

**Record of the  
Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament**

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**Legislative Assembly  
29<sup>th</sup> June 1860**

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Extracted from the third party account as published in the  
Moreton Bay Courier 30<sup>th</sup> June 1860

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The Speaker took the chair at a quarter past 10 a.m., and read prayers.

**STATE-AID TO RELIGION.**

In reply to a question put by Mr. McAlister, the COLONIAL SECRETARY stated that the government would be prepared to introduce a bill to abolish state aid to religion, during next week.

**ADJUSTMENT OF ACCOUNTS WITH NEW SOUTH WALES.**

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the resolutions standing in his name, as follows:—  
(1.) That with a view to the final settlement of the outstanding accounts between this colony and New South Wales, it is desirable that the Legislature of Queensland should take the necessary steps for the appointment of Commissioners, to act in conference with those about to be similarly appointed on the part of New South Wales. (2.) That this house do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole, for the purpose of considering the mode of appointing such Commissioners, and the general basis upon which their negotiations are to be conducted. The hon. gentleman then said:—In rising to introduce the motion of which I have given notice, I shall use my best endeavours to speak temperately and in a conciliatory spirit in order that the subject now brought under discussion may meet with fair and reasonable consideration at the hands of the Assembly. And before I proceed further, I would observe, that although in dealing with so interesting a question members of Assembly and others in New South Wales may have approached it with a strong and one-sided feeling, there are not wanting in that colony men of high position who are desirous, as I believe this Assembly is desirous, of seeing this difficult matter settled upon a just and equitable footing. His Excellency the Governor General has been consistently fair and straightforward in the views that he has maintained; Mr. Hodgson has made repeated efforts to bring the claims of Queensland under the consideration of the Assembly; and Mr. Darvall, once the strong opponent of separation, has been the strong advocate of an honest and liberal policy towards Queensland. (Hear, hear.) The settlement of the public accounts, to which I now invite the attention of the house, has been long regarded as likely to form one of the chief difficulties attending the separation of this colony. If it had been possible, no doubt it would have been very desirable that no account whatever should have been taken between the two colonies; that upon parting with each other they should have cried quits, and each have proceeded forthwith to the unfettered administration of its own revenues. But the progress of separation has been hampered by the existence of a debt, incurred by New South Wales upon several distinct accounts, and chargeable, to a greater or less extent, according to views entertained in New South Wales, upon the revenues of Queensland. It is maintained by some persons in Sydney that this colony, notwithstanding separation, continues chargeable with the debt of New South Wales, for whatever objects incurred; it has been said that the Act under which separation took place did not empower her Majesty to alienate from New South Wales the land which had become security for the public debt of the colony. Sir, this is an idea which cannot for one moment be entertained in this Assembly; there can be no separation that is not a

territorial separation. (Hear, hear.) Is it said that the public lands of the colony are the security upon which its debentures are raised? The entire fallacy of this assumption is proved by an argument which has, I believe, been used in the Assembly of New South Wales, and which is, to my mind, irresistible; namely, that the land is sold daily by the Government of New South Wales, and thereby ceases to be a public security. (Hear, hear.) Those debentures are issued upon the security of the consolidated revenues of the colony, whencesoever derived; and these revenues alone however they may fluctuate, are the security of the public creditor. (Hear, hear.) But, Sir, I will go further, and I will say that those debentures were issued at a time when it was well-known that separation must shortly ensue; and that even since separation the public securities of New South Wales have stood as high in the money market as before it. When I was last in Sydney I was informed by a high authority that many persons there considered that Queensland would be chargeable, to the extent perhaps of a million, with the general debt of New South Wales. This, Sir, is preposterous—(hear, hear)—and wholly inconsistent with the statement made on the part of New South Wales with regard to the object for which it was borrowed. It was borrowed—(1) For sewerage and waterworks in Sydney; (2) for public works; (3) for railways; (4) for immigration; and (5) to cover deficiencies in revenue. Now the only material part of this debt, which according to the showing of New South Wales was incurred on behalf of these districts, is a proportion of that incurred on account of immigration. This should be acknowledged and met on the part of Queensland, with this important proviso, that a general account be struck of the receipts from and expenditure in the Moreton Bay district since 1842. On no other terms should this colony enter upon the settlement of accounts; more especially as these are the terms originally proposed by New South Wales. (Hear, hear.) Having said thus much, I will proceed to observe that in order to a settlement of the accounts, commissioners must be appointed to act on behalf of each colony. The Governor-General had originally recommended that this question should be adjudicated by the Government, in order to avoid the heartburnings and bitterness of feeling that must otherwise arise between the two colonies. However, the Secretary of State held that it should be decided in the first instance by the Legislature, and should the Legislature decline to co-operate there would then be a strong reason made out for parliamentary interference. In debate upon a motion by Mr. Darvall it was stated lately by the Government of New South Wales, that it was proposed to appoint the necessary commissioners during the ensuing session of that parliament. This will probably be after our present session has ended, and therefore, in order to meet them we should not delay to appoint commissioners on the part of Queensland. It has also been said, I believe, on behalf of the Government of New South Wales, that the £18,000 due to this colony on account of the revenue of 1859-60 should be paid over so soon as commissioners should be authorised to settle the public account. There is no reason why we should object to this, provided we adhere to the opinion that our commissioners should enter upon no further negotiation until this and the other parliamentary accounts be settled. (Hear, hear.) I will now move, Sir, that this house resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the appointment of these commissioners, and the basis upon which they are to act. (Hear, hear).

Mr. RAFF was glad that this important question had been brought before the house in such a commendable manner by the present executive. He thought that by reference to the despatch from the Secretary of State for the colonies, alluded to by the Colonial Secretary, it would be seen that the position taken up by the Home Government in this matter was a just one. The house should be careful, in their appointment of the commissioners, to instruct them to regulate their official act solely by those principles enunciated by Sir William Denison in his despatch and in their proceedings not in any way to deviate from those principles. He took a slightly different view of the position taken up by the Home Government from that entertained by the Colonial Secretary. He thought that the Home Government instead of saying to the colonies "settle the matter in the best way you can, amongst yourselves," virtually said "make the attempt to settle the matter amongst yourselves; and, in the event of your failure, we will step in and interfere." He deprecated the application of the word "negotiations" by the Colonial Secretary to the proceedings of the commissioners. This task he imagined would be rather to investigate the accounts, and elucidate the relative pecuniary positions in which the two colonies stood; their

proceedings all the while being regulated by certain clearly defined principles, such as those set forth in the despatch of Sir W. Denison. It was a mere settlement of accounts, not a matter of negotiation. As to the statement of certain parties in New South Wales, to the effect that Queensland was indebted to New South Wales, in the sum of £100,000,000 were this statement true, New South Wales would not have evinced such tardiness in taking measures to adjust the accounts. The hon. member proceeded to condemn in severe terms the discreditable manner in which New South Wales had acted immediately subsequent to separation, receiving monies which she well knew she had no right to, and which she admitted belonged to this colony. It was pleasing to see that the conduct of the Governor-General in this matter had been upright, reasonable, and enlightened throughout.

Mr. MACALISTER thought that the house was indebted to the Colonial Secretary for the way in which he had introduced this matter to their notice. The Government had treated the subject in a spirit of great fairness, and in accordance with principles which had already obtained general approbation. In some matters of minor detail he did not quite agree with the principles enunciated by Sir Wm. Denison for the settlement of this matter. For instance, he did not conceive that we should be burdened with so large a proportion of the debt on account of immigration. For the first three years subsequent to the breaking out of the gold fever, the whole of the immigrants who were landed in Moreton Bay rushed off to New South Wales; and this colony derived no benefit from their presence. He scouted the idea that we were in any way bound to sympathise with the creditors of New South Wales in consequence of the position in which they were placed by separation. Before ever this debt was contracted, this colony had applied for separation; and the public creditor was well aware of the fact. (Hear, hear.) He believed that every member of that house wished that New South Wales had met us in a spirit of fairness and justice, had met us as honest debtors, instead of pocketing nearly £20,000 of our money, of which they had wrongfully come in possession, on the ground that we were debtors to them. The Colonial Secretary took the right ground when he said that it would be our duty to make New South Wales first refund this money before we entered into negotiations with them. The colony of New South Wales was not entitled to levy an execution before proving her debt.

Mr. BROUGHTON followed on the same side. With reference to the alleged injustice done to the public creditors of New South Wales by separation he might observe that they knew their position before entering into their engagements, as a clause of the Constitution Act especially provided for separation.

Mr. BUCKLEY would occupy the time of the house with a very few remarks, having reference to the correspondence which had taken place since separation. The Colonial Secretary in the course of his address had very fairly placed before the house the true position of this colony, with one or two slight exceptions. The hon. gentleman here read a letter from the Forster Government of February 14th and 15th, by which it appeared that at the time of separation, the debt was estimated by that government at a little more than three millions and a half. He also referred hon. members to a minute (No. 4) of the Executive Council of the 15th January, 1857, by which it appeared that the liabilities were then estimated at £2,234,700. He had in his place in the New South Wales parliament, in conjunction with Mr. Hodgson, protested against the public lands of Moreton Bay being pledged for the debt of New South Wales; and that protest was entered upon the papers of the House. With reference to the share of the debt alleged to have been incurred by us for immigration, he might observe that, he was resident here immediately after the first gold discovery and could assert from personal observation that, at that time, the whole of the immigration found its way to Sydney. At present we were entitled to six hundred immigrants from the Imperial Government; and if we were not credited with the amount by New South Wales, he would suggest the desirableness of at once communicating with the Home Government on the subject. No doubt, most honourable members were acquainted with those principles enunciated by Sir William Denison for the settlement of this matter; and he (Mr. B.) had always found that gentleman in conversing with him on the subject, ready to treat the matter in a spirit of fairness, and to listen with attention to any suggestion offered by representatives from the Northern districts. He thought that in estimating our contributions to the treasury of New South Wales, we

were entitled to be credited with a share of the revenue derivable from the Customs, although no doubt some difficulties stood in the way of arriving at an estimate of the true amount which we had contributed in this manner. By dividing the whole amount of the revenue by the whole amount of the population for each year, up to the time of separation, we might be able to arrive at some approximation to the amount of the contributions from the districts of Queensland; although, even then, the amount would hardly be fair, as the women and children of the large and populous towns of New South Wales would be reckoned against our adult population. The house would observe that amongst other amounts, we had been charged with £4320 for trial surveys; with regard to which Messrs. Flay and Robertson had stated that they were not worth the paper on which they had been printed. He (Mr. B.) thought, however, that we had better pay the amount and submit to the loss. He considered that we were not chargeable for any sum borrowed to meet the deficiency in the revenue of the year 1856 for two reasons. In the first place, if we examine our account as rendered by New South Wales, we find that the following is the result total of revenue available from 1842 to 1856, £329,499 5s. 9d. Ordinary Expenditure for the same period, £313,291 3s. 9d.; leaving a balance of £16,208 2s. From this, after deducting £5,400, the proportion for survey, &c., for 9 years, would still leave a balance of £10,808 2s. in our favour. In the second place, it would be found, on reference to those principles expounded by Sir William Denison, for a settlement of the debt, that we were to bear no proportion of the cost incurred for railways in New South Wales. Now the deficiency in the revenue of the year alluded to, arose chiefly from the unprofitable working of the railways, which had just been established. The hon. members for South Cumberland and the North Biding, had asserted that they entered a written protest against the decision of the Governor-General in the matter. But search had been made and no record of the protest could be found. The bill brought on by Mr. Cowper for the adjustment of the debt had passed its second reading in the Assembly, but an agitation was afterwards got up against it outside the house, the result of which was, that it was determined in the House to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, which was to shelve it altogether. Meetings were held in Sydney, and it was publicly suggested and maintained by that very honest and very liberal organ, the "Sydney Morning Herald," that if the Imperial Parliament were allowed to interfere in the matter, New South Wales should repudiate her three millions of debt, and throw the whole burden of it on the shoulders of the home Government. A large proportion of this Debt was for the Sydney Sewerage and Water Works, and of course these amounts, or any interest upon them, we should be exempt from paying. He suggested to the Colonial Secretary the desirableness of getting a receipt in full of all demands from the Government of New South Wales after the adjustment of the accounts. It was also highly necessary that the duties of the Commissioners should be clearly defined. The hon. member concluded by enforcing the necessity of concurrent legislation on the part of New South Wales and this colony, for the purpose of rendering the decisions of the Commissioners binding on each colony.

Mr. FORBES said that, since the first meeting in favor of separation, which he attended in 1849, he had hoped to see the day when the wishes of the people would be realised. When within our reach it had well-nigh been snatched from us by the grasping avarice and selfishness of the sister colony. While we formed a portion of New South Wales we were left altogether uncared for, and but a small fraction of the large sums of money we contributed to the general revenue was grudgingly expended for our benefit by the Government of the day. He remembered when a memorial from the people of Ipswich was presented to the New South Wales Parliament by Dr. Lang, who was then member for the district, the government refused to recognise the principle that money collected in any district ought to be expended there. With regard to the question of the adjustment of the debt he did not consider that Queensland could be called upon to pay for the railways of New South Wales, which had been constructed on the most extravagant principles, and were the most expensive in the world. They were not, in justice, bound to make good money that had been recklessly and lavishly spent by New South Wales for its own benefit, without the sanction, and against the wishes of the people of Queensland. It appeared to be laid down in the Governor-General's despatch that we were not to be required to contribute towards the construction of these 'works' in the adjustment of the debt; but he thought they had good

grounds for complaining that the New South Wales Government had seized our revenue in years past, and, while they refused to return us a fair share of it, or even to acknowledge it to be their duty to spend money here at all, had employed the whole of it in constructing and maintaining those extravagant railways for their own peculiar benefit.

Mr. GORE agreed with what had been said by the Colonial Secretary and the honorable member who had last spoken, with reference to the treatment the people of this Colony had received before separation from the Government of New South Wales, and he feared they had too much reason to believe that they would not now receive from that Government the full amount of justice they deserved.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY in reply said he agreed with the honorable member for North Brisbane (Mr. Raff) and for East Moreton (Mr. Buckley) respectively, that the duties of the Commissioners in dealing with this question should not be regarded as negotiations merely, but as designed to arrive at a direct and final settlement of the accounts. The honorable member for East Moreton had suggested a very important point in the remarks he made with reference to the real value of the immigration to this colony for the cost of which payment was demanded from us. The real benefits were ascertainable from an examination of figures and facts, and he had no doubt it would be found that in consequence of the policy pursued towards Moreton Bay by the Government of New South Wales, but a small proportion of the immigrants introduced here at our expense were enabled to remain in the colony. It would be observed that up to the year 1856 the sum owing to this colony was £10,000. There was an absolute surplus in our favor instead of a deficiency for us to make up, and he was confident that during the last four years our revenue had considerably increased, while our expenditure had by no means been permitted to keep pace with it. In the Estimates prepared by the Colonial Treasurer of New South Wales for this year, that gentleman stated the probable revenue of Queensland at £180,000, while the expenditure was set down at only £90,000; and he had no doubt that the returns for the three previous years would be equally in favor of this portion of the undivided colony. The Colonial Treasurer of New South Wales must have considerably under-rated the revenue of Queensland, for our own Estimates shew it to be upwards of £160,000, and he did not think the difference was solely attributable to the fact of separation. It was probable however that the expenditure was by no means underestimated by the Government of New South Wales. He agreed also with the honorable member for East Moreton (Mr. Buckley) in considering that it would be useless to enter into negotiations with New South Wales till both colonies were bound by Bills of their respective Legislatures to agree to a basis for the Commissioners to act upon. An Act could be passed in one colony and submitted to the other for its approval. Without mutual agreement as to a regular basis, the Commissioners could not proceed with their labors, as provisions might be introduced into the Bill of one colony which would be objectionable to the other, and render the labors of its Commissioners nugatory from the very outset. (Cheers.)

The question having been put, was carried, and, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Speaker left the Chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of the Resolutions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY then said that as the house had already affirmed the principles of the bill introduced into the New South Wales Parliament by Mr. Cowper for the adjustment of the debt between the two colonies, he concluded that it was agreed that that bill was regarded as the fairest proposal for the settlement of the question. They were now to take a general estimate of all the benefits they had received from New South Wales and of all the injustice she had done us, and they were prepared to pay whatever was fairly owed by us, while we expected nothing short of an honorable settlement of our just claims at the hands of our neighbor. A previous government of New South Wales had affirmed the principles of the bill which had just met with the approval of the Queensland Assembly, and the chief Secretary of that administration was chief Secretary of the Ministry now in office. They might, therefore, reasonably expect from him a cordial adherence to the principles he laid down before. That gentleman had expressed to him (Mr. Herbert) a desire to adhere to those principles, and the home government

had further signified their approval of them. In doing so the Imperial authorities had clearly indicated what should be the basis upon which the debt was to be calculated and adjusted, and at the same time had signified that if the Government of New South Wales did not agree to settle the question in an amicable manner it would be settled for them by the Imperial Parliament. He hoped however no such interference or appeal would be necessary. The bill which had been prepared by the New South Wales government was to be taken as an expression of the views not only of the Ministry but of the Parliament of that colony, for as it had been read a first and second time the principles it contained must be regarded as having been distinctly and deliberately affirmed. With regard to preliminary negotiations it was his desire that there should be no dealings between the two colonies with reference to the question of debt until the matters that had been referred to with regard to the affairs of the current year had been satisfactorily settled. It had been suggested by the Governor-General that the Governor of Victoria should be appointed an umpire to decide matters referred to him by the Commissioners of the respective colonies; while other persons recommended that the Commissioners should be left to appoint an umpire themselves. It was also a question for consideration whether the commissioners for this colony should be appointed by the legislature or the government. The government would be quite ready to undertake the responsibility if the house should think proper to leave the matter in their hands, especially as a difficulty might arise in the case of the right of appointment being reserved by the parliament, should it not happen to be sitting when it became necessary to make the appointments, or to make alterations with respect to them. In either case, however, the Commissioners must be appointed by bill, and empowered to act on a distinct basis, and under certain clearly defined restrictions. As to the number of the Commissioners he considered that there should be more than one, and suggested three, as the work would be very heavy. They would require a paid Secretary, well qualified to perform the clerical duties of the commission and to manage the accounts, which would be intricate and voluminous. He thought that some remuneration, also, should be given to the Commissioners, for they could not be expected to devote their time and labor to such a difficult task at their own charges. If the Commissioners were paid, however, by the government, it would be a question whether any members of parliament could be appointed, as the Constitution Act under which they held their seats obliged them to resign if they accepted a salary from the government. While, therefore, he thought it right that the Commissioners should be paid for their services he considered that the matter should be so arranged by the Legislature as to allow the government to avail themselves of the best men in the country, and to select them from the Parliament. He concluded by moving the resolutions he had read.

Mr. RAFF said that he considered that three commissioners should be appointed, and that the Government would act wisely in throwing the responsibility of the appointment on the Legislature. He pointed out a difficulty which suggested itself to his mind with reference to the passing of an act to regulate the proceedings of the Commissioners. A bill passed in Queensland would not be binding beyond the limits of the colony, and would therefore have no force in New South Wales.

Mr. GORE, believing that the Government had the full confidence of the house, thought they might be allowed to exercise their discretion in the appointment of commissioners. There might be local influences brought into play if the appointments were vested in the Legislature, and he therefore considered that the matter would be better managed by the ministry.

Mr. WATTS was suffering from severe indisposition, and would therefore offer but a few remarks on the question before the house. He warned the house against trusting to New South Wales. The legislature of that colony had acted neither honestly nor conscientiously when portions of the territory had been separated previously to the establishment of an independent colony in Queensland. On the separation of Victoria there was found to be a considerable sum due to that colony by New South Wales, which had not yet been settled. It was not unlikely that we may be placed in the same position. He thought, therefore, that some clause should be introduced into the bills to be passed by the respective colonies binding the legislatures to abide by the arrangements made by the Commissioners. He felt bound to state that when he entered

the house, it was with the intention of voting against the resolutions, but after the lucid and able statement made by the Colonial Secretary, he would not only vote for the resolutions but he would state his willingness to leave the appointments in the hands of the Government.

Mr. BLAKENEY proposed that the Government should appoint the Commissioners subject to the approval of the Legislature.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL thought that, as the colonies would have to agree to the terms of the negotiation, the bill passed by one would be a fac-simile of that passed by the other.

Mr. BUCKLEY considered that three Commissioners would be too many, that as the accounts would take a considerable time to adjust, it was not advisable that there should be much conversation over them.

Mr. JORDAN had listened with great pleasure to the lucid and able statement made by the Colonial Secretary, and considered that the Government might well be left to appoint the Commissioners.

Mr. MOFFATT was in favor of the appointment of three Commissioners instead of two, as it would be advisable, that, in case of disagreement between the members of the Commission, one should have a casting vote and be able to decide the disputed point.

After a few remarks from Mr. Watts, Mr. Broughton, Mr. Gore, and Mr. Fitzsimmons, the COLONIAL SECRETARY stated that, after the remarks he had heard made by different speakers and the suggestions that had been thrown out in the course of them, he desired to amend his resolutions, and would do so with leave of the house by proposing that they stand as follows:—“(1.) That in the opinion of this Committee, a bill should be prepared and brought in, empowering the government, subject to the approval of this house, from time to time to appoint Commissioners, not exceeding three in number, to confer with Commissioners acting on the part of New South Wales, respecting the settlement of the public accounts. (2.) That the negotiations of such Commissioners be conducted upon the general basis set forth in the minute of the Executive Council of New South Wales of 15th January, 1857, and in a bill laid before the Assembly of that colony in pursuance of such minute; and that such Commissioners adhere strictly to such further instructions as may be communicated to them by letter from the government of Queensland.” He said the number of members might be originally two, power being granted to the Government to increase the number to three, or to provide, in case of an accident happening to a commissioner, or his death, resignation, or removal, the Government might be able to fill up the vacancy. He thought it would be well to give this power because it might appear to the Government that the Commission mismanaged its affairs, and under such circumstances it would be necessary to send another member to the board. The Government would be willing to take the responsibility of appointing the Commissioners, but they would be glad to have the approval of the house. He quoted the opinion of the Duke of Newcastle to the effect that the appointment of arbitrators in such cases as the one then under consideration was a matter to be dealt with by legislatures rather than Governments.

Mr. TAYLOR had listened with great pleasure to the debate which had taken place on this question, and especially to the opening speech of the Colonial Secretary. He thought two Commissioners sufficient, and that the umpire should not be the Governor of New South Wales. He had the highest confidence in Sir William Denison, and would willingly submit the whole question to him for arbitration, if he did not think he would thereby be placed in an invidious position.

After a few remarks from Mr. JORDAN, Mr. RAFF, Mr. FERRETT,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in reply to a question asked by Mr. Taylor, stated that in the event of the Government of New South Wales refusing to pay to Queensland the sum of £18,000 due to this colony as revenue for the current year, all communications on the subject of the debt would be immediately put an end to, and the Home Government would be appealed to. (Cheers.)

The resolutions having been agreed to, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the

CHAIRMAN reported progress, the house resumed, and the resolutions were read a first and second time and adopted.

### DISQUALIFICATION OF OFFICERS' BILL.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY the Disqualification of Officers' Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be carried to the Legislative Council with a message requesting the concurrence of the Council in the measure.

### DISTRIBUTION OF THE REVENUE.

Mr. BLAKENEY, in moving the resolutions of which he had given notice, said, he would merely advert to the general principles embodied in the resolutions. He regretted the subject had not been taken up by a member better qualified to deal with it, but he thought it was one which properly fell to the share of one of the members for the City, and as such he took it up, congratulating himself at the same time that he had the sympathies of his hon. colleagues along with him. He thought if the principles laid down in his resolutions were enforced they would be the means of obviating the evils which resulted from the system of centralisation which had been carried out to so alarming an extent in Sydney. If these principles had been acted upon in Sydney, as he hoped they would be acted upon here, we would not now be an independent colony nor would we ever have found it necessary to agitate for separation. The injustice done to the northern districts had driven the people to demand separation as the only means of promoting the interests of the colony. He hoped that by pursuing an opposite course to that pursued by New South Wales, they would prevent the necessity of the separation of the Rockhampton, Port Curtis, and Wide Bay territory, and would not have to be told that large sums had been received from these districts and not appropriated in an equitable manner to their use. The estimated revenue from the sale of lands for the current year was set down at £45,000, and he argued that £24,500 or a moiety of the sum, should be appropriated for the repairs and maintenance of the roads and bridges in the districts which contributed the money. He was glad to find that the government had carried out this principle in placing a still larger sum than one half of the entire land revenue, on the estimates for the maintenance of roads and for public works of general utility. This showed the healthy state of the revenue; but he would like to have the principle laid down and recognised as a rule that the districts which contributed money to the land revenue should be allowed one half for local purposes. For those reasons he hoped that the Committee would be granted, and that they would be enabled to commence their enquiry on Wednesday next. He wished to do ample justice to the country districts as well as to all the other divisions of the colony, and when he remembered that Rockhampton had within the last 18 months contributed £16,000 in the shape of proceeds from the purchases of Crown lands, he did not think they ought to complain of the paltry sum required for the construction of a wharf, or for any ordinary improvement within the district. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. JORDAN seconded the motion.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS was of opinion that the hon. and learned gentleman's remarks, and the principle he advocated, under the pretext of doing justice to the northern or remote districts, were calculated to have quite the contrary effect. The proposed mode of apportioning the money would really tend to a centralization. As for the vote to which the hon. member referred for dredging the harbour, he begged to say that he did not complain of £5000 being granted for that purpose. All that he objected to was that so large a sum as £10,000 should be voted. What he really did complain of was the niggardliness which seemed to actuate hon. members in voting supplies for the country districts. Even the paltry sum of £260 for a large waterwork at Gladstone could not be allowed to pass without notice, whilst large sums such as £10,000 for Brisbane were voted with the greatest possible facility.

Mr. GORE would not oppose the motion for enquiry, but he was desirous of guarding himself against being committed to the principle involved in the resolutions. It appeared to him very doubtful as to whether the principle of appropriating money derived from the sales of land to local improvements in the localities in which it was raised could be fairly carried out.



Mr. HALY was favorable to an enquiry such as was proposed, but he objected to the principle propounded in the resolutions. He had always thought that the land fund should be set apart for the purposes of immigration, and it was easy to see that without a copious supply of labor, the wool-producing interest would suffer.

Mr. MACALISTER thought the principle proposed was a most monstrous one, and as it had been embodied in the motion, it appeared to him that the present was the proper time to decide upon it. By the plan propounded about seven-tenths of the colony would receive scarcely any portion of the public expenditure, and thus the evil of centralisation would be greatly increased. He thought it was disgraceful that only £25,000 should be appropriated to public works and improvements; and with regard to immigration he had always been of opinion that the land fund should not be applied to such a purpose. He concluded by moving the previous question.

Mr. WATTS seconded the motion.

Mr. JORDAN had been under the impression that this motion would have received the cordial support of hon. members representing the outlying districts, more especially as their constant complaint was that those districts did not receive their fair share of the money contributed to the revenue, and that there was a general disposition to promote the evil of centralization. It appeared to him that by the proposed system of keeping accounts each district would have a better opportunity of knowing what it was entitled to, or at all events would be in a better position to establish a claim for expenditure when it was absolutely required. He quite concurred in the propriety of dealing liberally with the outlying districts. They all knew that it was the want of liberality in this respect, combined with dishonesty, which led to their separation from New South Wales. (Hear, hear.)

The COLONIAL SECRETARY was afraid that the adoption of the motion might commit them to the principle of appropriation involved in the motions, which he thought was in some respects objectionable. He endorsed all that had been said with regard to the desirability of dealing liberally with the remote districts of the colony. They had been taught a severe lesson on that point by their separation from the other colony. With regard to the principle of appropriating the land revenue it was simply this,— one-half (£25,000) was devoted to public works and improvements, and the other half to surveys and immigration. Of the latter £20,000 were appropriated to surveys alone, so there really remained nothing for the purpose of immigration.

Mr. TAYLOR supported the motion.

Mr. BROUGHTON said he would vote for the previous question.

Mr. WATTS concurred in the views expressed by the hon. member for Ipswich. Money spent in particular localities would be of very little use unless the roads and bridges leading to them were kept in thorough repair.

Mr. RAFF was of opinion that it would not be safe to pass the resolution in its entirety, although the principle embodied might, with some modification, be most equitably applied. As for the clamour about centralisation, which certain hon. members had endeavoured to foster, it seemed to him that the only danger was of their going to an extreme in an opposite direction in promoting a scattering policy. (Hear, hear.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the land was a part of the consolidated revenue, and if it should ever come to pass that they would be obliged to raise a loan by means of debentures, there would be a difficulty in assigning the security if a principle such as was contained in the resolution were adopted. He thought it would be very improper to hamper any government with restrictions enforced by mere resolution of the house.

Mr. BLAKENEY replied, and concluded by withdrawing the motion, the previous question having been previously withdrawn.

### CONGRATULATORY ADDRESS TO THE GOVERNOR.

On the motion of The COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House resolved itself into Committee

to consider an Address to His Excellency the Governor in reply to his Message No. 5, intimating the honor Her Majesty had been graciously pleased to confer on him.

The Reply was to the same effect as that passed in the other House, and was unanimously agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5 minutes past 1, until 3 o'clock on Tuesday next.