premier. We read the following in the leading Sydney papers:—“The Queensland Government has adopted the policy of development of the Gulf country and the establishment of suitable deep sea ports and railway connections to open up the rich land along the Gulf rivers.” So that we can expect something doing in the next few months. However, a little later on you will see the object of this setting out the Lawn Hill mineral field and its stagnation for the want of quick and suitable transport and you will read how a seemingly ambitious and presumably an unbiassed and sane Labor Minister for Lands stabbed this field in the back, imagining he was helping the interests of the State and district, and the interests of the labour market. At the same time he was damning the settlement and prosperity of his own State and the Territory Barkly Tableland for Australia. However, in due course we will arrive at the information.

“TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES.”

ESCOTT,

October 4, 1914.

J. RICHARDSON, Esq.,

Lawn Hill United Silver Mines,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,—

We, my Manager, Mr. Scott, and myself, have come to the conclusion that running motor lorries in the Gulf at the present time and trying to help the district along is an utter failure. If we could come to some arrangement with your company to take in ore no doubt it could be made a success, and also a big help to the working of the silver mines. At the present time, with carriage only one way, running the motors to Camooweal is not profitable, and a man is only a fool to keep running.

I have always understood that the non-success of the silver was the difficulty of getting in the ore. Now, I have a first-class motor man here and a five-ton good motor machine, and an 8-tonner, and am in a position to carry in a large quantity of ore monthly, but as we were not ready to cart in ore when it was available, and now when we are ready there is no ore to cart in and no settled arrangement for the future, I am fully fed up with the position and intend if I can sell out to do so, unless I can make some arrangements whereby I can see light ahead.

Firstly, is your company a buyer for either machine? I can offer you a 5-ton Halley in the best of running order, with newly re-rubbered wheels, for £800; also an 8-ton machine, which cost me £1,500, for £1,000. This machine has never done much work and would be handed over in thorough working order and repair. It is an 8-tonner, but no doubt, if the road is good, more could be trailed. If your company are not buyers, are you prepared to induce us to keep running by the offer of continual loading at the rate hitherto paid. Since I have been away, my Manager, Mr. Scott, made an offer to make the new road for £160, using the big lorry. What his exact offer was I have not the particulars at hand just this moment, but no doubt you will know them. Being fully aware of the mishaps that have attended the mines' lorry and what my own lorries have cost me at different times, I think Scott's offer was a fair one. Now I have put this big powerful lorry in the hands of Dalgety's to sell, but do not suppose it will go off too soon; so if you wish the road to be made at once and like to give us the contract we would do it as soon as possible. I hear your company is shutting down for a time, as the war is upsetting things. However, when you do want to start again and open the new road, all your recent markings and inspections will have to be done afresh, and more time wasted, whereas if the work was gone on with now at once when the big lorry is here to do it—and the only man is here to do it that is ever likely to be here again that would do it so well.

As regards the payment, we would easily arrange for time to be given for payment, as I know the finance of the company depends on the sale of ore.

I am also told you are not sending in any more ore for the present. Should you decide to give us the contract for the new road at once, when it was completed I would be willing to shift in as much ore as possible before the wet, so as to thoroughly make the road, and wait for the payment of carriage until the ore was sold, but in the meantime to *store* all the ore your lorry brings in and all mine brings in *free* of charge in our store room at the wharf. I am aware that the price of ore is up considerably and likely to go higher. Would it not be advisable for the company to take this opportunity of having a big lot of ore ready to ship away and jam into the market as soon as it is open, instead of only being in the same old unworkable position of having yet to make a new road? Goodness knows if it is not made now, when weather conditions and everything is favorable, when it will be made if a long wet comes! I tip not before June or July—and then half the year is gone. If the thing is done now, as soon as the wet is over the mines can be run as they have never yet been run, if the road is ready this year. And surely by that time the ore market will be righted. I speak from a large shareholder's point of view now, and I really hope the directors take my view also. While these shuttings down are going on there are considerable expenses to be met with no outlook of a better return than before. But if my offers are accepted, no urgent calls are made for cash, and the expenses

at present to be met are not thrown away and so much waste time. It seems a laughable matter that one man has a complete system of transport ready to be put in use for carrying the ore into Burketown, and willing to accept the rate hitherto allowed, that is, £7 per ton, although lately, I am told, carriers were asked to go out and promised £8 per ton. And, on the other hand, the silver mines not being a payable concern because the ore cannot be brought into Burketown in sufficient quantities, and the owner of the lorries on the eve of selling out, lock, stock and barrel, because he cannot get loading for them. I have no hesitation in saying I have in my manager, Mr. Scott, a man who is thoroughly competent and able to carry out all these contracts; but if we cannot come to some arrangement with the mines now when he has the motor transport question so thoroughly in hand and ready, I will have to disband same and dispose of it for all time, because, outside of the mines, we cannot get payable loading.

When returning from South last week, I had a long conversation with Mr. Evans, a son of the Commissioner for Railways. He is on his way up to inspect the rival routes for a railway into the Gulf from Mt. Cuthbert terminus. He first goes over the Normanton route and then over the Burketown route. Surveyor H. T. Smith is surveying the Normanton route now and is as far as Kamilaroi Station. Surveyor McDonnell is surveying on the Burketown route. In conversation with him he states, on paper Burketown route seems to be the better favored one, and no doubt, if the line came to Burketown and the port made, the next step would be a line up to Camooweal to tap the Barkly Tableland. Such line would be a distinct advantage to the Lawn Hill mineral area. He stated also that if Burketown was made the terminus of the line and the port made, there was a likelihood of the smelters being erected at Burketown instead of Cloncurry, which is a very feasible proposition in every way. Mr. Evans told me he was out to make an exhaustive report, and one of his duties would be to inspect the Lawn Hill area and report on it as an asset for the railway. I think you will agree with me that as yet Lawn Hill has shown no wonderful outputs of ore, and if these matters of transport were gone on with at once and matters on the go-ahead grade it would be a better advertisement for the field and get us more chance of a railway, than mere murmurings of what could be done or what is to be done in the future.

Personally, I have always been optimistic as regards the motor vehicles in this district, but now I have got a good man and everything ready, it looks as if they are many years too soon for the district. I hope you will go into the subject matter of my letter carefully.

Although I am a shareholder in the mines, as yet I know nothing of the financial position or the intentions of the Directors; but I feel sure they do not intend to just keep running the mines to employ labor and be content to get no dividends out of it, and unless a serious alteration is made in the management—that is, scale of working and sending away ore—the losses of interest yearly on their money invested will take a lot of making up when the dividends do come finally.

Thanking you for a reply as early as possible, as I am inquiring at the present time for likely buyers of my machines.

I am, yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

COPY.

April 26th, '15.

W. F. Jaques,
Warrigal Club,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,—

As a shareholder who is anxious to see some return or prospect of developing our properties into a payable proposition I would like to bring under your notice the present crude method of bringing our richest ores to market and also the want of any development work on the mines to prove further bodies of ore other than is being worked at present.

Being a resident here and having the opportunity of visiting the mines I have the advantage of being more closely in touch with the working policy of the company than any of the other shareholders or directors who are living in Sydney.

Referring to the carriage of ore from the mines to Burketown—

The present means of carriage from the mines to Burketown is by horse teams who are returning empty from the outside country. The total number of teams who are engaged carrying to or from Burketown total 21, and in the most favourable seasons a team can make more than two trips in and out. Now a good proportion of these teams are engaged to bring wool, etc., back from the outside stations and are therefore not available for the carriage of ore from the mines. Thus if we give a liberal allowance of 15 teams available and allow a 6-ton average load we can only bring 180 tons of ore per annum to market. Making that amount our maximum output, what prospect have we got to get any return of our capital or create a reserve to develop our properties in the manner that should be done? As you are aware the Company tried motor transit, but this proved a most costly experiment owing to the conditions of the roads and that the Directorate not realising that by making a road over the hard black soil country they would have had a track that would have enabled them to run the lorry at full pressure instead of which they had nothing but continual breaks and repairs to the machine. On behalf of the Burketown Motor Company in which I am largely interested, I offered to make a road suitable for continual running for £160; this amount I may state (owing to my being a large shareholder in both the U.S. Mine and the Motor Coy.), is a bed rock price allowing no margin of profit, or as an alternative I offered to take a contract to deliver 200 tons ore at Burketown at £7 per ton and make the road ourselves. The rate paid carriers is £6 per ton and on occasions they were paid £8—(so when you consider the work done and the greater quantity of ore that can be shipped, also the quick despatch enabling the Company to take full advantage of the market, besides which the Company will then have a road made on which their own lorry can be made a success—whereas now it is lying idle here and if this work is not done it will continue to do so or else cause endless expense in a useless attempt to again put it into commission). You will admit that we are giving very good inducement to have the work done. The work required doing cannot be done with the ordinary light lorry, but requires a machine far heavier and of greater horsepower.

We have a 10-ton Halley motor here, the biggest of its kind in Australia, and are therefore in a position to do the work far cheaper and better than the only other means, viz.: Horse teams.

Trusting that this information will be useful to you and other shareholders and enable you to infuse a good deal more energy and thoughtfulness into the policy of the Directors.

(Signed) J. N. MacIntyre.

(Date Stamp)

Copy Telegram dated 4th June, 1915.—

Australia Hotel, Sydney, 5.30 p.m., 3rd.

J. N. MacIntyre,—

If you deposit fifty pounds and plough and form new deviation to satisfaction Dickson prepared give you contract delivery two hundred tons ore at six pounds deliveries not less than twenty tons per month first delivery not later than end August failure involves cancellation contract and forfeiture deposit on completion of deliveries of said two hundred tons will pay you two hundred pounds for roadwork can you find six competent miners.

“Hawker,”

Sec. United Silver Mines,
Lawn Hill.

Copy of telegram despatched to—

Jacques,

62 Hunter Street, Sydney.

Returned from mines Shire Council notified Manager Station in event of their road being no good they would apply for new motor road. Manager won't allow make road unless get guarantee from Lands Office that it will only be motor road Have written my Brisbane solicitors interview Lands Office Have written you fully

MACINTYRE.

COPY.

Escott, June 27, 1915.

Messrs. Hawthorn & Byram,
Brisbane.

Dear Sirs,—

I have floated all my motors into the Burketown Motor Company. I am offered a 200 tons contract to bring in ore from the Lawn Hill Silver Mines at £6 (six pounds) a ton. As the present road granted by the owners of Lawn Hill Station is of no use for motor traffic, before we can carry any ore we have to make a new road. For doing this the mining company are giving us £200, when we make the road, and draw in the 200 tons of ore. We have just gone over the proposed new road, and although there will be no profit to our motor company in the making of the road for £200, when it is made it will open up a big field for advancement to this portion of the Gulf country. The Shire Council have just got the consent of the Lands Office to open up a public road also through Lawn Hill to the mines. However, they have notified the Manager of Lawn Hill that, in the event of their road not being suitable and the one that the Manager was allowing

the motor company to open up being a good road, they would abandon their road that is granted and apply for our new one.

Naturally, the station most strongly objects to this, as the one they are letting us open up will run through the heart of their best country where most of the stock run, and where the motors will do the trip in a few hours from the mines to Punjaub, and not have occasion to camp at all on the road, carriers will take a week to do the journey and camp and disturb the stock in every way. The Manager has now notified me, that, unless I can get a guarantee from the Lands Office that they will not at any time open our motor road for the general public other than motor traffic, he will not let us open at all.

Now, as you are aware, I have spent over £6,000 on a merchant business in Burketown, also spent £4,000 in motor lorries (two) and a motor car to push trade out to Camooweal and the Barkly Tableland and open up the back country and push trade. The main Camooweal road has proved to be too formidable for us to run our lorries other than at a loss. After two trips with my smaller lorry it cost me £210 to re-rubber the wheels. In all to date the motor speculation has cost me £6,000. This proposed new motor road through Lawn Hill up to the mines will be a good one if kept for the use of motors alone. Unless we can get this concession from the Lands Office, we cannot get the new road from the station, and if the Mines Department and Lands Office get us the road, or rather the public, after the teams travel on it, it will be of no use to me as a motor road, and my motors will have to shut down again.

What we want, is for it to be opened as a motor road only. As this road means the success or failure of the Lawn Hill Silver Mines, unless the Government build the railway—I do not see how the Lands Office can refuse the request.

Re consulting the Minister for Lands—I think it would be advisable to ask our member, Mr. W. Murphy, to accompany you, as he thoroughly understands the situation—and knows my speculations (from failure of the motors to run on the present roads) have proved disastrous. However, I am fully convinced this Lawn Hill road is only the first step to success, when we can later on open up a motor road on to Herbert Vale, and when there we are on the edge of the Barkly Tableland, where for hundreds of miles the country is suitable to run the motors. Such stations as Brunette, Avon, Alexandria, Barkly, Rockland, Herbert Vale have hundreds of tons of improvement materials to send out when carriage is available. It is possible to go to the furthest of these places in three days in motors, when it now takes the teams over three months, and they can only do at the most, in an extra good year, two trips.

I am enclosing Dalgety's account, showing bona fides for my statements of costs of motors to me, and you can impress on the Lands Office what this concession means to me and to the silver mines also, and to the opening up of all this rich back country, the "Barkly Tableland."

If my advocacy is not enough, please communicate with the United Silver Mines' Directors, 62 Hunter Street, Sydney, and they will also give their little say about the present road for their motors and what it has cost them.

As we are willing to start on the making of this road immediately, we get this concession and hand same to the Manager of Lawn Hill, I will ask

you to hurry on the matter and wire the result to me so that no time will be wasted.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am,

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

P.S.—I am also enclosing correspondence on Road Case 8398. In their letter 7th May they are considering the case. I want you to urge on this road for me and ask for a motor road only on the same conditions as I want the other one. I have to cut and make the road all myself. It is a fact the Wollgorang Copper Coy. have 200 tons of copper lying at grass on their abandoned mines at Wollgorang. They cannot get the teams to bring it in. We are starting out to look at the ore at grass, and if assay is satisfactory we are going to make a small offer, and if we can make the road suitable will buy it and cart it in with the motor lorries. With copper at the price it is we can turn over a big profit, and perhaps if we take a contract to deliver all the ore into Burketown that the mine can produce in future it may lead the company on to start work again at the mine. If we can bring in 200 tons, we can bring in 2,000 tons. However, I want the road opened and only a motor one at that; surely my energy and perseverance will call for some recognition from the Lands Office or Minister for Mines. You can see the Ranger's report. Nobody wants the road, and, if you read his report, I am a game man indeed to tackle it.

I am writing Mr. Murphy on these matters, advising him, if there is no precedent for motor roads in the Lands Office, to get him to make one when the House sits. If you show the Minister for Mines and Minister for Lands these letters and they are sports, they will do all they can for a brother pioneer sport. Please hurry these road matters on and wire result.

J. N. MACI.

COPY.

ESCOTT.

June 28, 1915.

HON. W. MURPHY,

Parliament House.

Dear Mr. Murphy,—

Let me congratulate you on your return to Parliament.

Now we have got you back I am finding you something to do. I am writing fully to Messrs. Hawthorn & Byram, re getting a motor road only through Lawn Hill and one out to Westmoreland. Hawthorn will acquaint you with all the facts.

I have told them to get you to go with them when they see the Minister for Lands.

If there is trouble in this matter—want of precedent, etc.—when the House opens, get the matter fixed up and made good law.

Kindest regards,

Yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

Hawthorn & Byram,
Solicitors.

North Queensland Chambers,
(opp. Queensland National Bank),
Queen Street,

BRISBANE, 10th September, 1915.

J. N. MacIntyre Esq.,

Escott,

BURKETOWN, N.Q.

Dear Sir,—

Re Roads—

We wired you to-day as follows:—"Have seen both Ministers several times, Murphy accompanying. They will not give guarantee asked for, for either road. Writing fully."

We have during the last fortnight interviewed the Ministers for Lands and Mines and the Under Secretaries of both Departments. We were at first hopeful that the Minister for Lands would have given you some kind of undertaking, as he intimated that he would like to know what the Mines Department thought about it before doing anything. The attitude of the Mines Department is apparently that they do not care to interfere, but would give no encouragement, and although the Minister for Lands says that it would probably be some two or three years before the road were opened if the Shire Council asked for it, he would not give any undertaking in that direction, nor would he give a written guarantee that if certain moneys were spent by you or the mines even under the supervision of the Lands Office inspector that you would be recouped this money in case of the local authority stepping in later and requiring the road to be made a public one.

From the attitude taken up by the Minister of Lands, we can see that if the Shire Council applied for the road the Department would feel themselves bound, unless very strong reasons were shown against it, to grant the road.

We regret that your application has been unsuccessful and we may say that Mr. Murphy was very keen in his support of the application, and did all he could to urge its favourable consideration. We understand he is writing to you himself.

HAWTHORN & BYRAM.

(COPY LETTER)

QUEENSLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

Sept. 10.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,—

Mr. Hawthorne is writing you fully on the road question and the Minister for Lands was sympathetic, but we could not get him to agree to refuse to open the motor road as a public road if the matter were later on pressed by the people of the district. We then tried to get him to bind the Department to compel the Council to refund all money expended on the road—or a fair proportion of it—to you in the event of the Council asking for the route to be proclaimed a public road. No document to that effect would be given, but the Minister said that when application was made by

the Council the Department would probably insist upon you being recouped for your outlay. Whether this is good enough to act on will be for you to say when you have read Mr. Hawthorne's letter. The Department was treating your application in the first place as a request for a stock route, and that caused delay in the first instance. Then the Mines Office had to be consulted and you know how Government Departments have to get reports from one place and the other. Hawthorne has been very persistent, and he was disappointed at his non-success. The Minister finally said he would not guarantee to keep the road closed from the public and Hawthorne had to finally accept his decision on that point.

Am sorry we failed.

Kindest regards—

Yours faithfully,

W. S. MURPHY.

COPY.

3rd ANNUAL REPORT.

UNITED SILVER MINES: NO LIABILITY.

To be presented to the Shareholders at the 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Company, which will be held at the Registered Office of the Company, City Mutual Chambers, 62 Hunter Street, on—THURSDAY the 7th day of OCTOBER, 1915, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

To the Shareholders,—

Your Directors beg to submit to you their Annual Report to the 3rd May last, together with Balance Sheet, Mines' Working Account and Profit and Loss Account to that date. In thus reporting upon the affairs of the Company, they regret that the transport difficulties which have been such a drawback to the operations of the Company, since its inauguration, have not been in any way improved.

It may be within your recollection that the Burke Shire Council applied for a road to be opened to the public through Punjaub and Lawn Hill holdings. Previous to this application, a private track, which had been granted to the Company by the Lessee of these stations, and formed at the Company's expense for motor traffic, had commenced in places to cut up badly, and it was considered advisable to make an effort to secure some deviation for the purpose of doing away with the necessity of traversing these soft portions of the road. For this purpose several inspections were made, and a good hard route was found, and preparations were in train for its proper formation so that the Company's lorries, together with those of Mr. J. N. MacIntyre, of Burketown (who offered to contract for the delivery of the Company's ore to Burketown), could be put in commission bringing ore to the seaboard. But the Company's operations here received a check, inasmuch as the Department of Lands, notwithstanding your Directors' energetic protests, recently granted to the Burke Shire Council the road for which they had applied, and the Manager of Punjaub and Lawn Hill Stations thereupon declined to permit a second road being opened up without the sanction of the lessee, or a guarantee from the Department of Lands, that, in the event of any application being made for this new road to be thrown open to the public, it would not be granted. Thus matters stand at

the present time, and advices are now being awaited from the lessee of the stations mentioned, as to whether he will permit this deviation to be prepared for motor traffic. Meanwhile the Company has to rely upon the services of the Burketown carriers and occasionally a team of camels for the delivery of ore to Burketown and these deliveries are naturally very erratic without taking into consideration that the cost per ton is very much heavier than it would be if the Company's lorries could be given a good hard road to work upon. As it is, operations during the past fifteen months have permitted the Company to just about cover expenses, though from the balance sheet presented herewith, it would not appear so, but in addition to the amount showing therein to the credit of Ore Proceeds Account, as on the date of the balance sheet, further shipments have since come to hand and are still arriving which will more than wipe out any loss which may appear in the balance sheet, as from the 22nd January, 1914, to 3rd May last.

During the period covered by the balance sheet, viz.: 22nd January, 1914, to the 3rd May, 1915, some 195 tons of ore have been received in Sydney and marketed, the gross value of which was £3,187 3s. 1d., and the nett value, after deduction of returning charges, £2,460 14s. 4d. Since the 3rd May of this year, viz.: the date of the balance sheet, to the 7th September, 1915, 112 tons of ore have been marketed, the gross value of which was £2,008 18s. 5d., and the nett value, after deduction of returning charges, £1,744 19s. 11d.

Your Directors are in receipt of advices that 16 tons of ore are now in Sydney, 14 tons are in Burketown ready for shipment, and 24 tons are en route between the mines and Burketown. Weekly advices, which come to hand from the Mine Manager as to developed ore, reserves in the mine, and ore at grass, are most satisfactory.

It can be readily understood, therefore, that providing the Company get regular deliveries of its ore from the mines to Burketown, a very short period would suffice to put the Company in a most satisfactory position and upon a dividend paying basis. Your Directors are very hopeful that eventually a deviation from the Company's present track will be secured, and that with its own lorries (one of which is still in Sydney), and those of Mr. MacIntyre working upon the delivery of its products, together with horse and camel teamsters, operations will be of such a nature as to give a substantial return to the shareholders, who have stood by the Company through most adverse circumstances.

Since the inauguration of the Company, the "Silver King" mine is the only one which has been worked, and at no time has there appeared any diminution of the high grade ore, which has been delivered from that mine in the past, the average value being within the vicinity of 78 per cent. lead and 45 ozs. silver per ton. If, however, the Company is successful in securing better transport arrangements, it will be necessary, in the near future, to consider the advisability of opening up further ground in this mine, for, up to the present, it has only been exploited to about 50 feet. Another matter which is worthy of very careful consideration is the erection of a small smelter to deal with the vast quantities of carbonate lead ore, which have already been won and which would on being reduced from two to one, give an average percentage of lead and silver of about the same value as the pure galena at present being marketed. As these carbonates have already been raised, the only cost attaching to them on the mine would be that of smelting and a considerable amount of profit could be made therefrom, without any further opening up of fresh ore bodies in the "Silver King."

The retiring Director, Mr. R. Ryder, on account of regrettable ill-health, is not seeking re-election at the General Meeting of Shareholders. Mr. Bell, a large shareholder, has given the requisite notice, and is eligible for election.

W. F. JAQUES.

Chairman of Directors.

So one sees that the matter was probed to its very core, and that most consistently. Mr. Hawthorne, M.L.C., who was himself a member of the Upper House, was most persistent, and the perusing of the memo. of solicitors' costs after all his trouble was the only salve to my outraged feelings. The name of the statesman who was under the regrettable necessity of having to refuse the request on "God only knows" what grounds, want of precedent, or some other silly puerile reason was J. M. Hunter, Esq.

It may be remarked here—That the Lands Office had already granted a new public road to the carriers and general public to the mines, and the Council were then making it, and my application for another road was entirely apart from their road and moreover was much longer and the stages for water would be difficult for a public road. But a really good hard black soil road could have been cut over the devil plains for a good motor road, with no inconvenience to the lease holder or to the detriment of his stock. Nobody objected to the road, the public or the lease holder, only the lease holder wanted a guarantee that it would not be made a public road, if he allowed us to make it for motors. However, as lead and silver values were decidedly high just then on account of the war, the mines management put on men and started to root out the rich ore in earnest and carriers were induced at £7 and £8 per ton to cart in some hundreds of tons during the next two years. Imagining that at the price metals were bringing in the market that the shareholders, would soon be paying a dividend. I wrote the Secretary for information as to the likelihood of such—and I quote the reply dated 23rd Jan., 1917, of the Managing Director.

"In reply to your letter, no dividend will be declared for the last financial year, and unless *freights* and ore treatment charges which have risen from £2/10/- per ton to £8/15/- per ton are considerably reduced, there is little likelihood of there being any dividend declared this year."

From this out the history of the mines to me is obscure, excepting that all the men were paid off last year and mines closed down and the material at the mines sold off, and in reply to my letter of inquiry I can only quote the following private letter from the Chairman of Directors.

11/9/18.

Replying to a letter dated 8th inst., I regret to say that the United Silver Mines, Ltd., has "gone bung," and all the assets have been taken over by a few debenture holders, who are realising on same and I understand have already disposed of the galvanised roofing iron."

"Requiescat in pace."

Let us now open up a "post mortem." Long since have all the local carriers bewailed their past voracious demands for £7 and £8 per ton, and have since expressed their agreeableness to carry in the ore for a much less price per ton, and seeing that it was only back loading on their return from Camooweal, it was to their advantage if they only got half the amount they asked before. A perusal of the balance sheets of expenditure since 1913 will throw some light on the operations.

Expenditure 1913 from Jan. 22nd to Jan. 2nd, 1914.

Mines Wages	..	..	..	..	..	£463	6	10
Carriage of Ore	..	..	..	..	..	195	16	3
Motor Drivers' Wages	..	..	..	..	..	145	4	0
Insurances	..	..	..	..	..	106	6	0
Travelling Expenses	..	..	..	..	..	88	14	0
Freight (General)	..	..	..	..	..	79	7	6
General Expenses	..	..	..	..	..	66	1	8
Benzine and Oils	..	..	..	..	..	65	0	0
Government Fees	..	..	..	..	..	50	0	0
Freight on Ore	..	..	..	..	..	33	7	6
Ore Charges	..	..	..	..	..	6	16	6
Bank Charges	..	..	..	..	..	1	12	0
						£1301	12	3

Ore Proceeds Account £1082 5 1

Expenditure, 22nd January, 1914, to 22nd May, 1915.

Carriage Ore	..	..	..	..	..	£1241	3	0
Returning Charges on Ore	..	..	..	..	..	1067	15	2
Mines Wages	..	..	..	..	..	931	18	2
Freight on Ore	..	..	..	..	..	383	7	6
Motor Drivers' Wages	..	..	..	..	..	292	16	9
Stores Account	..	..	..	..	..	202	16	0
Interest Account	..	..	..	..	..	115	7	7
Agency Fees, Burketown	..	..	..	..	..	113	13	10
Travelling Expenses	..	..	..	..	..	93	6	10
Government Fees	..	..	..	..	..	37	1	6
Repairs to Plant	..	..	..	..	..	85	0	3
General Expenses	..	..	..	..	..	70	13	8
Insurance Account	..	..	..	..	..	67	19	7
Rent Account	..	..	..	..	..	39	3	8
Timber and Firewood	..	..	..	..	..	29	19	11
Agency Fees (Sydney)	..	..	..	..	..	22	2	5
Harbour Dues	..	..	..	..	..	11	3	5
Freight General	..	..	..	..	..	8	7	4
Bank Charges	..	..	..	..	..	6	18	0
Hotel Expenses	..	..	..	..	..	6	13	0
						£8261	7	7

Ore proceeds £3533 10 7

*Expenditure Mines Working Account from 3rd May, 1915.
to 31st January, 1917.*

Mine Charges—

Men's Wages	£3098 19 0
Stores	554 17 6
Carriage Stores	146 0 5
Freight on Stores	48 13 0
Timber and Firewood	41 13 0
Repairs to Plant	12 2 6
Travelling Expenses	284 15 9
Insurances	93 2 10
General Expenses	40 1 7
Government Fees	49 15 0

£4370 0 7

Marketing Ore—

Carriage Ore Burketown	£5012 18 11
Agency Fees, Burketown	263 13 8
Rent Store	32 11 5
Harbour Dues and Wharfage	97 0 3
Freight to Newcastle	1233 16 7
Railage to Cockle Creek	188 8 3
Insurance on Ore	28 13 6
Assaying and Sampling	98 7 0
Returning Charges	4297 1 9
Agency Charges (Sydney)	96 11 9

£11,349 3 1

Total £15,719 3 8

Ore Proceeds £14,601 3 7

There was also paid away in Sydney in salaries, office rents, Directors' fees, etc.:

In Year	1913-1914	£1663 6 1
	1914-1915	343 5 6
	1915-1917	1451 2 1

£3457 13 8

so that the grand total of money circulated for the benefit of the Commonwealth for 4 years was—

1,301 12 3
8,261 7 7
<u>15,719 3 8</u>

25,282 3 6	the bulk in North Queensland
<u>3,457 13 8</u>	in Sydney

Total £28,739 17 2

and of this £19,216/19/3 came out of the ground.

I understand that approximately another £2,500 worth of ore was sold, and the loss when the debenture holders took over was approximately £1500. It would be interesting to know the further amount in wages paid away up to the time of the collapse, but as I was informed from the Trustee for the Debenture holders who took possession of the assets on 15th April, 1918, and who holds the accounts, that he regretted he could not give me the information, it seems that I am not to know any more about it.

No one sees that in these five years working against all sorts of drawbacks, ridiculous freights, and all the other drawbacks of isolation, which never allowed of even normal exploitation, some £22,717 worth of ore was taken out of the ground and some thirty thousand pounds of money circulated. It is a fact also that the bulk of the ore was taken out in 1916 only, the practical shutting down of the mining was at the end of 1916. So that I do not hesitate to say that £15,000 worth of ore was taken out of the mine in 1916.

Now for the want of some £1500 this lucrative proposition was allowed to go bung.

It would be interesting to know what financial institutions were approached for financial help. Is this not a case where a Commonwealth Bank should have come to the rescue? It was a Commonwealth matter, both North Queensland and New South Wales reaped the actual benefit of the mines and the Commonwealth in the long run.

However, we can live and learn, watch the future—watch also the future of those contemptible Cloncurry Copper blows of twenty-five years ago. Note well also here that practically only the Silver King mine of the whole 25 outcrops as before mentioned, has this wealth come from. It should be as well here to record also the most pious wish of one of the Sydney Directors:

“Matters in connection with the Lawn Hill mines no longer interest me, and owing to the experiences which we received at the hands of various people in Burketown my most earnest desire is that a hurricane should strike Burketown and wipe it off the face of the earth.”

Give the poor underneath dog another good kick and blame it on to him. Extortionate freights are forgotten, the calloused lethargy of the State Ministers for Mines and Lands whitewashed away, forgotten and all discharged off the sheet of complaint without a stain on their character. However, the pious wish that Burketown may be consigned to oblivion, may yet be granted him, as in a later chapter, it will be shown that when our long overdue Queensland statesman arrives on the scene, the impossible site of the city of claypans, glass bottles and breakaways with all its past records of undeserved strangling and contempt, will be shifted over to a new site, and one of the garden cities of Australia be founded on Hann's Hole on the Nicholson River, and, yea, truly from the depths of ignominy and decadent despair a city will arise from the wealth of the district, that will astonish those people who now sneer and laugh at Burketown. Truly a lift to the “sublime” from the “ridiculous.”

PART II

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE EAGER TO ADVANCE THE DISTRICT.

In the year 1914, Mr. A. J. Cotton, Managing Director of Brunette Downs, in the Territory, was about to get or had already purchased a 5-ton motor waggon to run goods from Borooloola to Brunette station, a distance of 190 miles. However, the road was so bad with sand at the Boorooloola end that this turned out to be impracticable. He had landed at Boorooloola some 100 to 200 tons of improvement material, and on account of few horse teams being on that road and the state of the road being an impracticable one, that material barb-wire and wind-mill stuff, etc., lay there a year or two before it was all shifted away. Now, the main road to Brunette was, —from Burketown to Camooweal some 250 miles, Camooweal to Avon 50 miles, thence to Alexandria 93 miles, thence to Brunette 50 miles. Total, 443 miles. There was an old dry track, sometimes used just after the wet season, from Herbert Vale to Alexandria, which was only 80 miles.

The distance from Burketown to Lawn Hill is 100 miles, on to Herbert Vale is 50 miles, 80 on to Alexandria, and 50 on to Brunette, making a total of 280 miles, a difference of 163 miles. Once within twenty (20) miles of Herbert Vale (north), the country was tableland country, and level, good hard going. In fact, Nature, as often happens, had left it so that it is an ideal motor travelling country, giving compensation, as it were, to man for its other isolated drawbacks. Now, why not travel to Alexandria and Brunette from Burketown via Lawn Hill and Herbert Vale? It is a saving of 163 miles, and back loading of silver lead ore from the mines. However, for teams the Herbert Vale-Alexandria 90 miles is a dry one; but what did that matter for motors on a good hard, level, pebbly road? My 5-ton motor lorry on its first trip to Lawn Hill mines had gone up with four tons of loading, and returned with $4\frac{1}{2}$ tons of ore. The time returning was 17 hours. Later on it went up to Camooweal along the main Camooweal Road, and returned with a 4-ton load of wool from Avon Downs via Herbert Vale. So remarkably successful were the trips that a big 8-ton motor lorry was purchased. This machine made a good trip to Avon Downs and brought down a 7-ton load of wool along the Camooweal Road, but the long patch of sand at the Seymour River and other creek crossings made the running of the big machine too costly, so it was discontinued. However, to show how the machine ran on the level Tableland country, it ran out to Avon Downs from Camooweal, 50 miles, in one day, and back from Avon the next day with the 6 or 7 tons of wool on.

The Lawn Hill mines road had long since cut up and proved useless for motor lorry traffic, and the mines lorry had to lay up. There was a good hard, black soil road available to be made through the centre of Lawn Hill run, which when made was the connecting link for a good motor road from Burketown on to Herbert Vale, and from this spot perfect motor roads extended to Camooweal on to Boulia one way and on to Avon another way; and, thirdly, the main one that was going to open up the Barkley Table-

land territory, the direct route 80 miles to Alexandria, Brunette, and on to Newcastle Waters.

By glancing at the map one will understand better the sanity and feasibility of the scheme.

Mr. Cotton used to leave Sydney on Thursday afternoon, arrive in Cloncurry on Tuesday night, and drive to Brunette in less than 48 hours' travel in his car.

Before the days of cars it was practically a week's coach trip from Cloncurry to Camooweal, and there was no coach convenience for passengers out to Brunette; so you can say it was a long, weary, dirty, dusty, monotonous camping-out trip of ten days from Cloncurry. Does anyone imagine a man like Mr. Cotton investing his money out in this God-forsaken region behind the sunset, out in the Never-Never, if he had to go back to old-day conditions? However, a 50 hours' run from Cloncurry in a car is only a pleasant break in the monotony of civilised life that virile men like Mr. Cotton enjoy now and again to inspect their properties, and when these men go out into that good country willingly, they go out to progress, and the costs of the improvements done on Brunette and some of those other big places would show some mighty big figures; but had quick transport been available, the list of improvements would have been doubled, which meant more labour and more settlement.

Now, this was, I imagined, the time to get a quick motor transport company going, and wrote to Mr. Cotton, and you will note his reply.

The new road mentioned by Mr. Cotton here was made by the Shire Council in due course, but was heavy and sandy, and was soon cut by teams, so that motor traffic on it was impossible, and for the history of the attempt to get a good hard motor road, which was available, I will refer you back to the foregoing letters.

You will also read in them 50 per cent. of the death warrant of the Lawn Hill silver mines; the other 50 per cent. was the freights.

(COPY.)

Hidden Vale, Granchester,
Queensland, 13th July, 1914.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,

"Escott," Burketown.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 16th June, and note with interest all you say therein. I have also received Memorandum of Association of a Motor Carrying Coy. you contemplate floating, which should be very useful in the event of our coming to some arrangement. In the meantime, I would like to let this matter stand over until I received replies to my letters to Mr. Holt, of Alexandria, and Mr. Kilgour, of Herbert Vale.

I feel confident that with Scott to run the business, and two other competent drivers, it would be a success. The development of the Barkly Tableland has been retarded by the want of easy transport; in fact, at the

present time it is almost impossible to get any improvement material on to the properties. I have interviewed the Roads Department at the Lands Office in Brisbane re the opening of a road from Burketown to the Lawn Hill mines. If this road is opened, and the Burketown Shire Council put the road in order between Lawn Hill mines and Herbert Vale, it should be an easy matter to do all the carrying that is required for the Barkly Tableland stations, and I think the company would be a profitable concern.

I see no reason at present why wool from Avon Downs should not go direct to Herbert Vale. I have written asking Mr. Kilgour if a road direct from there to Avon Downs is practicable and what sort of country it would go over. I am told that it is all level country.

So far as your interest in the concern will be, I think if you take a sufficient number of shares to the value of the lorries you put in, your shares will give you a voice in the management. Of course, my only reason for wishing to have anything to do with the company is on account of my interest in the tableland, and the carrying that could be done to and from there (apart from the Mt. Oxide trade, which, I am afraid, on account of the very bad state of the roads, is not within the reach of motor lorries for some years) will enable us to run successfully. However, I will write you more fully on the subject later.

I have written the Shire Council regarding my interview with the Roads Department, and, although Lawn Hill might object, this will not prevent the road being opened if it is to benefit a number of people, but it would facilitate matters if the Lawn Hill owners could be prevailed upon to give their sanction or raise no objection.

Hoping you are having a good season.

I am, yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) A. J. COTTON.

9/9/19.

News that Mr. P. Quilty, who manages Bedford Downs in W.A. for his father, Mr. Tom Quilty, of Oakland Park, Croydon (Q.), a good old North Queensland sport and station owner, has just done the journey to Bedford Downs from Cloncurry in eighteen days in a car, with no break-downs. No doubt now, once a year old Tom will make an annual run across in the car to see things for himself. It is only a few months ago that they bought the car in Sydney and motored home to Oakland Park from Sydney.

Mr. Lobston has made an annual trip this last three years to Tanninbarini, near Boorooloola, from Cloncurry. The latter part of the journey is a rough one; and so thus is the Gospel of Progress being advanced.

No doubt at all but the neat trip from Cloncurry to Bedford Downs will be done more quickly, but as the distance is some 1400 miles, the average of 77 miles over those tracks per day is not too bad.

ROAD CASE 8398.

On January 29/19 the following article was printed in the Brisbane "Daily Mail":—"Good Roads" essential to settlement.

The Minister for Justice, Mr. Gillies, during the course of an interview

yesterday, said that amongst other things that occasioned his visit to New South Wales was to inquire into the road question. He then goes on to state the necessity of roads, etc., and instanced expenditure in other parts of the world.

In Victoria, two millions of loan money was set aside in 1912, etc., etc. Now, it is a great pity, indeed, that a man with ordinary sane views like Mr. Gillies was not at the head of the Queensland Lands Office in the year 1914.

Now, in 1912, I bought Westmoreland, and at the time of purchase there were only two O.L. holdings, which brought in £74/10/- rent to the Lands Office. I immediately took up the lease of Westmoreland, 655-sq. miles at 10/- per mile, rent £327/10/-.

The road (see map) from Burketown goes along the Nicholson River nearly west to Turn-off Lagoon station, and then cuts practically north to get to Westmoreland. I naturally wanted to make the short cut road from Escott, or rather Harrisdale lease (as it is called), to Westmoreland, which cut off some 25 miles. Now, the road in places between Egilabra and Turn-off Lagoon is very sandy in places for a car, and between Turn-off Lagoon and Westmoreland there are some six or seven very sandy, treacherous creeks for a motor car, besides other patches of heavy sand, which, if there is much traffic on it, makes it very heavy, indeed.

Now, for the last 30 years small mobs of stock have been brought in direct on the short cut route, but it was anything but a popular one—in fact, it is a very dry track, indeed; but it cut out all those six or seven creeks except Cliffdale and Lagoon Creek, but each of these creeks had good crossings, and the only trouble on this road was the water and scrub. However, I had already cleared and was using the short cut road, or trying to get it used, as unless I gave explicit orders for this road to be travelled, not even my own men would take it. However, it meant that when I opened it up and had the stumps grubbed out, that it would have been a remarkably fast motor track, as miles and miles of it ran over scalded country. However, as my letters show, the lease of Burlong was just about this time taken up, also St. Clears, and objections were made to me using it. That did not trouble me one iota, as I wanted a summons case to see if the law allowed people to use a track that had been used off and on both as a stock route and otherwise for some thirty years, while the country was vacant. But I never got one to air my “bush lawyer’s” knowledge. However, the embargo placed on this short-cut road completely frightened off any faint hearts that might have used the track, so I asked the Lands Office to throw it open for a road and stock route. They very kindly and considerately and most statesmanlike sent out a ranger to inspect it and report on it, and charged me £4, which I paid. The road, however, was refused me.

I then came at them again with the letter Dec. 13/1914. They then snarled back at me with their letter 13th January, 1915. However, “He that has truth on his side, is a fool as well as a coward if he is afraid of his opinions because of the multitude of other men’s opinions. It is hard to say that all the world is wrong; but if it be so, who can help it?” That’s me. My punch, only put aside, came back with my letter of February 15/1915; it evidently upset them, as the reply took some time to come back—May 7th/1915.

They must have had a great conference between the Land Commission, the Lands Office, and the Department of Agriculture and Stock over this short-cut tract, but came to the conclusion on the evidence that it would only be a kindly, humane act to stop me from trying to commit suicide by using the short cut, and notified me in due course that "it couldn't be did." However, in another letter to my solicitors I asked them to try again for it, this time as a motor track only. But it was no go.

Now, it will be seen in my letter of February 15/15 that I had also taken up Cliffdale lease, 672-sq. miles at 7/6—£252, and there was no other known track on to Cliffdale lease but this one. However, I was the only one that ever wanted to use it, so it was not used much. However, the long-delayed summons never appeared. Last year, 1918, Mr. Charles Calcino had occasion to run out to Wollgorang to inspect some bullocks. Both going out to Westmoreland and returning in his Ford he was stuck in those sandy creeks, and in one of them was delayed seven hours. The short-cut road was now almost grown over by saplings, but as these bullocks inspected by Mr. Calcino were to travel in to Burketown, I got the drover to bring them along in the short-cut road. He did so. I had occasion to visit the Wollgorang mines about this time, and on the return journey our car broke down between the mines and Wollgorang. I left Westmoreland on horseback before daylight to catch the drover up on this short-cut road to camp the night with him, as I only had the one horse, and no swag or tucker except a snack for lunch. I should have caught him up half-way, but about sundown I got off the faint track and had a night out by myself without water. I also had until 11 o'clock next day without water, but struck the head of Moonlight Creek and followed it down, thinking all the time it was Horse Creek, and came out on the coast the third morning some 30 miles north of Escott none the worse for my trip, only thoroughly disgusted; but when it did not look as if I was going to find my hobbled-out horse the first morning in the thick, rotten country, and was just settling down to think of starting off on my 50-mile walk through this rotten and dry country, unless I hit the creek, I got the scare of my life. However, no harm was done, and I was too disgusted to be hungry, and there were miles of water in Moonlight Creek. Much as I knew that nearly always "The longest way round is the shortest way home," it was rather a point of honour to tackle the old short-cut track. More determined than ever to have the short cut cleared and grubbed for good, I immediately sent out men and blackboys with a plant to complete the road. The 50-mile Escott end was already a good road, and it was only the Westmoreland end that wanted doing. On returning back to Escott after a trip South, I was informed that the letter (following later) was handed my men after I got well away South, and they had knocked off the road work and came into the station, and so the short-cut road is still *non est*.

I had, as I thought, the pleasure of informing Mr. Edge in September, who was going down in his car later on his annual inspection visit to Westmoreland, that most probably by the time he got to Escott the short-cut road would be ready for him, and he could run out to Westmoreland in half a day. But he had to go the old main road, with the chance of being stuck at the creeks, but with the certainty of straining the engines, etc., of his good car. And so you see, after five years of a cut-and-come-again attempt to open and make a good, quick road, the Lands Office have come out on top, and the convenience is still denied us. No doubt Mr. Calcino

enjoyed his motor run, and his loss of sweat, bad language, and hard graft, on his trip to Westmoreland, and will recommend the road to his friends. The loss of a day or two in getting in and out to a place, to a business man, will—I don't think—tempt him to repeat the trip; and so these back places are damned, and will be until business men have a quick and easy run to get out to them.

This Westmoreland run would have been a five-hour one for Mr. Calcino had I not been frustrated and denied the short-cut road four years ago.

Registered No. R.C.8398.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

Brisbane, 12th November, 1914.

Sir,

ROAD CASE 8398.

Referring to the letter received from you on the 16th ultimo, with which was forwarded £4/6/-, being £4 inspection and inquiry fees in connection with your application for the opening of a more direct road from Harrisdale Holding to Cliffdale and Westmoreland Holdings, and 6/- cost of maps forwarded to you with my letter of the 20th August last, and which you returned for mounting in one sheet, etc., I have the honour to forward under separate cover the map, duly mounted, giving the information asked for by you. The cost of the work was 15/-, which amount please remit to this office.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. W. HASELER,

Under-Secretary.

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre,
Escott, Burketown.

(COPY.)

Escott, Dec. 13, 1914.

The Under-Secretary for Lands,

Brisbane.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of 25th November to hand, dealing with road case 8398.

I must say your decision not to give me a right-of-way for easy access for my men and stock to travel to and from Cliffdale, Patterdale, and Westmoreland holdings to Escott gave me a great surprise. We have lately acquired another occupation license of 100 square miles, and our rents almost reach £800, and yet we have to go all the way round by the road up the Nicholson to get to our leases, when we can save over a day by going the short-cut road that I asked the Lands Office to open up. I note it is considered that the road is sufficient for public requirements, which is quite correct, as there is no public to use same, and the only persons this new short-cut road would affect are Mr. Aplin, of Wollogorang, and myself and men, and Mr. Aplin will surely use same if it is to save him a day's journey.

I would also point out that this road was marked by a carrier twelve to fifteen years ago, and the marked trees are still to be followed, and it is only since St. Clear's and Binlong leases have been acquired that there is any need to ask for a road, as before it was all vacant country. However, early in the year my men were threatened with a summons for bringing in cattle the short cut, and it was this incident that made me ask for a road or stock route to be proclaimed.

By keeping a little north of the route asked for, it is all vacant country, but by doing so we miss the water, so that it would be all a dry stage and no use to us.

In the last three years my dray has gone out and back to Westmoreland some half-a-dozen times, and, besides doing myself a quicker trip, I thought I was doing the public by opening up a road a good turn also.

I hope you will reconsider your decision re declaring the route I asked for a stock route or road, as I require it for convenience of the working of my different Westmoreland station holdings, and I think I should be conceded the convenience if any concessions are allowed to pioneers and large leaseholders who are opening up the country, especially when the concession affects no one at all in any possible way.

Thanking you in anticipation.

I am, yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

Registered No. R.C. 8398.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

Brisbane, 13th January, 1915.

Sir,

ROAD CASE 8398.

Referring to your letter of the 13th ultimo, urging, for the reasons therein set forth, that the decision not to proceed with the opening of a more direct road from Harrisdale Holding to Cliffdale and Westmoreland Holdings as applied for by you may be reconsidered, I have the honour to inform you that, in addition to the opinion expressed in my letter of the 25th November last that the existing road is sufficient for public requirements, you should have been informed that the proposed new road is regarded as being unsuitable for the passage of stock, as it passes through thickly-timbered and badly-watered country.

In his report, Ranger Little states that the proposed road traverses level country covered with stunted ti-tree scrub, stunted wattle and silver-leaf box; that in places the scrub is almost thick enough to stop a pack-horse; that the country is poorly grassed with spinifex, wire-grass, and turpentine-grass; and that bushes and swamp couch-grass would have to form the staple food of any stock grazing thereon. With regard to water, he states that there are good supplies in Lily and Flying Fox Holes in Wild-horse Creek, the latter hole being an exceptionally good supply, but that the remaining forty miles of the route (west of Flying Fox Hole) is badly watered; Bushranger's Hole, Walford and Cliffdale Creeks being nearly dry when he passed, and the water remaining being hardly fit for human consumption. Taking into consideration that the opening of the

proposed road would reduce the distance about twenty miles, but that the travelling would be difficult and the water along the route insufficient, he is of the opinion that no good purpose would be served by opening the road.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. W. HASELER,

Under-Secretary.

Mr. J. N. MacIntyre,

Escott, Burketown.

(COPY LETTER.)

Escott, Feb. 15/15.

The Under-Secretary for Lands,

Brisbane.

Dear Sir

Your letter of 17th January to hand, and I have to reply that Ranger Little is quite correct in all he says; in fact, it is a true report of the rottenness of the country. The Cliffdale block of country, 672-sq. miles at 7/6 per mile, rent £252, which I pay for, can only claim ten miles of decent country on each side of Cliffdale Creek and between Harrisdale Holding, and there the country is as described. However, this new road is of great convenience to me in travelling direct from Harrisdale Holding to Cliffdale Holding and Westmoreland. Ranger Little, however, is possibly not aware that my dray and buggy have made four in-and-out trips from Westmoreland by the route, and we have travelled in several small mobs of cattle this way, and had we not been warned not to take this route, as part of it was through the top end of St. Clair's lease, and possibly Barlong lease, by this time I should have had a well-cut road. I have had 20 miles of it cleared from the Harrisdale end, and was on the point of putting men on to clear the rest when I got the notice I was not to be allowed to travel the route. Hence my application to the Lands Office for the road and stock route.

I may point out, also, that I firmly believe that the country around Flying Fox Hole is vacant Crown lands, and when I know this for a fact, which I will have to find out for myself, as I can see no hope of ever finding out from the Lands Office, as there are no survey marks, I will take up the block with water on.

We are handicapped in these parts with the large tracts of vacant, useless country, as our stock stray away and get to be scrubbers, and it behoves us to take up these useless tracts that can only boast of the water as an asset, and keep our men continually around the water to collect them. One cannot do much with scrub cattle in country described as Ranger Little truly describes it.

I have been very taken aback at the attitude of the Lands Office in this matter. I always understood the Lands Department were only too willing to give every assistance to the pioneer, as it was of material benefit to them to have the lands opened up. Had I not been blocked early last year in cutting this road, where it goes through St. Clear's lease and possibly through a corner of the Barlong lease, I should have been out to

Westmoreland and back in my motor car a dozen times. I would very forcibly point out that if it is only the scrub that is in the way, that can soon be got rid of, and time from Escott to Westmoreland will only take half a day by car.

Thanking you for a favourable decision on this matter, as it affects no one but myself now, and will have to come later on when, perhaps, more adventurous people find a use for this rotten country and take it up.

I am, yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

P.S.—We must touch the waters of Flying Fox and Lily Holes for water, otherwise we could keep a few miles north and travel all vacant country, and not ask for a road.

J.N.McI.

Registered No. 8398.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

Brisbane, 7th May, 1915.

Sir,

ROAD CASE 8398.

Referring to your letter of the 15th February last, further in re your application for the opening of a more direct road from Harrisdale Holding to Cliffdale and Westmoreland Holdings, I have the honour to inform you that the matter is being referred to the Land Commissioner for further consideration and to the Department of Agriculture and Stock, and I will again communicate with you as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN S. BENNETT,

for Under-Secretary.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,

Escott, Burketown.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

Brisbane, 23rd November, 1915.

Gentlemen,

ROAD CASE 8398.

Referring to my letter of the 2nd August last, relative to the application by Mr. J. N. MacIntyre for the opening of a more direct route from Harrisdale Holding to Cliffdale and Westmoreland Holdings, I have the honour to inform you that the Burke Shire Council, to which the matter was referred, has advised this office that in its opinion the road asked for is not required. In the circumstances, the previous decision not to open the road will be adhered to.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) —. BOARD,

Asst. Under-Secretary.

Messrs. Hawthorn & Byram, Solicitors,

North Queensland Chambers,

Queen-street, Brisbane.

Egilabria, 26th September, 1918.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,
Escott.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of Mr. W. R. Johnston, of Burns & Johnston, Ltd., 10 Bridge-street, Sydney, I beg to inform you that Mr. Johnston objects to you making a new road through Egilabria and Turn-off Lagoons properties.

You will please desist from any further marking that you have done through the above properties.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT H. SMITH,
Manager.

ANTE CHRISTUM, 1917.

A VOICE FROM "THE HILL" UNDER THE CONSTANCE RANGE.

Talk about buying into stations, MacIntyre! Do you really think it's of any use trying to make money these days, or only waste of brains and energy, when you take into consideration the taxation that is certain to be imposed before long? What with Income Tax, Super Tax, Excess Profits Tax, and goodness only knows what won't be taxed before long, just to give the men in power the satisfaction and privilege of wasting. Why trouble about the private individual waste, as I should think the private waste only a drop in the ocean compared with the State waste.

It's really annoying when you hear of what the men in power have to say about private waste, when everybody knows the Government extravagance is, and was before the war, enormous; but, of course, members of Parliament are a privileged body, and just another case of you must not do as we do, for the money we waste is public.

Talk of Capitalists! I am fully certain that two-thirds of our Queensland members of Parliament to-day do not know the meaning of the word. Still, they think, when put into power, that they are the brains of the universe. If it's to hoodwink, squander, feather their own nests, hold office and such-like are the brains that are required—well, I think the present-day Parliamentary men are overloaded with them.

Just look at the great waste of public money, buying of State stations, and a great amount of money supposed to be paid for them never went into the pockets of the sellers, but into the pockets of some of our worthy members of Parliament. It's a well-known fact, but not proved. But how many things are known and not wanted to be proved? What about the State-owned hotels? Why, the one in Darwin is a disgrace. And the State butchers' shops that supply beef at 4½d.,—at whose expense? Most certainly not the members of Parliament, but the man on the land. The man on the land must always and ever pay. I don't hold with State ownership of anything, apart from railways, and then if private people wish to hold them, they should be allowed to do so, as there is nothing like railways to open up a country. Put a railway through any country, and the people will follow. But building railways or helping the man on the land in any

way in Australia is not the policy of the present Queensland Government. Their policy is to help the Germans, grab all they can, and kick dust; and what they can't grab or kick, think to keep for their friends the Germans. Talk about railways! Why, we can't even get a mail service. Why? Because the greater portion or majority of our members of Parliament to-day are Sinn Feiners and, of course, pro-Germans. Talk of the Germans fighting the world! It's the Allies that are fighting the world, as thousands of our so-called own people are with the enemy, and doing far more harm than if within the German lines.

It is rather annoying this talk of settling the small man on the land, which is all a fallacy, for no sooner is he on, and he wants a lot of luck to get on, and a lot to be able to stay when he is on, for he is at once termed a Capitalist or a "Parasite," and as it is not permitted or polite to kick him off, he must be taxed off.

There are thousands of miles of good cattle country and even second-class sheep country in this vicinity, that hundreds of small, experienced, hard-working sheep and cattle men would willingly take up and do well, if only given even a fair chance, under present conditions. And if we had an enterprising, patriotic Government, instead of a German one, there would be no necessity for State ownership of stations, as we have both the country and the men to grow them, and all that is wanted is an enterprising party in power to fix the stock markets. I know plenty of good men that have been trying to get on the land for years with a limited amount of capital, and can't get it. Why? The State want both cattle and sheep badly, so why not give the men of Australia a chance to grow them? The State should give all capable men a living area, and fence and water it if necessary; and if a man has not enough capital to buy stock, the State should buy him a certain number and charge interest on the outlay. If the bank can do this and make money, why not the State? And if only a little care was used, the State would have all to gain and nothing to lose. But it is not to be expected that the present Government would give such assistance, as men with money can't get land. Yet it is the policy of the present party in power to settle the small man on the land, and the following is how they go about it in this vicinity, anyway:—When an expired "lease" is about to be cut up for the benefit of the small man, it is usually done by a man that knows absolutely nothing about the condition or carrying capacity, hence the reason of a lot of country that has been cut up and offered to the small man going back to the large landholder, as the size of the blocks offered to the small man were of no use, as it was not possible to make a living off them; and rent asked is doubled, to say nothing of the selector being compelled to fence and make other improvements within a stated time, and as well as being asked to pay double the rent the previous holder was paying, and the selector has an excessive survey fee to pay. If the useless small blocks offered to the selector are not taken up within a given time, they are again put into one block and offered to the large man unconditionally absolutely, without any inquiry being made as to why the country was not taken up by the small man, and it is pointed out that the blocks offered were too small and rent too high. No effort is made by the Department to suit the small man, and he is supposed to take what's offered to him, or go without; they usually go without. Hence the great shortage of stock in Australia to-day.

I do not mean to assert that the large holder is not paying enough for

the leases they hold in this vicinity, for a lot of them are paying too much for some of the leases held, but it often pays a large holder to pay an excessive rent for leases adjoining. All the holdings in this district are liable for a fourth resumption. I have no hesitation in saying that if I had the cutting-up of the resumption that I could settle good men on the lot of it within twelve months, even under present conditions; but apart from these resumptions there are hundreds of miles of country in this vicinity held by no private person, a great portion of it no use, certainly, as it is worthless, and consists of rough mountains and old-man spinifex. But there are patches of from thirty to sixty miles of third and fourth rate country between some of the mountains which should be carrying cattle, but if any small man happens to apply for one of these patches he is offered along with it five or six hundred miles of mountains, and asked to pay from 10/- to 15/- a mile, consequently the patch of fair country is left to the breeding of wild dogs and all other pests that help to hamper the man on the land. What an enterprising Government we have in Queensland! And is it any wonder that a great majority of the Southern people think it only a "Blackfellow's" country, which is not right, as it is one of the finest countries in Australia; but few outside of it know its capabilities and resources, and it is not likely to be realised by many in our time, as the present-day members of Parliament are usually lawyers, railwaymen, or such-like individuals, as the hard-working sheep or cattle man has no time for politics—hence the deplorable state of a fair country. As well as having the country, I think, MacIntyre, that you will allow that we have the men, or had them before the war, and a few that were unfit are still left.

The boys that went to the front from these parts have more than proved themselves.

I am considering the advisability of turning blackfellow, as they appear to be the people encouraged and respected in these parts to-day. So don't be surprised if you see a big, able "black" knocking round looking for police protection.

1/3/19.

To the Editor of *The Pastoral Review*.

Dear Sir,

Re your Pamphlet on "The Question of Labour in the Northern Territory," reprinted from *The Pastoral Review*, February 16, 1916:

Now, who is asking for black labour for the Northern Territory?

What industry is it required for?

When was it asked for?

I was not aware that that was one of the demands of the late disturbance.

So why unearth the old question of black labour?

We should all be satisfied now that the ignorant, though well-intentioned, views of the people of the South have had a fairly thorough chance to be carried out, and have proved a dismal failure; so why not forget the past, and proceed on the only solution of the question, viz., railways?

In a newspaper report of an interesting lecture delivered by Dr. Jensen under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society, the lecturer, who was four years Chief Government Geologist and Director of Mines in the

Territory, dealt fully with the geology, soils, rainfall, and general resources of that interesting area. Its agricultural prospects, he said, were poor.

The coastal area carried poor soils, while its alluvial pockets were subject to floods, and could only be cultivated in the dry season. The soils of the interior were exceedingly good, but the climate was dry, and the land could only be cultivated by irrigation at prohibitive cost.

On the other hand, there were large tracts of magnificent pastoral country, and he goes on to describe these wonderful pastures. Further on he states: "Speaking generally, the best country in the Territory was that lying south-west of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the best line of railway from a development point of view he thought would be one from the Pellew Islands via Anthony's Lagoon to Camooweal, which could also be linked up with the proposed transcontinental line from Port Darwin."

Now, where does black labour come in?

We of the North all know that the extreme Northern Territory country is not suitable for agriculture under *white* labour, now and why in the name of purgatory do we want to grow agriculture there for? By this time I think most people know that taking an east and west line of parallel say from the Roper, all the country south of this is splendid pastoral country, and the country north of it, Arnhem land, practically waste country and uninhabited and likely to be for a long time to come. One does not get into the edge of the good pastoral country until he gets to the Katherine going south, so, as far as wasting money on this northern portion is concerned, except for thoroughly prospecting for minerals, it would be all thrown away. It is also on the cards that if the ground were thoroughly prospected it would pan out some good fields. I understand that north of the Roper, there are several lodes of silver and lead. However, the wealth of the Territory is the pastoral one, and it is only after reading such a recent production as "The World's Meat Future," by A. N. Pearce, F.R.G.S., that one who is acquainted with the Territory can realize its future.

Vesty Bros. have done more for the Northern Territory with their expenditure of £1,000,000 than the Federal Government with their several millions, and in fact, I think Vesty Bros. would be having a far easier and a happier time of it to-day if the latter money had never been spent at all, and they were working with the old amicable Territory conditions.

In my opinion, Vesty Bros. have or will solve the Territory Question, if the Federal Government join up the transcontinental line and with the branch line to Camooweal: Darwin never will grow on its own conditions, but as the outlet of its Pastoral centre and its position on the extreme north of Australia—if it is linked up with the South by transcontinental lines it will yet be a wealthy and prosperous place.

Then, and then only, if white labour is not able to grow fresh vegetables and produce, call in black labour, but I am of opinion that there will never be a call for them. I think I am right in saying the black labour question in Queensland is dead, as it should be. The unsatisfactory white labour question of tropical Queensland to-day is the same as that which is all over the world in every other industry, and there is no call for black labour in Queensland that I am aware of. And if Darwin is fostered as an outlet for a world's meat supply industry port, and not as an agricultural centre, which

nature and the climate never intended it to be, it will not only solve the question of the vacant north, but be the solving of the whole question for the benefit of Australia strategically and otherwise.

From a Northerner's point of view, Dr. Jensen's information is entirely correct in every way, but why run the Commonwealth into the expense of a new port at the Pellew Islands near Boorooloola just yet, when it is plainly on the cards that the Queensland Government intend to open up a port at Burketown, which is easily the picked spot of the Gulf of Carpentaria in Mineral, Agricultural, and irrigable lands, besides having, if anything, the better advantages for the making of a port. What does it matter to Federated Australia if one of the easiest and handiest keys for opening up of the Territory—Barkly Tableland is in Queensland. I am of the opinion that in the discernable future, the Commonwealth Government will have to open up ports at Boorooloola and the Roper River also, but at present they will have a struggle to find money for the carrying out of the scheme of repatriation for the different States, which is to cost £39,500,000.

It is also a foregone conclusion that once a port is made in the Gulf and the railways linked up, that meat works will be started, so that the pastoral wealth of the Northern Territory will be exploited fully.

The only drawback to taking up country in the Territory and stocking it now and for the last thirty years has been its isolation. Some of the losses that have occurred to big mobs of cattle coming into Queensland, and the time and expense it takes for a man to get his return is enough to flatten out the big holders, let alone induce small holders to start. For that matter, unless an owner drove in his own bullocks, it would not pay him to start a mob under 700 head, in with a drover. Once the opportunity is given to men to put their cast of bullocks on to the trucks in a distance of 100 to 150 miles, the territory with its cheap rents will be rushed. Now it is a struggle to be kept supplied with rations in the Territory. Several times since the Federal occupation of the Territory, the settlers around Boorooloola have been on the point of starving for rations during the latter end of the wet season, and so precarious is their position, that three years ago, an envoy was sent to Burketown to open up a regular trade to and from there, and now rations come from Thursday Island, which on account of the limited tonnage and distance of travel for small craft is not too satisfactory yet. Under these conditions, is it feasible that the country will ever be occupied?

Given markets and communication with Darwin, Burketown, and the south, the pastoral country of the Territory would soon progress. Now, a small man to attempt to make a start there wants his head read. Surely people are aware that last year when the railway strike was on in North Queensland, that if the train had been discontinued another week Cloncurry and Winton district would have been starving for flour. And even now, discontinue the boat running from Brisbane to the Gulf for two trips, and the result is disastrous; discontinue it for six months, and you close up the Gulf for Queensland.

Just consider this: It takes some eight to ten weeks for rations to arrive at Brunette or the Rankine in teams, the only transport there is from Burketown, and practically the roads are not open after the wet until the end of March or early in April, and in a dry year, which often comes along, the road is closed for teams after October, so that rarely does a team attempt—nor is it able to make—more than two trips a year out

to these places. Boorooloola outlet is hundreds of miles nearer to these places, so why do they not get their supplies from there, one will ask. Well, because they don't—is sufficient answer; and that is sufficient reason, unless you do not give the station owners and managers credit for having any intellect. The fact is that very few boats come to Borooloola, and the road for the first 100 miles or so out from it is too heavy and killing for teams.

Now is the time, it seems, to put the claims of the Territory well before the people of the South.

North Queenslanders have long since ceased to take any notice of the doings of the Federal Government in the Territory, but seeing that practically all the prosperity of its back country is due to the energy of old Queenslanders, and all its Barkly Tableland yet depends on Queensland for its existence, one would have thought, like Dr. Gilbert White, it was a wonder they did not invite more Queenslanders over there to help spend that £7,000,000.

Officials got from the similar climates of Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns, Cooktown, and Thursday Island would still have the same conditions of climate they left behind, and would have settled down in comfort there. One can imagine the grudge that officials from the South, cut off from the pleasures and environment of the cities of the South where they came from, would have. And is it any wonder any town with such a lot of new practically monetary conscripted citizens (perhaps one could call them, as they would never have dreamt of going there unless they were paid what they reckoned was compensation for their martyrdom) would go ahead in peace and prosperity?

And yet people who are used to North Queensland towns such as Bowen, Cairns, Cooktown, and Thursday Island felt once they put in a few days at Darwin that they were practically in their own country with the heat, and the tropical air of Cameraderie and easy-going life of Darwin as it was ten years ago; and if one met, as usually was the case, old North Queenslanders, and the same old "come-and-have-a-drink" spirit prevailed as it did, it only meant making it worth his while and the North Queensland stopped there. And I feel certain that had North Queenslanders been taken over there in the beginning, not only would they have settled down for the prosperity of Darwin, but enticed others over, too, and there would not be any talk of dissatisfaction. And Queensland would have been proud to know that her sons were not only settled in good billets, but that it was by the energy and spirit of her sons that Northern Australia was being opened up for the benefit of the Commonwealth.

The bolder spirits of the South are gradually and willingly creeping up to the now safe Queensland coastal towns, where they are only six days away from Melbourne or Sydney, with a weekly—in fact, bi-weekly—boat service, so that Queensland would not have missed her men.

It seems that the only really happy appointment at Darwin is that of Paddy Cahill, as Aboriginal Protector. One never hears a word about the poor nigger now; and this is a wonder, indeed, as usually there are wonderful tales of woe to be told about the downtrodden nigger of the North, so that evidently Paddy is the right man in the right place. In fact, I think there are hosts of people who will agree with me when I say, had Cahill been given £3,000,000 to spend on the development of the Territory and been made boss, there would be a different tale to tell of the prosperity

of the Territory to-day. However, Dr. Gilruth can be proud of the opinions of most of the old Territorists of himself, although they did not at all agree with his aims or methods of trying to open up the Territory. However, men, mice, and Parliaments, if they never make mistakes, never make anything, so that the Territory is not doomed yet. And, perhaps, now it will get a show. However, it will be very, very interesting to watch the movements of the Federal Authorities for the next few months.

Senator Ferricks has been sent North to look into the recent upheavals. We have often read of Senator Ferricks at election time, so we shall see later how things go. Already a lot of people are writing about the Territory, and the information seems to be all in the right direction. It is interesting to read ex-Senator T. D. Chataway's views in the Melbourne "Argus." He sums up the immediate pastoral possibilities of the Territory rightly—stock; but the isolation of the Territory won't be relieved by wireless telegraphy and aeroplanes. It is no good settling down in the Territory with a daily wireless telegraphy service to enable one to issue a daily newspaper, if you cannot get your cattle to market. And until railways open up the country, a man wants his head read to go out there and attempt to settle.

As far as the new land laws go, it seems to me that they are very good, indeed. Let a man take up as much country as he likes if he can fulfil the stocking and improvement conditions. Whatever way it goes, it will be many, many years before the Territory really booms. We have not the people to settle there, and, until we have, the big man who takes up the most country and stocks it and improves it, and carries out the conditions, is the best friend to the Territory. If we cannot grow people fast enough to stock it with, we can cattle and stock; and, until we get the people, the stock will be fulfilling the purpose.

I cannot see, however, where the black labour question comes in at all, unless it is to encourage the native nigger to breed up in the country north of the Roper, as he makes a good stockman among cattle and horses; and surely to goodness his race is entitled to his own land if he can survive civilisation—as far as cheap labour goes, that is, and will be a matter for the Arbitration Court.

It seems to be a settled conclusion that the present Federal Government have failed, after spending several millions, to do any good for the Territory. However, that is all over. I give them credit for trying to open it up according to their views; but the wanton, malicious, narrow-minded parsimony that some responsible Heads have used in closing up telegraph offices such as Floraville and the Donaldson, attempting to close others, and chopping out small mail services in Queensland the past few years that had been in operation for some thirty or forty years previously, in order to pay for their ignorant, silly, expensive attempts to open up the Territory, stamps the men responsible as political wasters, who should be passed out as soon as possible, if they are still in Parliament. A man or party can be forgiven if they make honest mistakes, but if they try to cover up difficulties by robbing a neighbour or making him suffer to help pay for mistakes, is low-minded, indeed.

Can any country that is led by such men ever be led out of the mazes of early Federation successfully, when their aims and actions are so puerile, dishonest, and parochial?

However, it's only the Gulf! How often in the past has its own Par-

liamentary representatives bartered away its claims for recognition for the aggrandisement of the more settled parts in the South?

However, it gripes me to think some people try and make themselves believe that the stagnation of the North of Australia is for the want of imported black labour, when the real reason is so damnably plain.

That is—quick railway communication to bring settlers on to the isolated province, to feed them regularly, and to allow them to dispose of their stock, to pay their way and pocket the returns.

J. N. MACINTYRE.

FEBRUARY, 1919.

At the present time, the cry of the alleged bungling of the Federal Authorities over the quarantine brings out the desire of the New South Wales people to secede from the Federal Union (so some of the papers suggest). They complain that once the other State Federal representatives get to Melbourne they get swallowed up by the Melbourne environment, to the detriment of the welfare of their own States. And, apart from this present incident of the influenza quarantine, there is much more in this complaint than at first meets the eye. The States nearer Melbourne complain the loudest, although they have the least to growl about; but the furthest away portions of Australia are so disregarded that they are practically wiped off the Federal map. And in very truth is the cry of the empty and dead North of Australia justified, as it were, because the faint bleats from the far North are hardly heard, and, if heard at all, are so faint and weak that no notice is taken of them. The mighty sword of the Southern press is sharpened and kept clean for the people of the South, and is so busy that it has no time or inclination much to be drawn for the needs of the North. Is it on record, either, that any Northern Federal representative was put out of the House or suspended for vigorously upholding the just claims of the North? Is it on record, even, that any member courteously, but most vigorously, brought the needs or abuses of the North into prominence?

In fact, the Northern Territory has not even representation. And how is a province going to get justice if it is not allowed to send its own local men to the "Peace Table," as it were? Surely the old residents of the Northern Territory know what will be for their own advantage and prosperity better than the people who have never been there, and should have a seat in Parliament to put their case before the rest of the Federal House of Representatives, and so educate them in their wants, and, if need be, voice their complaints so loudly that the general public in the South take up their cause. Why should the Northern Territory be used differently from the other States? Is the present administration to be continued? No serious man blames Dr. Gilruth for the failure of the administration. Why have an Administrator when they should be returning their own representatives to fight for their wants? I imagine an Administrator's hands can be tied by whatever Minister is in power, if need be, or has to carry out his ignorant views. However, the recent outbursts of threatened secession show plainly that the sooner the Federal Capital is an accomplished fact, the better, although it seems to be such an unnecessary waste of money and a further intensification of the congestion of the South to the detriment of the empty North.

It seems that this segregation of our worthy Federal representatives will have to be accomplished before they will be free from local environment, which operates so largely to the discontent of the rest of the States,

and breeds up thoughts of secession. Had Canberra not been settled and fixed up, one would have liked to suggest the capital city of Australia being put in the North of Australia for a few years. It certainly would soon open up the rich North. Perhaps some of the Representatives would resent the climate and surroundings, but the welfare of Federated Australia should have a prior claim to the ease and comfort of those patriotic legislators. What real difference would it make, except for the economic benefit of the Commonwealth? The crowd that would have followed the building of the Capital City in the North would have soon set on foot the solution of the question of the empty North.

And these are some of the natural advantages, say, if it were built on Hann's Hole, on the Nicholson River. There would have been a seven miles long, blue, deep, wide expanse of magnificent, clear, clean drinking water, with a stream running out of the northern end of it sufficient to generate electricity to light up the city and work electric fans to cool the fevered brows of the legislators; an illimitable supply of clean sand and rubble for concrete works in the river (from the end of the Hole north) for building purposes. The soil and site on the high banks of this magnificent body of water would make one of the Garden Cities of the world, as not only are prolonged droughts unknown, but the supply of river water would not run short to keep those gardens watered. The wealth of the 700 miles long mineral belt would soon flow through its streets, the agricultural wealth of the perennial streams of the Gregory District province be exploited, and a new centre be made for treating and cheapening the meat supply of Australia and the opening-up of further woolgrowing areas. The shortening of the distance to London, and a nearer proximity to the (as yet) unexploited trade which will one day be in evidence with the masses of the East, and then would the question of the empty North be solved. When this was effected, the cry of the South would be so strong and the old "octopus of vested interests" so rampant in the North, that it would then be time to plant a real, permanent Federal and centre capital somewhere in a picked spot in the centre of Australia, with railways direct to each of the State capital centres.

Although such a monstrous suggestion has never before appeared in print, to my knowledge, and the present state of Australian sentiment and vested interests opinion may look at my views as idiotic, I would point out that the Commonwealth would get a far better return for the money spent than they will from the Canberra site; and the Canberra site will always be a thorn of irritation and jealousy for all the State Capitals. And although it seems politically time that Canberra should be moved into, financially it is courting monetary suicide without adding one iota for the real, lasting welfare or prosperity or advancement of Federated Australia. The money already spent on Canberra would, perhaps, have joined up those breaks in the line between Sydney and the Gulf which eminent Sydney-siders want linked up so as to exploit store cattle from Queensland, and so keep up the price of beef to the people of the South by saddling them with the railage, when the beef should be killed in the Gulf and taken down to the South chilled, less the cost of live carriage, and twelve months of fattening and middlemen's commissions.

Instead of the line being for the exploitation of Queensland, it would serve to give legislators quick transit to the interim Federal Capital. However, "Qui docet discit," "Humanum est errare." It is not, and I do not suppose it will ever happen to be, the luck of Australia to possess a Govern-

ment that will take for their motto, "Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum," as regards the settlement and opening-up of the empty parts of Australia.

At the present time Sydney bitterly resents Melbourne trying to run the show. Brisbane and Townsville snort because Sydney would try and entice all the cattle supply from the West and North of Queensland to fatten and kill in Sydney.

Rockhampton puts up a legitimate protest about Brisbane debarring wool sales at Rockhampton.

The Gulf bitterly resents Townsville pushing the claim of the Gulf for advancement into the background, and gradually closing it up.

Darwin crying out for representation. And the results of the political bickering and vested interest politics are, the settled South and empty North. From the South to the North is a far cry, and the census and settlement denote the results of the voice.

STATESMANSHIP, PAROCHIALISM, AND WASTE OF PUBLIC MONEY.

Although the powerful Southern press at times comments on the empty North, and once in a way prints a letter thereon, the subject is not a burning one with them, and they are not too enthusiastic in sacrificing space for it.

The following matter was sent to the press, both in Brisbane and Sydney, but never saw the light of print; and I contend that it is only by showing up insane actions like the following that helps to educate the people to understand why the North is empty and not advancing in prosperity as quickly as it should do.

Sydney, July, 1919.

To the Editor.

It was particularly interesting to me to read in your issue of to-day the following paragraphs:—

"PROPOSED STEEL WORKS.

"THE QUEENSLAND SCHEME.

"BRISBANE, Tuesday.—The manager of the State coal mine at Bowen has advised the Mines Department that the new shaft has bottomed on an 8ft. seam of good coal, without bands, at a depth of about 70ft. It is known that there are several good seams on the State coal mine property, and it is estimated that there are something like 40,000,000 tons of coal in an area of about a square mile.

"Mr. Brophy, the manager of the proposed State iron and steel works, anticipates that he can have the blast furnaces and coke-making plant in operation in about two years from the date of the commencement of the work, and that the manufacture of steel should be possible in about three years and a half. About 1000 men will be employed."

It may be interesting to the people of the South to know that the proposed "steel works of Queensland," however, may be bungled as regards a suitable site for same, and a repetition of the old scandalous statesmanship that has created the settled South and the empty North be repeated.

A glance at the following from the Brisbane papers will point out the situation at present as regards the proposed site. And after reading your paragraphs the absurdity of the Bundaberg site will be more apparent. Of course, in a parochial sense the doings of the State of Queensland are of no concern to the people of Sydney, but from a Commonwealth point of view it matters a great deal. And the robbing of the "empty North" of her just dues will keep the North empty for ever and a day, and the enigma of the empty North of Australia be ignorantly put down to climatic conditions, want of black labour, absence of facilities, and the general unworthiness of the North, which to anyone that has ever travelled the North knows to be absurd.

QUEENSLAND STATE IRON WORKS.

Mr. Brophy, manager of the proposed State Iron and Steel Works, states:—

"So far as ores were concerned, in the Cloncurry district there were supplies on hand sufficient for 100 years, while in the Biggenden district there was a sufficiency in the ore supplies of from five to six years, at least.

"If the Cloncurry ore could be brought to the works for one half-penny per ton per mile, as the Government said it could, then the works would pay, while if the ore could be brought from Java at the same rate, they would also pay. What he wanted to find was a suitable site for the works."

Mr. Brophy later inspected the cauesway and crossing at the Elliott River, and expressed himself as satisfied with the water proposition. In the afternoon Sand Hills was visited, and the site of the proposed deep-water port inspected, Mr. Brophy intimating that the site was a good one, but that considerable expenditure would be involved in the construction of a breakwater.

The Burnett Heads were then inspected, and Mr. Brophy said that the Burnett River site had more advantages than the Sand Hills proposition. He said that a branch railway could be built with ease, but pointed out that Bundaberg's disadvantage would be that it would be further from fresh water than the other sites.

STATE IRONWORKS.

WHERE WILL THE SITE BE?

It was thought some weeks ago that the selection of a site for the proposed State iron and steel works then was imminent. The selection has not yet been made, and the indications are that it is not now regarded as a matter of urgency. The sites which at one stage were considered to have the best chances were Port Urangan and Bulimba, but at the present time there appears to be considerable indefiniteness about the whole matter. Mr. J. W. Brophy, the manager of the proposed works, who is advising the Government in regard to the site, has submitted reports from time to time, and still is engaged on investigations. Evidently the Government was not satisfied with the recommendation made in the first instance. Be that as it may, Mr. Brophy has recently been making further inspections in the Burnett and Wide Bay districts, which are pressing their claims with great persistency.

When seen to-day, Mr. Brophy said that he visited Bundaberg last week, and saw two suggested sites, one at the Sand Hills (on the open sea, and the other on some Crown land on the Burnett River, three or four

miles from its mouth. The utilisation of the former site would involve the building of two large breakwaters, and, if the river sites were chosen, constant dredging would be necessary. He was informed that coal would have to be conveyed a distance of about 50 miles—namely, from the Burrum. Mr. G. P. Barber, M.L.A., had undertaken to report to him concerning the possibilities of what was claimed to be a large iron ore deposit in the district.

From Bundaberg, Mr. Brophy went to Maryborough, and thence to the Biggenden district. The Government was testing a lode at Biggenden, and boring had been carried to a depth of 250 feet, with very satisfactory results. It was expected that the sinking of another bore would be commenced at an early date. Mr. J. Jones, underground manager of the Biggenden iron mines for 30 years, had informed him that there was as much ore at Mount Hastings, two or three miles distant, as there was at Biggenden, and that Mount Don Juan and Mount Harlow also contained large deposits of iron.

Mr. Brophy said that he had told the Bundaberg people that there was more ore in the Biggenden and Mount Hastings district than he had expected to find, and that he intended to mix the ore from those deposits with ore from Mount Leviathan and Mount Philp, in the Cloncurry district. The Biggenden ore was of very high grades, and the mixtures with the Cloncurry ore should be very satisfactory. "There are millions of tons of iron ore, not only thousands of tons, in the Cloncurry district," said Mr. Brophy. "I was informed that, big though the Mount Leviathan ore deposit is, it is insignificant compared with Mount Philp."

Now, Bowen possesses one of the three finest natural harbours of Australia. In close vicinity also has been opened up a huge coalfield, and the Government are connecting same with rail to Bowen. Already the Mount Elliott Copper Company of Cloncurry have erected very costly copper refineries at Bowen, and the rail has already connected Bowen to Cloncurry; so why in the name of all that is "putrid" should the iron ore be taken past Bowen?

The Statesmanlike action of opening up Iron and Steel Works is likely to be accompanied by the ridiculous expenditure of thousands of pounds of good public money in a totally unnecessary new port and ridiculously unprofitable new branch railway. Surely it is cheaper to bring six years supply of ore to Bowen for treatment than 100 years of ore supplies from Cloncurry to Bundaberg.

Look also at the wealth of magnificent agricultural land at Bowen as well as being a natural site for the establishment of a big healthy and prosperous city.

Surely the very palpable claims of the beautiful harbour of Port Denison and the already constructed facilities from Cloncurry outweigh any attempts to rob this comparatively empty part of the North of another step to early prosperity.

LATER.

"Questioned about Bowen's qualifications from the point of view of coal and harbour facilities, Mr. Brophy said there appeared to be a vast quantity of coal in the district, and the harbour was an excellent one, but it would be necessary to reclaim about a mile of the foreshore for wharfage purposes in connection with the works if they were erected there. Mr. Brophy seemed to think that Bowen stands somewhat on a par with Bris-

bane, inasmuch as it is the port of a coal producing district. He made it clear that in addition to the other considerations referred to, an important factor is that of labour. That is to say the works must be built where permanent sufficiency of labour is obtainable and where the climate is not too hot to permit of white men's engaging in the arduous employment of steel and coke making. He does not regard Bowen as too far North—it seems to him climatically about on the same plane as Gladstone, whilst Port Urangan, in his opinion, has more to recommend it from the standpoint of climate. It was gathered, however, that Urangan's principal weakness is its lack of water supply. It is apparently near enough to the Burrum Coalfields and the Biggenden iron ore deposits."

Now I challenge any sane, honest man, that knows the conditions prevailing at all these places mentioned, to say that there is any doubt at all about the site of Bowen being the proper one. However, we shall see what we will see. But if the site has not been chosen before this book sees the light of print, and another crime to the North is to eventuate, the people of Australia should make it their business to look into the matter themselves, and in no uncertain voice state their findings. Thank goodness, the petty workings of the separate States with their parochial jealousies and intriguing, etc., will soon pass away, as all sound thinking and patriotic Australians will from this out (now that Australia has taken her place in the world as a nation) think and act nationally, and the empty north of Australia whether it be Queensland, The Territory or Western Australia, is a blot on the Commonwealth, and her citizens should rightly see and block any narrow-minded and paltry individual from committing her to further ignominy without voicing a protest.

"WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS" AND IS MADE USE OF FOR PALTRY POLITICAL ENDS.

"The A.W.U. policy for developing (?) the Northern Territory (says the "Australasian") has already borne fruit. Avon Downs Station, one of the oldest established sheep stations of any size in the Northern Territory, has, in consequence of the scarcity, expense, and unreliable nature of the labour obtainable in that part of the map, gone out of sheep, and is restricting its enterprise to cattle. Thirty years ago sheep were sent up there by Mr. Thomas Guthrie, who is still hale and hearty at the age of 86 years. His successors have recently sold off their sheep, 50,000 head, in two lines. All dry sheep are being lifted at the present time; the lambing ewes will be lifted in June. This step has not been brought about by any difficulties with the season, seeing that 5 inches of rain fell on the station during last month. Some years ago the company, which took over this property from Mr. Thomas Guthrie, mapped out for itself a policy of steadily improving and adding to the resources of the large tract of country which it owned. There is almost no limit to the possibilities of expansion, and no deficiency of capital for giving effect to these intentions; but it was found that efficient labor in quantity was practically unprocurable. Fencing and water improvements could not be taken in hand not through a lack of material at that time (as is unfortunately now the case), but through the impossibility of obtaining the necessary labor. Contractors were confronted with the same difficulty as the station owners. In writing on the subject, one of the shareholders tells me that the latest claims of the A.W.U. proved the last straw to break the camel's back; so far as their sheep-breeding operations

were concerned. Cattle raising will continue, that portion of the industry being further removed from harm following on labor agitation, although even with cattle there will be a limit of endurance, if some of the figures recently quoted by me in these notes pass the Arbitration Court."

The writer of the above article has evidently struck a patch of information, with which he gets in another dig at the A.W.U. It seems to be the fault of the working man that Avon Downs has gone out of sheep and he is in a way being blamed for the non-development of the territory. However, if he wants to have a "dig in" at the right quarter perhaps this chapter will give him the tip, who to fight. But it's pretty certain that the enemy will not be molested, as he might be offended. His other course is the safer—blame the most harmless. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. It is perfectly true that labour is scarce in the way back territory, and likely to be so until the Government bridges over the space of distance between civilisation and the oasis of plenty constant work.

Neither State or Federal Government pay the living expenses of people looking for work while waiting at Burketown or Cloncurry or Camooweal. It's 240 miles from Burketown to Camooweal and about the same distance from Cloncurry to Camooweal, to walk it some people would consider the distance 340 miles. Between Avon and Camooweal is 50 miles, not many people walk it for pleasure, and they are long dry tracks out there, and the mailmen have no subsidy to carry people for nothing, so under these circumstances is it likely to be over run with people looking for work? Will it ever be over-run with people looking for work until the distances are bridged with railways? One of the biggest drawbacks, always has been and ever will be to the development of those districts, is scarcity of labor. Like everything else, one looks for jobs where jobs are most likely to be found close handy, that is in settled districts. It has been the custom for those out back places to pay for the journey of necessary labor to and from where they are brought, but this expense on top of the cost of carriage and the exorbitant freights on material make the improvements far too costly. Also when a Contractor or Station Manager gets men out those hundreds of miles, he may then only find out they are not too good, in fact it's importing "a pig in the poke" and he may get men no good to him, and the risk is not worth the game. A good man is worth the full quality of his work, especially in improvements. The improvements of some men are there for a lifetime, yards, fences, etc., and their work is a matter of boast for a station manager to point to. A cheap and nasty man's work is an eyesore as long as it lasts. And station holders dread this and would sooner not improve, than chance the importation of bad workmen.

I was informed by a Gulf station manager in December, 1918, that he was thinking of going in for a fire plough as there were a lot of fences, etc., that wanted protecting with fire plough tracks but that on being informed by his neighbour who had just recently in October or November got up a fire plough to Normanton and the freight landed at Normanton was £80, he jibbed. This was a particularly good type of fire plough and the makers price is only in the vicinity of £80, but sooner than feed the freights of a voracious shipping company to this extent he would get his blacksmith to make a "make-shift" one which is not a satisfactory article for doing the work. The A.W.U. cannot be blamed in this case. Now I know that some five years ago in 1913 when the Goldfields Diamond Drilling Co., of Melbourne, a well-boring company, were doing work on Avon Downs; they were hung up for months for want of carriage to get their material out to

Avon, and it not only disgusted them as contractors, but disgusted the owners also, and was more expensive to both parties, and the result was, "once bitten, twice shy." They did not persevere with boring improvements. Alexandria, Brunette, and all these big places have been most anxious to improve, not in hundreds of pounds, but in thousands, but the uphill fight is too great both as regards scarcity of transport, excessive rates, and excessive freights, and scarcity of good labor.

The selling off the sheep from Avon Downs is nothing short of a calamity for the Commonwealth, and unless these excessive freights, scarcity and dilatory methods of transport are wiped away, there will never be any more sheep go out on to the Barkly Tableland in our time.

On top of that note the back freights on wool coupled with the expense of paying the fares out there and back of the necessary labor for shearing.

Turn again to Mr. T. Nevitt's speech re the attempt to further close up the Gulf to Camooweal and impose 700 miles of land carriage against 240 miles.

The failure of sheep on the Barkly Tableland to-day is the great penalty imposed by the excessive freights land sea to market, and the extra expense added on to the cost of the labour to import it out there.

Private enterprise endeavouring to open up and exploit and settle the empty north, but hindered by the State Government.

RAILWAY EXTENSION WANTED.

In view of our efforts to get the railway line connected up from the Dobbin terminus, near Mt. Cuthbert, to a port at Burketown, via Gregory Downs, and branch lines thence South to Camooweal and a line to the silver field, a distance of 40 miles from the Gregory Junction, I will explain In supporting the petition for continuation of the Dobbin terminus to the Gregory only, and not mentioning Burketown or a port, we of the district were only "going cunning." What hope had we of getting a port at Burketown and a line out to the Lawn Hill Mines and on up to Camooweal, with the "Liberal Party crowd" that has been in power for years? What hope had we of getting it from the ordinary Labour politician, who is not always above pandering to vested interests and votes also. The labor votes and vested interests of Townsville are just as potent with narrow-minded Labour Members as they are with Liberals, so—it behoves one to lie low and think. It suited the Copper Magnates who have spent millions in developing Cloncurry to go with the tide and develop Cloncurry from Townsville. Previously some of these magnates had recognised the claims of a Burketown port for copper smelters and refineries, but exhaustive delvings into the minds of politicians and vested interest claims showed them the futility of even looking at the 250-mile propinquity of the Burketown sea-port, so they erected refineries at Bowen; the site, however, was a salve to our disgusted minds, as one does not grudge poor Bowen her long delayed prosperity, as her townsmen are not of the voracious type, but have been victims of a more influential and powerful political neighbour, like the Gulf. However, Mt. Oxide was languishing for transport facilities, and as there was no hope of it coming from Burketown, 150 miles away, the only thing was to try and connect it up to Cloncurry and Townsville. Anyhow, now the refinery was at Bowen, with central smelters at Cloncurry to treat Mt. Oxide ore and other ore, with the line in to the refineries at Bowen which of

course suited the mines. With great eclat the Townsville people backed up the petition and all seemed well—in fact all should have been well, and the co-operation of Burketown District enthusiasts was not even asked. However, despite the crying calls for this necessary development, the powers that be with a false virtuous timidity that sat very incongruously on them early in 1917, appointed a Public Works Commission to inquire into the matter, although no Commissions were ever appointed to inquire into the advisability of buying stations or building ridiculous State Hotels. All agreed as to the necessity of opening up Oxide, and even the Gulf people were not dog in the manger silly enough to cry it down, but lo and behold! The line was decreed to be a doubtful speculation in as much as if the mines turned out to be “duds” the line would be superfluous. The advantages to be gained by the pastoral industry were practically ignored; the witnesses brought forward to speak in this matter turned out to be “duds,” and so the line was turned down. However, the claims for the line are so pronounced and Townsville interests had so far swallowed the bait that the mining enthusiastic and not-to-be-beaten men put on more Gulf bait and tacked on the claims of the previously “unheard of glories” of the Gregory Irrigation and Agricultural area and Mineral area of Lawn Hill, and proposed to go for the continuation of the line from the Dobbin on to the Gregory River stoppage.

The Burketown people were willing to co-operate even to getting the continuation on to Oxide, but were not asked—this time they were asked with the result that a pamphlet styled “The Resources of the Gregory” was issued by the authority of the Burketown Shire Council, and copies sent to all Members of both Houses of Parliament, and the agitation again firmly and respectfully set on foot. With the result that in October Mr. Theodore and party made a tour of the Gulf. I feel sure that had some representative Gulf cattlemen been asked to come forward and give evidence as to the value of the line to the Pastoral Industry in the first sitting of the Works Commission that they could not have truthfully and honestly turned it down. However, from Mr. Theodore’s own speaking in Cloncurry he showed he was determined to do the right thing in the right way and open up the district with its own natural port and not pander to the already illegally fed western line into Townsville, which has done so much to cripple the Gulf’s prosperity and rightful development.

No mention has been made yet of the mines opened up between the Lawn Hill Silver Mines and Mt. Oxide, but only been hinted at. We should all be aware that the unbroken metalliferous belt of country extends for 700 miles from beyond the township of Cloncurry on the South-east (where copper prevails), to the Macarthur and Roper Rivers, and the Northern Territory on the North-west (where lead ores have been found in some quantity). The two provinces overlap on the Burketown mineral field, but there the copper deposits, located some distance to the north-east of the chief lead mines are few in number and mark the extreme feathered edge of the Cloncurry province. However, a real copper field again comes up on Wollgorang Station and within a vicinity of fifty miles of the old copper workings of 30 years ago, when they were worked by Chinese labor from Darwin. There are some twenty-five shows that have been more or less worked and partly opened up, some proving very rich indeed, and will, in due course, be a thriving copper centre. Silver lead ore lodes are also worked in the vicinity of Boorooloola, and the Macarthur River lodes have also been located in the same line north of the Roper River. However.

the lodes opened up are all languishing for want of transport. Between Lawn Hill and Mt. Oxide which have given out some very rich copper ore are the Burke (1½ miles from Tunnel Hill), Britannia Copper, Croxton Park, Lilydale Copper, Mellor, Missing Ling, on Gregory River between Gregory Downs and Ravensleigh Homestead, Moodies (on Sandy Creek between Gregory Downs and Mt. Oxide), Mt. Stanwell (22 miles east of the Dorothy), Mt. Verdon (adjoining Lilydale Copper), Vera Jane (on road between Lawn Hill and Punjaub Homesteads), Victor (on Victor Creek, a tributary of the O'Shanassy River), and others, so that not only will the linking up of the line with Dobbin open up Mt. Oxide and these further shows, but pass through pastoral country equal to any in North Queensland.

CONTENTIONS FOR THE EXTENSION.

In advocating for the continuation of the railway from Mt. Cuthbert to Mt. Oxide and thence on to the Gregory from a Gulf pastoralists point of view, I would here narrate the following facts:—

In 1902, or thereabouts, some 250,000 sheep were travelled down to the Gulf for relief country. Many thousands were dropped on their journey down, both from long stages of travelling without water and from poverty. On one night camp on Canobie after a cold snap coming on the weak and poverty-stricken sheep, two thousand (2,000) head died on one night. For years afterwards bones of sheep marked the old camps of these drought-stricken sheep that were being travelled to the Gulf. However, once they arrived there, they did well and there were practically no further losses, and all the sheep that reached their destination on the downward journey travelled back again after rain came. So great were the losses on the downward journey that men were engaged with plants to follow up the mobs and gather the wool off the carcasses.

Had the railway at that time been extended on to the Gulf the losses of sheep would have been infinitesimal. Had the line then been on as far as Mt. Oxide it would have been sufficient, as the journey from the railway to the relief country would have only been a day's stage.

Within close proximity to Mt. Oxide are Myally, Mitty, Goody and Gidgee Creek and Shawfield blocks, which are considered by some pastoralists to be good sheep country indeed to graze sheep on, but even the most sceptical cannot refute the fact that this country is good relief country.

Fiery Creek country and all the country down to the Albert River at Burketown can also be classed as good relief country, and was proved to be in the year 1902. The loss to the owners was not only a private one, but a national one, as it was many years before the herds bred up again to their former numbers.

We were told by Mr. Wragge that we can expect these bad years in cycles of every ten years or thereabouts and pioneers mostly agree with the accuracy of this statement.

It is a generally accepted fact that the Gulf has and never will experience a drought such as periodically happens around Winton and Longreach. At Longreach they have access to relief country by the railway, but if the drought belt when Winton District is suffering extends on to the Flinders country, then the only extensive available good and cheap relief country is the Gulf. It is only reasonable to expect what happened before may happen again, and the extension of the line now is only insuring against vital losses when the stressful time comes.

In looking at the matter from the present point of view I would point out the following. Owners would truck all their stock at the new terminus and be saved loss in condition, anxiety and mishap. The less distance stock are driven the less likelihood there is of disease breaking out in them and causing death, and the more nutritious is the meat when killed, a fact that will not only be of much benefit to the consumer here in Queensland, but get a better name for the State in which it is grown, from the consumer in other parts of the world wherever the meat is exported.

The risks of droving cattle are only known to those who have experienced losses on the road and have had to swallow their chagrin.

Some four years ago my drover when taking fats from Escott Station, near Burketown, to be delivered at the Gilliat on trucks to the meat works, had twenty-six (26) head poisoned in one night at the back of Canobie. Some ten years previously I had known two other lots to be poisoned about the same spot. It was understood that occasionally in this locality in the billa-bongs a poison weed of some sort came up after a severe wet season. Whatever argument was, or can be put up as to the cause of the death of the twenty-six (26) head is of no consequence. I had the loss. The year previous to this I started eight hundred (800) head of store bullocks up, to be delivered at Mt. Sturgeon, about (80 miles out of Hughenden). The railway was only as far as Cloncurry at that time. My nearest suitable trucking place would have been the Gilliat, but it was hardly worth while going thirty miles out of the track to rail them from Gilliat to Hughenden, as the cost would not have been commensurate with the benefit, so I had them driven. At Richmond, pleuro broke out and 46 head died, and I also had to pay extra for use of yards and paddocks to spell the mob while they were being inoculated. Could I have trucked them at Oxide, then I would have been a lot in pocket and the purchaser would have got better conditioned cattle, and all would have benefitted.

My own experience can be capped with other and more serious losses suffered by dozens of others, and these losses are not only private ones, but are in a way national ones.

The fear of pastoralists not making use of the nearest point of the line for trucking purposes, but travelling them further up to Kygabi, is absolutely groundless, as what with the risks of cattle rushing, etc., scarcity of competent droving hands and quickness of delivery into the tricks will actuate every owner to make use of his nearest trucking place.

In due course all the new country tapped by the railway will be closer settled by the small holder if the Government sees fit to throw open for "selection" the country along the line. The absurd, ignorant, and in many cases selfish motives, arguments prevail to-day on this question as prevailed in the late nineties as regards closer settlement areas along the Hughenden, Richmond and Cloncurry line. We forget the pessimistic utterances of those days now (to-day) when we see the number of small men between Hughenden and Cloncurry (250 miles) that in 1897 only boasted of some ten or twelve large holdings, with half the country practically not made use of and not able to carry half the stock the whole is able to carry to-day.

As regards the new mineral area tapped I would point out that Mt. Oxide is only a large "Outcrop" from the Mineral Belt that extends right over to Boorooloola, and as yet it is only waste of time looking for any fresh shows further away from the railway as there are no means much of dealing with the ore if it were opened up.

Up at the head of Fiery and Sandy Creeks one can see traces of copper everywhere, but as yet it has not been seriously prospected. Getting over towards the Gregory several promising small shows are opened up, but why they have not been proved and developed, only the small man with little capital and very big difficulties to battle against and no means of transport to get away the little he has been able to win out can fully tell one.

Getting on to the Lawn Hill field there are both copper mines and silver lead shows which should be dealt with in an article apart, like Mt. Oxide itself, and for that reason I will not dwell on them here, but will leave it for the mines people to write up, as they can give facts and figures.

Returning again to the pastoral aspect of the situation I consider that at the hearing by the Commissioner appointed for such, held in January this year, 1917, the evidence given was in some instances idiotic. One witness stated that Pastoral Leases would not be greatly benefitted, but grazing selectors would be.

On looking at the map one will see that the proposed line runs about parallel with the Leichhardt River, from the Mighty Atom Mine down forty miles at an average distance apart of about ten miles. This shows that every Pastoral Lease from Cooloolah Station down the River Leichhardt on both sides of the river will be benefitted, and by having trucking yards at the Sixty-five (65) mile peg, every Pastoral Lease on the lower Gregory River and Gulf will be most materially benefitted. The proposed line will practically mark the boundary line of the poor pastoral, but the rich mineral country on the West side from the rich pastoral and agricultural land on the Eastern side, which is only a few miles away from the line to the East. In fact by keeping the line up where it is, it is of more benefit to the good pastoral leases, as it will not divide their runs and nullify any strip of country and compel owners to protect their country on both sides of the line from fires, by having to make fire-breaks every year. Again this same witness asked whether the opening of this line would open up sheep country; emphatically answered in the negative.

I contend, big areas of the Shawfield and Mitty, Goody, Gidgy Creek, and Myally Blocks are suitable for sheep, also patches of Kamilaroi. Further East some twenty miles east of Lorraine, on the Landsborough, is seemingly splendid sheep country, and in fact was stocked with sheep many years ago, but on account of drought and mismanagement they were slaughtered for their skins. We have no statement that the country was condemned as sheep country, but the owners did not stock up with sheep again.

In the opinion of competent pastoral men Fiery Creek country should suit sheep well. However, opinions go for nothing many people's opinion are tempered with prejudice and are not worth listening to.

The writer was told by a manager of Manfred Downs eighteen years ago that Manfred country was not fit to carry sheep, and should not be stocked with sheep, but it had been carrying sheep some thirty years before he went there as manager, and is still carrying sheep; and I presume will still go on carrying sheep and that most profitably, so that that man's contention was worthless. His contention also applied to Eddington run, but they still have sheep there, too. In later years a lot of the Gulf holdings will have both sheep and cattle depasturing on them if railways are built, and good practical men are thereby induced to come out so far and the construction of a railway line will be the only inducement.

Up to the present I have only dealt with the question of the line on to Mt. Oxide, but by continuing the line on to the Gregory River will be of much more consequence to the pastoralist, as cattle from the further west towards Camooweal will come to the Gregory to truck, where, if they had to come to the Sixty-five (65) mile trucking yards, near Myally, would naturally prefer the droving route into Cloncurry or Dajarra to truck, and this extension of the line to Gregory naturally augments the paying capacity of the line already constructed to the Sixty-five (65) Mile, and Oxide.

In other letters set forth in this petition, you will note the enormous potentialities for closer settlement on the Gregory River District, so there is no need for me to expatiate on same. As regards the advisability of going on with this line at once I can only refer you to the extracts contained in this petition taken from Mr. G. E. Bunning, and you will note that I am only reiterating his and other views which have been before the public many many years now.

The sooner the extension is gone on with, the sooner will Queensland begin to drain off the trade of the rich Territory, Barkly Tableland into Queensland, which, of course, does not belong to it.

My contention is, that if Queensland moves first in this direction and establishes suitable and effective means of dealing with the trade, that once it is established the Commonwealth Government will hesitate to supplement it further by expending more money in the Northern Territory area to develop it for themselves, and so it will remain for a long time a valuable adjunct to Queensland; otherwise, if nothing is done the Federal Government is in duty bound to open it up and they will naturally do so from Boorooloola, or thereabouts, and the trade will be lost to Queensland.

It is generally understood that the Government is anxious to go on with the extension, but are doubtful of its paying from the start. If there is any doubt about this at all, the exigencies of the situation will balance any loss, and I feel sure the people of Queensland and Australia at large will only have esteem and not calumny for the statesmen, who are in power that push the scheme on with all possible haste.

I am, yours respectfully,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

"Escott,"

Burketown,

June, 1917.

Now it is some 2½ years since the Works Committee Commission turned down the projected extension of the Mt. Cuthbert line on to Mt. Oxide, and nothing has yet come of Mr. Theodore's visit in October, 1918, when it looked as if he meant to get it hurried on, wherever funds were available. Certainly from what we read the Queensland Government has not the necessary funds yet, but reading the following article in the Sydney "Bulletin" of July 24th, 1919, it sickens me to think that the money is now available for this specific purpose, but the Powers that be won't move in the matter. It is only right to mention here that people will talk, and the talk hints that the people who were most concerned in the extension of the line and the opening up of Mt. Oxide, did not deal with the members of the Works Committee in the right way, when early in 1917 they sat on Commission at Cloncurry, and the more one learns the more one begins to think there is a lot in the rumour.

However, the matter now stands if we can believe the paragraph in the Sydney "Bulletin," which is not very often guilty of publishing bogus news, that private enterprise here is anxious to have this line built, which means more production, more wealth, more wages, more settlement, and less empty north, and the State Government will not aid them or if they intend to do so they are taking a long time to think about it. And this Mt. Oxide mine is reckoned to be the largest and richest copper producer in the Southern Hemisphere.

July 24th, 1919.

From Cloncurry (Q.): Owing to the cessation of all smelting and the curtailment of mining operations, extreme depression prevails throughout the district. Further, it is exceedingly difficult to forecast when smelting is likely to be resumed. Any considerable revival in mining depends a good deal on the extension of the railway to the Gulf, with a branch line to Mt. Oxide. Mt. Elliott, Ltd., has offered to advance the State £300,000 towards the construction of the line. Elliott would almost certainly proceed with a policy of vigorous development simultaneously with the railway extension, and probably also erect large treatment works in the vicinity of the town of Cloncurry, scrapping the present plant at Selwyn. The company's smelting operations last year were principally confined to ascertaining whether the vast tonnage of low and medium grade ores available could be successfully treated. This was clearly proved beyond all doubt, notwithstanding the adverse conditions of the campaign; small tonnages, war cost of materials and labor scarcity. For the 15 months to the end of March the grade of ore put through the smelters averaged only 4.6 per cent. (extraction), compared with 10 per cent. and over in all previous campaigns. All the company's mines without exception have responded to development, and Mt. Oxide, practically a virgin mine, now shows over 300,000 tons 10 per cent. ore available for immediate treatment, with every prospect of the reserves being increased to millions of tons when development has been advanced.

QUEENSLAND JURISPRUDENCE, 1917, AS APPLIED TO THE NORTH.

GENIAL JOHN MAY, M.L.A.

AN APPRECIATION.

To the Editor.

Sir:

Will you kindly grant me a few lines to express appreciation of your worthy representative in Parliament, Mr. John May. Recently a couple of friends were the victims of a trumped up charge at Cloncurry, and, knowing them to be incapable of the offence alleged, I introduced one of them to Mr. May. He went into matters thoroughly, and laid the case before the proper authorities. He had the satisfaction of learning yesterday that the Crown refused to go on with the case.

At the same time there was so much plausibility, backed with money, that had action not been taken in the way indicated, matters might have gone hard with the young men concerned, and I regard it as only an act of duty, not to say gratitude, to let Mr. May's constituents know what a kindly man he is to those in distress.

Cloncurry should be proud of so honest and capable a representative, and I trust your genial and kindly old Member will have another walk-over at the next election, and I say this as one absolutely opposed to him politically.

Yours, etc.,

(Sgd.) J. T. LEE.

(Mr. May was Labour Member for the Flinders for many years).

1917.

(COPY.)

TO THE EDITOR.

Dear Sir,

I have just recently had my attention called to a letter printed in the "Advocate" of the 20th February last, headed "Genial John May, M.L.A. An Appreciation," and signed J. T. Lee.

Now, Sir, I think this shows plainly a state of affairs that ought to make every intelligent voter pause and consider seriously what is likely to come to pass in the future if such facts as stated in the letter and are allowed to go on, if true.

I take it that in the matter referred to a "prima facie" case had been made out against the couple of friends who were victims of the trumped-up charge, and that Mr. May then went into the matter himself, and, finding, as your correspondent says, that matters might have gone hard with the young men if it went before a jury, he laid the matter before the authorities, and the matter was squashed at once. I take it from this that Mr. May has the ear of the authorities, and can "do things" with them.

I also take it that the law acts for every man the same. Did not this couple of friends have their remedy in law? What right has Mr. May or any man in Parliament to lay the matter before authorities and so tamper with justice. The Magistrate at Cloncurry is above suspicion and praised by all for his impartiality and courteous fairness in his decisions. Is not this letter of J. T. Lee an insult to him? If these friends were committed for trial, why was not the law allowed to take its course, and the case come before a Judge and Jury? Was it because Mr. May would not be game to have a talk to the judge and jury before the case came off? Anyhow, why are judges sent to Cloncurry when Mr. May and the authorities are able to settle the matter without a court? Perhaps it is only meant for people who have no friends in Parliament. I do not think that Mr. May will thank your correspondent for his appreciation. It is a well-known fact that Mr. May is a personal favorite, and no one would willingly harm him politically or otherwise, but where the majesty of the law is concerned no one, genial or otherwise, should attempt to interfere.

Yours, etc.,

A. GULFMAN.

Verily, "what is one man's meat is another man's poison." The foregoing letter of appreciation which was inserted in the Cloncurry "Advocate" in April, 1917, in very truth tasted as poison to me, and I could not help but reply as "Gulfman." It rankled in my mind, as just about that time I had on an affair of honour of my own.

Often in that glorious game of "bluff poker" it falls to the lot of one man to protect the other players, and see what the "sport" is doing it on. It's really half the fun of the game, and one admires a good "bluff." However, if it is left to the one man to keep the others honest all the time, it is apt to be expensive for the "Public Benefactor" as he is called. It's really not a good advertisement of the sporting proclivities of the other players, but it very often happens in a game that these traits show up. A small game of poker, played amongst friends shows up character a lot. Coming out further into the usages of "ordinary life" this trait shows itself just the same. The man who is pig-headed enough to cry out for justice and try and get it for himself on a matter of principle, when severely trampled in the mud, gets very little sympathy and damn little helping if he falls further into the mud, although he is not only helping to protect the public, but perhaps helping his assailants to act differently in the future for their own safety. A lot of people only fight when they are sufficiently stirred up; it's the nature of the "beast," I suppose.

However, I had occasion in December, 1916, to issue a warrant for the arrest of two persons, that were in my opinion in the running to become two out and out Bolsheviks. Gratitude is absent in a lot of people and easy going and well meant hospitality and kindness is mistaken for imbecility. When such people begin to practice Bolshevism and get stronger and stronger, it's time to bite them. Well, some people think so, although there are others who are too tired or frightened to do so, and let well alone. No doubt these latter are the "shrewdies" of this world, as it never pays to be a Public Benefactor. A Cloncurry firm also had a warrant issued against these same two men, and I was chief witness. This was early in December, 1916. This matter seemed to cause quite a sensation, and three well known Sydney firms wired up to both the Cloncurry firms, also to me, that they guaranteed the integrity of the two men. Well, on talking the matter over with the police, I wired a proposition which if agreed to, I would, with the consent of the police, withdraw the warrant; although I always understood that once a warrant was issued it had to go through. There was no reply to this, but the strings began to work, and at 9 a.m., 23rd December, 1916, I was asked to attend at Burketown, as the matter was to be again put before the Magistrate who issued the warrant, and I would be required to make a full statement about a certain telegram, and whether I would or would not withdraw or cancel these informations and my reasons. Well, the river happened to be a swim the day I was to ride the ten miles into town, so I did not go in, but I sent in word that I would see the warrant through.

Well, in due course in the month of February, the Cloncurry case was heard. I had to bog through the mud and rain on horseback 150 miles to catch the coach at Kamilaroi and was up to time; and the Cloncurry case heard and the offender was committed to stand his trial in a fortnight's time at the sittings of the District Court. I waited and killed time for a fortnight; but a day or so before the Court opened, word came through. There was no true bill filed, and of course the case was finished with.

In due course early in March, the Cloncurry Magistrate bogged through the mud in the wettest month of the year in a car to Burketown and tried my case against the two, which resulted in a committal to the Normanton Circuit Court on the 24th April, 1917.

Please note it was "Rex," the King's case and not mine.

However, in due course, three witnesses and myself with a plant of 12 or 15 riding and pack-horses, were just leaving Burketown for the boggy and wet ride over to Normanton, 150 miles, when an urgent wire came through that there was a no true bill filed, and so we could go home again. And believe me I was pleased indeed, as the game was not worth the candle. The time wasted, and the cost to me one way and another was getting too tough. The proceedings altogether did not lack of other pleasures to come either, as on the 22nd March, 1917, I was informed by my Cloncurry solicitor that he had been that day informed that it was intended to join up the Cloncurry firm and myself as defendants in an action for malicious prosecution. He advises: "On present information I do not see how they can hope to succeed. It might be as well for you to write me instructing me to accept service of the writ on your behalf, if you wish me to act for you, so as to save time and possible expense caused by delays in mails owing to the state of the country." I heard afterwards of the possibility of a "ten-thousand pounder" writ; but it was all smoke.

However, this appreciation of J. T. Lee's set me thinking, thinking, thinking. I wrote my solicitors to get me a copy of the depositions of my stealing case, but after writing a time or two he was informed they had not been returned to Cloncurry. There was also given in at the hearing an "ore contract document" which I wanted back.

On 25th May, 1918, I wrote to the Police Magistrate who heard the case for a copy of the depositions, etc., and he referred me to the Registrar of Supreme Court, Townsville. I wrote these and also enclosed his letter to show my authority for writing there, but I got no reply.

Still anxious to some day peruse the facts that led to the committal, and try and find out from a qualified legal man the weak points of the case for committal, I wrote again to my Townsville solicitors to get me a copy of the depositions, or get to the bottom of the matter to see if they were in existence at all.

And this is what I learnt. After going to a lot of trouble they found out that in April, 1917, no true bill was found. The reason was that the Crown Prosecutor did not consider there was sufficient likelihood of obtaining a conviction on the evidence to justify him in putting the Crown to the expense of a trial. The depositions went to the Justice Department, which, in due course, informed him that his decision was approved of and the depositions were returned in the ordinary course to the Registrar of the Supreme Court.

However, I am of the opinion of J. T. Lee that in my case also that it would have gone hard indeed with the young men concerned if the action had not been ruled out of Court.

I might also mention that on about December 23, when there seemed to be a hitch about the execution of the warrant, I wired to the agent who was acting as intermediary between myself and the three Sydney firms who were guaranteeing the integrity of the culprits.

"There seems to be an attempt to tamper with the strings of justice, if warrant not gone on with will wire the Leader of the Opposition." However, all's well that ends well. If you can frighten a man to death it comes easier than hanging him. However, I have a habit of keeping documents that concern little matters of this kind, as well as other official documents

that are idiotic and unjust, like those postal notices re the closing up of civilisation and other road matters, so that when I open my mouth I can substantiate same.

Inquiry elicited the fact that the J. T. Lee signature was not that of the late worthy Cloncurry townsman of the same name, but of another stranger to Cloncurry. "Nuff sed."

BANKING.

Having been following the articles in the Sydney "Bulletin" "Wild Cat" column by "Ex-Banker" on banking amalgamations and some comments thereon, I noticed the following with great satisfaction, "but Ex-Banker surely does not think that private enterprise is going to be permitted to collect every pound of new profit—Nationalisation is in the air and the people are beginning to think that the time is ripe for some reduction in the profits of private banking institutions, etc." I must admit I never never read an article that gave me so much satisfaction.

There is no intention of unjust confiscation or hint of unfair procedure at all. The banks have in the past coined their money easily and more regularly than any other industry, speculation, or manufactory in the Commonwealth, and why should it be so when they in their turn only pick the cream of the risk market to finance on, irrespective of obligations, moral, patriotic, or just.

Money makes money! Why should money make money at the expense of the people. Why should not the State make all these profits? It would assuredly lessen taxation for the Commonwealth, and at the expense of no one, more than at present.

Ex-Banker mentions—"Banker's 'Terror"—Drought. This will make a lot of people smile. How many banks have been mortally injured by a drought this last few decades? How many of them deal in pastoral or agricultural securities to any extent? No, the mainstay of the country is, and has always been, the Pastoral and Agricultural industry; and how do these institutions support them, by avoiding them like poison, on account of the "Terror Drought."

Now how many droughts have passed over Australia since it has been inhabited, and has it in any way spoiled the country? It's only a phase, and the desolate dead condition of to-day's drought is totally forgotten in to-morrow's season of overflowing plenty, as it were.

How many banks took over station properties some years ago for behindhand interest, etc., that in some cases to our knowledge paid off the original debt to the bank in a few years and were gold mines to their new owners ever afterwards, until they sold them for seemingly no reason whatever, except perhaps it was that every fresh year's big return gave a twinge to the consciences of the more human-minded on the Board of Directors, when they knew some of the original owners were then still alive and living in poverty.

What fair-minded honest man, rich or poor, can deny the right of the Commonwealth to have a monopoly of the banking business of Australia? The Commonwealth should collect these enormous profits for the benefit of her progressive people.

The hard work of pioneering of her sons should be recognised and their efforts backed up financially by the Commonwealth out of these profits when

necessary, not only the country people, but the industries that are languishing for financial help and given accommodation.

How often has a man or company started an industry or work in this new country that has gone down for want of financial help at the right time, but the next owners, the "Shrewdies," came along with capital and made it a financial success. Give a dog a bad name and you might as well hang him! How many of the old pioneers of Northern Queensland died owning the stations they first took up and pioneered, that became gold mines to their new owners? On the other hand, how many rich men to-day can thank those institutions that were fair-minded and honest for carrying them along to success. To the people of North Queensland the name of A. T. Halloran, Esq., of the Bank of N.S.W., Townsville, will go down as long as Townsville is Townsville, for his broad-minded and statesmanlike belief in his own knowledge of the productiveness of the Northern pastoral industry, despite droughts, and his honest actions in sticking to his bank's worthy clients; and dozens of rich pastoral men to-day can testify to this. But how few men in the banking world can be classed alongside Mr. Halloran. It is a well-known fact that when most men get out of the bank, that have pretty well had only banking experience all their lives, although they had been supposedly smart bank managers, utterly failed to make good at anything else afterwards, and yet these men had been in the position, and they held the reins of finance and often tried to teach other unfinancial industrial men their business, and had sometimes the damning or making of them as far as getting them financial help was concerned, when it was most wanted.

It would be interesting to know the ins and outs of the true reason of all these country farmers and small pastoralists selling out all in a bunch as was printed in an article in February, 1919, in the morning paper. The reasons given are drought and fires, and a long rigmarole of stuff that does not hint even at the true reason—want of capital to carry on. Anyone will sell out if he gets his price, but the paper goes on to say they were selling out "lock, stock and barrel," sacrificing everything, dozens of them. Does one think these men would go mad like that if some financial institution would carry them on for the few months until the rain came. Are we to believe that no one else will take up those lands again and farm or grow stock? Would it be for the benefit of the Commonwealth to let it lie idle?

Money makes money. This time two years on or so, some of the new owners will be marvelling at their good luck in getting such a cheap place, and thinking of the hard luck of the late owner in having to sell it; and perhaps the late owner could tell you that some financial institution had advanced him about one-tenth of its value and would not carry him on, and he had to sell and pay these shylocks their bit, regardless of the sacrifice to himself.

You cannot altogether damn the institutions, business is business; but why not the Commonwealth take over all banking business and with the enormous profits (that we read of that the banks each return), bulked for the Commonwealth Bank. The State would be able to give all the pioneers of industries that want helping, help, especially those that these periodical droughts destroy.

We read: "The Minister for Lands has issued the form of application in connection with the Government's scheme of advances of £100 to farmers who are in necessitous circumstances owing to the bad season and crop failures."

The State bears the burden, but when peace and prosperity again flows, who reaps all the benefits of the prosperity. Why, the banks. All the time, as it were, the State is the "mug" for the banks.

Within the last few days this appeared in the morning paper.

AN AGRICULTURAL BANK.

In the course of a lengthy written reply to a deputation he received here some time ago in reference to land matters, Mr. Ashford, Minister for Lands, pointed out that amongst many concessions in the Land Act of 1917, he had altogether dispensed with the necessity for obtaining the Minister's consent to mortgages.

If adds Mr. Ashford, settlers cannot secure from private banks the necessary financial assistance to develop the land, the Government must seriously consider the advisableness of establishing an Agricultural Bank to undertake the work.

A very good idea in a way, but why should the poor old Government attempt to try and live on the cast off business of the private banks. It seems such a pathetic feeble way to try and give justice to the people, at the magnified risk to the State, whereas these other sharks are swallowing up all the easy good, safe money, and will be further benefitted when the results of the Agricultural Bank begin to be circulated round. It seems as if the Government is frightened to really open its mouth for fear these other Lords of Creation of the financial world will cry out at the enormity of the scandalous state of affairs that the country is coming to.

"The advances to settlers ordinance, 1913," for the benefit of the people of the Northern Territory, is an act that the Federal statesmen who are responsible for the framing of it and those who were instrumental in getting it made law, can well be proud of and once they link up a North and South Continental line and make quick communication with the now isolated territory, if this ordinance is continued, the money that has been spent on the territory will not all have been spent in vain.

I don't suppose 5 per cent. of the people of Australia know of this ordinance or its terms, and it might be just as well to give the information here in full.

ADVANCES TO SETTLERS.

(Advances to Settlers' Ordinance, 1913).

To Whom Advances can be Made.

Under the Ordinance advances may be made to any person residing in the Northern Territory who is the holder of any land under freehold or leasehold from the Crown or under agreement with the Crown, by which he is entitled to acquire the freehold, provided that such land is being cultivated or improved, or bona fide intended to be cultivated or improved for the production of any commercial product.

Applications.

All particulars and forms of applications may be obtained from the Secretary to the Advances to Settlers' Board, Darwin, or from the Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Melbourne. No fees are payable on application.

Purposes for which Advances are Made.

Advances are made to settlers for the following purposes:—

- (a) For making improvements on their holdings;

- (b) For purchasing any implements, plant, or machinery, approved by the Board, for use on their holdings;
- (c) For stocking their holdings; or
- (d) For paying off mortgages or charges on their holdings.

Limit of Advances—Pro Rata Advances.

The total advances made to any one person shall not exceed £800, and may be granted as follows:—

- (a) For purchasing approved building material a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds.
- (b) For purchasing approved fencing material a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds.
- (c) For erecting buildings, thirteen shillings and fourpence in the pound, not exceeding one hundred pounds.
- (d) For erecting fencing, thirteen shillings and fourpence in the pound, not exceeding one hundred pounds.
- (e) For ringbarking, clearing, breaking up water conservation, and other improvements approved by the Board fifteen shillings in the pound.
- (f) For the purchase of approved stock fifteen shillings in the pound on the value of the holding with the improvements made thereon, after taking into consideration all sums already advanced and still owing on the security, not exceeding three hundred pounds.
- (g) For the purchase of implements, machinery or plant approved by the Board, fifteen shillings in the pound on the value of the holding with the improvements made thereon, after taking into consideration all sums already advanced and still owing on the security, not exceeding one hundred pounds.
- (h) In case the holding is not of sufficient value in excess of all encumbrances (or at all) to permit of an advance being made as provided by the last two preceding paragraphs, the Board may grant an advance not exceeding ten shillings in the pound on the value of the stock, implements, machinery or plant proposed to be purchased.
- (i) For paying off mortgage, fifteen shillings in the pound on the value of the holding.

An advance may be paid by instalments as the improvements have been affected or the purchase made.

Attention is especially invited to sub-clause E above-mentioned, under which he is able, subject to the Ordinance and Regulations, to obtain 15/- in the pound up to £800 for improvements effected. The undermentioned table shows the advance which he may obtain under this sub-clause.

Value Improvements.	Amount of Loan.	Value Improvements.	Amount of Loan.
£666 13 4	£50 0 0	£666 13 4	£500 0 0
133 6 4	100 0 0	800 0 0	600 0 0
266 13 4	200 0 0	933 6 8	700 0 0
400 0 0	300 0 0	1066 13 4	800 0 0
533 6 8	400 0 0	—	—

Repayment of Advances.

For the first five years next following the date on which an advance is made the settler is not asked to repay the loan, but is to pay interest only

on the advance at 4 per cent. per annum, the first payment of interest becoming due on the 1st July in the year following the granting of the advance.

After the expiry of the first five years, however, the settler shall repay the advance to the Board by twenty-five equal instalments, together with simple interest on the balance of the advance for the time being unpaid at 4 per cent. per annum. The instalments are payable on the 1st July in each year.

Any advance may, at the option of the settler, be repaid at any time sooner than prescribed, or in larger instalments, etc.

Now, why does not an ordinance like that be on the statutes of every State and Province of Australia? Why, "it couldn't be did." No, not while these other sharks are gorging themselves on the easy money, and so prohibiting settlement, as it were. It would be as well for the brains of the Federal Parliament to look at the matter, "not only of the question of the empty North," but of the unsettled state of the fortunes of the settlers in the settled South, when the pinch of drought comes, and weigh this matter well.

Now, if settlers in the settled districts, as Mr. Ashford says, cannot get help from the private banks, what hope has the settler in the far back country or in the far north of Queensland, say. Well, he has "Buckley's." I think some people will agree with me when I say that one bank whose name smelt putrid all over Australia some (25) twenty-five years ago, and to whose aid the State came and pulled it through, or rather put it on to its legs again, and it is now racing ahead of itself by leaps and bounds to success, is one of the most contemptible as far as aiding enterprise with accommodation for the welfare of the State. It is absolutely pathetic the way the powers that be all in turn bow down for the benefit of the big octopuses.

The key of the situation to-day, I contend, that induces honest men to lean towards any movement that is iconoclastic in its aims, even although some of these movements are totally too much on the brink of the Bolshevik abyss, they are inclined to turn towards them as a change from the other evil, and that key is summed up in the word "money." No honest man wants money for nothing, but if he is a man who has sunk £1000 or £10,000 in land and stock, or what banks call risky security, and when a pinch comes he cannot borrow money to carry him along and so goes to the wall when he should not have—well, he gets the hump. There are as many men quite content to be employees as want to run a business for themselves. If the latter are helped in a business way and prosper, they as a consequence look after the former, which balances matters to a certain extent; but once let one big employer go to the wall, it means on an average, I suppose, some half-a-dozen employees, and if that employer has gone down just for want of a little financial help at the right time given when he was an honest and deserving man—well, he is embittered, and you have seven thoroughly disgusted men. What one might call a dead horse as far as security goes is freehold land in a back country or decadent town, and yet those freeholds should be worth to the owner what was originally paid to the Government for it. An honest State Bank should consider the original price received by the Government for it as a fair value to lend on it, I should think. Not so. One can buy £1000 worth of town freeholds from a private bank, and then later ask for an advance on it as

security, and they will tell you it is valueless as security. Funny, isn't it? However, times are changing.

In advocating for nationalisation of all banking business, either for the Commonwealth or for the different States, if it is to be a Commonwealth business, of course it will have to be run as a Commonwealth Bank. We have, as we all know, a bank in existence called the Commonwealth Bank, but the name, it appears to me, is a misnomer.

I always understood when it was brought into being that it was to be for the benefit of the whole Commonwealth. If this was the intention, it seems to be another serious case of Southern environment dominating the situation, as is commented on in the Chapter , Feb., 1917, which acts more detrimentally for the empty North than anything else. In fact, as the root of all settlement and progress, money takes the first position.

It is a common position to be in for a man to have a big interest in Australia (freehold land, stock, leasehold and improvements, and other solid national wealth in the far North), and be almost a pauper as far as ready cash is concerned; and in applying to the banking institutions one finds that it is all dead security or practically so, and one comes away from an interview with these people fully convinced he is a "busted gun," and if the position is acute he goes and gets accommodation elsewhere from private people, and has to pay through the nose for it. The majority of private people abhor money-lending, as every decent-minded man can understand, but there are others who glory in it and deal solely in it to their advantage, and if one is up against a blank wall elsewhere he sometimes has to take them on temporarily or sell out at a sacrifice.

If the Commonwealth ever does nationalise banking, and it looks as if the matter is in the minds of some broad-minded, honest, and progressive men, the Board will have to be drawn from representatives of each State, or the old rotten system will still prevail and the far-away provinces be as they are to-day. Perhaps each State could collect and use its own profits for itself; however, that would be a matter for the minds of financial men to fix up.

One thing, though, is certain to-day, and that is—that the Commonwealth Bank of to-day does not carry out in practice what I feel sure it was intended to do when the men in power brought it into being.

Quoting from the *Review*:—

"To what extent the welfare of any country depends upon the quality of its banks and bankers is a matter upon which vastly different opinions are held; but it will be generally and widely admitted that, with the exceptions of the press and the pulpit, banking comes into more intimate touch with the people than does any other influence known to man."

The first part of this statement, I venture to state, is indisputable, notwithstanding different opinions. As regards the latter portion, I would say banking comes before the press or the pulpit. Most people get more satisfaction from life if their bank balance is alright, and the press can be then ignored; and if one has a box-seat in life, the pulpit is more easily digested likewise.

I have noticed in print "the Commonwealth Bank" quoted as "the great adventure," which, to my mind, must have originated in the mind of some poor, silly sycophant. What, I wonder, will the proposed nationalisation of banking for the Commonwealth be called? And yet, if that brave man will remember how this "great adventure" has prospered in six years, what would the gain be to the Commonwealth if it took over the monopoly?

I note that it was said at a recent gathering: "We have really one of the most remarkable institutions in the world; that is only possible if the bank is run in a business-like way." Very good. It's a true saying, "There should be no sentiment in business." No, certainly not; and the result is showing plainly in the breeding-up of disgusted and discontented honest men. The brainy men of the Labour Party, twenty years ago, were considered to be little short of being Bolsheviks in the making. Lloyd George was the most hated and feared man in England among these "Business is Business" people, and I always understood that this democratic Commonwealth Bank was only brought into being for the benefit of the country, for her well-being—that is, to protect her people from the cupidity of the private banks, and also help them. But this running it in a business-like way appears to be that it is being run purely and simply on the lines of a private conservative bank, which nobly proclaims, "To him who hath, shall be given," and no risks indigenous to the country, although the investor took them himself when he acquired his stake in the country.

It is a poor business house that won't lend back, say, half the value on an estate that he has already sold to the investor, especially if he looks for his profits and stability from that said stakeholder, when the good times come along and the average of the drought years in Australia are, as we know, only one in ten.

(COPY.)

Sydney, 25th October, 1916.

The Manager,
Commonwealth Bank of Australia,
Moore-street, Sydney.

Dear Sir,

Re J. N. MACINTYRE.

In asking for this financial accommodation, I would also place before you why I am asking for it, and showing you that in giving it to me you will be helping me to carry out my aims and ambitions as regards the development of the Gulf of North Queensland and Territory country, which is a national benefit, and will result in opening up this corner of Australia, which is sadly being neglected, and which I claim will help to solve the problem which will soon be placed before the Federal Government—that is, how to successfully employ the returned soldiers when the war is over.

I contend that the belt of country from Cloncurry to Boorooloola is the biggest and richest mineral belt in Australia. From Cloncurry to Lawn Hill the country is just getting into touch with civilisation. From Lawn Hill to Boorooloola is practically unexplored, except for the small area about Wollgorang, of which I will dwell on later.

Some five years ago I bought up the insolvent firm of John Affleck & Co., who was in earlier days the most successful merchant in Burketown, supplying all the Barkly Tableland at the back of Camooweal. However, the policy of developing North Queensland from Townsville at the sacrifice of the Gulf helped to down the old firm. Stations which got their supplies from Burketown, after the continuation of the railway line out to Cloncurry, got their supplies from the Duchess and from Cloncurry, and the policy is yet to continue out the line to Camooweal and cut off the Gulf ports altogether.

To keep merchant opposition in the district, and a patriotic endeavour to try and again divert the old trade back into the old channels, I went in for motor lorries. My first runs were successful. We delivered loading at Camooweal in less than a week, where horse teams take some two months to do the journey, and in a dry year cannot travel at all on account of dry stages. However, the road to Camooweal proved unsuitable for motor lorry running, and after many disappointments and failures it proved too costly for me to continue.

Now, from Lawn Hill silver lead mines to Herbert Vale is only about 50 miles, and once at Herbert Vale station the road to Camooweal and from there out anywhere on the Tableland is an ideal motor one, so if I could get a good road from Burketown out to the mines it was a success as far as my aims were concerned, as we only wanted the good roads to run our machines. The road to the mines was sandy and soft, and totally unsuited for motor traffic. However, by keeping through the centre of Lawn Hill station run we could have a hard black soil road all the way. We could run stores out to all the large stations in the Territory—Brunette, Alexandria, Avon Downs, etc., and on our way back take in silver lead ore.

The station was giving us the concession to make the road for the silver mines people and contract to cart in their ore, and they could run their own motor lorries. However, at this juncture, my local friends, the Shire Council, stepped in and warned the Lawn Hill station manager that if the new motor road was made and turned out a good one, they would make application for it to be thrown open as a public road for the use of carriers, etc.

This brought forth the ultimatum from the station owners that unless I could get a guarantee or a promise from the Lands Office that they would not throw it open for a public road, they would not grant me a private one.

You cannot blame the station. The road would run through the heart of the run where the stock were running; motor lorries would race through the run in a few hours. Teams would travel 12 miles a day, camp at the water and disturb cattle from their watering-places, and do harm.

I asked my solicitors, Messrs. Hawthorn & Byram, also our member, Mr. Murphy, to interview the Minister for Lands, and enclose you their letters, also letters from the United Silver Mines people *re* the making of the road and ore-carrying contract.

As I have not been able to get this road, my motor lorries have been *practically* idle ever since.

However, within the last few months I have taken an interest in Mr. Masterson's copper mines.

We have a perfect motor road from the mine down to the sea, Massacre Inlet, some 50 to 55 miles. This Massacre Inlet was surveyed and buoyed by the Commonwealth Government some five years ago at the instance of Messrs. Moffat and Linedale, who also were opening up a copper mine on Wologorang, some 20 miles away from Mr. Masterson's shows. But they have practically abandoned same for want of funds, I understand. Anyhow, the show does not seem to be much, as far as I can understand.

I enclose the ore purchase note for the first 3 tons treated, which netted £140/14/9, also the returns of the second parcel of 4 tons, which netted £77/10/7.

You will note the copper percentage is much the same, which bulks about 36 per cent. The drop is explained by the fall in copper values.

This 7 tons is the only sample sent away. Since then we have two miners working, and when I left Burketown last week there were 12 tons already bagged at the mine waiting to be sent away.

I wired to Thursday Island to see if we could get a lugger to take some 12 tons of stores to Massacre Inlet for Wollgorang and Westmoreland stations, and return with a guarantee of 15 tons of ore, and I enclose the telegram saying there were none available.

My scheme is to purchase a 20-ton motor boat to pick up all the copper at Massacre Inlet and bring it into Burketown for the big boat, and later on, when we can guarantee regular shipments, the shipping people agreed some time ago to send their big boat to as near the Inlet as possible, and it will only mean taking the ore from the landing to the steamer.

Another big factor which urges me on to get this motor boat is that some three months ago the Boorooloola people sent a representative to Burketown to interview the merchants to see if one of them would take up the trade of that port, that during last wet season they were practically starving for rations there. The Territory Government cutter was supposed to make a quarterly trip from Port Darwin, but this had not been regular, and the place was left to starve. He guaranteed any merchant firm taking up the business £5000 worth of trade, but assured them that if they liked to open up there and run light motors, that they could pretty well count on £10,000 to £12,000 worth of trade.

I am sorry to say my firm was only third in the offer; the first people they approached took on the business. Now, I have partly secured the offer of the store that is there from Brunette station people who own it. I am told it can be bought for £300.

Now, whether I can buy this or not, if I can get the motor boat for the copper carrying I will open a branch of the firm there and carry goods to Boorooloola, and on return journey take copper ore to Burketown. I will also run light motors from Boorooloola to Alexandria and Brunette, and elsewhere. My aim and ambition is to open up these parts, and I feel convinced that the undertaking will not only be a financial success, but a most patriotic and worthy endeavour. My object finally would be to open at Camooweal also, and have the three places connected by motors—Burketown, Boorooloola, and Camooweal, so that the Northern Territory Tableland would be opened by either place.

The successful opening up of our Wollgorang copper mines will mean the opening up of new mines from the border at Wollgorang to Boorooloola, as there are shows opened up near Boorooloola, and although there has been no one to look for any between the two places, Mr. Masterson is convinced it is all the same belt of mineral country, and his discoveries are only fleas-cratches on a very vast area. He has uncovered an outcrop of some 800 to 1000 tons of ore lode; the lode is running down in a slanting direction, big and wide and solid, and all miners that have seen same say that it is a remarkable show. At any rate, at the present price of copper this ore in sight, that only wants blasting in and bagging, is a rich proposition, and no speculation.

I have been handicapped by want of capital. My bankers have been New South Wales Bank. Their Townsville inspector considers I have done nothing but waste good money the last five years. They say as a pastoralist I have no business touching anything like this. My ideas of opening up the country are considered mad, and they have hindered me financially in every possible way. The store is paying its way, but the motors are

losing money at present. The store money has to find the money for the motor company, and so the store finances get behindhand. As you will see, I, myself, am the merchant company, and also the motor company, and I have lost no man's money but my own.

However, I am on the eve of success, and by financial assistance now I can hurry on the matter and reap the reward of success well earned.

My men are the best paid in the district; they are also to get rewards of shares if they stay in my employ for a certain number of years and help to carry out my ambitions. My success will mean the success of all my employees and my friends.

My aims and ambitions have been frustrated in every way by local jealousy. Instead of encouragement in the running of my motors, the Shire Council put hindrances in my way by not getting creek crossings done up, etc. I have never at any time run foul of the carriers with horse teams, and never would, as there is more carriage to be had in this district for four times the number of carriers in it. The only drawback to the successful working of the United Silver Mines is the want of carriage.

Should your bank be willing to give me the accommodation, I would be satisfied with £8000, but would be able to do more with £10,000. I would, besides the station property, be willing to give as security both the assets of the firm of J. N. MacIntyre & Co., merchants, and the Burketown Motor Company. The assets of the former are some £5000, and the latter in motor vehicles £3500.

I contend I will do more to open up the best and most profitable portion of the Northern Territory in the coming twelve months with this accommodation than the Federal Parliament have done in Port Darwin and the immediate neighbourhood in the last five years, and with no expense to the Commonwealth.

My late father, Mr. Donald MacIntyre, first stocked Dalgonally station, in the Cloncurry district, Queensland, in 1866, and his name is a well known one amongst the old pioneers of Queensland.

The Bank of New South Wales people feel sad to think that I am wasting all the money he left to me in these mad schemes. They have no time for people who would be of benefit to their district, and hamper one in every way if they have been unfortunate enough to get tied up to them financially.

Should I not be able to get this financial accommodation, it will not mean that I will abandon my aims—it will mean only a postponement of them.

Not only have I been financially handicapped for my own schemes, but on account of cash tightness I have not been able to subscribe to the War Funds as I would like to do. It was my intention, if I could leave my schemes in good hands and financially on a good footing, to enlist. Although my having a wife and young family might be a bar to going right into the firing line, I contend I could be of service in other ways. However, my desire is to get into khaki as soon as possible, but until my financial affairs are on a good footing this is impossible.

Thanking you for a kindly and favourable perusal of the foregoing.

I am, yours truly,

(Sgd.) J. N. MACINTYRE.

(COPY.)

COMMONWEALTH BANK.

(Coat-of-arms.)

Sydney, 25th October, 1916.

F. W. Walker, Esq., Solicitor,
12 Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

Dear Sir,

Re J. N. MACINTYRE.

With regard to your preliminary inquiry this afternoon as to whether the bank would be disposed to advance Mr. MacIntyre £8000 upon the security mentioned, the matter has received our consideration.

I regret to inform you that the business will not suit the bank.

I return herewith the papers that you left with me.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) W. A. YOUNG.
Manager.

(COPY.)

Sydney, October 27th, 1916.

Denison Miller, Esq.,
Governor of Commonwealth Bank,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

In an interview with the city manager of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia to-day, on a matter of financial accommodation for the purposes of helping me to carry on pioneering, patriotic, and profitable undertakings in far North Queensland and the Northern Territory, I was told that the business would not suit the bank.

Moreover, it was out of his district. I replied that I understood that the whole of Australia was the bank's district.

I have been led to believe by Parliamentary debates and the reading of the policy of the Federal Government which were instrumental in brining the bank into being, that it was to be for the benefit of Australia as a Commonwealth, and to aid as far as possible those who were desirous of helping the Commonwealth. To be told it was not in the bank's district, astounded me.

Had I been told my security was not good enough, I would have taken the matter in a business-like way. But to be told that this Commonwealth Banking Institution was, after all, only to be used as a city parochial one, astounded me, and I felt very much like casually putting the facts before the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes.

This refusal, I consider, is a direct refutation of what the bank was brought into existence for.

Perhaps the intention of Mr. Young was to tell me to apply to Townsville manager. The Northern Territory would also be out of his district, so I am no further ahead, and must accept the ultimatum. However, I

would like, if you had the time to spare, you to oblige me and peruse my request as asked Mr. Young, and letting me have your decision personally.

Thanking you in anticipation.

I am, yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

(Turned down by D. Miller.)

(COPY.)

Bowral, N.S.W., February, 1919.

The General Manager,
Commonwealth Bank, Sydney.

Dear Sir,

In asking for an advance of £500 from your Townsville manager, I am referred to Head Office, as you will note by reading his letter. I require this advance principally to secure another leasehold in the Burketown district, and to buy a plant of horses preparatory to stocking it with cattle later on, which I can do by selling out my interest in the Escott Pastoral Company.

My security will be 2000 fully paid-up shares in the Escott Pastoral Company, and about 4 acres freehold of picked sites in the centre of the town of Burketown, which cost me £1000, which your Townsville bank now hold for me.

As regards the freehold, Burketown security, I make bold to say that in a very short time now the Burketown securities will be most valuable, and it is for this reason I am intending to stock more country up there with cattle.

Thanking you in anticipation for a favourable reply.

I am, yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

(COPY.)

COMMONWEALTH BANK.

(Coat-of-arms).

SYDNEY, 5th February, 1919.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,
Bowral, N.S.W.

Dear Sir,—

I am in receipt of your letter asking for an advance of £500 against security over 2,000 shares in the Escott Pastoral Coy. and about 4 acres of freehold allotments in the town of Burketown, but I regret to say we are unable to make the advance on the security offered.

I return the letter from our Townsville Manager of the 16th ult. addressed to yourself.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) E. W. HULLÉ,
Manager.

L

(COPY.)

"Innesfree,"

BOWRAL, 6th Feb., 1919.

The Hon. Chas. MacDonald,
Federal Parliament House,
MELBOURNE, VIC.

Dear Sir,—

As an old correspondent of yours re closing of Telegraph Offices and mails in the Gulf, I take the liberty of asking you for some information that I seem to be ignorant of.

I would like to know the stated objects that the Commonwealth Bank was brought into being for? Was one of its objects to help with financial accommodation the settler, and those who were most likely to be of advantage to the Commonwealth. Did those intentions mean to apply to all over *Federated* Australia, or only the Southern portion?

Is there any means of knowing what amounts were lent out on country security for the benefit of country industries and what amounts lent out in the cities, and the amounts lent out as accommodation in the different States.

Who controls the actions of the Governor of the Bank, or rather who only can dispense with his services.

I would be pleased to know all this information, as I don't know of anyone who has ever got accommodation from them, and inwardly I had great faith in a Commonwealth Bank, but I am beginning to think the management is the same if not worse than the ordinary run of Banks, who were certainly not brought into being by men, who held honest "Labour policy" views.

In fact it was "nauseous disgust" of these other institutions that brought into being the Commonwealth Bank, I always understood.

I would indeed be pleased to get this information.

Thanking you in anticipation,—

I remain,

Yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

(COPY.)

(Coat-of-arms.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

MELBOURNE,

15th February, 1919.

Dear Mr. MacIntyre,

Your letter of the 6th instant to hand re advances made by Commonwealth Bank.

I do not know that it is possible for me to get the information any more than yourself, but I am taking the liberty of sending your letter to the

Treasurer and asking him if he will get the information for me, and if supplied, I will send it along to you. When the Bank was established, the idea was to keep down the rate of interest as much as possible, and by this means to assist the various industries of the country. There is no control over the actions of the Governor of the Bank, who is in sole charge, except by special Act of Parliament.

With best wishes,

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) CHARLES MACDONALD.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,

"Innesfree,"

BOWRAL, N.S.W.

(COPY.)

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Department of the Treasury,

CJC/M

MELBOURNE, 5th March, 1919.

19/6766.

The Hon. Charles MacDonald, M.P.,

House of Representatives,

MELBOURNE.

Dear Mr. MacDonald,—

In reply to your letter of the 15th ultimo, enclosing a letter from Mr. J. N. MacIntyre, "Innesfree," Bowral, N.S.W., in which he asks for certain information regarding the Commonwealth Bank, I beg to inform you that the Commonwealth Bank gives careful consideration to all applications for advances from all parts of Australia, and if the securities offered are satisfactory, the advance is usually made.

2. No information is available in the Department as to the amount lent by the Commonwealth Bank on securities for the benefit of country industries and in the various cities of the different States.

3. The Governor is responsible for the management of the Bank, and his appointment is for seven years during good behaviour.

4. The reply to Mr. MacIntyre's last question as to who was Postmaster-General in 1910 and the following years, is—

The Hon. J. Thomas, 29/4/10 to 14/10/11.

„ C. E. Fraser, 14/10/11 to 20/5/13.

„ Agar Wynne, 20/5/13 to 17/9/14.

„ W. G. Spence, 17/9/14 to 27/10/15.

„ W. Webster, 27/10/15 still in office.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. H. WISE,

For Treasurer.

(COPY.)

COMMONWEALTH BANK OF AUSTRALIA,
SYDNEY, 12th April, 1919.J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,
"Innisfree,"
BOWRAL.

Dear Sir,—

With reference to your interview with me yesterday when I declined to negotiate your cheque on Burketown for £10. I am surprised to note that this cheque had already been deposited for your credit here and that cheques had been drawn against it.

Please note that no cheques will be paid against your cheque until it is clear.

Yours faithfully,

R. LOVE,
For the Manager.BOWRAL,
May 31st, 1919.The Manager,
Commonwealth Bank,
SYDNEY.

Sir,—

In answer to your letter of 27th inst., I have to state that I have drawn within 5/- of the amount stated, available, to allow of the closing fee of my account.

In answer to your letter of 12th April, I have to state that I thank you for this document, as it more than bears out my contentions, as regards the parochial management of this supposedly Commonwealth Bank, in spite of a letter from the Treasurer, Mr. Watt, who states "that the Commonwealth Bank gives careful consideration to all applications for advances from all parts of Australia, and if the securities offered are satisfactory the advance is usually made."

In this latter application of mine to you for a temporary urgent advance of £50, for the security of Burketown Town freeholds, that cost me £1200 and which the Shire Council assess at the value of £1410 and charge me £12/3/4 rates on and which you turned down with a malignity that manifests itself in your letter of 12th April, plainly shows that your management should be shown up to the citizens of the Commonwealth. The spleen of your letter, however, will not be fully understood without knowledge of the fact that during the last two years the Townsville branch of the Bank has passed through its books for me the sum of £6,464—and your head office £670.

Moreover, I have to thank you for the—I presume—sarcasm in your letter of the 27th in reference to the "fate" of the cheque in question. However, as documental evidence for a necessary inquiry into the workings of this Bank it is invaluable.

I am,

Yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

(COPY.)

COMMONWEALTH BANK.

SYDNEY, 4th June, 1919.

J. N. MacIntyre, Esq.,
"Innisfree,"
BOWRAL.

Dear Sir,—

I am in receipt of your letter of the 31st ult. and note that you intend closing your account.

There is no justification whatever for the tone of your letter, as the facts are that in your interview with me on the 11th April last, when you asked for an advance of £100 on the security of some vacant allotments at Burketown, the matter was treated with every consideration and courtesy, but I informed you that we could not give you the desired accommodation on that security, as we did not advance against vacant town lots.

At the same time you asked whether we would cash your cheque for £10 on Queensland National Bank, Burketown, in anticipation of funds being there to meet it by the time the cheque was presented, but as you admitted there were no funds there at the present time, I told you we could not negotiate the cheque, and notwithstanding that, we found on the following day your cheque on Burketown had been deposited by you for credit, and that you were drawing cheques against it, and it is because of this that we wrote you on the 12th April on the subject.

Our letter of the 27th ult., was written you in reply to your letter of the 21st idem, wherein you ask us to telegraph regarding the cheque for £10 referred to, and I have to say that the word "fate" which you write in inverted commas, and apparently attach some hidden meaning to, is quite the usual term used in business circles.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) E. D. HULLE.
"Innesfree,"

BOWRAL,

June 8th, 1919.

E. W. Hulle, Esq.,
Manager,
Commonwealth Bank,
SYDNEY.

Dear Sir,—

Before closing the correspondence re your letter of 4th inst., I have to state:

When my application for an advance of £100 was turned down, I asked for a £50 temporary advance—when this was refused I asked whether I could not be temporarily accommodated for any amount and was refused even the £10, although I had the deeds for some £1000 worth of Commonwealth freehold security in my hands. As regards the Burketown cheque I informed you that although I did not know whether at that exact date there were funds to meet it, that various sums of money were expected to be paid in any day and that as it would take at least three weeks from date

May 10th to reach Burketown it would be certain to be met. As it turned out I posted a Sydney cheque for £14/3/2 the next day (May 11th) which reached your office May 14th, and in due course also the Burketown cheque was met. So that by your letter of April 12th, you would have had no compunction whatever in damning my credit for a contemptible £10, which, under all the circumstances, is a contemptible action for the authorities who are in charge of this Bank of the Commonwealth to be guilty of.

I am,

Yours truly,

J. N. MACINTYRE.

With all due respect to the beliefs that this Bank gives careful consideration to all applications, I am bold enough to say that in my cases they have not. In 1918 I applied for an advance of £1000 in order to put £500 into the War Loan and for private uses for the other £500 and the security covered the whole amount four or five times, as well as the further security of the £500 War Loan Bonds.

I began to think that they themselves were doubting the "War Loan Bonds." The application made verbally was turned down in less than five minutes.

In my application in 1916 the excuse of not satisfactory security was not given, as it could not have been substantiated as nearly the whole of the advance was secured by hard cash that was in another bank in the hands of estate trustees which in due course would have matured, besides fully four times the advance in station and other assets.

I suppose applications like mine were something to wonder at and raised doubts of my sanity, however I don't mind that one bit. I have no intention of ever leaving the Commonwealth and I don't think many will say I have no business to be in it, so that perhaps the little cleaning up in this chapter may help to set matters moving in the right direction. Anyhow I apologise to no one, and don't give a snap for any man's opinion, I suppose it is the nature of the beast! However, it is a worrying game trying to run big things on ones own, and sooner or later one begins to think that the game is not worth the candle and sells off and invests his money and lets the other chap worry, and is content to draw the dividends.

Well, that may be the safest for a faint heart, but all people are not built alike, and the incurables generally break out again. Perhaps some day we may have a Commonwealth Bank run as we all hope the Commonwealth as a nation will be run.

At the present time it looks as if some of the States want to pull out because things are not going too well, which to my mind is childish. What hope had Australia ever of getting the full advertisement of herself and her Anzac sons if the A.I.F. had have gone abroad under five different States all pulling apart. What hope had Australia of being a nation and a proper off-shoot of the British Empire unless she had federated.

The proper amicable federal working may not reach maturity even with this generation, but that need not be expected. It is not to be expected either that the initial workings of a Commonwealth Bank would please everyone either, so why worry?

However, unless people cry out or complain, one never knows when they are hurt, and if people get hurt often without complaining or trying to remedy the cause, they deserve to be hurt. And the people who run away

from the cause, who are too faint hearted to try and remove it are not the ones that will be for the benefit of the Commonwealth.

It is my opinion that with a Commonwealth Bank to operate all over Australia and fed on the profits that now keep over fat some dozens of private banks, not only would our taxes be very materially reduced, but the increased production prove the making of Australia.

This undertaking may take years to accomplish, however, if it takes fifty years in the swallowing, it should be done, unless some one sets forth reasons why it could not be feasibly done and show up the fallacy of such an idea.

Would the Bank that was brought into being to protect the people of Australia explain why the rate of exchange on Burketown is 40/- per cent. and 20/- per cent. on Normanton? Is it because Burns Philip have a branch house there, and why should it be double that on Port Darwin or Normanton and Normanton and Darwin double that on London?

The following lists have been supplied to me, which I presume are correct:—

COMMONWEALTH BANK
SYDNEY.

QUEENSLAND NATIONAL
BANK LTD.

Rates of exchange on eight drafts from Sydney to London. Buying 20/-, Selling, 10/-.

Rates of Exchange on eight drafts from Sydney to London. Buying, 1 per cent., Selling, ½ per cent.

Also on Cheques or sight drafts.—

Also on Cheques or sight drafts—

Sydney to Perth	15/-
do. to Adelaide	7/6
do. to Melbourne	5/-
do. to Brisbane	5/-
do. to Townsville	10/-
do. to Normantown	20/-
do. to Purketown	40/-
do. to Port Darwin	20/-

Sydney to Perth	¾ p.c.
do. to Adelaide	⅜ p.c.
do. to Melbourne	¼ p.c.
do. to Brisbane	¼ p.c.
do. to Townsville	½ p.c.
do. to Normanton	1 p.c.
do. to Burketown	2 p.c.
do. to Port Darwin	1 p.c.

Now, considering the time it takes for a letter to go to London from Sydney, and considering the time it takes for a letter to go to Burketown or Normanton or to Darwin, is not the 40/- per cent. on Burketown little short of robbery?

In the banking world we have young men, Australian-born, who have cut their wisdom teeth under the tuition of wise, noble, fair-minded, and good, patriotic, business bank managers, who have won their experience of human nature and banking honesty in their dealings over years with honourable pioneers of the country districts, and learnt the risks and discounted them fairly in the favour of their clients for the final success of all concerned—the banks, themselves, and their clients. A notable exponent of many of these gentry can be classed in the late broad-minded, honourable, and optimistic Mr. A. T. Halloran, of Townsville, and his apt pupil, Mr. Gross, who has been lent by the bank to the Commonwealth Government to unravel the tangle and straighten out the absurdities, intricacies, and mazes that the Defence Department's money affairs have got into.

These are the men who should be in control of the banking world of the new, glorious, sane finance of a Commonwealth Bank.

How can one expect a city man, however honourable, just, courteous and well-meaning, to have the environmental experience of the former men to work on, to do justice towards the men in rural occupations for help in finance? Let city men control the workings for sane city accommodation, and those former men the control of the other, and then will the financial aid seekers get peace and justice to help them towards success, which is the key of the prosperity of the Commonwealth and the nation.

Money! Why, the Commonwealth has buckets of it; but the private banks are getting the use of it for a paltry return to the depositor, and lends it out on such a rigid line of city and safe security only, for double what they pay for it. That operates to the detriment of the vital industries of the land, and only tends to make the city folks more grasping, and cruel and heartless in the pursuit of profits to pay these banks for the use of it, and make a reasonable and payable return to themselves after all their expenditure of energy and brain and industry personally.

Either induce the capitalists of the Commonwealth to deposit their money in the Commonwealth Bank, enticing them hitherto by a larger rate of interest, which is not only an inducement and a just reward for the investor, big or little, who is thrifty, but it will allow the Commonwealth to help also with finance the thousands of unfinancial good ambitious, honest brainy small men to strike out for themselves for the benefit of everybody and every industry concerned, with greater production, and moreover, heal the cancer of discontent, which assuredly will attack even the most honourable and well deserving men in the long run who slave for years under an employer, when they should be running businesses for themselves. They are forced to accept the ruling rates of wages where they could be using their energies for the full benefits for themselves and the Commonwealth.

Let private Banks bring millions of pounds into the country and lend out to their hearts content, but if the Australian has money to be kept and deposited on fixed deposit which he can thank this country for the making of it, and is the rightful perquisite for the use of the citizens of the Commonwealth in which he made it, to use it—he should deposit it in the Commonwealth Bank.

Well, I say, if people won't or can't see that by lending it to a private Bank and getting an interest of 3 per cent. for it, and they lend it out at 6 per cent., the profits are going to the shareholders of that bank only, where the Commonwealth itself should be gathering in that extra 3 per cent. for the benefit of her citizens and the reducing of the taxation on the masses.

And if they cannot or won't see it, well nationalize banking on these lines by law.

The present private banks need not be forced out at all, if they can get foreign capital to use at 4 per cent. and turn it over for Australia's use to all her citizens that are willing to pay 8 per cent. for the use of it, well and good, everyone should be satisfied and let them send the 4 per cent. return back to the foreign money lenders out of the country, for the use of it in Australia, but the increment wealth made in the Commonwealth should be kept in the country and used for the opening up of industries and improvements for her masses in the aggregate.

It's only sound, sane, patriotic and democratic honesty for the citizens of Australia.

I notice that the narrow-viewed and biassed freetraders who look upon Australia only for the advancement of their own selfish ends and enjoyment,

now are forced to see that Commonwealth bonds are as good as any in the world. Nay, now they know that thanks to the valour of her Anzac sons, present and future, backed by the glory of the Empire, they are more gilt-edged than most others in this world.

The results of the last five years of the international melting pot principles of character and stability has proved this to them, so let Australia gradually accustom herself to this view of the situation and let Mr. Watt and our other patriotic financial thinkers and experts, who desire to gain the everlasting gratitude of the citizens of Australia seriously consider this aspect of the situation, and inaugurate a workable beginning.

And as for exchange, why should there be any exchange on cheques in the Commonwealth, which penalizes the country districts all and every time, the worst of all. At the best, exchange, seems to be only a survival of ancient grasping, robbery and greed. Do, I wonder—the States of America exchange charges coincide with Australia? I doubt it!

Anyhow, it's not what America does, it's what Australia should do and will do if her citizens are wise.

As for other countries, well, because the people of Russia are cutting each others throats trying to experiment in order to arrive at a decent fair democracy, despite some men in Australia, who would like to stir up the people here to follow their example; Australia will always be Australia and her sons be free from such besotted, ignorant, atrocious madness and use their best brains it is to be hoped to arrive at these knotty and necessary solutions for her democracy in a peaceful constitutional way. The pen is mightier and cleaner than the sword, so let us hope more use it in the future, not only for the Empty North, but for AUSTRALIA.

UNPEOPLED NORTH.

IMPERIAL DANGER.

Call for Scientific Study.

("The Times.")

LONDON, Saturday.—"The Times," in a leader, states that the report of the investigations of Mr. T. Griffith Taylor in the Northern Territory, which has been published in the Australian Year Book, proves a useful corrective of vague generalisations. "But," proceeds the writer of the article, "the Imperial aspect of the danger involved by leaving this immense area unpeopled, demands far closer scientific study than it has yet received. Professor Gregory's contention that huge artesian supplies exist in the neighbourhood of Lake Eyre, qualifies Mr. Griffith Taylor's conclusion concerning the aridity of Central and Western Australia. Some experts argue that the northern coast belt is capable of supporting a population equal to that of Java (30,000,000, including 50,000 Europeans). We do not believe that one million white people will ever settle in Northern Australia, but it is quite likely that no other races can ever be settled there in large numbers. Meanwhile the latest figures of the metropolitan populations compared with those of the country are a real blot on the picture of rich temperate Australia."

Having read Mr. T. Griffith Taylor's book myself, I could not but smile at his ignorance of the empty north and wonder why he had the audacity to attempt to write on the whole continent as it would have been more hon-

est to deal only with the parts of Australia he was qualified to write on, and say at once that he, like nine-tenths of the people of Australia, was ignorant of the northern half of his own country, and leave it that.

However, I hope that the editor of the London "Times" reads this book, and in another leader with altered views draws the attention of his countrymen to this land of health, wealth and prosperity awaiting all who come to settle on it, for, once, the railways are joined up with the North and easy and quick communication is given it will be settled and advance in leaps and bounds to prosperity. It is amusing, indeed, to read of the "Scientific study" required to be made into the matter, to read also of the contentions of the experts. Who are the experts mentioned?

Perhaps the following account of an interview with a scientific expert will satisfy him and acquaint him with one of the obstacles, but only a secondary one in comparison to the want of communication. As regards Health, it is a noteworthy fact that a lot of the old early pioneers are still alive in the vicinity of eighty years of age—some of them are over that age, and some of the ones that have passed away were up to that mark, too, which fact seems never to be mentioned by the detractors of the empty North.

The old Gulf fever and ague is a thing of the past as the stocking and opening up of the country has chased that away, and one now sees it but rarely.

THE NORTH.

OBSTACLES TO SETTLEMENT.

Labour Troubles.

BRISBANE, September 15th, 1919.

In the course of an interview Dr. Breinl, Director of the Tropical Diseases Institute, dealt in an interesting way with the work that has been carried out by the staff of the Institute in investigating tropical diseases and their effect on settlers of the white race in Northern Queensland. He declared that labour troubles and economic uncertainty were likely to be a far more serious handicap to the development and settlement of North Queensland than any other danger from tropical diseases.

Discussing the prospects of greater settlement of the lands in the north, Dr. Breinl expressed the opinion that there was nothing in climatic conditions to prevent a large influx of population, but he was not at all hopeful that anything of the kind would take place, because it seemed impossible to rely upon getting labour necessary for carrying on the industries of the country. Before any scheme for the settlement of the north could be undertaken it would be necessary to have a thorough investigation made of the economic conditions, and also of housing problems. Although a fair proportion of houses in the northern cities were suitable enough the dwellings in country districts were quite the reverse.

Sir,—

To the Editor.

Seventy-three years ago, Sir Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, a Peninsula veteran, a great Australian explorer and geographer, was commissioned by Governor Gipps, at the instance of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, to lead an expedition for the express purpose of searching for a practicable overland route from Sydney to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria. In the opening remarks of his journal, Sir Thomas said:—"For the mere exploration, the colonists of New South

Wales might not have been very anxious just at that time, but when the object of acquiring geographical knowledge could be combined with that of exploring a route towards the nearest part of the Indian Ocean, westward of a dangerous strait, it was easy to awaken the attention of the Australian public to the importance of such an enterprise. A trade in horses required to remount the Indian cavalry had commenced, but the disadvantageous navigation of Torres Straits had been injurious to it; that drawback was to be avoided by any overland route from Sydney to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria. But other considerations, not less important to the colonists of New South Wales, made it very desirable that a way should be opened to the shores of the Indian Ocean. That sea was already connected with England by steam navigation, and to render it accessible to Sydney by land was an object in itself worthy of an exploratory expedition. In short, the commencement of such a journey seemed the first step in the direct road home to England, for it was not to be doubted that on the discovery of a good overland route between Sydney and the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria a line of steam communication would thereupon be introduced from that point to meet the English line at Singapore. In this view of the subject, it seemed most desirable to open a way to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, the nearest part of the sea, than to the settlement at Port Essington, on a pres-ile forming the furthest point of the land."

Sir Thomas Mitchell was not destined to reach the Gulf of Carpentaria, but he discovered and traced the Belyando River as far as lat. 21.30, also the Victoria River from some distance beyond the junction of the Alice. From there he was compelled to retrace his steps and return to Sydney. His assistant, the ill-fated Kennedy, was subsequently despatched from Sydney (February, 1847), to continue the exploration of the Victoria River (now known as the Barcoo), also if time permitted, to extend his explorations towards the Gulf. In that, however, Kennedy did not succeed, and it was reserved for Burke and Wills to first cross the continent from south to north, and reach the Gulf via the Cloncurry and Flinders Rivers on the 11th February, 1861. In 1880, Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith propounded his great scheme of a land subsidy railway from Roma to the Gulf of Carpentaria, at Point Parker. Unfortunately for Queensland the scheme miscarried, so that although 73 years have elapsed since Sir Thomas Mitchell left Sydney to explore a route to the head of the Gulf, and 38 years have elapsed since Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith attempted to give practical effect to Mitchell's far-sighted conception, the placid waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria remain to this day very much as Flinders saw them in 1802, for as Sydney de Loghe puts it in his book, "Pelican Pool"—"The Sea of Carpentaria woos the north land. The north land gives no sign." In April next it will be 53 years since first I saw the Gulf of Carpentaria. I have frequently visited the Gulf since, both by sea and by land, and I am in a position to say that so far as settlement and progress are concerned, the Gulf has been steadily retrograding for many years. When I undertook the survey and construction of the Normanton-Croydon railway in 1888, there was a grand steam service every week from Melbourne to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria at the Norman and Albert Rivers. This was Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith's statesmanlike idea of making the Sea of Carpentaria woo the north land to some purpose. I know that north land as few do, and I know it is worth wooing, but it can only be successfully wooed through the Gulf of Carpentaria.

GEO. PHILLIPS.

Sandgate, 21/1/19.

And now, the spirit of the Empty North answers in this Book, the murmurs of "The Pelican Pool" stirred by Sydney de Loghe, who mournfully indicts her, and wonders, when "The Sea of Carpentaria woos this Great North Land" so well, why, the North Land gives no sign.

She sullen—but defiant ever since 1880 when she was forcibly divorced and robbed of her champion Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, has lain disheartened, dormant and comatose ever since, in which state, the lesser lights and intellects, that came after him, knowing of her beauty and wealth, were too small souled to woo her hand, and were emboldened only to steal and filch away year by year, one asset after another, to her undoing, so that for some 40 years she has lain helpless and sullen and emasculated.

But at last she is stirred into anger by the false, wicked, ignorant ideas that are afloat in the world about her and by those who jeer, sneer, and point with scorn, to her condition after all these years of wedlock.

The spirit of the Empty North in this book, tells a tale of injustice that will win for her, I feel sure the sympathies of the whole world. Long has she groaned under injustice, but like a strong man, patient under adversity, she has scorned to scream aloud in hysterics, knowing full well that in due course "truth and justice must prevail," and that time has now arrived.

However, to clear away any doubts which may linger in the minds of others, besides Sydney de Loghe, she rises up in her strength, which is in no way impaired, and with a reference to the foregoing information in this book, she points the finger of scorn and contempt at those Premiers, Ministers of the Crown, and Parliamentarians who knew her character and maternal instincts, but who would not go aside to help her, but rather did their best to strangle her, and she murmurs in no uncertain voice.

"J'ACCUSE."

PART III

NORTHERN TERRITORY

GREAT RESOURCES

DEVELOPMENT A QUESTION OF MONEY

MELBOURNE, Sunday.—The Minister for Home and Territories, Mr. Glynn, has been looking into the question of encouraging further settlement of the Northern Territory lands. He finds there are some 30,000 square miles of useful land in the Roper River district, 10,000 between the overland telegraph line and the Queensland telegraph line, and the Victoria River Downs and Wave Hill Station, and a further 15,000 lying between the overland telegraph line and the Queensland border, including part of the Barkly Tablelands.

The chief difficulties in the way of settlement in the past have been the cost of stocking and water boring, and lack of capital. In pre-war days stock cost over £8 per head to transport, and it has cost anything from £600 to £3000 to sink a water bore.

The Commonwealth itself has done a good deal of experimenting. The Minister states that only about ten per cent. of the bores sunk have absolutely failed. Water is obtainable on the tablelands, and although it does not rise to the surface, pumping has produced from 40,000 to 70,000 gallons daily from bores sunk at depths ranging from 250 to 600 feet.

The Government has tried for coal, but so far without success.

When we know that the only place where breeders can be bought at a reasonable price is the Territory, and that it is so far away that the risks of bringing them in are too expensive, so that the Territory is not likely to be depleted of its breeders, although Queensland and New South Wales are crying aloud for them, so then can we gauge the absurdity of the statement that "The chief difficulties in the way of settlement in the past have been the cost of stocking and water boring, and lack of capital." In the face, also, of the people of the Barkly Tablelands, willing and anxious to spend thousands of pounds on water improvements, we have this absurd statement. How any intelligent man can overlook the fact that railways are the only solution of the difficulty, is a much bigger conundrum than why the North is empty. In the case of the Northern Territory, since the Federal Government have taken it over, it is because the persons who were responsible for its administration have been as little qualified to administer it as they would have been to manage a big sheep or cattle station. In fact, any competent sheep or cattle station manager would have made a cheaper and better job of it, and had more to show for the money expended.

It was rumoured that when the first administrator was sent out to the Territory he was advised to cut out all the old hands and make a obligations to the world at large and her own democratic masses. When

clean sweep and a fresh start with fresh blood. It looks very much as if the rumour had truth in it.

For the first years, the chaos and waste were great, and the only competent work done was by the old Territoryites, but the new regime took the credit where it could be taken. It is reported that the late administrator remarked to a friend before washing his hands of the billet, that he deeply regretted not making more use of the old Territoryites when he first took the position over. All who came in contact with the late Administrator spoke highly and well of him, but his new system and ignorance of conditions, etc., soon drew such a community together at Darwin that they in their turn intensified the situation, and when the position was so acute that it was advisable for him to leave, he was recalled.

What was the next step that the Authorities did? Well, one would think they would appoint a man that was well acquainted and better fitted and qualified to fill the position.

Well, some of us thought so, and recognising that Mr. Cahill, the present Protector of Aborigines, was the most eligible of anyone in the Territory, induced him to send in his application for the position. Great was the chagrin, however, to find the nearest approach to the old regime that caused so much discontent and waste before was chosen in the late Administrator's lieutenant, an unqualified new-comer, like the late Administrator himself.

And now we read that "The Labour Representatives withdrew from the Advisory Council of the Northern Territory at the last meeting, after severe criticism of the Council, as follows:—

"Owing to the Federal Government having thought fit to have made retrenchments below the ordinary requirements of maintenance and safety, and without even consulting the direct Labour Representatives on the Advisory Board as to the advisability or not of such retrenchment, also the fact that a considerable amount of revenue is still being wasted in the upkeep and payment of obsolete and useless departments and officials thereof, and also taking into consideration that elected members of the Board see no hope of this very advisable retrenchment being carried out, we are of opinion that the Government is not giving, and apparently does not intend to give, that attention to the affairs of the Territory in the way that this Board advises; further, we are of opinion that the same autocratic powers are being used by the present director as were used by the late Administrator, in so far as private advice given by the director is acted upon, while the advice of the Board is ignored. We are, therefore, of the opinion that the Board has proved abortive."

Even one of the Government supporters of the Council itself remarked that the present constitution of the Council, in his opinion, would not work.

Somehow, one can imagine the strings are being pulled from the office in Melbourne even yet.

The administration of the Northern Territory from Melbourne has only damned it like a mine that has been on the market for flotation many times, so that the name is enough now to make people smile.

Not only is the name enough to make people jeer, but it's very being is poisoned with an element that was never there before the Federal Authorities started to experiment on it with their own experimental intellects.

The Evening News.

Sydney, Wednesday, October 15, 1919.

OUR FRACTIOUS WHITE ELEPHANT.

That enormous and enormously expensive joke, the Northern Territory, has added another flash of light-hearted gaiety to its comic history. It has produced a *coup d'etat*. Some of the white folks thereabouts, not approving the ways and works of the Administrator and two Judges appointed by the Commonwealth, simply put so much pressure on those officials that they agreed to leave for the more civilised and less revolutionary South. The Mayor of Darwin told the Government representatives that the people did not wish to use force, but a Mr. Nelson is reported as saying that a refusal to resign "will precipitate one of the biggest revolutions Australia has ever seen, and only by a firm hand by those who control the industrial mind are they being held back."

So the officials decided to go, not being, apparently, of the stuff that martyrs are made of, or, perhaps, being of opinion that the official duties did not include martyrdom. It would have been better, no doubt, if the three had stood firmly on their official right, if only for the purpose of seeing what "one of the biggest revolutions" would be like. But the undauntless three preferred to go quietly, and Australia has been deprived of what might have been a very interesting and instructive exhibition of mob law.

Well—well—well—well!

(A.) "I will telegraph for instructions. I do not intend to cause a riot."

(Q.) "If an evitable sign of riot should appear, can we take it that you would resign?"

(A.) "I would go further. I will say now that if you assure me that my failure to do so will mean a riot, I am prepared to resign."

Does anyone think that any Territorian who has fought the blacks in the early days, and drought and hardships and all the dangers and inconveniences of the empty North for years, deserved such legislators? Can anyone imagine their being forced out of Darwin against their will?

However, there never was a nasty situation; but it might have been worse, and, perhaps, this will mean all for the best interests of the Northern Territory.

Quoting still further from the *Evening News*:—

"There may be some doubt as to who rules in Darwin, but there can be none as to who pays. The Southern taxpayer pays for the Northern joke, as he has paid ever since the Commonwealth took over that fad-fogged region. If there is any truth in the old adage that those who pay the piper have the right to call the tune, then the right of governing the Territory should lie, not with the thousand or so whites who happen to be there owing to the prodigious expenditure of Southern money, but with the five million Southerners who had to provide that money. And logically, if the aforesaid thousand will not admit the rights of the aforesaid five millions, then the latter should simply stop supplies. As the Commonwealth needs to economise, it ought to seize the chance of doing so when one of its principal fads gives it the opportunity. If the Commonwealth

were simply to apply a policy of strict financial blockade to the Territory, the local insurgents would soon revise their programme."

The Southern taxpayer certainly pays for the joke—they most certainly should do, if they like to create jokes by supplying the authors of them, who in their stupidity and arrogance, armed with plenty of cash to squander, call for tunes that the Northern Territory will not and cannot play harmoniously, but in their ignorance want to keep paying out more money, and only understand that it is not their mismanagement, but a lack of enough capital that is at fault.

It certainly is time that the Southern taxpayer, who is undoubtedly in the same category now as the city owner of station property, who, when he heard that his station had had an inch or so of rain, wired up and instructed the manager to send in a draft of fats at once, little understanding that an inch or two or more of rain at the wrong time will rot off all the old good dry feed and leave none, and perhaps turn a good season into a devastating one! whereas, if a less fall of rain had happened at the right time, it would have meant thousands of fat stock.

Perhaps the advent of the Federal regime might be likened to that former state of affairs, and a similar one be pointed out would have happened if experienced Territory men from the length and breadth of the Territory—not from the confines of Darwin only—had been given a quarter of the golden shower to oil its wheels of opportunity. That's all that was needed; the old wheels were sound and solid and seasoned, and no new rubbish that would warp, open out in the new climate, and collapse and bring down the whole show, was required, which was inevitable to those who have often brought new wheels into the North and know something about it. There is a way of seasoning new material before making use of it, otherwise you are not only courting disaster, but unfair to them.

Now, what was all the row about? Well, we learn from the individual who the Federal Authorities in their wisdom sent up to inquire into the row previously, that the officials were charged with being interested with Vesty Bros. and the Daly River Copper Mine. Well, most people will agree that this is the only gleam of intelligent action that has emanated from the Federal officials since their advent in Darwin, if true.

The Federal Authorities are under a big obligation to Vesty Bros. for all they have done and hope to do for the Northern Territory, and nothing the officials could do would be enough to help them on to success, both for the prosperity of Darwin, the Northern Territory itself, and the Commonwealth.

As for the Daly River Copper Mine—well, any action on the part of the officials to set a copper or gold or tin mine going, and keep it going, is to their credit, and if it was done without wiring away for advice, it shows they were getting some sense in their administration, and were not going to let things go to pieces while they were writing for the Darg of Red Tape to move in the South. We have to thank Senator Ferricks for the information of corruptness in the news of the Senate doings in Melbourne. A lot of people remember Senator Ferricks' campaign speeches of old in North Queensland; some take off their hats to him, most don't. It looked like as if the Authorities were going to make him Administrator some months ago when he was sent to inquire into the former disturbance, and, under all the circumstances, Northerners would not have been a bit surprised.

The doings in the Northern Territory, since the administration by the Federal Authorities, not only demand criticism but destruction. No one can level the charge of corruption at them or their officials, only ignorance of management. The zeal that has been shown by them is praiseworthy, indeed; but, alas, it has all been wasted. One desires only to destruct in order to construct, and a new method of management is the only solution.

However, the Northern Territory upheaval is nothing to wonder at, and in one way it will do good. Poor old North Queensland was more to be pitied at one time; but things are alright again, as the men in charge met the disturbances without waiting for telegraphed advice from Brisbane.

We have seen the time when a Premier attracted to Queensland by his methods and expressed views the scum of Australia, as they were kicked or forced out of the other States, and they flocked to North Queensland to attempt to preach and practice the gospel of Bolshevism, but were in turn gradually worked out of Cloncurry and Hughenden and Townsville. In Hughenden some of them were booted out by returned soldiers.

As we have only the Federal Authorities to blame for the poisoning of the industrial life at Darwin, so we in North Queensland have the politician of Brisbane responsible for the poisoning of it in North Queensland.

This latter, a Labour politician only for convenience, and not by conviction, in order to win votes to bring him nearer to his selfish ambitions, politically would barter away even industrial peace to pander to these scum for their votes. Not so the true Labour man of conviction, who stated in no quavering voice to them when he had to deal with them, "These loud-mouthed braggarts will have to be booted out of the movement," and from that moment the tide of insolent, unwarranted Bolshevik discontent has been on the wane and is now almost gone. Thus, North Queensland patriots, backed by an Acting-Premier, gradually righted itself. One can look back on Australian Labour Party politicians by conviction with gratification, but those who were of the Labour Party only for convenience—and there have been more of this sort than the other—has and is gradually killing the movement. Mr. Hughes is the leader of the old former party, and was kicked out by the latter.

"Cheap Meat" reminds one of the sly-grog shanty-keeper that used to trade at Floraville. He had no cattle of his own, only a few goats; but so well advertised was he that his moneyed friends knew that they could always get beef free from him, and that there was no need to buy meat from the butcher, leaving Burketown, if your journey took you past Floraville. It only meant buying grog, and the meat was thrown in free. And, as is well known, one drink of good bush rum, with plenty of "Nailrod" nigger twist tobacco well soaked into it, generally meant that all the poor "guys'" cash went to pay the shanty-keeper for the risk he ran of killing the neighbouring station cattle and dealing the meat out free. However, the rope gives out in time, so will the cheap meat rise. Anyhow, it has been hung up and displayed so long now that it is beginning to stink.

So, North Queensland's name is on a par with that of Darwin for lawlessness; but it is only another handle to grasp to damn the empty North, and one can well read the following newspaper cutting, and the same conditions, I think, can be stated for Darwin. The devil is never so black as he is painted.

PAINTING NORTH QUEENSLAND BLACK.

MR. E. T. GARBUTT IN DEFENCE.

BRISBANE, September 25th, 1919.

Seen after his arrival, Mr. Garbutt protested against the general tendency to paint the North black. There was nothing very formidable up there. They had their problems, and they were seeking solutions. North Queensland, he said, imported most of their industrial outlaws from Southern cities. If the Northern unions were led by Northern men, strikes would occur only when there was justification, and never without every effort being first made to deal with the situation by other means. The dominance of militants over moderates can be understood when they recognised that even the Government accedes to the demands of extremists. The day when things will better themselves is when the organisations control themselves, when the majority rules and the militant minority has ceased to boss the union.

As regards the Northern Territory isolation and the luxuriance of its pastures, I can quote an instance of some twenty (20) years ago, when Alroy Station fat bullocks travelled in to the end of the railway line—then at Hughenden—and trucked there for Townsville Meat Works. They were the champion cattle of that year that were treated at Townsville, both in weight—being in the vicinity of 900 lbs. average for a thousand head—and in condition also, after having travelled some 700 miles on the hoof, then railed another 240 miles to Townsville. A page of the past of the expenses to send Alroy cattle to market as stores or as a full year's cost can also be read from a leaf of a pastoralist's expenses book as follows, distance 1818 miles:—

DISTANCES FROM ALROY TO NARRABRI.

From—	To—	Miles.
Alroy	Urandaggie	300
Urandaggie	Boulia	210
Boulia	Winton	240
Winton	Isisford	200
Isisford	Blackall	85
Blackall	Tambo	75
Tambo	Charleville	125
Charleville	Wyandra	75
Wyandra	Almena	62
Almena	Boatman	22
Boatman	Bendena	40
Bendena	Bollin	55
Bollin	Hebel	93
Hebel	Angledool	13
Angledool	Yeranbah	7
Yeranbah	Gundabluie	45
Gundabluie	Mogil Mogil	15
Mogil Mogil	Moree	81
Moree	Narrabri	75

Driving at 1/- per head per hundred miles, with the losses incidental with such a long journey, lame, sickness, and other unforeseen mishaps.

Just consider further the yearly cost of 10,000 bullocks coming the same journey from Wave Hill or Ord River stations, further adding on another 800 or 1000 miles to this 1818, and it will help to show why the North is empty and backward.

As regards the North of Western Australia, for many years the only market was Derby and Wyndham, from where limited numbers of bullocks were shipped to Perth.

One can understand only the cream of fates found a market. And Ord River cattle, more or less, until recently have also had to depend on this Queensland market as stores some two thousand miles away, and were passed on another 2000 miles to Narrabri.

Latterly, North-Western Australia Wyndham boasts of a meat works, but cannot exploit the East Kimberley and Sturt River and cattle too well, so that to-day those regions are crying aloud for meat works at Derby to exploit its magnificent cattle lands, which obtain right up to its doors, reaching many hundreds of miles back. It is also a fact that some 12,000,000 acres of vacant magnificent pastoral as well as mineral country between Wyndham and Derby are still idle, and have never been dented with a pick in the way of prospecting.

Vesty Brothers have initiated the solving of part of the problem, but is it feasible to suppose the Darwin works can successfully solve the problem of all that unexploited area?

Wyndham can only treat successfully the area that is not cut off by the King Leopold Range, and so those magnificent pastoral lands outside its pale have no real markets yet, and are stagnant and at a disadvantage.

Why are the Farquaharsons obliged to sell their cattle to Queensland when they should be treated at Derby or Wyndham?

In 1882 Mr. Nat. Buchanan, with his brothers-in-law, Wattie and Hughie Gordon, stocked Wave Hill with Dalgona breeders. Hard times, however, forced them to take into partnership Nat.'s brother, W. F. Buchanan. In 1896, C. H. Buchanan was sent out to fix up and arrange a financial settlement, as that "curse of humanity," finance, had made it necessary to step in, and old Nat. and his son and the Gordons severed their connection with Wave Hill. When Mr. C. H. Buchanan went out to the headquarters of the firm, Flora Valley, which was then the seat of Authority, and from where business was done, was in charge of young Gordie, and it is from his cousin, C. H. Buchanan, the information later on is given.

However, before touching on these matters, I would pause and make known to the people of Australia and the whole world the nobility of character and worth of these pioneers—"some of the old nobility of Australia"—hoping that my attempt will in a small way bring before the Australian public their worth and past deeds.

Should another with a more able pen not come forward and tell of these "Pioneer Nobility" of the empty North, before many years are out, I will account it my duty to Australia, for the sentiment and honour of her future generations, to do so myself; and the only wish I have is that my pen will be inspired to write them up as they should be written.

Some weeks ago, when Mr. Hughes, fresh from his triumphs in the old world "at the Peace Table," was about to visit Sydney, I saw, on

coming out of the gates of "that big Cathedral of Democracy," the Sydney Domain, newly chalked on the footpath, the following words:—"Australia's most famous man—Digger Hughes." Had I been present when that man was chalking the announcement, I would certainly have tossed him a dollar, as he only put into print what all good, patriotic Australians voiced in their hearts, but perhaps was more courageous than most of us by advertising it, and he certainly deserved a *douceur*. Mr. Hughes, with all his political faults, if any, stands out as the only man in history who has stood up in the world and preached the "Gospel of Australia"!

Metaphorically speaking, he got up on the Peace Table and poked his tongue out at Mr. Wilson, leered at Mr. Lloyd George, and beamed enthusiastically at Mons. Clemenceau, and demonstrated to them in an enthusiastic, but far from offensive manner, that Australia was Australia and a nation, and in his fight for the rights of a White Australian ideal he tactfully gave the Japanese Ministers to understand Australia's attitude towards their nation was not only a friendly and highly esteemed one, but our ideal was also a just one, and we are led to believe that no one present at that Peace Table was other than amused at Mr. Hughes' championship, and could not deny Australia's right to be so represented after the deeds of her Anzac sons.

Now, I beg to draw the notice of Mr. Hughes to the fount from which have sprung those Anzac sons—"The Australian Pioneers"—and would beg of him to inquire into the lives of some of those who are still with us, unhonoured, however, and unsung, but still leading their peaceful Christian lives under the glorious skies of Australia, and ask him to honour them while they are alive, and thank them either by word or deed to show that Australia does not forget, and he, in his exalted position of Prime Minister of Australia, is a fitting mouthpiece to do so. Those that I bring under his notice ask for nothing, as they are comfortably situated in respect to this world's goods, but a word of recognition from Australia would, I feel sure, be prized by them, to hand down to their future heirs. There are still a few left, but I would single out the Gordon brothers and their sister, Mrs. Nat. Buchanan. Australia can point to no "nobler lady" in all her history than "Kate Buchanan," who is still living with us at the ripe old age of 78 years, and her brothers, Wattie and Hughie and Willie Gordon.

Mrs. Buchanan went out with her husband, Nat. Buchanan, in 1862, and settled on Bowen Downs. In 1863 she came into civilisation at Rockhampton and gave birth to her only son, Gordie, and in 1864 went back to Bowen Downs. Later on she went out to Flora Valley, and lived there and kept the flag of civilisation and Christian religion flying, which was tainted with no cant—only the real, true Christianity; and for days, and even weeks, while her men-folk were tending the stock, she knew the solitude of the bush of practically Central Australia, with only the company of the Chinaman cook and the mobs of naked, untamed, half-civilised blacks camped on the creek below the homestead, who only understood the lesson that they were not to spear or molest the cattle on the run. For a religious, well-nurtured young lady, like Mrs. Buchanan was in her youth, to follow her husband, Nat. Buchanan, into those outback regions of Bowen Downs in 1862, and later on to Flora Valley, and to lead the life she has done, is a triumph for Christianity. Her life and demeanour in Sydney, or at Flora Valley in the empty North, was always the same, and the same can be said of Nat. Buchanan in his life. For a higher panegyric, ask the hundreds of weary travellers who have had hospitality from her hands at

Flora Valley; whether they came at midnight or midday, the hour was never unseasonable to put the kettle on and lay the table. And I know that I am only doing the right thing in bringing to the notice of Australians this "peeress of Australian womanhood," and will be thanked by the hundreds of those travellers of the wide spaces of the empty North who partook of her hospitality and benefited by her soothing and noble influence.

The same can be said of the two Gordons. It is on record, also, that the residents of the empty spaces of the North in their district, when they were leaving after the sale of Flora Valley to Vestry Brothers, gave them a handsome gold watch each. Golden also were the thoughts and well-wishes that they took away with them, but those golden memories of themselves that they left behind will last longer still. So that I say now, in this great hour of Australia's triumph, forget not what is due to your "Great Pioneer Nobility," and, worthy as they all have been, in these cases they not only have pioneered and triumphed, but they have by their lives and actions in the empty spaces brought the spirit of Christianity to bear on their fellow-men wherever they have come in contact with them, and all who know them, love, honour, and respect them. It would be, indeed, a fitting sentiment, when the Commonwealth establishes its Federal Capital and enters a new era of greatness, for Australia to erect statues to the memory of her pioneer noblemen, but the chivalry of Australia should see that the first one to be erected should be to "KATE BUCHANAN," one of Australia's noblest daughters, and I make bold to say no man or woman in Australia will deny her right to be so designated.

To single out a few of these old pioneers may seem unreasonable, but it is only that I am well acquainted and know them personally. Within the last few days, seeking for information, I was informed that a Mr. Richardson was to be seen at Kogarah, near Sydney, who pioneered the Gulf country with his partner, old Joe O'Rielly, but on making his acquaintance, however, I discovered that that pioneer had passed away like his partner O'Rielly, but it was his brother, Mr. W. W. Richardson, who had taken up country and stocked it on Cooper's Creek in the sixties. And I had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with another "Peer of Nobility," who at 88 years of age is still hale and hearty, the only trouble being a lame leg, the result of an old fall off a horse, which was in his old age coming against him. To say that to make his acquaintance was a pleasure is underestimating the incident. It was an honour to meet him. To me he was just another elder brother of the Gordons, and if ever long life in the back empty spaces left its traces of silver on its folk in the cases of all these pioneers mentioned, so then it has blended the grey with the blue, open, clear skies of Australia, and the charm to behold is exhilarating and uplifting. It reminds one of the soliloquy of Capt. Stokes on the 4th of August, 1841, eighty years since, who was the first white man in history to view the "Plains of Promise," and thus gave voice to his thoughts:

"All I could do was to give one long, lingering look to the Southward before I returned."

"In that direction, however, no curling smoke denoted the presence of the savage! All was lonely and still. And yet, even in these deserted plains equally wanting in the redundance of animal as in luxuriance of vegetable life, I could discover rudiments of future prosperity and ample justification of the name which I had bestowed upon them. I gazed around, despite my personal disappointment, with feelings of hopeful gratitude to

Him who had spread out so fair a dwelling-place for His creatures; and could not refrain from breathing a prayer that, ere long, the now level horizon would be broken by a succession of tapering spires rising from the many Christian hamlets that must ultimately stud this country, pointing through the calm depths of the intensely blue and gloriously bright skies of tropical Australia to a still calmer and brighter and more glorious region beyond, to which all our sublimest aspirations tend, and where all our holiest desires may be satisfied."

It would seem as if the spirit of Capt. Stokes' feelings were portrayed in the faces of these pioneers of those empty lands that he gazed upon so long ago from the North, and the inspiration of it all has tempered their lives and dealings with their fellow-men.

So not only would I draw Mr. Hughes' attention to these and others living of the old pioneers, but I would tell him that a chat with these men would show him that there are men still in existence who are evidence of the "grandness" of human nature, which, after all his years of fighting and association with carping critics, must have gone a long way towards lessening his belief that such types exist at all.

The ages of these folk also are a living reputation of the climate of Northern Australia.

I feel certain also that if a census was taken of all the old people of Australia over 70 years of age, nine-tenths of the number would be pioneers who had spent all their early lives as pioneers of the then empty spaces—North, South, East, and West of Australia.

A chat with C. Buchanan, a nephew of the late W. F. Buchanan, Esq., of Killarney Station, New South Wales, would be most interesting and valuable, and trustworthy indeed for any politician who wishes to help the solving of the question of the empty North.

Mr. Buchanan did nearly all the business of his uncle in stock matters, both inspecting properties and taking and giving delivery of stock, etc. It is many years ago since he first went to Wave Hill and came into touch with the conditions of the Territory. He had much experience of the working of stock in N.S.W., Queensland, Victoria, and even New Guinea in a small way before he went to Wave Hill, but he admits that it was not until he was two years on Wave Hill that he began to understand the conditions, seasons, etc., or the solving of same as regards stock. What a horse was capable of doing in the climate, or the stamina of the cattle as regards droving or handling. When to work them and when to leave them severely alone, and the solving of same means everything for the success and the development of a country and the stock, and one's own pocket.

He, an experienced bushman, admits that the conditions were upside-down in the Territory to him when he first went there. How, then, can one expect men who have never been out of the cities of Melbourne and Sydney to legislate for a country like that, when experienced men talk thus?

It is an interesting tale, indeed! Up to 1896 there was no market for cattle in the West for Wave Hill cattle, but that year shipping cattle from Wyndham to Perth was commenced. However, the conditions were so strict as to cattle being on the spot when wanted, etc., or pay demurrage, deterred the old hands from rushing the opening. However, in 1898 Wave Hill made their first sale to the Wyndham shippers, and that was the first really profitable paying sale off Wave Hill Station.

The Gordons and Farquahsons, with small lots, managed to keep the pot boiling and buy rations by small sales of bullocks to the disappearing Kimberley Goldfields butchers and Hall's Creek and such like places. However, the Wyndham shipping market was not large enough to exploit all the vast herds of Ord River, Victoria Downs, etc., so that most of the cattle from Wave Hill came into Queensland and New South Wales for sale up to the date of its sale to Vesty Bros. in 1913.

For four years running, 10,000 head each year came off Wave Hill for the Queensland and New South Wales markets.

After this long trip, especially if the cattle had had a rough, drought-stricken passage, the losses were great even after they reached the depot paddocks in Southern Queensland owned by Mr. Buchanan, and in one instance out of 1,000 head of these travel-worn bullocks that were placed into a paddock, only 200 were taken out of it after the rains came and delivered for sale.

In 1906, 7000 bullocks were sent off Wave Hill, and in 1907 only 2000 were left to be sold for delivery, going through the Homebush Yards, Sydney, averaging £6/10/- per head.

In 1905, Skewthorpe, a well-known drover, started with 3000 head from Wave Hill. The Murrnaji route was closed that year, and he had to come the outer coast route, Wave Hill, down the Roper River, via Boorooloola, Burketown, Canobie, and up the Flinders. The mileage paid for was just under the 3000 miles at 1/- per head per 100 miles. He delivered and was paid for 2850 head, and the best offer for those cattle when they got in was £4/10/- per head. The same year Philott took in another 3000 cows, but they came in via the Roper River—Bohemia, Brunette, and down the Georgina to Boulia. On the journey they had to lay up and spell for six months, as they were calving, etc. All this agistment has to be paid for and drovers' expenses still going on, so one can imagine the enormous profits left for the owner when the cattle were finally sold.

Walter Rose, the great overlander, also started in from Lissadale, another 340 miles further west from Wave Hill, but had great losses and mishaps, and landed with only about half the number.

Albert Williams, one of the "Kings" of the great "Overland" in 1910, also brought in 3000 head from Lissadale to Queensland. Huge mobs also came into Queensland from the Ord River and from Victoria Downs, with similar losses and hardships, and a fine book of romance could be written on the doings of these fine men of the "Overland night watch," and the totalling of the losses over 20 or 30 years would have made a big hole in our national debt had the losses only been applied to the paying it off instead of their being absolutely wasted. And what was there to hinder the making of the North and South Transcontinental line the first act of the Commonwealth when they took over the Northern Territory from South Australia? Nothing but damned ignorance and selfish parochialism, because it would only lead into Adelaide, and not Sydney or Melbourne.

Vesty Bros. have done more for the empty North than all the £10,000,000 of wasted money spent by the Government, and it is only to be regretted that they were not better advised to open their works at Wyndham instead of Darwin, where the Mitchell grass pastures obtain right up to the sea, and is the key of the cattle country drained by the Victoria River. We read, "The chief difficulties in the way of settlement

in the past have been the cost of stocking and water boring, and lack of capital." In 1896, when Wave Hill was changing owners and a settling-up was taking place, the best price for 700 mixed cattle, with calves thrown in, was 22/6 per head; the same cattle to-day, on the same spot, would be cheap at £6/10/-.

Up till lately, before the big droughts depleted the Queensland herds, and there has been a call on Territory cattle, those vast herds on Wave Hill, Ord River, Victoria River, etc., were not too well worked or branded up, and many of the small men to-day in those regions of the empty North and West settled down near by them and simply started his herd with nothing at all, and to-day boasts of 6000 or 8000 head. And those big owners did not worry much, either, until stock became more valuable. Had ten thousand small men gone out to those empty lands at that time when cattle were plentiful everywhere, they could have bought breeders for a pound or 30/- a head, and been to-day as well in as the Farquahsons. That is, if they possessed the grit to hang on like others have done. The people of South Australia had in the Northern Territory a golden nest egg of cattle, that, had they only had joined it up with a railway to Oodnadatta, would never have given it away for nothing. A census of returns of cattle sent out of the Northern Territory since 1900, and the numbers delivered over to purchasers at their final deliveries, would show a criminal waste of national asset that would astonish those that allude to the "White Elephant."

In 1916, the Farquahson Brothers, of Inverway Station, had 1200 head of their own bullocks to send to market. Being ambitious and good business men, they thought it would be a good speculation to buy up the surrounding cheap bullocks and take in a big mob, as the margin of local prices and the Queensland one was a tempting one, indeed. They bought 1990 from Lissadale and 1445 from a neighbouring run, Froghollow, and started with a mob of 4635. The Murranji track was closed for water, so they took the round coastal route, as it was called, via Victoria Downs—the Eley and Hodgson Downs, Bohemia Downs, Anthony's Lagoon, and Brunette. Their destination was Boulia. On the road pleura broke out among the cattle, and they had to agist them on Brunette Station for five months. In the delivery they were 1629 head short, and just as these pioneers were getting on their legs financially they got the setback of their lives.

Just think of it—1629 head of a loss! Think of the economic loss to Australia, let alone the blow to these men. Not only that, but they had trouble personally, and one brother had to be taken into Camooweal suffering from beri beri, brought on by the hardships of the journey, as they were shorthanded and everything seemed to go against them. However, they did not sit down and curse the country, the conditions and climate. No; they went back to their Inverway home and got ready for the next year's returns.

Next year, 1918, their bullocks were sold to be delivered at Headingly Station, in Queensland. They started the journey on the Muranjai track, but after travelling some 150 miles they found this road to be impossible that year, so they turned back home with the cattle, as they would not tackle the coast track that had proved so disastrous to them the previous year. And now we read in the papers the following:—

"The Farquahson Brothers, who, with one thousand bullocks, left

Inverway for Queensland in May last, 1919, also had to negotiate the Muranjai dry track, the cattle being without water for five days. Passing south of Newcastle Waters, they had dropped eight out of the mob, and have now reached Camooweal, well on the way to their destination. Headingley Station. Final delivery, 28 short.

"The present season throughout the Kimberleys is the driest experienced since 1913. Unless the wet season commences early, the position will become serious for stock."

The three Farquahson Brothers, the kinsmen of the Gordons and Buchanans, the doyen of the old pioneers of the empty North, whose name will go down in the history of the North as long as it is the North and the "great bushland," started their career droving cattle in the Gulf, and in 1894 took a contract to deliver 10,000 Dalgonaully bullocks to the Normanton Meat Works, and on the proceeds of this contract and with what they had put together previously, they went out and took up Inverway Station, in Western Australia, and have hung on, fair times and foul, ever since. Can anyone wonder how the Anzacs came to hang on to the heights of Gallipoli so well, and make the name of Australia so renowned, when we know that the majority of them were descendants of the breed of the Old Australian Pioneers? Can any sane legislator sit still after reading this book and still declare that it is want of "capital only that is retarding the North" Can he not see that the need of railways are involving the Commonwealth in an economic loss of thousands and thousands of tons of meat, which is walked off the cattle on the hoof before they reach even where they have meat works to treat them, or loss by death or misadventure? "Pleuro pneumonia" in the North is practically no drawback whatever. But travel brings it out, and if there are no yards or conveniences to spell the mob and inoculate them, the losses are heartrending. So insignificant is the disease in the North that it is only after hard riding before you can find a beast on the station to get virus from to inoculate the mob before starting, and when unprocurable one can only start the mob and chance pleuro breaking out.

I believe the Government is doing something in the way of breaking the dry stages for water, in the way of putting down bores and wells; but why this when the rail should be run out to save the journey at all?

In the case of the Farquahsons, the loss of stock was heartrending. But it had other dangers also. The mob was quarantined at Brunette, and had to be agisted there some five months, and the price of agistment for the mob would have been a splendid cheque to tour the world on for pleasure for any ordinary mortal. Hughie Farquahson had beri beri so badly that he had to leave the cattle and be taken in to the hospital, and Harry Farquahson also was bad with it; and, to make matters worse, on the journey over the cattle were rushing at night, and gave no end of trouble. However, it's only the men of the "Night Watch" can read and sympathise, and not supercilious wooden legislators who do not and cannot understand. It is more in sorrow than in anger we write this; "but if it be so, who can help it"? Nor will the farce of the situation as regards the opening up of the Northern Territory be solved until the Territory people elect and make their own conditions. What sane intellect can argue that it is possible for men with no knowledge or sympathy with the climate, conditions, or natural wealth of the Territory can govern and open it up successfully from Melbourne? Let the Territory have their own Parliament at Darwin, and submit their intended actions to the Senate of the Commonwealth. Why

not initiate in the Northern Territory a model State of the future for all the States—one State House of Parliament, abolition of all State Upper Houses, and in their stead have the Commonwealth Senate? The saving of State Governors' upkeep and totally unnecessary expenditure would be for the glory and advancement of the Commonwealth and the lightening of the load of taxation to its already overburdened citizens.

The unseemly arrogance and narrow-viewed parochial actions of some of the State Premiers have already retarded Australia's progress, and will continue to do so unless the Commonwealth is given a better grip of the situation.

This is another attempt to operate in the North, accompanied by economic loss and also loss of life, and is only one recent instance, but, if need be, hundreds could be quoted over the last fifty years where the economic loss in the aggregate would run into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

KAPUNDA TO HALL'S CREEK.

A DROVING FEAT.

Hall's Creek, Aug., 1919.

Drover Thomas Hunt and party left Kapunda, South Australia, over 2000 miles distant, in February last, with more than 300 horses, for Fossil Downs and Glenroy stations. They reached Hall's Creek on Saturday last after a strenuous journey, many long, dry stages over rough country being encountered. There was one waterless stretch of 135 miles owing to the yellow waterhole at Muranjai being dry, which occupied three days. The party only lost 26 horses, 20 of which died in the first month of the trip. This fine performance was tragically marred on Sunday when leaving Caroline Pool, two miles out, to move on to Nine-Mile Camp. This pool is situated in the rough gorge of the Elevira River, which has steep banks and is very deep. Ned Corley attempted to head a horse out of the pool, when the horse he was riding went suddenly into deep water and swerved round, dislodging Corley. A blackboy, a native of Bonnet Springs (S.A.), who was the first to see Corley's plight, appears to have made heroic efforts to rescue him. He plunged in with his clothes and boots on, but finding that he could not reach Corley he returned to the bank and divested himself of his clothing, but again failed from exhaustion. By this time two other members of the party who were some distance away stringing the mob through the narrow gorge came back to see why the horses were not coming on, but they arrived too late to rescue the unfortunate drover. Constable O'Connell later on recovered the body. The body of the deceased was interred yesterday, the Rev. Mr. Consterdine, an Anglican Minister, who is visiting the district, conducting the last rites. At the inquest a verdict of accidentally drowned was recorded.

Well when we know that the first profitable sale off Wave Hill was in 1898 and also that the market was only a very limited one or they would not have sent cattle into N.S.W. for the next 15 years. Well the idea of 10,000 men going out there would have been absurd, not in a practical sense, as the country was there—the breeders to start their herds were there, and the result in the numbers of stock in five years would have been enormous, as ten small holdings in ten years will aggregate more stock than one big holding over the same time given equal conditions and seasons. But

when we know Wave Hill itself did not pay until it was sold to begin new conditions and those behind the scenes know that Sydney town property was mortgaged to keep it going for many years or it would have fallen into the hands of the banks many years ago what hope then would ten thousand men have had if they had have gone out and taken up country and bred cattle there ten or fifteen years ago. What hope would 100 extra new settlers have had for survival, when we know the conditions that kept up Wave Hill.

Take the period before Vesty Bros. started their works, what inducement was there for an experienced and sane business man to take up country and stock it, although the Federal Government were shouting and bawling and splashing money about and trying to induce people to go to the Territory. The past present and future held and holds forth wonderful opportunities for the Territory and the Commonwealth when Railways are built to deal with the products, but under the circumstances when the Federal Authorities were trying to boom it they were executing only a Wild Cat, another "Blue Mud Bay" scheme, and there is no wonder at all that lots of people went to the Territory and came away in disgust and said the place was misrepresented. The fact of the whole matter is, that in a hazy way the people of the south knew the wealth of the Territory and thought to exploit it, but were totally ignorant of how to get at that wealth and sent their own men out who apparently knew less. The Federal Parliament men had a theory but their employees seem to have had neither theory or practice but the taxpayer paid all the time, and the results are as you see them. Why was all that money spent in Darwin in new quarters for employees, new this, new that, what was the object in view? What was the theory or the system to be used. The only glimmer of the idea was to perpetuate the crime of the south, to create in Darwin a place like Sydney is to New South Wales, and Brisbane to Queensland, but they did not know enough to settle on the head or back of the dog, but in their ignorance settled at the end of his tail, and it cannot and will not wag the dog, and naturally there is a frost, and now the southern press says cut off supplies and starve out Darwin. It would be the finest thing out for the Northern Territory if they did, and let conditions go back to pre-Federal days in many respects.

It may interest people to know that the Northern Territory would be well rid of all Darwin and Arnheim land north of the 15th parallel, and let the Darwinites, Bolsh and Biff to their hearts content with the Federal Authorities there. There has been no Federal money at all—practically—spent on the Territory below this parallel, and where it was most needed and would have been the most profitably invested, so why interfere with this country or its old Pioneers; further, when their own poison is likely to hunt them out of Darwin. However, the Territory is the Territory, the only men capable of opening up and advancing the Northern Territory are its own men.

31/7/1916.—From a Queensland Paper.

AUSTRALIA'S BACK DOOR.

VAST VACANT TERRITORIES.

Like a great staggering blot on a manuscript lie the vast, indefinite, lonely lands of North-Western Australia. They hang to the south-eastern coast-line like a huge airship to its moorings. Perhaps in a hundred or two hundred years, "when the sands of the desert grow cold," and a new race of politicians shall arise, something strong, statesmanlike and final will

be done for the unpeopled never-never of the North. Already one Western Australian politician appears to have had a spasm of wakefulness. Mr. Underwood (Hon. Minister) returned to Perth on Saturday from an inland tour of the Kimberley country, in the north of West Australia, and delivered himself on the following opinions on the problem of settlement:—

The tableland east from Broome to the Queensland border is capable of carrying millions of sheep, and to renew the Kimberley cattle leases without re-classification would be traitorous to Australia, but development will only be commenced when the sheep men get there. That would involve railway construction east from Fitzroy River to Hall's Creek. A new state must be formed, it being absurd to administer Kimberley from Perth.

A representative of "The Daily Mail" sought the opinions of a number of Queensland Ministers on the line of action outlined by Mr. Underwood. The difficulties of being a State Minister and at the same time thinking Australia wide (officially at any rate) were exemplified by the fact that one or two of the Ministers showed a tendency to shy at the paragraph because it did not directly deal with Queensland. The etiquette which years of more or less easy-going politicians have built up also makes it what may be termed "rash" for a responsible Minister of the Crown to discuss such a matter as the formation of another State anywhere, there is always the chance, be it understood, of stamping officially on somebody's corns. For instance, for a Queensland Minister to talk about incorporating part of the Commonwealth-governed Northern Territory and Northern-Western Australia in a new State is more or less officially taboo—unless the Minister wants particularly to talk about it of his own accord or for his own purposes. In spite of all these ceremonious circumstances, some very interesting views were obtained on the most important problems involved. For instance, all the Ministers were agreed on the ever-urgent need for a big, definite, energetic scheme for the settlement of the Northern spaces of Australia, and one Minister propounded the doctrine that, morally speaking, what we cannot occupy we have little right to hold.

Mr. J. M. Hunter (Minister for Lands) said he quite agreed with Mr. Underwood that if the areas he mentioned were good, healthy sheep country, or could be made such by improvements, and the suggested connection with the coast by rail provided, undoubtedly the wisest and most profitable thing for the State of Western Australia, both from financial and population view-points would be to reserve it for sheep pastures. The matter of population naturally included defence. Almost due east from the country mentioned by the Western Australian Minister, was the great Barkly Tableland, part of which was in the Territory and part in Queensland. This area was well known to afford first-class pastures for sheep, and, in Queensland at least, was being thrown open for that purpose by the Government. As a matter of fact surveyors were on it at the present time, and it would not be a very long time before areas would become available. One benefit the Western Australian Government would receive from sheep on the Kimberley country would be bigger rents. Sheep, of course, meant considerably more population than cattle. As for cattle there was a lot of country close to the coast in the Darwin area that was very fine cattle country. Further inland, when the Tablelands were reached, excellent sheep lands were encountered. Mr. Hunter considered that the proposition regarding a new State was purely a matter for Western Australia itself.

It is well known, however, that Mr. Hunter does not favour the smaller States idea.

Mr. E. G. Theodore (Treasurer and Acting-Premier) confined his remarks to the North-west corner of Queensland, but made rather an important statement in regard thereto. He said that his emphatic opinion was that the whole country in the far North-west corner of Queensland was immensely rich, and could only be developed by the extension of railways, principally from the Gulf deep water port in a Southerly direction. He had no doubt the Government would seriously take up that task as soon as finances would permit them to consider proposals in that direction.

Mr. W. Lennon (Minister for Agriculture) agreed with the general proposition regarding the cry of the North, and as an advocate of long standing of separation for North Queensland, was not uninterested by this new proposal from Western Australia. He candidly confessed, however, that as the particular part of Australia referred to by Mr. Underwood was not well known to him, it was not competent for him to express an opinion on the proposals outlined.

Mr. J. Adamson (Minister for Railways), who in the past has most powerfully and pungently urged the division of Queensland into three handy-sized States, was also keenly interested in Mr. Underwood's idea for the development of the Northern areas of Australia. We must recognise, he said, that the right of holding these lands carried with it the responsibility of occupying them. Railways appeared to be the whole problem. The whole of Australia needed railways. He himself had found the Northern division of Queensland badly neglected in this respect, and had endeavoured to deal with it in accordance with its area, and need of development. No one knew more than he did the need for railway development all over Australia. Touching on Mr. Underwood's advocacy of sheep, he said that it appealed to him if practicable, because it led to closer settlement. With regard to the whole question Mr. Adamson made the arresting reservation that the Northern parts of Australia would never, in his opinion, be developed until they became a separate State or States. He referred to the striking success of the small State system in U.S.A., and remarked, "It would be well for Australia if the creation of new States could be taken up enthusiastically, because every territory with its own Government must push on development."

Is there any constitutional method of putting such a plan into operation? Mr. Adamson was asked.

"When the Commonwealth Constitution was formed," he replied, "provision was made for the formation of new States."

Would it not be necessary to have population before forming the new State?

Mr. Adamson emphatically considered that the best way to encourage population was to create the new State. America had found it so.

Do you think the Commonwealth Government would part with the Northern Territory

"I think," replied Mr. Adamson, "that the Federal Government ought to be very glad to get rid of the Northern Territory."

Well, it makes one really tired and ill to read this and think that there may be a gleam of hope for the empty North only in a hundred years or two hundred years time.

Just study the evidence closely.

The difficulties of being a State Minister and at the same time thinking Australia wide (officially at any rate), were exemplified by the fact that one or two of the Ministers showed a tendency to shy at the paragraph because it did not directly deal with Queensland. What an admission to bring forward for amending the Constitution at the next election.

State Ministers, W.A., Q., and S.A. had the decency to recognise that they could not open their mouths about their neighbours' backyards, as their own were disgraceful enough.

Does not Mr. Hughes' slogan, "I am for Australia," come like a clean fresh breath of air for the benefit of Australia, especially the opening up of the empty North," if acts and deeds result from his slogan.

Now, it is on record that cattle have been shipped from Melbourne and Adelaide to Perth within a recent decade (10 years) and not only isolated lots either, and among cattle shipped from Adelaide were Wave Hill cattle that had come in some 3000 miles into Narrabri, then sent to Adelaide on to Perth, nearer 6,000 miles than (five) 5,000 journey from Wave Hill. At the same time Western Australia had its empty north overrun with prime cattle some 1,500 miles north of Perth or even less a distance, but on account of the bad stock route it was not negotiable just another repetition of South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Now Mr. Underwood, as quoted, came back after his wonderful voyage of discovery eager to do something and talked of a railway, our doughty legislators of Queensland that were interviewed about the matter also all knew what to do too, but their own back yard, the Gulf of North Queensland was nearly as dirty as the Northern Territory and Western Australia, so that is the last heard of the matter.

So that that takes in all the Empty North of Australia. Is there any doubt as to why it is empty after reading all the foregoing. Is it the want of black labour? Rotten climate, rotten country, or rotten pioneers, or want of water?

Natures normal supply of water in the empty north of Australia made provision for thrice the number of stock that it has ever carried to date, and when water improvements are made, the numbers of stock to be carried will be ten-fold and more. And how any man can think the difficulties in the way of settlement in the past have been otherwise that want of railways and markets, shows an ignorance that is only equalled by his supreme contempt of the report of the Royal Commission on Northern Territory Railways and Ports, etc., taken in 1914.

BLACK LABOUR AND THE EMPTY NORTH.

Is this a conundrum or only the blatant ignorance of silly small minds? It would appear to be only the latter.

Why does it appear to one that in journeys around the suburbs of Sydney that nearly all the vegetable gardens seem to be run by Chinese?

Now why has the narrow minds of the White Australia Movement not demanded the instant dismissal of those Chinamen growing the vegetables for the citizens of Sydney? Well, it would cause a sensation, and one would be laughed at and ridiculed and rightly so. Well, the same parallel governs the question of black labour in the tropics.

Australians are not of the gardening breed like the Germans, and we can thank God for it, but at the same time also give praise to those races who do nationally lean towards agricultural traits. No one sneers at the Britisher because his heart leans towards the waves.

The Australian is a good farmer, but draws the line at vegetables or tropical culture that requires unremitting close attention, and more power to him. Were the Chinaman who slaves for the growing of cheap vegetables for the public of Sydney to be cast out, the white men as a bulk would demand the wages of the cane cutters in North Queensland, and the Sydney public would have to pay for it. However, everyone is satisfied to let the Chinaman do it, it seems, and all are satisfied, and the ideal of White Australia, is in no way jeopardised.

Now turn we to survey where hotter climes a more undeniable situation is displayed. The Sugar Industry and Coffee, and other tropical products of North Queensland. Well, what do we see? Well, those "silly small minds for want of better argument, insulted the White race, and said White labour could not do the work. What is the result? Well, the cane cutters in Queensland are not only cutting and doing twice the work of the old Kanakas, but making up large cheques at it. But who pays for this—well, the public in the South—by the bonus and high tariff, how else could the industries possibly survive. So that it is only a plain question, either let the tropics indent cheap black labour for their districts or pay for the upkeep of the White labour, and be consistent all over Australia and hunt the Chinamen market gardeners out of the South. Take off the bonus for White grown sugar and you ruin the industry, so that the only question is indented cheap labour for the tropics for tropical industries, which would in no way interfere with "White Australia," and give Australians cheap sugar, and drain out nature's gifts out of those regions to the full, otherwise, if you cripple the industry; Australia boosts up foreign trade by buying cheap sugar and is only half utilizing her sugar and tropical lands that nature set there for a better use. Indented labour for those regions can never come to the pitch that America has with her blacks. Which is the result of her own Statesmen and Wowsers in the past. Why should not Australia indent cheap labour and exploit it cheaply for herself, but which to they themselves is great wealth. Why should not the White race exploit the Black, for the Black's own benefit and satisfaction. It's only the wowsers of humanity that would take him to their bosoms and make a brother of him, and bring the world to the pitch that America is to-day. We read in the leading article of the "Sun" 30/9/1919. The United States of America with all its advantages has one problem unknown to the effete races of the old world." That problem is "What will we do with our nigger."

Within the infant nation its rude forefathers built up this problem with loving care. They bred a servile race as other men breed horses or cattle and now with 12,000,000 black men and women still rapidly multiplying the sins of these fathers are being visited upon their children. So then would the wowsers of Australia and the ignorant Labour Government of Queensland put the aboriginal black not only on the level with the working men of the cities of populated Australia, but put him on a much higher financial footing. Why? Why! to spite the Beef Barons of Queensland. Who they are—God only knows—the biggest of them now is the "State Stations Department" itself, and the wowsers, they want to prohibit the man on the land from using them at all. It looks as if power placed in the hands of

unbalanced biased brains is likely not only to help poison Australia to a small extent like America, but at the expense of her own masses.

Instance the notification from the Home Secretary's Department of Brisbane, dated 5th June, 1919, "Regulations under the Aborigines Protection Act, etc." Minimum rates of wages to be paid to employees.

Samples.

General Station Hands:—

Adults, 21 to 40 years, £2 per week.

Head stockmen at McCawley award rates, £3 per week.

Boys under 18 after two years training, 15/- per week.

Also (K) all employees under 18 years of age shall (in addition to being paid the above wages) be kept supplied with the following clothes by the employer or at the employer's expense:—

One Summer Suit.

One Winter Suit.

Two pairs working trousers, with belt and braces.

Four singlets.

Six pairs socks.

Two ties.

Two soft white shirts.

Two pairs of boots, one for working.

One raincoat.

One warm overcoat.

One sweater or guernsey.

The employer shall be responsible for the keeping in a decent state of cleanliness and repair of the clothing provided by him for any such employee.

It would appear that the only thing that was left out was to insist that the boy after being safely tucked into bed at night was to be kissed before the curtains were drawn over him.

These conditions also carry with them:—

. Keep—Food.

(1) The employer shall supply to the satisfaction of the local protector food of sufficient quantity and variety which shall include the following:—

Bread (or flour with baking powder).

Meat (to include fresh meat at least once a week).

Sugar.

Tea.

Milk (fresh or condensed).

Vegetables (fresh or dried).

Rice or sago.

Salt.

Soap.

Kerosene.

Fresh or dried fruit.

Jam, syrup, or butter.

Well, it requires a chapter to itself to go into this matter; so, we'll let it go at that now, and hope that a true Labour Premier and democrat will wipe off this splenetic and dangerous and disgusting proclamation off the Statutes, holus bolus, and let sane and unbiassed clear minds frame a new

one, not only for the true welfare of the aboriginals, but for the men on the land in Queensland.

Were the poor aboriginal able to even understand, when explained and read to him, his situation, as it is placed for him under this regulation, I feel sure that they would rush the framers of it wherever they came in contact with them—bucks, gins, and pickaninnies—and kiss them; and when one comes to think of it, such astounding championship of the poor nigger deserves such a demonstration of affection. Now let us read the following, dated 22/9/1919, and as I feel certain that similar cases could be quoted in hundreds around Brisbane and all the big towns of Queensland, does not it look like as if the Ryan Government in the foregoing proclamation grossly insulted the workers of Australia.

It is one thing to honestly try and uplift the conditions of the working people of Australia, but it is another to lift up our aboriginals who are admittedly the lowest specimens of the human race (which, however, is over the odds, and he is far from being the being he is sometimes credited with being), and demand for them conditions that would be affluence and paradise for the White man.

I say that the toilers of Australia have been insulted grossly by "bogus Labour Democrats."

STRUGGLE TO LIVE.

EXPERIENCES OF WORKERS.

No Clothes. No Amusements. Mother of Four Complains.

Mr. Croft, who is representing the Unions before the Board of Trade inquiry into the cost of living, has received a letter from a mother residing at Hurstville regarding her struggle for existence. The letter, which was read before the Board of Trade this afternoon, was as follows:—

"I don't know whether you are collecting evidence from Suburbs as far distant as Hurstville, but the following account might interest those concerned."

"My total weekly receipts from January 1, 1919, have been (average) £3/7/9½ from husband and boy of 16, who is working as engineer's apprentice for the totally inadequate sum of 8/6 per week, less fare.

FOUR CHILDREN.

"The average rail and tram fares for father and son are 6/- per week, leaving £3/1/9½, out of which for rent, club and insurance I pay £1/1/8 weekly, leaving £2/0/1½ to feed and clothe a family of six persons. The children's ages are 16 years, 12 years, 8 years, and a baby of seven months, the milk for him costing not less than 5/- weekly. I might say here that my husband is at present out of work. He and the eldest boy join in a Sunday suit of clothes. The boy is ashamed to be seen going to work in what he has to wear, and I am ashamed to see him going in them.

NO BOOTS OR SOCKS.

"The boy 12 has neither boots nor stockings or Sunday coat and hat. In fact, clothes for all of us are lacking.

"The child eight years is at present at home from school sick. He is also weak from want of good food; he is unable to retain what he does have. He is the best scholar in his class—indeed, I believe, in the whole South Hurstville Infants' School. Naturally, the teacher is anxious for him to go back, but an underfed child cannot do his best.

"The two elder boys had the 'flu, and the doctor who came to the second one said, "You must feed him up, give him plenty of cod-liver oil and malt. He is in very poor condition." What a mockery to tell anybody that when ordinary food is so hard to get.

CANNOT AFFORD BEER.

"As far as amusements are concerned, we get next to none. I have had none for nearly a year. I spend 1d. weekly on the 'Budget.' We are total abstainers; indeed, no working man can afford to be anything else.

"As for household utensils, it is impossible to replace them. We have had no kettle for months. In these Suburbs a woman with a baby can't even go out to work, as there are no nurseries or places where babies can be left, no clinics where one can get anything that a sick baby requires—in fact, no help at all.

PLENTY OF OTHERS.

"I am only one of many in these fair-seeming Suburbs. There are plenty of people with more children than we have, and I don't see how the families can be averaged. My next door neighbors have none, but they don't keep two of mine to equalise matters.

THE ABORIGINAL REGULATIONS.

("Cooktown Independent.")

The following discussion took place at a meeting of the Cooktown Progress Association:—

ABORIGINE REGULATION.

The chairman said that the business was the aborigines regulations. He had heard several people discussing it in his shop and in the street. He felt the meeting would like to hear their views, and invited anyone to give the subject a lead. There was a little hesitancy.

"Go on, Dave!" urged a member.

And after a minute or two of further waiting Mr. Twaddle took the floor amidst general applause. If these regulations, which demanded a wage of £2/2/- per week for the black, and boots, trousers, shirts, raincoats, dress suits, neckties, and everything else imaginable, were carried out, he said, then the sandalwood industry was settled. From 10 to 12 tons of wood was sent down the line every month, which at the present price of £30 per ton, meant at least £300 to the district for the period, or £3,000 for the year. This would all be lost if the wood was not cut, and it cannot be cut if the niggers must get—or the Government rather—what was demanded. The speaker could not afford the demands, and no other cutter could. For each ton of wood cut under the old conditions it cost him £10. The sandalwood cutters wanted the support of the association, and they were prepared to give it all the necessary information. If the new regulation must operate there would be nothing left for him (the speaker). He was too old for station work ("And too fat," chipped in a member)—and would have to apply for the old age pension. The ruination of the sandalwood industry would not only be a loss to the town and railway, but a mighty big loss to the blackfellow. The people down south knew nothing of our blacks; they were persecuting them. If the blacks were sacked and turned adrift thieving and violence would be committed to get tobacco and food. They would not only raid the miner's camp, but would go to the station and

knock the Chinese cook on the head and make off with whatever they could get. It was nonsense to think that these blacks, if put out of employment, would be taken over by the mission stations. They would not give the Government the opportunity to catch them; they would get away as quick as kangaroos; they simply hate the mission station. The speaker took exception to the Protector taking 80 per cent. of the niggers' wages. If the black were intelligent enough to earn £2/2/- per week from him (Mr. Twaddle), he was intelligent enough to have it all and spend it.

Mr. H. Olive said that the regulation would affect farming. It meant that he would have to close up his farm. During the harvesting of the peanut crop extra labour was necessary. It would not pay to employ white labour, and under the new regulation it would not pay with black.

Mr. J. Gordon said that from a North Queensland pastoral point of view the aboriginal was most necessary. The station property in the Peninsula was third-class country, and big areas had to be obtained to run small herds. In these areas there was plenty of bush; and what use would staffs of white men be to the employer if they did not know the bush and were getting lost. In that respect alone the black was most necessary. The Peninsula pastoralist requires as much as 1,000 miles to carry the same number of stock as 100 miles would carry in the western plain country, where only four men would be required to work the area, against at least treble that number necessary in the Peninsula. The North Queensland pastoral industry was going to be handicapped if the regulation was made operative.

Mr. Neill was in accord with the previous speakers. The regulation, he said, would do nothing but persecute the blacks. He had a little black boy, nine years of age, at the station. He was partly crippled and practically of no use, but he had to be paid fifteen shillings a week, though really he was not worth fifteen pence. The boy's parents were hundreds of miles away from the station, and it was through charity he was kept there. He was too young to be turned away; so the police will have to come and take him. The black in the Peninsula was a very stupid sort; he did not know the value of money or anything else. The speaker gave an instance of the stupidity of one nigger. Whilst coming down to Cooktown in the train he gave the boy a pound note; and evidently not knowing its worth, the black tore it in two, made a cigarette with one piece and threw the other through the window. The aboriginal knew also very little of the value of clothes. He (Mr. Neill) had bought one of them a pair of trousers; when he saw him the next day one of the legs of the trousers was burnt off. There was another case of want of knowledge; he procured a pair of boots thinking the black would wear them, but to his surprise they were passed on to somebody else or thrown away. What then was the use of fitting out the blacks with all the choice apparel the regulation demands? It is nearly impossible to get white labour to work in the Peninsula country on account of the danger of being lost in the bush. The black was very handy for tracking. He could detect cattle footprints where the white man could never find a trace; but that didn't mean to say that he was worth all the Protector demanded. Good as he is in tracking, the black will not do the work unless a white man was with him all the time. Many cattle would be lost to the owner if the aboriginal was not available, but he did not know any responsibility. The speaker would be only too pleased if a commission was appointed to inquire into the aborigines, and he would never be afraid to repeat that an injury would be done to industry and the blacks persecuted if the regulations operated.

"Black Bonnet": The new regulations regarding the employment of aborigines are arousing the utmost indignation in the Far North (Q.). They have evidently been compiled by men who are quite ignorant of the conditions of life up here. Besides paying wages out of all proportion to the value of the black's services, any employer must now supply clothes, luxuries, and conveniences he rarely dreams of possessing himself, and there is the rub from 30 to 80 per cent. of the aboriginal's wage must be paid in trust to the Government. It is supposed that the police pay out this reserve to Binghi, when he needs it; but ask the black! At all events, those who have employed a gin or a boy occasionally, or all the time, cannot afford to do it under the new rates, and the consequence is that much black brother is starving. Already a great number, having lost their employment, have gathered at Cairns, and influenza has broken out among them—and you know what that means. What accommodation and clothes and luxuries and wages do the poor free people of this country get at the mission stations which the Government seems determined to fill? Again, ask the black?

The regulation under the aborigines protection act dated 5th June, 1919, is a masterpiece of absurdity that if published in its entirety with a true history of the aborigines themselves,—habits, abilities, status, etc., and presented to the readers of the English speaking world would make them wonder what sort of intellects are allowed to frame regulations that enact so unfairly for the man on the land in North Queensland, for no earthly benefit to eleven-twelfths of the blacks themselves. It seems to be purely and simply an ebullition of spleen from jaundiced minds to hit at the man on the land. Some time ago some well meaning and sensible people proposed a scheme to take in hand the fast dying-out race and give them fair play. The original intention I feel sure was to care for the needy and unemployed only, but the advisory committee that met decided on the complete segregation of the aborigines including those already employed by Europeans.

The Secretary stated that in most cases pastoralists simply made a convenience of the aborigines. Some people are inclined to wonder if he ever saw a pastoralist or a nigger or a wowsler. In more ways than one the empty north is hit at and would be kept empty, if some intellects were allowed full sway.

On the one hand, people want black labour to open up and exploit the tropics of Australia cheaply, for the benefit of her citizens, on the other hand others, representatives of the Labour Party, are putting the aboriginal blacks on a higher plane than whites, and presumably against letting indented cheap labour be brought in to cheapen the cost of living for the masses in the South, but adding on taxation rather by the authorities having to pay the difference by a bonus.

It seems absurd, especially as the national ideal is in no way threatened by indented labour just for field tropical work only.

So it means if intense prosperity for the Queensland tropics cannot be exploited without black labour, the Sugar Industry goes out or the people pay through the nose for it. The only regions that want black indented labour are the East Coast sugar lands of North Queensland and Arnhem's Land. When people are ready to settle and open up that limited part of the Northern Territory, however, the subject of black labour, and the empty North as regards the settling of the Northern Territory is absurd. Arnhem's Land is only a corner of the Territory, and will only be opened up

when the pastoral country is booming and settled, like Queensland sugar lands, followed only in the wake of the settlement of her pastoral lands.

But to think that by bringing a few thousand cheap niggers indented or otherwise on to Arnhem's Land now is going to solve the enigma of the empty North is absurd. The only real question of indented labour for our tropics to-day is for the sugar lands of Queensland; but this matter will keep for a year or two, so first let the people of Australia say if the Commonwealth is to govern Australia with full power or to be hampered for another decade of years by State misfits with full powers to obstruct when their spleen is uppermost.

Then when the people answer this question let them decide if the tropical culture districts of the empty North, which are limited, are to have cheap indented labour for field work or not, and if they say no, no is the answer.

It may be as well to state here the climate in the Gulf of Carpentaria is dry and arid like that of Winton, and not a coastal tropical one by any means like the Eastern Coast or Darwin, and there will be no hankering for black indented labour in the Gulf.

However, they must understand that if mawkish sentiment on behalf of the indented nigger, is the drawback only and not fear of bringing the national ideal into jeopardy remember it is only fair to Queensland to still go on paying a sufficient bonus and tariff to protect the industry for Queensland, and don't squeal about cheap sugar, and want to enrich the growers of other countries who exploit the cheap labour worse than he would ever be treated as indented labour in Queensland.

CAN AUSTRALIA KEEP WHITE WITHOUT SUGAR?

Dear B.—Because the maintenance of the sugar industry in the North is of great national value to White Australia you will let me put in a plea for the sugar-growers of Queensland anent the campaign down south for cheaper sugar. At the present time, owing to the large demands made by labour (it is no uncommon thing for cane-cutters to earn up to £12 per week right through a season of seven months, at award rates), only the very best land can be cultivated. Inferior and average land is gradually going out of use, and by reason of the competition for the good land it is rising in value. Mills that a few years ago were crushing 100,000 tons of cane annually are now putting through from 60,000 to 70,000 tons. Australia in a generation has only once produced the quantity of sugar it can consume. This year it will be over 100,000 tons short. While the war was on foreign sugar could not be imported for less than about 40 per cent. above the price fixed for Australian-grown sugar. But now the war is over our importing friends down south want the duty taken off the local article, so that they may in future land black-grown sugar at cheaper rates. Every man, woman and child in the Commonwealth consumes on an average about 120lb. of sugar annually. Let us say 2½lb. a week each. A man with a wife and four children thus requires 15lb. Raise the price a farthing per pound, and he would have to pay under 4d. a week extra. If this farthing per pound were passed back the growers would receive £2/6/- per ton extra for their raw sugar. They now receive £21. It takes about 10 tons of cane to make one ton of sugar, so the farmer would receive about 4/6 more for his cane. This 4/6 would mean double the number of small farmers; at least 40 per cent. extra production, and employment for a large extra

number of men. The jam-makers may use half-a-pound of sugar to a pound of jam. The extra cost would involve them in only one-eighth of a penny for each pound of their product. This is included in the family man's weekly expenditure of 4d. extra. If the Southern jam-makers and their friends gain their ends, and the price of raw sugar goes down, it must close up a number of sugar mills. Even under present conditions three out of about a dozen in North Queensland have locked up for good, and others are very nearly settled. There are farmers who can afford to put large areas under cane and who are still making big money by reason of their large turnover. But they are few and far between and are not the sort the country wants. North Queensland (especially the Coast Line) must have population if Australia is to be safe; and so far sugar-growing is the only large industry which has shown any success in that region. In the Cairns district it keeps about 15,000 people. If an extra £2 per ton can be got for raw sugar, the benefits of that increase going to the actual growers, the land under cultivation will double in two years, with a corresponding increase in population. And it will be good population, too—mostly small farmers and their employes. But if the price is lowered £2, then the industry will at the least be in grave peril of complete abandonment.

Yours, Alidade.

VETERINARY ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W.

We still read this: "It was pointed out what great scope existed in the Northern Territory for veterinary investigation of animal diseases and how much the progress of the Territory from a pastoral standpoint depended on an understanding of these ailments, so that immunisation, innoculation, and preventative veterinary measures might be employed to lessen the risk to animal life."

This is the sort of dope that is used to help authorities in power to make use of so that they can push their friends and hangers-on, who are waiting, into good easy Government billets. One would think that there was no stock in the Territory before the Federal Authorities took it over, and that they were dying on the runs with disease. Verily, verily, politicians can thank the tick and other pests of life in Australia for giving them opportunities to reward hangers-on.

In the case of the Northern Territory it has been an absolute "Wild Cat Gold Mine Boom"—and every department seems to have been stretched to its utmost capacity for feasible accommodation, but the Southern tax-payer is just beginning to wake up and wants to know where all the money has gone to and for what, and what is there to show for it, and the only answer is from Darwin in the shape of a small revolution—and the Southern tax-payer bitterly bewails the loss of his money and calls the Northern Territory a White Elephant.

Now let them seriously ask themselves the question: Is it really one—or is the management one? If so, let us sack it and appoint local men.

The trouble with Australia is that she is breeding up too many parasites and few pioneers. Some of her politicians are more concerned about the dignity of the Senate being enhanced if the President was made to wear a wig and gown. It was ever thus, "small things attract small minds," she has good men in politics but they are hampered by other stop-gaps and irreconcilables whose only thought is to pander to their own particular breed of votes and the desire to legislate for the good of Australia

is a foreign sentiment to them as the salary of the position was the only inducement for them to enter politics at all. Other ambitious men if they cannot climb up on their own merit, fan the flames of class hatred, putting the consumer against the producer, and bolstering up the waster at the expense of the thrifty and others work overtime to get national assets into their hands, so that the handling of them enriches their own particular firms or friends to whom they are given to handle.

So that it is indeed pleasing to hear the cry, "I am for Australia" from one who after many years of hard fighting and battling for democracy we know to be sincere, and who will do the right thing if helped by producers, and workers alike.

It is a well-known fact that Australia given three good seasons can and does wipe out the mistakes or crimes against her of the previous six years, but is it fair to thus penalize her?

Great, however, as the fruitfulness of the Southern States, Queensland is generally admitted to be far and away greater in every respect and with good treatment will soon prove her natural wealth and resources that will one day astonish the world.

Her future premiers have only to show to the world these resources and her credit will be unlimited, if they only show also that they possess a boot with a strong leg behind it to use that boot, and once that man comes forward and shows how far he can kick when the occasion arises, he will command capital to open up the land with railways to exploit it and not only will he be doing Australia a good service, but he will benefit the masses more than any man has ever done before, labour, liberal and socialist, and succeed in creating the monument for himself that should have been McIlwraith's.

For some time now, Queensland, it seems, has been touched with the hand of a leper and the depth and taint is not fully known to four-fifths of the Australian citizens themselves. The soldier partner who comes back to his smiling Western sheep farm, and now employs his returned soldier mates, and thanks God to once more see and behold and drink in Nature's gifts in the west, cannot and will not believe the news that while he was away fighting his own and his country's battle for very existence his partner was tactfully fighting the leprosy abroad in the smiling North. One owner was asked quite innocently by several different young swash-bucklers at different times who carried more rifles and arms than would be seen in previous days in a score of years, "when was the revolution to start"—and the flashes of Bolshevism in Cloncurry, Hughenden and in Townsville showed the train of powder that was so well laid.

In the height of the Empire's trials and dark outlook some of the early returned wounded men in places had to swallow insult from a scum, that no one ever dreamt was present in glorious Australia. Some of the insults offered but forgotten now are so revolting that one will not, rather cannot, credit it. Now, however, since all the boys are back, the leprosy has gone under again and crawling, cringing obsequiousness is taking its place. And if ever a man came forward far in advance of some of his jelly-bellied but otherwise loyal citizens to fight this touch of leprosy, that man is William Morris Hughes, and Australians know it; but a lot will soon forget, just as they forget the soldier after his work is done, and would cast him aside as a man that they had made use of and had no further use for.

Australia is now on the high road to success and the road stretches before her, white, and broad, and long, and it is to be hoped the people with such cursed bad memories will not forget the sound of truth and be led astray by the changed obsequious camouflage and get off that road. With sane management and the opening up of her empty north with railways, the greater production will be accomplished not by the hard slavery of her masses, but by bountiful nature herself, that is by the saving of these millions of losses of stock in the past. The very pulse of Australia is her meat and wool, and he who does not yet recognise that is a fool and traitor to his country and her democratic masses.

It would seem that Australians to a great extent as youths are cursed with the beliefs that at twenty, they know more than their fathers ever did or ever will do, and some people are wanting to give into the hands of these immatured irresponsibles of 18 years of age the vote to counteract, perhaps four times over, the vote of their matured and seasoned fathers—What for? Simply to keep in political power and poison it. The Labour Party has indeed hatched some fine politicians, but the caucus strangles them as soon as ever they show signs of becoming statesmen, and it is only an odd one that has had the courage to stick to his principles.

And the masses of matured intellects it is to be hoped will in the future stick to and lift up any future labour or nationalist strong man who has the courage of his convictions, to do what is the right thing in his own eyes, for the benefit of democracy even though the effort seems dangerous at the time.

In none of the other States more than Queensland is the statesman needed. Is it any wonder the people got sick and tired of the old liberals? As managers of the Queensland Estate in the past what glorious record have they left behind them, only that of robbing its richest portion of the prosperity that McIlwraith left it with. Look well into the past and see what they might have done for her, but did not, and is it not time she deserved another strong man?

However, nature has made her fool proof more so than any of the other States—and three good seasons can and will undo, with the aid of a strong man Premier and loyal citizens, all the poison of the last few years and the stench that the name of Queensland has conjured up of late, be wiped out for ever.

The Nation can forgive anything and everything by past incompetents, who held Queensland's destiny in their hands, when they remember their loyalty to Australia and the Empire.

But one is not only a cur, but he is an obsequious coward if he forgets the taint of poison and leprosy that is summed up in the word "disloyalty," and forgets it now all is well again for the Empire. Cheap food can never be got by robbing one half of the people to supply the other, and it is not democracy or socialism either, but to some intellects it goes down as such.

However, I feel sure Queensland's hour is about to strike at last and so is that of the Commonwealth, and I feel sure also that when the facts and figures in this book go out to the public, it will be seen that the only goal for the early solution of wiping off our national debt in a record time, and the accomplishment of more production without undue slavery is to "woo the Empty North" with an honourable hand, and she will never forget her vows.

and prove that panacea that is going to be the salvation of Australia for democracy.

And if I have made any mistake there is no harm done to anyone. It's a long way to Tipperary, and also to the Empty North, and perhaps, if this book interests the people sufficiently to want to see it, they will agitate for the building of the railways and hasten out to test the truth of my assertions.

Talk never accomplishes much as a rule—but before talking in this book, cash and enthusiasm had a try first and because, they accomplished nothing, is not to say, that the matters tackled were not feasible and worthy ones, however, the assets are still there, even now, and more valuable in the markets of the world than ever they were—for in Merrie England to-day they are melting down silver spoons and silverware to supply the shortage of silver and the Lawn Hill Silver Mines, with countless wealth probably unexploited or even tested.

However, one has a worthy example to look back on when the owner of Dalgionally in 1895, who was then over 60 years of age, dropped the makings of 30 years pioneering on Dalgionally to start and operate the Norman-ton Meat Works, and the loss in thousands was, as his age in years. However, the Gulf and his own energy and foresight in the next ten years, proved that the lure of the boundless wealth from the opening up the assets that belong to the Empty North, that had caused him to trip and stumble financially for such a huge amount, can be soon wiped away. And the lure is not and never was other than a reality, but the snare at the time was immature, and when set did not work—purely a miscalculation of opportunity only, but one feels that if the Gulf stuck to her earlier pioneer at his age, surely then, there is time for another of half his years to recover a quarter of the amount he tripped for in trying to set like snares for the same bird.

So now, when one has fought and his ammunition is getting low for undertaking fresh assaults, it behoves him to draw in his outposts and look after his main defences, and otherwise nail up his colours, but it is a crime to button up in despair, and not let the world know that a combined assault will take that wealth for the asking, if it is only made—especially as not one-tenth of the English-speaking world, it would appear, knows of that wealth in the Empty North.

The press of the cities is a lot to blame, as it allows misinformed people to print anything that makes for sensation only, and the Bible of Australia, the Sydney "Bulletin," is guilty of letting a well-meaning though misguided man say, "there are no buyers for the Northern Territory except perhaps the Japanese Government, so we must keep it and make the best of it," and if after reading this book people decide that the writer is making a most absurd statement, then, perhaps, the editors of that bible will admit that they are not infallible, especially as regards the great "Empty North" questions, and set themselves in future to fight its battles, and clear its name in the eyes of the world.

If all that has been written in this book does not prove that on paper now, well some of us are stark, staring mad, and blind also, however, he that never makes mistakes never makes anything.

It may be as well here to quote from the pen of Mr. John H. C. Sleeman, a visitor who is doing his bit for Queensland with the pen that is

mightier than the sword, and as it exactly coincides with my views and experiences it will be worth repeating:—

“Queensland, the Cinderella of the Commonwealth family, is a magnificent State, its people a glorious people, capable, if not handicapped with artificial legislation, of achieving civilisation’s highest destiny. Nothing written in this volume reflects upon the State or upon the people as a whole. The State is one of great possibilities. Its potentialities are unlimited. Its people are honest, open-handed and enterprising, and as a visitor here I have received the most hospitable treatment and generous consideration. Unfortunately, however, the Tammanyism of machine-made legislation, with an administration necessarily subservient to the machine that moulds it, has made what was once the Paradise of the working man an aggravated storm-centre of unemployment. It is the Government, not the governed; the legislature, not the legislated for, that has necessitated this book, and in sorrow the pages have been penned—sorrow leavened with the hope that soon Queensland will free herself from the control that is retarding its progress and marring its destiny. Queensland freed from the blight of misrule will be once again Free Queensland.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

Melbourne, Sunday, Nov., 1919.

The Minister for Home and Territories (Mr. Glynn) stated on Saturday that Major Hogan is the officer who has been appointed as special Magistrate for the Northern Territory. Major Hogan was formerly in practice as a lawyer in Colac. He has been four years on active service, and had done splendid work.

Now, this is the sort of thing that galls one, it is only a few months ago that Bishop White in his book on the North, wondered why more seasoned and better qualified men were not taken from Queensland to work in and help to carry out the Federal Government’s theories in the Northern Territory. The wonder was so natural and patent to all, that the Southern press also commented on it. However, it’s like pouring water on a duck’s back. Some people state that my literature on the Empty North is only like pouring water on a duck’s back. It is in my mind that if cold water will not move the duck, then try it boiling hot, and then if the duck is only moved while the heat is in the water, try pouring on melted pitch, and if this fails there are acids that often act where other things fail, but one can move any duck if he is determined to. So that if our duck for the Empty North cannot be moved at the first assault, there is no need to despair, but try some of these other remedies, and if after one or two the duck does not move on closer examination the public will find it is because it is not a living duck but a wooden one, and cannot and need not be expected to move, so that the sooner he is booted out the better. Now, as regards this appointment, are there not Queensland heroes who have done their duty by the Empire and Australia just as well as this gentleman from Victoria?

Any man who can write after his name “Active Service” is indeed to be congratulated, but that does not qualify him to act for justice in a new country, which boasts of a practically different race of mankind in thoughts

deeds and words, than Victoria does, where as is often the case, in the broad spaces of the Empty North, especially in matters of judgment, where one man drunk is often better than another sober.

The years of experience, duty, and knowledge is so burnt into the brain that the actions of the former are the right ones whenever or whatever state of mind he is in when he is called upon to act.

So common sense will say that the only man qualified to rightly understand and deal out fairminded justice to the men of that region are magistrates from Western Australia or Queensland.

In the Empty North, one does not judge the man by the height or cleanliness of his collar, but only by his worth, and the best man for the North is the man who wears no collar at all, but to the man of the South who brings up along with him the white collared chaps from the south that has resulted in the waste of so much money in the past, it seems cannot see this fact, and is more likely if any argument occurs and the culprits come before him to give the one three months and the other nothing, just on looks or language alone.

Verily, verily, like to like, set a thief to catch a thief, one would like to smite some of the Federal authorities or some of its departments with the jawbone of an ass.

The legislators of Australia should be chosen from qualified representatives of trades, industries, arts, thought and every branch of same in Australia—a representative for each.

Let the sheep districts return a sheep owner and breeder and a shearer and employee—a cattle district a cattle man and employee; the city a manufacturer and a representative employee. Let a disciple of Socialism represent socialism; also one of "advanced thought" have a place, also a "direct actionist" and then on the floor of the house let them pick to pieces the proposed legislation before it is made law, then the country-man and his industries will get proper representation, as the manufacturer will back up the man who is to supply him with his raw material, and the employee also be able to study the situation from the owners and producers' point of view, and when the producers' industry is flourishing so will the position of the employee.

As it is now the solicitor and city hanger-on monopolise the legislation of the country and it is killing the industries of the nation, slowly but surely. The Senate should only contain men of at least 20 years' residence in the Commonwealth. Is it feasible for a solicitor or schoolmaster to represent or talk for a miner or a pick and shovel man and class himself as a labour man? The talk of a hard-working labour man who has toiled and sweated at his occupation is honest and sincere, and when he is forced to speak it is from his heart; but when a solicitor makes himself believe he can put himself in the place of a toiler or the exponent of hard manual graft, and the people who are deluded into thinking he can also, are indeed simple. And what is the result? The far-seeing shrewdly climbs up into affluence and then drops out on the top shelf, and kicks away the ladder that got him up there, and smiles at the gullibility of the people.

RAILWAY TO DARWIN.

TO COST £8,000,000

CONTRACTORS' PROPOSAL.

ADELAIDE, Saturday.

"Some time ago Messrs. Joseph Timms and Sidney Kidman entered into partnership as contractors. The first huge proposition to emanate from the office of the new firm is one that has been made to the Federal Government to construct the long-debated transcontinental railway from South Australia to the Northern Territory, linking up Adelaide with Darwin. Mr. Timms says his firm is prepared to lay down a line of railway at scheduled rate, to be fixed by the Commonwealth Engineer-in-Chief and the firm's chief engineer. They would find the whole of the money, and take payment in Government bonds, and would undertake to have the rails through in three years. They did not anticipate any engineering difficulties. They could begin at both ends within three months, and if they had a proper start they could employ 5000 hands. Asked about the cost, Mr. Timms roughly estimated it at £8,000,000 for a single line fully ballasted. Mr. Timms emphasised the fact that the line would open up enormous tracts of valuable country, in addition to facilitating the transport of stock for the Adelaide market."

Now, let us consider the matter, from Kalgoorlie to Port Augusta, 1056 miles, on the east-western Transcontinental line, has cost the Government already over £7,000,000 with only half the line ballasted and the linking up of Oodnadatta to Katherine, the Darwin and terminus, is just 1000 miles, so that unless the Government was robbed considerably on the southern east and west line, which they built themselves, the contract price seems reasonable enough. Considering also that they find all the money and take payment in bonds, it seems too good to be true. Well, no statesmen, most people will agree, would lose this good opportunity, and save time and trouble to themselves, to get this national work completed. But such is the state of affairs, that no political party seems to see the gift in any such light, and the public of the south have barely mentioned the fact in the papers—just a paragraph in the corner of the paper, and it is dropped at that.

One editor to my knowledge most suspiciously feared that the contractors might do too well out of it and suggested letting tenders. Well, such haggling may be city business methods, where small city or suburban works are concerned, but where the immediate welfare of Australia is concerned, it appears the city breeds very few statesmen that can recognise a national gift, like I contend this one is, when it is given to them. Perhaps, it might be as well to point out a few facts to southerners that will let a little light on to the subject.

I feel sure it will not only open their eyes, but it will horrify them if they have any national decency in them and admit that they are in their ignorance letting Australia's assets be murdered every cycle of years and just give them a glance at the fruitfulness of Australia which her politicians are allowed to murder in their ignorance and which the press are not

aware of, and if they are impressed, then let them speak, and say who are the only men capable of making the "White Elephant" dance his best waltzes willingly without sickening him with millions of more wasted money. Fed by his owners and keepers he will soon roll off the map of Australia this huge national debt that has now sprung upon us, aye, and also roll the empty north off Australia.

And thus I will explain. The droughts of Australia are only local and rarely has drought been over two States at one time, so that with strategic railways into neighbouring States, these droughts could have been robbed of their sting a good deal. Where Victoria and New South Wales are concerned, this does not hold good so much, but the Kimberley district of West Australia could have taken on agistment all the drought herds in the south of Western Australia had they been joined up with a railway, and the cost of the line paid for years ago; however, this is not so marked as in the other States.

Now, the losses of sheep alone in South Australia from 1890 to 1902 would have more than paid for the railway to the Northern Territory—Oodnadatta to Pine Creek—and saved all her sheep.

In the case of Queensland, had the McIlwraith Railway Scheme to the Gulf been completed in 1888 between the years 1895 and 1902—£63,214,870 worth of sheep alone would have been saved to Queensland.

Had also New South Wales joined up Bourke with the Queensland line up the west back portion of Queensland to Camowéal and Burketown via Eromanga and Springvale, and the lines joined up from Camowéal to Newcastle waters, what the south and west of Queensland or the Gulf of North Queensland could not have given agistment to for New South Wales stock, the Barkly Tableland in the Northern Territory could have, and had the railway followed the telegraph line to Pine Creek from Oodnadatta in 1872 and encouraged men to settle in the Territory and given a lead to New South Wales to join up via Queensland, New South Wales would have saved £409,269,960 since 1876. So one sees that this "White Elephant" is not so useless after all, if he is only asked to play the tunes he is capable of playing.

Now it may be interesting to make use of a little past history of drought as it hit Dalgonally and its wonderful old pioneer owner in 1900, and the lesson it taught him, and of what use he made of it.

The years from 1897 up to 1899 on the Flinders River were not too good at all and they were getting worse. In 1899 the cattle started to bog early in October, but there was nothing to do but sit tight and hang on until the wet started, which it generally did in the last week of December or early in January. However, it did not break, no—not in January, not in February, nor in March—however we will resume. All hands were busy out on the run watching fast disappearing water holes, and shifting the weak and impoverished stock, a heart-breaking and weary task, but an absolutely necessary one.

The day before New Year's Day, the Dad arrived back at Dalgonally to see how things were going, but although his position was absolutely serious, he expected the rain to start "any day now," as he cheerfully would say, he then left for the south. No break in the weather brought him back

to the station in the latter end of February. Things were serious and just as black looking as ever, cattle dying and bogging in hundreds, so he determined to strike—Dalgonally is just on the northern edge of the Downs country before it changes into the timbered country on to the Gulf, and though our neighbours north were lucky and had rain, the edge of the fall did not extend far on to Dalgonally and the stock licked up the short feed before it had a chance, so that the boundary fences of Canobic and Byrimnie marked the line between starvation and a fair season. And that fence had to be well looked after or the drought-stricken stock would have hung on it. We however had all the working horses in the Byrimine paddocks to fatten, which stuck to the station, or God knows what would have happened.

He decided to wait no longer but to put the cattle on the road to Normanton, as all the real Gulf had their wet season as usual. It has never yet been known to miss it.

In talking the situation over at the end of February one of the managers who had been all through the heartrending experiences of the last six months of dying and weak cattle, poor and knocked-up riding horses, shifting weak cattle—long stages without drinks, for his horse and himself, and general depression passed the remark in his despondency, "Oh, well, my opinion is, the first loss is the best, if rain comes, it comes; if it doesn't, well—they will all go, personally, I would let them all take their chance as they are. Most of them are too weak to move now as it is." "What," says the "old man," "let them take their chance of rain?" "Yes." "The bugger that would do a thing like that wants ten years in chains working on the roads," and that ended the conversation. In March, the first 2500 mixed cattle were on the road to Normanton en route to Lochnagar, near the mouth of the Mitchell River. By June 8000 mixed cattle were off the run and another mob was in hand to start when the long looked for rain came, some 3½ inches fell at the station, but more on the run—the trouble was, will it do any good, will we let the mob go? And they chanced it. The drought on Dalgonally had really broken, and the old flag was still to be kept flying—but how many cattle were left? Well there were not many thousand on the run itself, but there were 8000 between there and Lochnagar some 340 miles, and lost on the neighbouring runs so that when the pieces were gathered together and the drought was over, they went up over twice the old price. Well things were "nae so bad." However, the drought of 1899-1900 was a new breed of drought to the pioneers. In old days of drought there was always dry feed 10 or 12 miles back from the water, but in this one there was neither feed or water, in places, and where there was feed there was no water, and the lesson was taken to heart. In 1901 and 1902 three bores were put down, one on Eastern Creek, and in 1902 it so happened that, if those bores had not been put down, there would have been less water on Dalgonally that year than the drought time, as the light season had only made grass and not filled the holes. So that Eureka Hole, midway between Eddington and Dalgonally, a 40-mile stage, went dry for the first time in the history of the station, however, the bore saved the situation, that was the year also that drought reigned supreme over Western Queensland and 250,000 sheep were travelled to the Gulf for relief country and the bulk of them came down Eastern Creek, and only for this bore on Dalgonally, would never have done the 40-miles dry stage.

That bore not only helped to save Dalgonally in 1902, but saved thousands of those travelling sheep. How much did they pay for the use of the water? No—the old man did not make money that way, the only rows were—the drovers wanting to take short cuts, etc., and trying to come the double and loaf, which necessitated seeing them through.

Well had the breaking of the drought in June, 1900, and a fair to good season in 1901 lulled to sleep the owner of Dalgonally, and he had not learned the lesson of 99-1900 pinch, and had neglected to put down those bores, the second hit would have ruined him absolutely. And now we can apply this lesson to Australia. Western Australia should have a road to her Kimberley paddocks ready for her next drought.

South Australia have the Northern Territory paddock ready; and New South Wales and Queensland her Gulf and Northern Territory paddocks ready and joined up with railways, and if after perusing the tables of losses in the past, the statesmen of the States, or the statesmen of the Commonwealth go to sleep again until the next big drought opens their eyes, then most people will say with the old Squire of Dalgonally, "The 'bugger' who would do that, want ten years in chains on the roads."

Surely this present loss to New South Wales this year will force them to join up with Queensland and complete the line from Bourke to Camowéal on to the Gulf, to be ready for the next drought. It may not come for many years, but it surely will come in time, and its worse sting can be drawn if this get-away is there, it is not only a get-away, but it is a getting in also, where perhaps its use as a get-away may only be wanted once in ten years, as "a leg in" for a cut at Queensland stock as stores, etc., it is a gold mine, and either way it should be completed as soon as possible—no money—rot—rubbish. The Old World or America has no money to lend people to paint the cities of Sydney or Brisbane red with—no they have more self respect than to allow their money to be so prostituted, but to set a national asset for Australia on tapis and also from a worldly humanitarian point of view to save millions of sheep and cattle and other stock dying a lingering death, millions of money could be got as the security would be tenfold, and if there could be any doubt about it a glance at the table of statistics will soon wipe the doubt away.

As for the White Elephant, well, only that the parasites of Australia in a few years would be complaining of the trusts and combines that had control of the Northern Territory, one would like to ask the Federal Government to put a price on it and take it over to England or America and float it, however, no Australian wishes to see astute Americans or others reaping money where now our representative men are floundering in the mire of their own creation or Australia and her own sons would be making it. It is my belief that the north of Australia joined up from Sydney via Bourke, Camowéal to Burketown, and Adelaide to Darwin, and joined by a line from Camowéal to Newcastle Waters, and Perth to Hall's Creek and Wyndham, and the national debt of Australia of £400,000,000 can well be paid off in, easily, 25 years. Study the losses in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland for the last 40 years and then say if at the least two-thirds of them could have been avoided if this bare outline of railways had been in existence.

Just study the prolific state of things when the seasons are good!

FROM THE "SUN" NEWSPAPER, OCTOBER 22nd., 1919.
GRIP OF THE DROUGHT—AMAZING FIGURES—STATE'S
HUGE LOSS.

Well-informed men in the industry estimate that at the end of 1919 there will be at least 25 per cent. fewer sheep in N.S.W. than at the end of 1918, when there was 37,000,000. That is, assuming the drought breaks now all over the State. It must be remembered that the losses are still going on, and will continue until the rain comes.

If it does not come before Christmas, graziers fear that the losses will be most disastrous, running probably to 33 one-third per cent. and more of the total number of sheep in the State, so that the figures would be back to the low-water mark of the end of the 1902 drought, about 24,000,000.

TEN MILLION HEAD.

Assuming, as they do, that the sheep and lamb losses will amount to 10,000,000 when they are all totalled up, graziers point out that this represents an immediate loss of £15,000,000. But the loss directly amounts to much more than that.

LOSS IN WOOL.

There is the wool clip loss, which may be taken at 10/- to 12/6 per head per annum. Then there is the loss in the meat production. As a result of the drought it is practically certain there will be no surplus mutton for export next year, and even the following year it may be comparatively only small. It would take years of good seasons to build up our flocks again. Instead of exporting the equivalent of a couple of million carcasses of mutton next year, and maybe a million lambs, worth say £4,000,000, there is not likely to be any at all.

Further, there is the natural increase in sheep that would have come from the breeders among these ten million sheep if they had lived. Apart from those that have died, breeding stock are being sacrificed every week at Homebush because it is the only way to save them from starvation.

At Homebush alone it is estimated that £100,000 is being lost weekly through the enforced sale of young and breeding stock. Every week young ewes and cows and heifers are being sold, "the sacrifice of which" in the words of the saleyards superintendent, "must be felt in the future." All these losses in breeding stock will put the State's production back years.

Graziers say that those ten million sheep, lost in the drought, could be capitalised at £5 per head. That is allowing for wool and meat production and natural increase over four years. It can be assumed that an average service of four years would be got out of them. Therefore their loss means directly and indirectly a loss of £50,000,000 to the State.

Well, let us go back and hold a post mortem, and look into matters a little.

In 1893 New South Wales had 37,915,510 sheep almost 38,000,000—

drought left her with 31,660,321. In 1894—a loss of over 6 and a quarter millions at £5 per head—£31,275,945.

In 1891 she bred up to 61,831,416.

In 1899 drought left her with 36,213,514 at £5 per head, the loss was £128,089,510.

In 1901 she reached 41,857,099 and in 1902 survived with 26,649,424 the loss 15,207,675 at £5 per head—£76,038,375.

In 1909 the numbers got up to 46,202,578, but in 1912 were down to 39,044,502, the loss was 7,158,076 at £5—£37,790,380.

In 1913 the numbers were 38,850,223 and in 1916 her numbers were back to 32,600,729—the loss was 6,249,494 at £5 per head—£31,247,470, and at the present time there is estimated a loss of £50,000,000, but if the rain keeps off experts say the numbers will go down to the 24,000,000 mark and it has every appearance of doing so, so that it will be roughly a loss of 14,000,000 sheep at £5 per head—£70,000,000.

Loss in 1883	£31,275,945
Loss in 1901	£76,038,375
Loss between 1891-1899	£128,089,510
Loss between 1909-1912	£37,790,380
Loss between 1913-1916	£31,247,470
Estimated loss, 1919	£70,000,000
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Loss of sheep, N.S.W. since 1883	£374,441,680

CATTLE.

In 1876, N.S.W. had 3,131,013 cattle, in 1885 she got down to 1,317,315—a loss of 1,813,698 head (which is considerably undervalued) by capitalizing at £10 per head—£18,126,980.

In 1894 there were 2,465,411 cattle and in 1895 2,150,057—a loss of 315,354 at £10—£3,153,540.

In 1896 there were 2,226,163 cattle and in 1899 they dropped to 1,967,081—a loss of 259,082 at £10—£2,590,820.

In 1901 there were 2,047,454 and in 1902, 1,741,226— a loss of 306,228 head at £10—£3,062,280.

In 1911 there were 3,194,236 head of cattle and in 1916, 2,305,770 head—a loss of 788,466 at £10 per head—£7,884,660.

The numbers in 1918 again climbed up to 3,161,000, but no one has yet speculated on the likely loss of cattle this year so that it can be added on later.

Loss between 1876-1885	£18,136,980
Loss between 1894	£3,153,540
Loss between 1896-1899	£2,590,820
Loss between 1901	£3,062,280
Loss between 1911-1916	£7,884,660
Loss between 1919	

Total

£34,828,280

The combined losses for sheep and cattle in N.S.W. since 1876 are,

374,441,680
34,828,280
<hr style="width: 100%;"/>
£409,269,960

The following figures will show the prolificacy of sheep and cattle in New South Wales:—

She had in 1865, 8,132,511 sheep; in 1868, 15,080, 625—so that in three years she almost doubled the number.

In 1875, she had 25,353,924—so that in 10 years she had trebled them.

In 1877, she had 21,521,662 sheep.

In 1881, she had 36,591,946 sheep.

Again in four years she increased 70 per cent.

And in 1891, with 61,831,416, she had almost trebled her numbers again in ten years.

In 1902 there were 26,649,424, and four years later in 1916, she increased them up to 44,132,421, almost 70 per cent. again in four years.

In 1869 she had 1,795,904 cattle.

In 1870, she had 2,195,096 cattle.

One year's increase, 399,192 at £10—£3,991,920; and in 1875, 3,134,086 cattle, a further increase in five years of 938,990—£9,938,900.

In 1903, she had 1,880,578 cattle, and in 1909 she had 3,027,727, an increase in 6 years of 1,147,149—£11,471,490—Total, £24,853,310.

SUMMARY OF INCREASES IN N.S.W.

10 years increase, 1865-1875—17,221,413	£86,107,065
In 4 years, 1877-1881—15,070,284	£75,351,420
In 10 years, 1881-1891—25,239,470	£126,197,350
In 4 years, 1902-1906—17,482,997	£87,414,985
28 years value, total sheep increase	£375,070,820
And 12 years increase cattle	24,853,310
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Total	£399,924,130

So we see that for 28 years in N.S.W. the total value of increase of stock was £399,924,130, but the losses were for 36 years £409,269,960.

Although in between these dates one three-year period doubled her numbers of sheep two four-year periods, she increased 70 per cent., two 10-year periods she trebled her numbers, and one seven-year period increased her cattle almost 80 per cent., and another seven-year period 60 per cent.

LOSSES IN QUEENSLAND FROM 1876.

In 1876 there were	7,315,074	sheep	
„ 1878 „ „	5,631,634		
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2 years a loss of	1,683,440	„	£8,417,200
In 1882 there were	12,042,893		
„ 1885 „ „	8,994,322		
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3 years a loss of	3,048,571	„	£9,145,713
In 1892 there were	21,708,310		
„ 1893 „ „	18,697,015		
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1 year a loss of	3,011,295	„	£15,056,475
In 1896 there were	19,593,696		
„ 1902 „ „	7,213,985		
<hr/>				
6 years a loss of	12,379,711	„	£61,898,555
In 1914 there were	23,129,919		
„ 1915 „ „	15,950,154		
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1 year a loss of	7,179,765	„	£35,898,825
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A total loss of sheep in 40 years			£130,416,768

LOSSES IN CATTLE FROM 1876.

In 1894 there were	7,012,997	cattle	
„ 1902 „ „	2,543,471		
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A loss of	4,469,526	@ £10	£44,695,260
In 1914 there were	5,455,943		
„ 1915 „ „	4,780,893		
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A loss of	675,050		£6,750,500
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A total loss of cattle in 40 years			£51,445,760
Sheep losses			130,416,768
Cattle losses			51,445,760
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Total			£181,862,528

INCREASE—QUEENSLAND'S SHEEP.

In 1881 there were	8,792,883	sheep	
In 1882 there were	12,042,893	sheep	
A year's increase of 50 per cent	valued at		£18,750,050
In 1886 there were	9,690,445	sheep	
In 1892 there were	21,708,310	sheep	
In 7 years an increase of nearly 125 per cent			£60,093,325
In 1892 there were	7,213,985	sheep	
In 1911, ten years later,	20,740,981		£67,634,980
and in 1914, 4 years later,	23,129,919		£11,944,690
Showing in 13 years an increase of			£79,579,670
Over 300 per cent.			

CATTLE.

In 1881 there were 3,618, 513 cattle	
In 1882 there were 4,324,807	
1 year's increase showing 20 per cent. valued at	£7,062,940
In 1886 there were 4,071,563	
In 1892 there were 6,591,416	
An increase of 2,519,853 over 60 per cent.	£25,198,530
In 1902 there were 2,543,471 cattle	
In 1911 there were 5,073,201	
Ten years increase of 2,529,730, 100 per cent.	£25,297,300
And in 1914, 5,455,943, an increase	£3,827,420
Making in 13 years an increase of	£29,124,720

SUMMARY OF INCREASES.

Increase for 1 year, 1881	.. ..	Sheep	18,750,050
		Cattle	7,062,940
			<hr/>
			£25,812,990
Increase for 7 years, 1886-1892	.. ..	Sheep	60,093,325
		Cattle	25,198,530
			<hr/>
			£85,291,855
Increase for 10 years, 1902-1911	.. ..	Sheep	67,634,980
		Cattle	25,297,300
			<hr/>
			£92,932,280
Increase for 13 years, 1902-1914	.. ..	Sheep	79,579,670
		Cattle	29,124,720
			<hr/>
			£108,704,390

So we see that:—

One year's increase was worth	.. ..	£25,812,990
Another 7 years' increase was worth	.. ..	85,291,855
And another 10 years' increase was worth	.. ..	92,932,280
		<hr/>
18 years' increase value	.. ..	£197,495,320

LOSSES IN VICTORIA

SHEEP.

In 1876 there were	..	11,278,893	sheep	
In 1879 " "	..	8,651,775	"	
A 3 years' loss of	..	2,626,118	"	at £ 5= £ 13,130,590
In 1894 there were	..	13,180,943	"	
In 1900 " "	..	10,841,790	"	
A 6 years' loss of	..	2,339,153	"	at £ 5= £ 11,695,765
In 1907 there were	..	14,146,734	"	
In 1912 " "	..	11,892,224	"	
A 5 years' loss of	..	2,254,510	"	at £ 5= £ 11,272,550
In 1913 there were	..	12,113,682	"	
In 1915 " "	..	10,545,632	"	
A 2 years' loss of	..	1,568,050	"	at £ 5= £ 7,840,250
A loss in 16 years of	..			£ 43,939,155

CATTLE.

In 1878 there were	..	1,184,843	cattle	
In 1879 " "	..	1,129,358	"	
1 year's loss of	..	55,485	"	at £ 10= £ 554,850
In 1883 there were	..	1,297,546	"	
In 1884 " "	..	1,287,945	"	
1 year's loss of	..	9,601	"	at £ 10= £ 96,010
In 1892 there were	..	1,824,704	"	
In 1893 " "	..	1,817,291	"	
1 year's loss of	..	7,413	"	at £ 10= £ 74,130
In 1894 there were	..	1,833,900	"	
In 1900 " "	..	1,602,384	"	
6 years' loss of	..	231,516	"	at £ 10= £ 2,315,160
In 1907 there were	..	1,842,807	"	
In 1910 " "	..	1,547,569	"	
3 years' loss of	..	295,238	"	at £ 10= £ 2,952,380
In 1911 there were	..	1,647,127	"	
In 1912 " "	..	1,508,089	"	
1 year's loss of	..	139,038	"	at £ 10= £ 1,390,380
In 1913 there were	..	1,528,553	"	
In 1915 " "	..	1,043,604	"	
2 years' loss of	..	4,849,949	"	at £ 10= £ 4,849,490
A loss in 15 years of	..			£ 12,232,400

WHITE AUSTRALIA

Sheep	£43,939,155
Cattle	12,232,400
	<hr/>
Total	£56,171,555

INCREASES IN VICTORIA.

SHEEP.

In 1879 there were	8,651,775	sheep
In 1880 " "	10,360,285	"
20% increase in one year.		
In 1889 there were	10,882,231	sheep
In 1890 " "	12,692,843	"
17% in one year increase.		
In 1904 there were	10,167,691	sheep
In 1907 " "	14,146,734	"
An increase of 3,979,043, almost 40% in 3 years.		
In 1916 there were	12,576,587	sheep
In 1918 " "	15,773,902	"
An increase of 3,197,315=25% in 2 years.		

LOSSES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SHEEP.

In 1891 there were	7,646,239	sheep
In 1902 " "	4,880,540	"
A loss of 2,765,699 at £5=£13,828,495		
In 1908 there were	6,898,451	sheep
In 1914 " "	3,674,547	"
A loss of 3,223,904 at £5=£16,119,520		
<hr/>		
A total loss of		£29,948,015

LOSSES OF CATTLE.

In 1881 there were	294,410	cattle
In 1884 " "	258,245	"
A loss of 36,165 at £10=£361,650		
In 1892 there were	411,793	cattle
In 1900 " "	214,761	"
A loss of 197,032 at £10=£1,970,320		
In 1901 there were	225,256	cattle
In 1902 " "	213,343	"
A loss of 11,913 at £10=£119,130		
In 1911 there were	393,566	cattle
In 1915 " "	226,565	"
A loss of 177,001 at £10=£1,770,010		
<hr/>		
A total loss of		£4,221,110
<hr/>		
A total loss of Sheep		£29,348,015
A total loss of Cattle		£4,221,110
<hr/>		
Total losses in 36 years		£33,569,125

INCREASES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

SHEEP.

In 1902 there were	..	4,880,540	sheep	
In 1906 " "	..	6,624,941	"	
				<hr/>
		1,744,401	at £5=	£8,722,005
Over 35% increase in		5 years.		
In 1915 there were	..	3,674,547	sheep	
In 1918 " "	..	6,229,519	"	
				<hr/>
		2,554,972	at £5=	£12,774,860
Over 70% increase in		2 years.		
In 1917-1918 the increase was		£1,138,237,	or over 22%.	

LOSSES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

SHEEP.

In 1890 there were	..	2,524,913	sheep	
In 1892 " "	..	1,685,500	"	
		A loss of	839,413	at £5= £4,197,065
In 1893 there were	..	2,220,642	sheep	
In 1894 " "	..	2,132,311	"	
		A loss of	88,331	at £5= £441,655
In 1895 there were	..	2,295,832	sheep	
In 1897 " "	..	2,210,742	"	
		A loss of	85,090	at £5= £425,450
In 1911 there were	..	5,411,542	sheep	
In 1913 " "	..	4,421,375	"	
		A loss of	990,167	at £5= £4,950,835
				<hr/>
A total in 23 years of	..	..	..	£10,015,005

CATTLE.

In 1895 there were	..	200,091	cattle	
In 1896 " "	..	199,793	"	
		A loss of	298	at £10= £2,980
In 1911 there were	..	843,638	cattle	
In 1912 " "	..	806,294	"	
		A loss of	37,344	at £10= £373,440
In 1914 there were	..	863,835	cattle	
In 1915 " "	..	821,048	"	
		A loss of	42,787	at £10= £427,870
				<hr/>
Total loss in 18 years	..	..	..	£804,290
Total loss of Sheep	..	..	..	£10,015,005
Total loss of Cattle	..	..	..	£804,290
				<hr/>
Total losses in 23 years	..	..	..	£10,819,295

INCREASE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

In 1879 there were	..	1,109,860	sheep	
In 1889 " "	..	2,366,681	"	
In 10 years over a 100% increase, valued at	..			£6,284,105
In 1892 there were	..	1,685,500	sheep	
In 1902 " "	..	2,704,880	"	
In another 10 years an increase of 92%, valued at	..			£5,096,900
In 1903 there were	..	2,600,633	sheep	
In 1911 " "	..	5,411,542	"	
An increase in 8 years of about 100%, valued at	..			£14,054,545

So one sees that in the first ten years the numbers were doubled, another ten years increased to 92%.

And in 1903, when the stock numbers were 2½ times greater than in 1879, the numbers were increased 100% in 8 years.

Total increase, £25,435,550.

INCREASE IN CATTLE.

In 1879 there were	..	60,617	cattle	
In 1889 " "	..	119,571	"	
About 100% increase in 10 years, valued at	..			£589,540
In 1885 there were	..	70,408	cattle	
In 1895 " "	..	200,091	"	
An increase of nearly 185% in 10 years, valued at	..			£1,296,830
In 1896 there were	..	199,793	cattle	
In 1906 " "	..	690,011	"	
An increase of 350% in 10 years, valued at	..			£4,902,180
In 1901 there were	..	398,547	cattle	
In 1911 " "	..	843,638	"	
Another increase in 10 years of 212%, valued at	..			£4,450,910
				<hr/>
	Total	..	..	£11,239,460
	Cattle total	..	..	£11,239,460
	Sheep total	..	..	25,435,550
				<hr/>
				£36,675,010

LOSSES IN AUSTRALIA SINCE 1890 UP TO 1916—26 YEARS.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Sheep—1891-99	..	..	..	£128,089,510
1901	..	..	..	76,038,375
1909-12	..	..	..	37,790,380
1913-16	..	..	..	31,247,470
				<hr/>
				£273,165,735
Cattle—1894	..	..	..	£3,153,540
1896-99	..	..	..	2,590,820
1901	..	..	..	3,062,280
1911-16	..	..	..	7,884,660
				<hr/>
				£16,691,300
Sheep and Cattle total	..	..	..	£289,857,035

QUEENSLAND.

Sheep—1892-93	£15,056,475
1896-1902	61,898,555
1914-15	35,898,825
	<hr/>
	£112,853,855
Cattle—1894-1902	£44,695,260
1914-15	6,750,500
	<hr/>
	£51,445,760
Total	£164,299,655

VICTORIA.

Sheep—1894-1900	£11,695,765
1907-1912	11,272,550
1913-1915	7,840,250
	<hr/>
	£30,808,565
Cattle—1892-1893	£74,130
1894-1900	2,315,160
1907-1910	2,952,380
1911-1912	1,390,380
1913-1915	4,849,490
	<hr/>
	£11,581,540
Total	£42,390,105

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Sheep—1891-1902	£13,828,495
1908-1914	16,119,520
	<hr/>
	£29,948,015
Cattle—1892-1900	£1,970,320
1901-1902	119,130
1911-1915	1,770,010
	<hr/>
	£3,859,460
Total	£33,807,475

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Sheep—1890-1892	£4,197,065
1893-1894	441,655
1895-1897	425,450
1911-1913	4,950,835
	<hr/>
	£10,015,005

WHITE AUSTRALIA

Cattle—1895-1896	.. ..	£ 2,980
1911-1912	.. ..	373,440
1914-1915	.. ..	427,870
		£ 804,290
Total	.. ..	.. .. £ 10,819,295

GRAND TOTALS FOR 26 YEARS.

New South Wales	.. ..	£ 289,857,035
Queensland	.. ..	164,299,655
Victoria	.. ..	42,390,105
South Australia	.. ..	33,807,475
West Australia	.. ..	10,819,295
		£ 541,173,565
		Losses in Australia.
		(Incomplete.)

TOTAL STOCK LOSSES IN AUSTRALIA FOR 42 YEARS.

New South Wales	.. ..	£ 409,269,960
Queensland	.. ..	181,862,528
Victoria	.. ..	56,171,555
South Australia	.. ..	33,569,125
Western Australia	.. ..	10,819,295
		£ 691,692,462

INCREASES.

In going back over the list of increases, we find in New South Wales the increases for a particular 28 years for sheep and 12 years for cattle increased the National wealth £399,924,130. But the managers of this station in other years allowed £289,857,035 worth of stock to die of drought in 26 years. Also, in Queensland, the State management shows that, although a period of 18 years brought in an increase of stock worth £196,973,385, losses of both sheep and cattle over 13 years were £137,167,268 to counteract the prosperity.

Although in between these dates one year's increase in sheep was 50%,
 One 7-year period showed an increase of 125%,
 One 13-year period showed an increase of over 300%; and
 One year's increase of cattle showed 20%,
 One 6-year period showed over 60%,
 One 10-year period showed over 100%.

INCREASE OF STOCK IN AUSTRALIA.

Cattle valued at £10. Sheep valued at £5.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

For 4 years 1902-1906 the increase of sheep was worth £126,197,350.

And from 1878-1891, 13 years, was £181,759,660. And in cattle, from 1902-1912, 10 years, an increase at £10 per head of £12,925,000—a total increase of £194,684,660.

QUEENSLAND.

In one year, 1881-1882, the increase of sheep in Queensland was £18,750,050, and in 13 years, from 1902-1914, an increase value at £79,579,670.

In 1881-1882 also an increase of £7,062,940 worth of cattle, and from 1902-1914 a 13-years' increase of £29,124,720, making a total increase of £25,812,990 cattle and sheep for one year, and £108,704,390 for 13 years.

VICTORIA.

In 1879-1892 there was an increase of sheep worth £21,567,655 and cattle £6,953,460; for 13 years, a total of £28,521,115.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

In 1915-1918 there was an increase of sheep of £12,774,860 and of cattle £866,800, a total of £13,641,660.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

From 1879-1889, 10 years, there was an increase of sheep of £6,284,105, and from 1903-1911, 8 years, £14,054,545; and in cattle the increase from 1896-1906 was in 10 years £4,902,180.

So that in 13 years the increase of cattle and sheep for

N.S.W. was	£194,684,660
And for 13 years in Queensland	108,704,390
And for sheep and cattle in Victoria for 13 years	28,521,115
For sheep and cattle in S.A. for 3 years alone	13,641,660
And for W.A. sheep in 8 years	14,054,545
And 10 years' cattle	4,902,180

Grand Total for 13 years £364,508,550

Now, we see the stock increases to be in—

NEW SOUTH WALES.

1878-1891—13 years' sheep	36,351,932
1902-1912—10 „ cattle	1,292,500

QUEENSLAND.

1902-1914—13 years' sheep	15,915,934
1902-1914—13 „ cattle	2,912,472

VICTORIA.

1879-1892—13 years' sheep	4,313,531
1879-1892—13 „ cattle	695,346

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

1915-1917—2 years' sheep	2,554,972
1915-1917—2 „ cattle	86,680

WEST AUSTRALIA.

1903-1911—8 years' sheep	2,810,909
1896-1906—10 „ cattle	490,218

Increase of sheep and cattle for Australia for a period of 13 years:—

	Sheep.	Cattle.
N.S.W.	36,351,932	1,292,500
Queensland	15,915,934	2,912,472
Victoria	4,313,531	695,346
South Australia	2,554,972	86,680
West Australia	2,810,909	490,218
Commonwealth	61,947,278	5,477,216

In placing £5 per head on sheep as their national asset value I am guided by printed authority. However, in placing the value of £10 on cattle per head I am underestimating their value ridiculously, so that on the advice of the Editor of the "Stock and Station Journal" I can place their value, based on five to seven years' increase, at £50 per head, and then be under-estimating the national asset value. This will further bring up the value of cattle over 42 years to:—

Queensland	257,228,800
Victoria	61,162,000
N.S.W.	174,141,400
West Australia	4,021,450
South Australia	21,105,550

Total	£517,659,200
So that the national loss to Australia is really:—	
Sheep	£588,160,623
Cattle	517,659,200
Total	£1,105,819,823

covering 42 years.

However, as the figures are only to demonstrate the huge waste of national assets in the periodical droughts by not having relief country to send the drought-stricken herds to, it does not really matter, and I would sooner be guilty of underestimating that exaggerating the losses.

"AUSTRALIA'S ONLY POLICY."

"INCREASED PRODUCTION AND A TARIFF."

For the last 42 years the States of Australia have lost well over £1,100,000,000 worth of sheep and cattle by drought. Why this mismanagement when her luxuriant lands of the empty North, within a few days' journey by rail, would have landed the bulk of those drought-stricken stock on pastures second to none on the face of this planet?

In New South Wales the losses in sheep and cattle since 1876—valuing cattle at £10 per head and sheep at £5, without attempting to fully include the estimated losses to be before this present drought ends—is some £410,000,000. The losses in Queensland since 1876 in sheep and cattle up to the year 1915 is £181,862,528. The losses in Victoria since 1876

to 1915 sheep and cattle has been £56,171,555. In South Australia since 1891 to 1915, in sheep and cattle has been £33,569,125. In Western Australia, since 1890 to 1915, the losses in sheep and cattle, £10,819,295.

Why these losses when there was agistment country in the empty North. A railway from Perth to Hall's Creek, tapping the magnificent pastoral lands of the Kimberley district in the empty North of Western Australia, would long, long ago have paid for itself over and over again, and doubled her stock numbers and given a legitimate cheap meat supply to her people.

The Oodnadatta and Pine Creek lines joined up in 1880 following on the overland telegraph line, and the State would have saved in 36 years £33,569,125, as well as settling that wonderful pastoral province, and trebled South Australia's stock numbers and enriched her own citizens and given them cheap meat, whereas even to-day ignorant masses of humanity, judging the country by the attempts of puling, idiotic dreamers to solve the easy solution of the question of the opening up of the Northern Territory, now proclaim it a White Elephant. Queensland, by not letting McIllwraith carry out his North and South transcontinental line, lost between the years 1891 and 1902, £65,378,240 sheep and £36,492,880 cattle, a total of £101,871,120 stock assets.

Will history repeat itself? Of course it will. Appalling as these losses seem they are wiped away into insignificance when we know that in a period of 13 years these same States increased their numbers to the value of £364,508,550 that is by 61,947,278 sheep and 5,477,216 cattle, so why cry stinking fish? History will again repeat itself, but are the citizens of Australia going to let her managers repeat their mal-administration and not make those vital improvements that are going to minimise those periodical periods of national disaster? Is it not feasible that one who has seen drought and worked through its months of depression and hardship and shifting perishing stock from fast drying waterholes over twenty or thirty mile dry stages to water, etc., and seen the pioneer Patriarch of old face the situation and win out so that the pupil can never forget and feels confident of his knowledge? Can anyone forget the trek of 250,000 drought-stricken sheep from the drought-stricken areas of Winton and Richmond in 1902 to the Gulf country of Queensland and all those who survived the journey on the hoof to the country all came back again. Can this fact be gainsaid?

Will anyone deny that Perth linked up with Hall's Creek and Wyndham, Oodnadatta to Darwin, Bourke to Burketown via Eromanga, Thargomindah, Camoweal and Menindie to Thargomindah and Camoweal joined across the Barkly tableland to Newcastle Waters to Hall's Creek; and the drought losses of the future will be minimised two-thirds? What on the other hand are its benefits otherwise than an agistment country for starving stock? Primary the getting in of thousands of fat and store stock from the far lands of the empty North, which have as yet no real market, other than the much hampered Vesty Bros. Meat Works at Darwin; secondly the settling of those far empty lands by small men who will then be in touch with civilisation and have a ready market for their stock, who otherwise have brains enough to see the struggles of its existing pioneers after all their years of hardship and privation and know that until these railways link up

the South, not only would they be brainless idiots to attempt settlement in a small way, but they could not keep financial for any length of time.

However, these railways require money to build them. The Oodnadatta-Katherine one is available for Commonwealth bonds in payment, absolutely a gift direct from heaven, but so suspicious are our worthy "Witena Gemot," who are so noted for their brilliancy of management of this now thoroughly despised "White Elephant," that already some four months have passed and no word of its acceptance, yet most thinking people who know, and who have felt the crime of the empty north, but will agree that at ten millions for its completion let alone eight millions, it is a gift from the gods direct. However, the millions for the building of the other lines must be got from other lands, if gifts are refused from heaven, as this one is, and the query is to which class of general manager of Australia will the capitalists of the Old World lend this necessary money. Will it be to him who would hint at repudiating our national debt, or would go arm in arm with comrade Bolshevik? Is it likely that anyone would lend money to a firm that would cry enough, when the enemy was at your gates, and tried hard to hoist the white flag, saying we have done enough, and more than our share. Knowing that the increased production of the primary industries of Australia are the key of the situation only and this capital is the only solution for its accomplishment that is going to ease the load of every citizen of the Commonwealth and pay off the national debt in a world's record short period, who is to be made General Manager?

The only feed that will make the goose lay this golden egg of prosperity is this capital, the Warwick egg was not the product of the goose, but was conceived in Berlin, laid in Russia, and gathered and partially hatched in Australia by claimants now for the General Managership billet who, if given a chance will only succeed in gathering, in feed for the goose that will sicken her unto death so that she will cease to lay at all. And when there are no eggs for the masses of Australia to live and thrive on, resort to the old trick of robbing one half of the people to pay the other half, which will last only a very short time before the result is chaos. On the other hand if the right man gets the billet, and he gets the money to open up the empty north and does it, on figures before quoted in 20 years the stock numbers of sheep and cattle in Australia will be doubled, and in another 50 years if sane management is carried out trebled, and if one has reason to doubt my contentions, a glance at the following will enlighten him on his way to belief. If America can carry 40,000,000 cattle, so can Australia on top of 250,000,000 sheep if opened up with railways as well as America.

In 1917, the total number of stock in the Commonwealth was 11,926,024 cattle, and 76,668,604 sheep.

In the United States of America, 40,849,000 cattle and 48,483,000 sheep.

The area of the Commonwealth, 2,974,581 square miles.

The United Kingdom, 121,090 square miles.

The United States of America, 3,026,789 square miles.

Just consider the situation.

The Commonwealth over 24 times the size of the "Old Land" is only carrying 48,801,360 sheep more than and actually 456,212 cattle less and the great wealthy America has actually 28,185,604 sheep less than the Commonwealth, but 28,922,976 more cattle.

Then look back to the stock figures of the Commonwealth in 1894, 23 years ago, cattle 12,311,617, and sheep 1891, 26 years ago, 106,421,068, and it is enough to make Australians weep, not for Australia or the empty North but for the calibre of her politicians only.

So then would we scrutinize the exports from the Commonwealth. And note that in twenty years with the increased production of her sheep and cattle the Pastoral Exports will be nearer £100,000,000 the exports of the silver and lead and copper of the empty North now not touched (Mt. Oxide and The Lawn Hill silver and lead area of some 300 square miles, and the enormous copper belt from Cloncurry to Boroloola), and one can then get a faint idea of the wealth of the empty north as regards the early solution of Australia's financial burden.

In 1911 the exports from Australia were valued at £79,482,258.

Among this was—

Wool	£26,071,103
Butter	4,637,362
Skins and hides	3,227,236
Tallow	1,935,836
Meats	4,303,159

Total £40,174,786

Also—

Gold	12,045,766
Silver and lead	3,212,584
Copper	2,345,961

Total £17,604,311

In 1911 there were 93,003,521 sheep; and in the Commonwealth 11,828,954 cattle.

Further again let us survey the near future and see the enormous volume of trade ready to pour out of the Commercial port of North Australia on to the markets of the world, especially on to the 300,000,000 of people of the Near East, who with hungry mouths, await Australia's meat and wheat and her wool. A little light on the hundreds of thousands of pounds that goes off our cattle values in the empty north and in unnecessary transport conceived only by pristine bad managers of the out-station of Queensland in order only to bolster up the property of their own particular towns to the detriment of Queensland and the empty North of Australia. So then would I say beware of the snare laid by the greed and grasping covetousness of Queensland politicians of the past and not be a party to intensify the crime of perpetuating the robbery of the empty North and its future port of its rightful dues and assets and fall into the trap set by past Queensland Premiers to bolster up Townsville at the expense of the empty North. Thereby adding on hundreds of miles of unnecessary and costly land carriage to burden the industries of the wealthy lands of the empty North when their door is within two hundred miles in comparison to the 700 to Townsville.

In 1917, the total Townsville exports were:—

Frozen and Canned Meats, Hides, Tallow	£2,180,000
Wool	1,809,000
Wool, Copper, Gold, Tin, Sugar, Sundries, etc.	1,855,000

Total £5,844,000

The total number of cattle treated by the meat works in Townsville was in 1916: 166,000; 1917: 140,397, of this number in 1916: 107,730 and 1917: 102,247 respectively, were trucked to Townsville from Winton and all the trucking stations from Richmond to Dajarr and Kyjabbi. Seeing that all this country drained of these fats rightfully belongs to Gulf port, one can say, that in 1917 and other years, two-thirds of the Townsville meat industry export should be credited to a Gulf port, so that £1,453,332 added on to the Cloncurry copper value output of 1917, namely, £1,231,657 makes an interesting total of £2,684,989.

Taking also into consideration the wool grown and sent into Townsville that should rightfully go into a Gulf port, I think one would be well within the mark, if he estimated the value of exports that should go through a Gulf port on the present figures at £4,000,000 sterling. However, it does not require any great stretch of imagination to say that if that volume of trade went through a Gulf port, as it rightfully should do, the Gulf would not be as it is now, a part of the empty decadent north of Queensland, and Mt. Oxide would be giving forth its volume of copper ore and the Lawn Hill silver, lead and zinc mines, also contributing their share, and last but not least the more lasting tangible agricultural and pastoral assets of the irrigable lands, on the banks of the overflowing Gregory River and adjacent streams would be settled, and with these (3) three latter adjuncts, I don't think one would be far wrong in quoting an export trade in a short time of nearer £10,000,000 for the Gulf port. Well-known cattlemen have estimated the loss of Gulf cattle on the road at 1-lb. a mile, and the saving of wastage at this figure on some tens of thousands which have now to travel on the hoof, two to three hundred miles, before they get on to the trucks and also the extra cost of long railage to Townsville would easily save at a low average £2 per head on each beast that now goes into Townsville, some 100,000 head.

This is now thrown away as it were and lost to the Commonwealth. When speaking of a Gulf port, it would be as well to refer back to other pages herein and note that Birdsville, Beetoota, Windorah, Bedourie, Urandangie, Carandotta, Camoweal, Cloncurry, Boulia and all this back country should be rightly served by a Gulf port; however, it is not likely this will ever happen now in our day, but as it is the object of this chapter to show why the north of Australia is practically an empty country it is herewith again set out.

It is also my desire to show that the speediest cure for this part of the empty north, is for the Gulf port to be made now at once, and the transcontinental lines joined up. As far as Queensland is concerned, a port and the lines joined up from the port to the present Mt. Cuthbut terminus via Gregory and a line through the Lawn Hill mineral area on to Camoweal.

On these figures that I quote from the Northern paper, the cattle industry that rightfully should go through a meat works at the Gulf port, would be at least £1,000,000 export. The doubtful numbers of stock that might perhaps be enticed into Townsville would easily be made up of Gulf cattle on the spot, that would be treated that now are considered not fat enough to do the journey into the trucks. Now, if a beast is put on the road before he is prime he is practically only store conditioned when he reaches the trucks, so that not nearly all the cattle that are really available every year see the far distant Townsville works.

As the railage from Cloncurry to Townsville would be 250 miles further than to the Gulf port, and railway freights were as I presume they would be, on the basis of mileage, I guess most of the Cloncurry copper would come to the Gulf. At the least we could expect all the copper, this side of Cloncurry to come through the new port, so that it is not as if the matter is one of speculation. And so the empty North would say for the success of the Commonwealth and her democratic citizens, please get a General Manager who will manage continentally, and who will work in with his outstation managers to complete works in their States that will link up with works in their neighbouring States for Australia's national benefit. Why open up a needless unnecessary port at Boroloola to boost the Federal Territory of the empty north, when Burketown is the natural seat of intense commercial future importance for all the tableland and mineral wealth at its doors? And why persist in trying to make Port Darwin a centre of the trade of the rich western part of the Northern Territory, when Wyndham is its natural and most economical outlet. As the look-out on to the Pacific, Darwin will always hold a supreme importance for Northern Australia, but do not attempt to drag commercial prosperity to its doors, that nature never intended it to get. Above all let people sub-manage the Northern Territory that are the only men qualified to do so, both by experience and by right of pioneering conquest and justice. Save a fair land from perdition, now and for all time, and be wise in time. Australia is now a nation, she has taken on obligations, her hands are on the handle of the plough. God forbid that New Guinea should meet the same fate as the Northern Territory, and be handed over to blatant unfitted and uncongenial specimens of southern environaged politicians to blather over and boom and burst in the exuberance of their ignorance, which they camouflage under the guise of statesmanship.

The day will come when the wealth of the empty north will assert itself, and from that day on will the Commonwealth be able to fulfil all her obligations to the world at large and her own democratic masses, when the hands of the populated lands of Northern Australia are able to reach over from North Australia to protect New Guinea and keep guard over her, and not to be dependent on the population of the far south for protection. The solution of all these problems is the joining up of the settled south and the empty north by these railways only, as it will never be by one alone. It is not feasible. So that, the ignorant, selfish, puerile attempt to deprive South Australia of her Oodnoodatta to Darwin transcontinental railway line will not settle the solution. The grab and greed will only be accompanied by a still unfilled necessity that will be totally inadequate and the secret of this short-sighted policy of statesmanship is only the ignorant animus of despicable selfish small minds which do not want to give South Australia her rightful dues. What other reason can be upheld?

Already the present lesson of insufficient rolling stock in N.S.W. that will not allow of her starving sheep to be brought into the sale and slaughter yards of Sydney to be dealt with, is forgotten or ignored. Already there are those who propose to try and perpetuate for Australia the crime of the empty north.

The morning paper already hints that we may expect the course of this first north and south line to be altered, to join up Newcastle Waters with Dajarra so that the Barkly tableland can be tapped for Townsville and Sydney both, as the editor says, for inestimable advantage to Queensland,

and also to the future financial position of the Commonwealth railways. What a short-sighted fool. A little more elucidation of his views and I would gladly exclaim, "What a liar!" When—oh—when, will people not understand that railways are needed only to settle and keep settled the man on the land and not to keep him in poverty by extortionate rates of freight. Why cannot people who profess to possess ability enough to lead public opinion in Australia see that the enormous strides of America has been made through her 266,071 miles of railway, as against Australia's 21,643 miles. Did they ever realize that this mistake has already cost Australia well over £1,100,000,000 in the last 40 years?

The increment wealth alone would well repay Australia to carry the produce and production of its far empty north lands to market for no charge at all. The sooner people see this view and the sooner the proletariat understands railways are not run solely for the benefit of easy jobs for their officials, the sooner will they prove the salvation of Australia. Why—oh—why is Australia cursed with officials in high places who have not the broad-minded intelligence even of a rat? Australia who possesses officials as capable as any in any part of the world for efficiency, courtesy, and intelligence? The reason is the latter do not and will not pander to the misfits who get into power and could not be made use of if they were put into the high positions that are their due.

Does it appear, that in advocating thus, I am going against Queensland's best interests?

Perish the thought.

Let South Australia get her transcontinental and the Queensland one must follow.

Have I the knife into Townsville because I am a Bowenite born and reared, and also felt the sword of her progress at the throat of the Gulf so that the latter's commercial life blood has ebbed away, and left her dejected, stale, unproductive and dead?

No. No. Emphatically, no. As Sydney is the commercial pulse of Australia and always will be, so it would appear Townsville will always be the commercial pulse of the North of Queensland eastern coast. One can recount with pride the millions of exports that flow through Townsville, also the energy and industry of her sons. Who are some of Australia's most renowned citizens, and were they to be put in charge of some of the Federal departments of the Commonwealth, there would indeed be a big change in the prosperity of Australia. However, Townsville is like Sydney, she is virile, grasping and very much alive, and would gather into her net all and sundry far and wide, and if the far empty north is too indolent and lazy to hold on to its own riches, and will not move to save themselves, good enough for them, and Townsville, by moving for them, is doing the next best thing for Australia. However, the far empty north is only just beginning to move, and says emphatically to Townsville, take out your cart and "do a get"; we have a horse and cart of our own, or shortly will have, as Mr. Theodore it appears is going to give us one, an iron one, so that we can run our own farm from this out.

A leaf out of the old Squire of Dalgonally's memoirs once again suits the situation to a nicety. One of the largest managers of bank properties in the Gulf some 20 years ago wrote to him and complained of the cattle steal-

ing thieves in the North, and asked him to join and help to float a stock stealing and prevention society in the North. In those days the banks and some others, when cattle were not a very good paying proposition, would not employ too many hands to brand up their station calves, with the result that there were clean skins galore, and it was only encouraging men with elastic consciences to view the matter in the light that the stations evidently did not value or want them, so helped themselves, or perhaps they were like old Donald Campbell, of Sedan, who had a hobby for certain colours, he would attend the muster at Taldora and get his own cattle, and if Dalgonally did not attend, would hold Dalgonally cattle with his own and bring them home to Sedan and then send word to Dalgonally that he had brought home some DMI cattle from Taldora, and to send over a man to get them. Well, this went on for a long time. At last old Donald's herd was growing out of all proportion to legitimate increase, and so the old dad bought him out. At the delivery, the man who took over commented to Mr. Campbell about the wonderful increase of his numbers in 10 years. Yes, said old Donald, I used to bring home your cattle from Taldora, you would not send men yourselves, and as I was entitled to a commission, I always took it before sending you word to come and get them, and as roan and reds are favourite colours of mine, I considered it only right to indulge in my fancies and never missed a "nugget" (that is a big unbranded calf). Anyhow, the old dad, who later on heard of the negligence of his Dalgonally managers in those days, took it to heart, and when he was approached to join the stock stealing society, wrote back thus: "NO. My advice to you all is, to put on more men, throw Larry (that is laziness, that tired feeling, etc.) off your backs, brand up all your own calves, and then start on your neighbours and there won't be any need then of any society.

And so, if Bowen, Gladstone, Normanton and Burketown had men that were sufficiently alive to get up on the table or soap box and shout: I am for Bowen or Gladstone, etc., well, there would be a different tale. With the Gulf however, the case of Gladstone and Bowen is not analogous. The Gulf was betrayed. Aye, yea, and that truly-betrayed, and through the House of Parliament all for the interests of Townsville, and so our wrath is not against the industry, activity and enthusiasm of Townsvillites, but for the master who conspired with his man to sell the interests of the Gulf for Townsville's aggrandisement. A despicable thing and a disaster that has kept the empty north empty and knocked it back a decade of years. However, is the empty north downhearted? NO! No! No! Politicians cannot alter nature no matter how hard they try, and the empty north has nature at the back of her. In fact nature has kept so much up her sleeve out of sight of the ordinary human, that it will be many years yet before we are fully let into the full knowledge of her assets. It is only for those of her sons who believe in her and love her and hold commune with her in lonely places at night lying on the open swag, drinking in the beauties of the moonlight nights as bright as day, and her milky way and Southern Cross, that tries hard to whisper the same truths that she whispered to Captain Stokes, her first visitor, and it will only be by knowledge and persistent seeking and asking and service to her will those secrets be told. Nature has shown year after year, thousands of tons of salt evaporated by nature in the Gulf country. She has spoken and spoken continuously for years and no one has taken any notice. I heard the whisper, but heard it not aright. I talked it over with Mr. Linedale, of Moffatt and Linedale, famed throughout the north in mining circles. Mr. Moffatt, a renowned

chemist, explained the value of potash, and knocked my theory of a payable salt industry on the head. However, not before I had followed a blind road and collected and bagged about 400 tons of the salt and dropped money or rather barely got back my own money for the venture. However, my photos produced in most of the pictorials in the south have opened the eyes of others, and so secrets have come to light. It is now recognized that nature has so favoured the Gulf as regards capabilities that the difference of advantage of Adelaide and Burketown for a salt industry is 8 per cent. to 70 per cent in favor of the latter.

I looked only for a cheap salt supply for the merchants of Australia. Mr. Moffatt, the chemist, was looking for potash. The latest issue is for the treating of low grade ores of copper from that mineral belt that has no peer in the world from Cloncurry to Boroloola with the chlorides of the salt. And one day this may be in great evidence. Some mining experts say it is not feasible only in the laboratory. However, the world was not built in a day, and the proximity of the copper belt to the salt looks as if nature had something in view and it should not be overlooked.

Townsville will fight "all out" for her ends, and it behoves the empty North to do likewise and not hide any "light under a bushel." When the Gulf strikes for her own, she is going to take away from Townsville a lot of her trade now, but the rising public men of Townsville of to-day are the descendants of the Old Brigade of North Queensland, the old brigade who had to be good or get out or go under, and most of them made good, and their sons are now coming into evidence, and Australia will hear of some of them in the near future, I feel sure. The presidential address of Mr. E. T. Garbutt to delegates of the Northern National Political Union, and their political platform, is a credit to Australia for true progressive democracy.

In the south the hundreds of thousands of people know nothing of Townsville and care less. To them it is a second Darwin for jazzing industrial jollifications, and yet, one year her exports were worth £7,000,000, and she stood third on the list for Australian ports. Her population in 1916 was estimated at 25,000 people. She is the largest export centre of meat in the Commonwealth. She has factories for furniture, clothing and sail-cloth goods, besides two foundries. She is widely known for her large and well situated base hospital, the Institute for the study and treatment of tropical diseases being close at hand. There is a red brick Anglican Cathedral on Melton Hill, a Roman Catholic Church of imposing dimensions, and other smaller churches of various denominations. Six primary schools, a Grammar School, founded in 1888, and last but not least, a Manly at Magnetic Island, which one day will vie with her sister of the south for the training of sons of the north, who will have as little inclination to look to Sydney as the "all in all" of life, as Sydneyites have for the north to-day. So then would I say that although the Gulf will now fight for its own and take some of its prosperity away, Townsville can and will make good the loss and double her exports in a few years if her public men are only helped with capital and backed by the Government in Brisbane. It will be seen thus that Townsville is the only centre in the far flung line of the empty North of Australia from Broome to Bowen, that has put her hands to the plough and her shoulder to the wheel and progressed towards the solution of our great national question. And I know her rising generation of statesmen have no other feeling but that of pleasure and admiration for

the Gulf people for having the spirit of progress that will come out into the open to fight Townsville for her own. Opposition is the soul of trade and commerce. And what of poor despised Burketown, now dead and decayed and fallen on evil days. The shipping company even which has squeezed her and sucked her dry all these years, now casts her aside, as useless, rotten and of no use to them. What of Burketown. When the War God banged his drum, fifty of her sons buckled on their spurs. Where did they all come from? Burketown, where for eighteen hours out of the 24 you could rake all its streets with machine guns and one would barely get a hit. Burketown, the tail end of Queensland that is forgotten about, but who topped the last War Loan quota for Queensland, and to whom the gentlemen of the south to their eternal honor who were in charge of the "War Loan" matter privately subscribed and presented "a golden star" to the Burke Shire Council for her patriotic effort. "Gentlemen, the empty North thanks you, she appreciates your sentiment. It is the sentiment of old Australia, the sentiment that is going to win out for the empty North and for Australia. The sentiment of one 'Dinkum Die' Aussie for another who has 'done his bit.' "

Yes, and we would all do our bit if possible. I am trying to do mine. I have been for the last ten years and verily my actions in the empty North savoured of foolishness to my friends. However, the schemes were all sound enough, but voted to be 20 years too soon for accomplishment. Perhaps the pen will prove mightier than the sword, and the empty North will be put more firmly on the map of Australia and the world than ever could have been done with motor lorries. The fray has left no scars and no regrets, only twice renewed hopes and convictions. Where are the honors? None. Perhaps, they will come later. There is no returned badge, no military cross to show. Perhaps, however, if this message captures its objective it will yet rank as high as that Military Cross won at Salonika, capturing a machine gun, won by its wearer campaigning with the Cameron Kilty Highlanders, or the "Dinkum Die" badge of yet another scion of old Dalgonally. However, it was only circumstances that withheld the honor from some of us, and there are yet honors, wealth and fame to be won in the far empty North, if one is not a quitter, so that we can all keep on doing our bit for Australia and the Empire and for Humanity.

HE DID HIS BIT.

(By kind permission of John H. C. Sleeman, Esq.).

The plain utterance of a plain soldier, should to-day attract attention. It should compel respect. It gives you the other side of the man, whom soldiers affectionately call "Little Billy." Whilst Mr. Anstey, a competent parliamentarian vouches for the mental qualities, the intellectual capacity of Mr. Hughes, the "men who did" have plumbed the man himself, and borne testimony to the man. They speak of his moral characteristics. The "diggers" of Queensland arranged a welcome for Mr. Hughes in Brisbane, a homely welcome. They would go along and meet him with a cheer. The men who saved Australia have a keen eye for manly values. They recognise true worth at a glance, and discount transient glamour at its true worth. They have ever a kind word for a proven friend. Mr. Hughes was coming to Brisbane. They arranged to give the soldiers' friend a soldiers' welcome.

"Come along and greet him," they wrote. "He has done his bit." That's prose, but it is the epic fire, the lyric sweetness of the poetry of accomplishment. Those are the words that will live through the ages, and give future historians the key to his complex personality. He has done his bit. No Statesman ever went to the people with a greater, grander testimonial.

He did his bit! He did it well!
 Himself he has not spared.
 He worked, he wrought, he fought—they fell
 Who opposition dared.

He played the game, the only game
 To men, that's worth a d———,
 He fought the foe, and called it "shame,"
 To bow the knee to sham.

He was the soldiers' friend, their mate,
 And recognised as such;
 A little man who rough-hewed fate,
 With genius in his touch.

A little man who's bigger far
 Than monarchs of the earth,
 A little man, but born to star
 When nations have their birth.

A little man, yes—Little Bill
 Who stood his nation's friend,
 Whom little men had tried to kill
 Because he would not bend.

A little man who lit a flare
 That evermore will flame,
 Who now, as then, has dared to dare,
 The pathway up to fame.

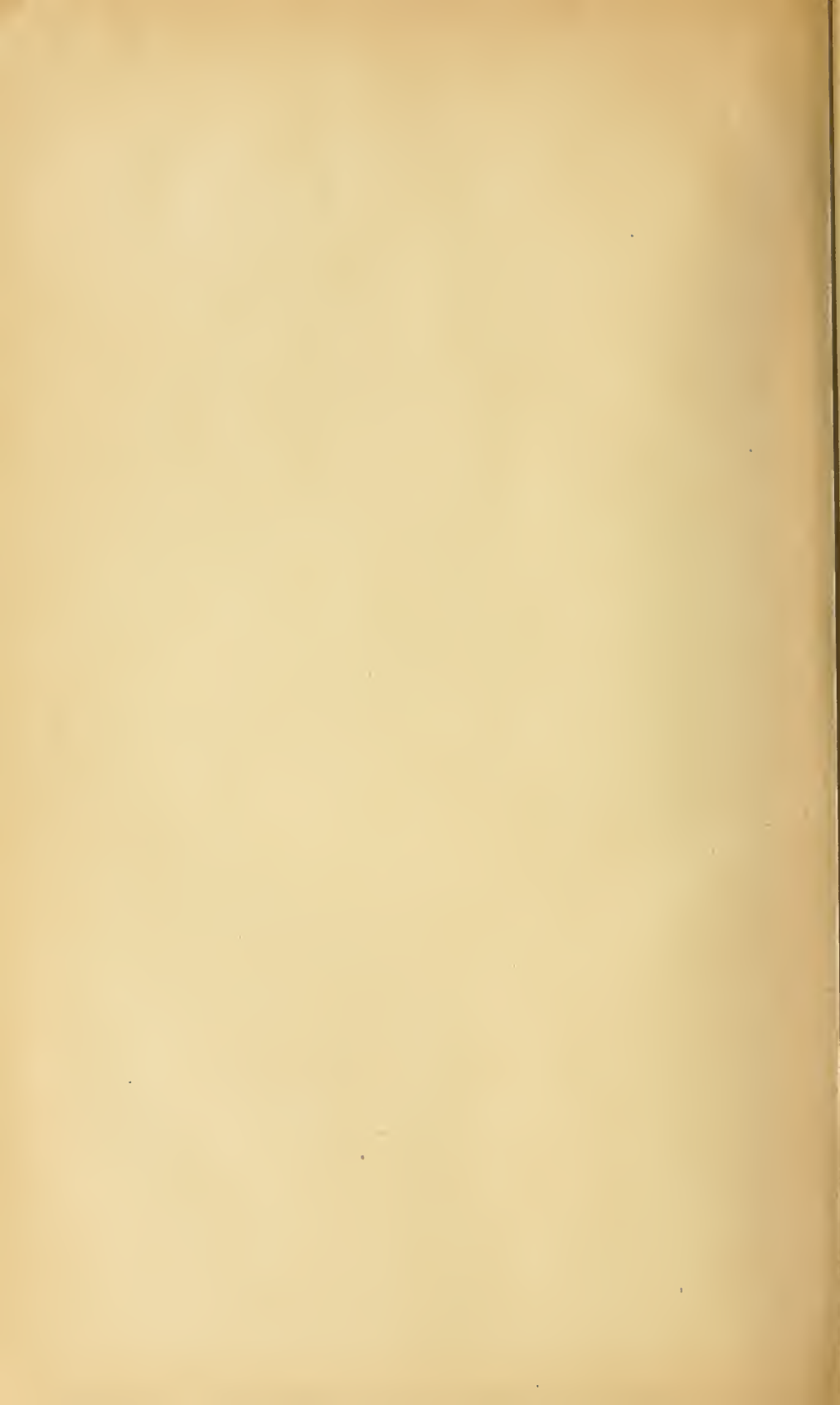
The men who fought, advertise to the world that Mr. Hughes *did his bit*. That is the slogan that the soldiers raise on his behalf. That is the verdict by which Australia must accept him. The man who *did his bit*, leads a political party, men who *did their bit*, and their appeal to the people today, is for permission to continue *doing their bit* for Australia.

The Steed Pegasus that carries the mail and messages from the far empty North to the South and to the world, is a good steed, but he is getting old. He has been ridden by good men in the past, but not far enough to reach the goal. I have tried a few trial mounts on him to get the strength of his endurance and ability, and I know he is sound in wind and limb, and also that his breeding is of the best, and has for sponsors the old pioneers of the North, who were of the same breed, so that I feel sure he will, if ridden courageously and faithfully, in the long run, reach the goal and winning post with his message. I know the message well, its worth, and value to the Commonwealth and to the Empire, so mount him again for a good try out. Perhaps he will just miss the race again, but I am sure this run will bring him into the betting and into prominence again, so that

in his succeeding attempts he will win out at last. And with this hope and confidence in my mount, I mount him and enter on the long, long, trail. The betting market is discouraging. "Are the public sufficiently interested in the message of the Great Empty North?" says one. "There will not be fifty totalisator tickets sold on him when the numbers go out," says another. "You will have to let your hair grow long before the public will take you seriously for a jockey," says a third. But in an able discourse on "Faith and Hope," given by a rev. gentleman at St. Stephen's Church, Sydney, who expounded the answer to a text, "What shall I do?" and his answer was, "Do whatever right and honourable course your heart and conscience bids you, and one will not go far wrong." And so I mount the old steed for a solid try out and enter for the race under the colours of "The Empty North," "The reasons and remedy."



PART IV



In compiling this volume I am actuated by several reasons:—

Firstly, to try and point out to the people of Australia, and all who care to read same, that the fact of the North of Australia being an empty, unpopulated land is not for the reason, as a statement quoted in a daily Sydney newspaper of 5/4/19, from the *Saturday Review*, "The obstinacy of the Australian Labour Party to keep Australia White has left Northern Queensland undeveloped," but for totally different reasons altogether, and I think when people have read this book they will agree with me.

In another volume it is my intention to try and bring before the people of the Commonwealth the enormous wealth—mineral, agricultural, and pastoral—of the North that should be exploited without delay. The general opinion is that now is the time for Australia to take advantage of the advertisement to the world that the chivalry and unheard-of gallantry of her sons has given forth, and the time is ripe to reward those heroes with rewards from her own bounteous wealth that has hitherto been despised and overlooked, and in the accomplishment of same they will also be solving the question of the empty North. The time is also ripe, as I think Queensland will shortly give justice to the claims of the North, and open it up with a port and railways. And when this is done, not only will there be room for all our gallant heroes to partake of these bounties, but that when the necessary development takes place hundreds of thousands of heroes of the Empire, with the pictures of the horrors of hell fresh in their minds from the shell-pocked plains of Picardy and the cramped life of the old world, gladly come out to these smiling "plains of promise," as the men who first saw them aptly named them,—where the horrors of war, I make bold to say, will never come, and multiply and prosper, and breed up a race of future Anzacs, who will in the future, if necessary, gladly sally forth to the help of the Old Land if ever the cancers of the old world break out again, and help with their free, fresh, untrammelled vigour to set right the causes, like our Anzacs as a nation have done at the present time.

This volume mostly deals with the reasons relating to North Queensland, but as the Northern Territory was first opened up from Queensland, and until the North and South Transcontinental Railway joins up the Katherine to Oodnadatta, the only way the Northern Territory will advance will be through Queensland, and it is the key to the situation and reason of all the empty North. In 1874 the first bullocks into the Territory to feed the people at Port Darwin Camp were from Dalgona Station. The first mob of cattle to stock Glencoe Station, near Darwin, were taken over from Aramac Station, Queensland, by Nat Buchanan and the Gordon Brothers in 1878, which were followed by cattle and sheep overlanded by Alfred Giles from Oodnadatta, after a very rough trip of some two years' duration. But the big difficulties, however, showed that the Territory would not get her progress by that route, and the empty North of both the Northern Territory and Western Australia were stocked and manned from Queensland, so that had the Gulf gone ahead as Nature and facilities intended that it could and would do whenever man settled on it, the North

of Australia above the 20th parallel would be a different place to-day, both as regards settlement and developed wealth. I do not hesitate to say that the glorious land of the Gulf has been damned by inglorious politicians, and the blight has altered the fortunes of the whole North of Australia in consequence. However, we can always bear in mind that the "darkest hour of night is just previous to dawn of day," so that it is to be hoped the last twenty years of the dark history of this part of the empty North is the forerunner of an eternal day of prosperity and sunshine.

And when that day comes, and the new wealthy garden city of the Gulf rears up its monuments to the everlasting glory of its grand old pioneers, the name of George Phillips, Esq., will occupy the foremost place on the scroll of honour. As, apart from the early explorers, he has worked for the development of the North unceasingly, and in the "nineties" sat in Parliament for this constituency. However, his efforts went unrecognised, and he was superseded; and from that day to this the Gulf has been forgotten and neglected. Other men, to their everlasting honour, latterly have tried to stem the tide of rot that had set in for the fortunes of the Gulf; and the history of the Gulf would not be complete without mentioning the splendid efforts of Mr. Tom Nevitt, and the genial, democratic, respected name of Mr. W. Murphy, of Croydon, whose position was unique in the House of Machine-made Politics, and he manfully led his own honest, free party of one as an Independent.

This wrongfully, much-despised third party, as Nationalists, is at last going to come into its own, as the right-thinking and much-disgusted citizens of Australia, who only see the best of the good, honest, and brainy men of both the Labour and Liberal side tied and manacled in their actions by the majority of their machine-made parties, so that it is only from the unbiased and broadminded, democratic politicians that Australia can hope to get a fair deal.

When men are put into Parliament by the wish of the majority on their own merits, and not by the sometimes unscrupulous machinations of a party machine, will justice be done.

Not only will I rely on the expert advice of that grand old pioneer, George Phillips, Esq., C.E., but I will quote the newspaper reports of an interview that was given by the Queensland Treasurer and Acting-Premier, Mr. Theodore, so that the facts and beliefs will not be those of an optimistic visionary, so that all the information can be relied on; and it is to be hoped that it will reach some of the back portions of the congested cities of the Empire and tell them of the land of freedom, health, and wealth for the making to be had in the empty North of Australia when it is thrown open for exploitation. And the statesman who casts the key that unlocks this golden casket of National Wealth for the sons of Australia and the Empire will not have lived in vain, and posterity will know him by his deeds when his words will long have been forgotten.

“THE EMPTY NORTH.”

AN OPEN LETTER

To the

HONOURABLE WILLIAM MORRIS HUGHES,

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Honourable Sir,

We were told by the papers some weeks ago that Messrs. Timms and Sidney Kidman are willing to contract to construct the long-debated Transcontinental Railway from Oodnadatta, South Australia, to the Katherine, in the Northern Territory, thus linking up of Darwin with Adelaide.

They would begin at both ends within three months, and when they had a proper start would employ 5000 men. The cost is roughly estimated at £8,000,000 for a single line, fully ballasted. Later on we learnt that the matter was in the hands of the Authorities for consideration.

In view of the abnormal ignorance displayed by the actions of Federal Authorities in the past, and which are, by the utterances of those still in authority, likely to be perpetuated to the detriment of the empty North and the finances of the Commonwealth, I would adjure you to go into this matter of the Transcontinental Railway completion yourself as soon as possible, and make good for Australia without delay this boon, and so erect this monument to your own memory, which will stretch across the continent that you have served so truly, nobly, and well.

Just as the East and West transcontinental line is the monument of the late Baron John Forrest, so this North and South transcontinental will be yours.

As regards the cost to Australia and the results, it is plain to all that this line would far outweigh in importance the other, and the matter of cost be a most satisfactory one.

It is most interesting to read about this East and West Transcontinental line. Although we must admit that a lot of other necessary Commonwealth works could have been more usefully completed before this one, Australia can well be proud of the accomplishment, but the reading of the cost of construction is inclined to make people shudder. The original estimate was £4,000,000. It has already cost, I believe, £7,000,000, and not half the total length has yet been ballasted. Now, Messrs. Timms and Sidney Kidman roughly estimate their cost at £8,000,000, fully ballasted. That is to be a contract. It is not to be an elastic estimate like the original one of the Southern Transcontinental one. Here is a chance for the people of Australia to get a legitimate, necessary work done for a legitimate cost. The devil only knows if the £7,000,000 already spent on the other was legitimate cost.

No political party, to my mind, should have any inclination to criticise,

as the contractors will start at both ends and employ 5000 hands, and surely there is no sane man in position to cry it down who would do so when it means so much employment? And to think that the contractors will find the whole of the money and take payment in Government bonds and finish it in three years seems like a gift direct from heaven to the long-suffering, badly treated, empty North of Australia.

In the foregoing chapters you will read "why the North of Australia" is empty. Could it be in any other condition after the treatment that has been dealt out it, and to those who have lived in it and battled and tried to advance it? Even yet we read in the papers that "The chief difficulties in the way of settlement in the past have been the cost of stocking and water boring, and lack of capital," etc. We are informed that £10,000,000 has been expended in the Northern Territory since 1911, and anyone that knows can truthfully say that unless this linking-up of the North with the South is gone on with, and the distance of isolation dwarfed down to the minimum both as regards bringing the population to it and sending its wealth to markets when it is settled and exploited, not even £100,000,000 will ever open it up and make it attractive to settlement.

The ignorant, unqualified opinion of Federal Authorities regarding the North, and the actions of the Authorities as regards the treatment of the people of the Gulf of North Queensland by the Postmaster-Generals over the last ten years, makes nauseating reading, and that is the reason why I address you in this matter. We do not hold you responsible in any way, and feel sure when the matter is put to you first-hand you will agree with us and recognise that the sooner the first sod of the North and South Trans-continental line is turned the sooner will the North of Australia give the lie to those who prate about the only salvation for North Australia being black labour.

The brand of Mr. Sidney Kidman on this contract is sufficient guarantee alone. Setting aside all the arguments for and against, feasible strategic usefulness, opening-up of good unoccupied lands, etc., Mr. Kidman, who does nothing foolish, or who has never been known to associate himself with anything bogus, comes out into the open to create, not contend, and his action should silence a lot of the argument against it. Other influential men propose different routes and, maybe, show sound arguments, but money talks, and if those against this route want to uphold their arguments, let them advance like proposals, then I would say they are both right and let them both construct.

I trust that my book will show to the people of the world why the North of Australia is empty, and in future there will be no need of the question: "Is it a white man's land?"

Australians are proud of you, Mr. Hughes; and your utterances, "I am for Australia," "Work is our slogan, and rigid economy, governmental and private, must be our watchword," is the enthusiasm and policy that is going to make Australia and her citizens greater still among the big nations of the world with whom she is now admitted.

Up to the present the empty North has been not only defamed, but murderously treated; but we can forget the past and only think of the future. I would also try and teach my countrymen the gospel of the "Empty North," and say with you, "Open your eyes, Australia, open your

eyes and go forth in the spirit which sent your sons and brothers to victory; and like your forbears, Australia's pioneers, who went into the uninhabited hinterland and settled, and who are responsible for the Anzacs and Australia's position to-day."

And now I would remind you also of your slogan to urge you on to sign this contract that the "Empty North" regards with feverish anxiety for completion. "Make jobs for the soldiers." "The Diggers made a nation; keep it one."

And in the commencement of this work, not only will the former slogan be fulfilled, but the latter one will be carried out more fully, because the rich unexploited empty North of Australia fully bears out your contention, and shouts aloud, "The gateways of opportunity are wide open, and she invites you to enter those gateways." And it is for you to see that an entrance to that gate is made in this North and South Transcontinental line as quickly as possible.

This is half the length of the wedge that is going to push the condition of the "Empty North" off the map of Australia. When this thin end of the wedge is completed, and a branch line formed up across the Barkly Tableland to Camooweal and a Gulf port, the wealth of wool won from its luxuriant pastures by small holders will place the districts of Longreach and Winton far in the background. With a deep water Gulf port, either on the Albert River or Investigator Strait, and joined up with Camooweal and Cloncurry, this port will in a short time pour out upon the commercial markets of the world its millions of copper, silver and lead, and other ores, its meat and wool and other pastoral products, and from off the irrigable, easily-irrigated lands of the everflowing Gregory and its adjacent perennial streams, tropical cereals and agriculture, which will double the wealth of the Commonwealth in a very short period and the cost of living to its citizens halved.

At the present time the appalling ignorance of those who think they understand the solving of the problem of the empty North, if it could be shown them from a Northerner's point of view, would startle them. Who are better fitted to open up the country than its inhabitants? Why does not the Northern Territory elect its own State Parliament to sit at Darwin, with its measures to be submitted to the Senate of the Commonwealth?

Why are its inhabitants disfranchised from taking part in the Commonwealth affairs? I make bold to say that there are men in the little-known and little-known places in the empty North who read and think and take more interest in, and are better patriots in word, deed, and example, than those of the much-toasted and much-boasted and boomed rich, patriotic clubs of the Southern cities, whose patriotism is all more or less tainted by parochialism, and, moreover, when called on for a practical illustration of their patriotism by finance, if the giving is not to be a much-advertised one, are generally found weighing in the balance and wanting.

Recently, Sydney citizens have lashed themselves into a frenzy of anger and disgust over the unfulfilled pledges of Canberra. In comparison to the needs of Federated Australia, the pledge with South Australia re the joining up of Oodnadatta with Darwin, the Canberra matter is insignificant. However, "might is right," and "to him who hath shall be given." Already we read that the Acting Federal Treasurer, in the course of the

Federal Budget Speech, made this important statement, "It is intended to proceed with the construction of the Federal Capital," etc.

The idea is to first join up the South to the North, and let the people of the South view these lands and assets in a few days' journey. Then, in comparatively as quick a time as it takes in the city to draw a crowd and have all the people in the vicinity looking up in the air, if one stops in the street or gazes continuously and inquisitively up himself, so the journey to these hitherto little known lands of romance will be visited with a rush, and in a short time Sydney, the commercial pulse of Australia, would see the necessity and advisability of linking up with the North also via Bourke and the back of Queensland to Camooweal.

There is an old saying, and a true one, "Once a Gulfman, always a Gulfman." The romance of it all gets into one's blood, and the man who has spent his early life there has a struggle to get away from it. The reason that people come away from it, when they are financially able, is because they see it going back and back, and recognise that it is hopeless to fight against circumstances, and the man is not sane who will deny himself the luxuries of civilisation when he can afford them, especially when he sees his efforts to make it for himself up there frustrated. And circumstances in the case of the empty North are ignorant, parochial, and small-minded legislators, who are totally devoid of Australian sentiment or Northern environment.

Given an opportunity of easy and quick transit to these lands, a lot of the "Ginger Micks" who now expend their energies and undoubted abilities in the pursuit of gathering old bottles and rags or selling "rabbit-ohs" in the cities, more from the point of view that they are their own bosses and are under no obligation to pay deference to any employer (a truly Australian trait), and are at liberty to reap the full result of their own energies—so soon will these men view these lands and recognise that their energies expended on the new lands would bring in results ten times greater in cash, status, and mental and physical betterment, and give them opportunities to make good homes and future prospects for their particular "Doreens" that stick to them now so well in adverse conditions.

It is on record that these Ginger Micks were part of the stiffening starch of our Anzacs, and, placed on fair lands like the empty North, they would prove further the stiffening element that will open up the empty North for Australia. "Australians for Australia," and then when the manhood of Australia has been offered these opportunities, and take or refuse them, offer the glad hand of welcome to the millions of our kinsmen and allies overseas to partake of them also—there is room for many millions. However, it would be a good idea, in order to counteract the various forms of Bolshevik thought and ambitious poison which is apt to be rife amongst a multitude of old world visitors, to pass a law prohibiting from date of its making any man from entering Parliament or holding any leading position in any social or industrial union until he is 10 years in the land, so that with the flood of new citizens Australia will not suffer from any of the backwash of society that may be in the flood. The curse of the empty North of Australia has been the getting of men into authority in the different Governments of the South who know not Australia or Australian temperament, and care not one jot about it nationally or patriotically, but only serve their own god of self to the detriment of the Commonwealth generally.

The area of the Northern Territory is 523,620 square miles. Let there be 17 electorates of 30,000 square miles each, or even less, to elect their own member. Do not perpetuate the curse of Australia which has already cursed the States by electorates by population, which has resulted in the congestion of population and trade around each State Capital, and if applied now to the Territory will only give over the country to the hotheads of Darwin to wreck, as they are now trying to do—which is on the cards, that those thoroughly cowed and weak-backed authorities are capable of doing, judging by past performances. No one would then be far wrong in saying that the Parliament of Darwin would consist of honourable, honest and well-seasoned and capable Territoryites, perhaps bluff and rough, but white men; although one would also want to make a proviso of at least five years' residence in their particular electorates before they were eligible for election, or it would only mean a hasty journey of irresponsibles and totally unfitted men from Darwin or the South—Labour, Liberal, Nationalist, and Socialist. "Home Rule for the Northern Territory"—but home rule in accordance with the deserts of those pioneers who have roughed it and battled in it to keep it open for the Empire so long and well, and whose earnest wish and thought is only to advance it, and not their own pockets. The honesty and the straight dealing and hospitality and "treat others as you would have them treat you" trait, is the trait of the bushman more so than any body of men in the Commonwealth. It may yet be left for the Territory to lead Australia as a model system of State self-government under the ægis of the Federal Senate.

The North and South joined up by railways, and their Treasurer lent half a million by the Commonwealth to initiate needed works, would in twelve months, by the saving of loss of stock travelling, etc., not only get an economic return for the stability of the State, but in other ways make money that is now going up in smoke and little bothered with, and is absolute criminal waste of Nature's gifts.

When the Federal Authorities took over the Northern Territory and appointed men from the South to run it, they insulted grossly the men of the Territory, who are the men responsible for the successful opening of it up and keeping it open all those years, and the late rumpus is only a fitting climax "of the inevitable."

I make bold to say that this Parliament would produce the only John Forrests that Australia is likely to ever turn out in the future.

I take the liberty of pointing out to you that practically all the country north of the fifteenth parallel in the Northern Territory is inferior and not worth talking about for many years to come yet, and the absurdity and arrogance of the present-day Darwin proletariat or "jazzing Soviet" or whatever one may call them, to say they voice the sentiments of the Territorians is as absurd as the actions of the Federal Authorities in spending some £10,000,000 on this area to the utter neglect of the real Territory. The Territory proper is one huge, magnificent sheep and cattle station, with unlimited mineral wealth, yet awaiting exploitation. The meat question alone sums its wealth in millions. However, it is not one-tenth made use of, as it cannot be until opened up with railways. The wool question at the present time is absurd to think about, as the only sheep station in the Territory, Avon Downs, on account of transport and scarcity of labour, has found wool-growing so unprofitable that they have recently sold off all

of their sheep, and the prospects of the real Territory to-day are as black as they have ever been in the eyes of their pioneers as regards the breeding and selling of meat and wool, which are the real assets of the Commonwealth.

In the eighties the Gulf was in a fair way towards progress. A fine steamer service was running weekly. To-day the monthly service, I contend, is not only a disgrace to Australian civilisation, but a damnable and gross insult to those men and women and children who live there, and are trying to make homes and open it up.

In the eighties the shores of Botany Bay were idle, unoccupied, and practically naturally waste and unproductive lands, and the site for "two-up" schools and cock-fights and snipe shooting and for any other unlawful game or sport that one had to get out of sight of the Authorities of Sydney to indulge in. To-day, in 1919, we see fellmongeries and woollscourers, light and heavy leather tanneries, the largest fancy leather factory in the Commonwealth, glue and gelatine works, tallow refineries, boot factories, paper mills, wool-combing mills, sandbrick works, that should gladden the heart of every Australian to behold. And the work turned out by these employees is a matter for congratulation, and one can well take off their hats and pay homage to the men in charge who direct, control, and manage them. I take it that very few people recognise the wealth of industry and quality of the work done now on the foreshores of Botany Bay, and it would be a good thing for Australia if her Federal politicians one and all were forcibly dragged through those factories and had a lesson on and a peep at the primary wealth of Australia before it is turned out to be distributed over the markets of the world, and also the finished article itself fresh from the hands of her own artisans, and then think of the wasted hides and skins of thousands of stock that perish on the long roads to market annually coming in from the empty North. One does not need to be a dreamer or visionary to see this. Thousands see it and know it, but few have the spirit to get up in high places and shout aloud: "I am for Australia!" Fewer still have the temerity to hint even "The Gospel of the Empty North."

For the last thirty years the politicians of Brisbane have been undoing the results of the efforts of Sir Thomas McIlwraith in the Gulf of North Queensland, and robbing it of its wealth by underhand and wholly unnatural methods for so-called development; and for the last ten years the Federal Postmaster-Generals have been trying to close it up, and latterly the whole of North Queensland has been poisoned by the influx of Bolsheviks encouraged to come to Queensland, and who naturally saw their best chance of making trouble to be in the North. And the result of the ill-advised Federal machinations in the Northern Territory since their regime has been in control has only been to thoroughly poison the seat of Government around Darwin, also; so that now it is time for good Australians in the South to pause and think and consider before they call it a White Elephant, and recognise that by their voices they may be proclaiming their ignorance of their own country.

Darwin will never be more than the naval base for the Australian Fleet, and a kick-off to other lands.

Wyndham, with fresh water and Mitchell grass right up to its mag-

nificent harbour, is the natural gate for the pastoral wealth of the Victoria River and hinterland, but the real commercial gate of Northern Australia will be near the mouth of the Albert River—Burketown. No outlet in Australia has the mineral wealth, copper, iron, silver, lead, and other ores, or the magnificent areas of pastoral lands such as the “plains of promise,” or the irrigable, agricultural lands of the everflowing Gregory streams within 200 miles of its doors as Burketown has; and this area, backed with 18½ million acres of the magnificent ‘sheep country of the Barkly Tableland in the Territory, and millions also of the Tableland in Queensland, shows, I contend, a natural asset that no other nation in the world can boast of. And the man who despairs for the future of the North is a blind fool.

It is some three months since the newspapers acquainted the public with the news of Messrs. Timms and Kidman’s offer to construct this North and South Transcontinental line. Already the darg of red tape has wasted three months, and deprived the Commonwealth of three months’ nearer solution to the enigma of the empty North.

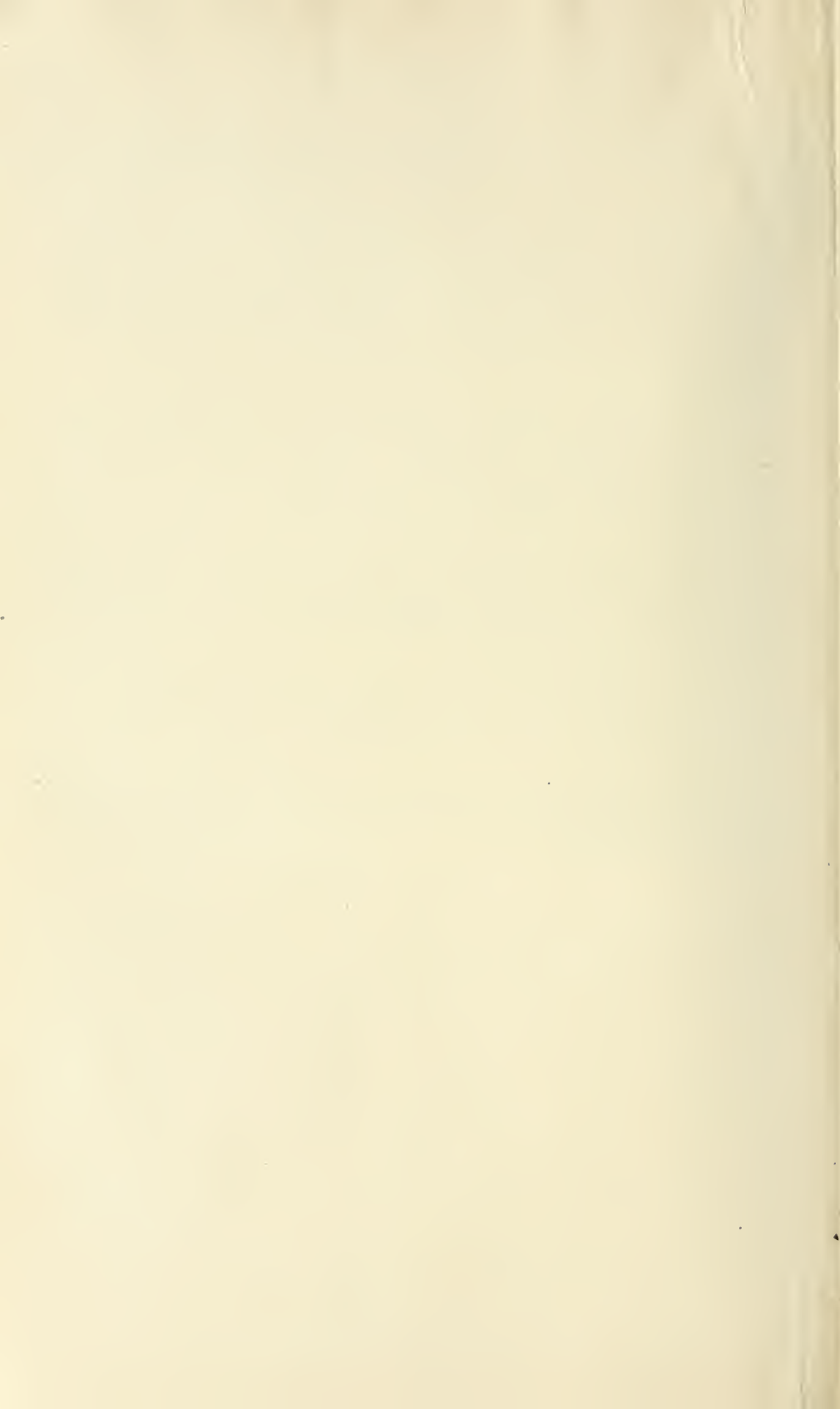
I would beg of you to recognise that this letter is only to instruct, and not obstruct—to destruct in order to construct for the early wealthy future for the empty North, and for the aggrandisement of the Commonwealth and her citizens. “He that has truth on his side is a fool, as well as a coward, if he is afraid to own it because of the multitude of other men’s opinions.”

“’Tis hard to say all the world is mistaken but himself;
But if it be so, who can help it?”

The empty North has her sons and votaries who would echo and help you towards its solution. We are also for Australia, and echo with you the slogan and agree that—“As long as we all say that, rich and poor alike, all will be well.”

I am, yours faithfully,

J. N. MACINTYRE



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