**Record of the**
**Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament**
**...**
# Legislative Assembly
# 11th July 1860
**...**
Extracted from the third party account as published in the
Moreton Bay Courier 12th July 1860

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The Speaker took the chair at the usual hour, and read prayers.

## QUESTION.

Mr. BROUGHTON seeing the hon. the Colonial Treasurer in his place, would ask the question of which he had given notice, namely —" Whether he was aware that a number of working men employed last year on the Ipswich and Drayton road had never received their pay for the month of November, 1859, and that they were obliged to sell their tickets at a loss, to supply funds to maintain themselves and their families."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was quite aware that those men had not been paid. They had been referred to the government of New South Wales, who were justly entitled to pay, as the amounts became due previous to separation, and when that government was in receipt of our revenues. He might say, however, that the government had the matter under consideration.

## EXPLORATION OF THE BURDEKIN.

Mr. BROUGHTON presented a petition from George Elphinstone Dalrymple, setting forth the fact that the petitioner had, at much personal risk, and considerable outlay, explored the country on the banks of the Burdekin, and traced the course of that river to the sea, with the view of opening up that part of the territory for pastoral purposes. The recent and the impending alterations in the land regulations had rendered futile the object of the exploration, and Mr. Dalrymple now prayed that the house would take his case into consideration, he having rendered some humble aid in extending our knowledge of that particular portion of the territory. He (Mr. B.) moved that the petition be received.

The motion was seconded by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and the question was put and passed.

## OCCUPATION OF LANDS APPLIED FOR BY TENDER.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY pleaded the indulgence of the house in the course he was about to take in asking leave to introduce a second bill upon the subject of the occupation of crown lands. He did not take this step so much because it would accelerate the course of legislation, but because it would be convenient for hon. members to have such a measure before them while considering that already brought before the house. The bill he proposed to introduce was a bill to provide for the occupation of lands applied for by tender, and its introduction would meet an objection made to the measure already brought forward, which was, that no provision had been made for dealing with the lands tendered for previous to its introduction. Without these lands were dealt with, the opening up of new territory would be a matter of danger and difficulty, for the pioneer squatter would have to take his flocks so far beyond the range of present occupation as to isolate himself altogether from the range of civilisation, and thus a check would be given to the progress of the colony.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded the motion.

Leave was granted, and the bill was read a first time, the second reading to stand an order of the day for that day week.

## WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION.

Mr. BROUGHTON, by consent of the house, postponed till this day week the motion standing in his name, relative to the production of papers and correspondence anent the leasing to Mr. North of certain Crown Lands now in the occupation of Mr. John Smith, of Wivenhoe, with the view to Mr. North purchasing the same by pre-emptive right. He postponed the motion because he understood that the Government were obtaining information on the subject.

## RIVER NAVIGATION.

On the motion of Mr. FORBES, the Speaker left the chair, and the house resolved itself into a committee of the whole.

Mr. FORBES then moved—" That an address be presented to his Excellency the Governor, praying that his Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the supplementary estimates for 1860, the sum of two thousand pounds for the improvement of the navigation of the rivers Brisbane and Bremer between Brisbane and Ipswich."

The motion having been seconded, it was briefly supported by Mr. TAYLOR, and the question was put and passed, after which the house resumed, and the Chairman reported progress.

## OCCUPATION OF CROWN LANDS BILL.

The COLONIAL TREASURER rose to move the second reading of this bill. After some preliminary observations he said that, should it pass into law, it would be followed by a Land Sales Bill, and others to regulate the entire land system of the colony. The land question was one which had been so thoroughly discussed and ventilated both here and in the neighbouring colonies, that he thought it next to impossible to find any new feature that had remained untouched and that it would be mere plagiarism to go over again, seriatim, all the arguments that had been adduced both in support of and against the system. There was, everyone knew, a very large extent of unoccupied land in this colony before the new districts were proclaimed, which originated the squatting system. With the permission of the house he would give a brief sketch of the progress of the system. The hon. member then proceeded to explain the nature of the system and said that less than 30 years since it was found necessary for the squatters to remove their stock, to do which fresh pastures had to be found, when a few enterprising individuals, entirely without the concurrence or consent of the government, pushed out farther and farther into the country until they came into serious collision with the aborigines. The result was that several of the latter were murdered by stockmen, some of whom were executed in consequence, and the affair created considerable excitement. The government took the matter up and enforced the squatting regulations. A deputation of squatters then waited upon Sir George Gipps—this, he at once recollected, was in 1838—but he refused to have anything to do with the matter, leaving it in the hands of the executive. He was pressed, and eventually so far yielded to the squatters as to recommend them to bring the subject before a select committee. He (Mr. Mackenzie) was a member of that committee, and helped to frame the squatting regulations of 1839, which provided for the establishment of a commission and a police board ; also the collection of license fees from the squatters, to be issued by the commission. At this time, or shortly after, nearly the entire portion of the northern districts were settled under these regulations, and he thought that, considering the irresponsibility of the commissioner, it was wonderful how well the regulations succeeded. It was true that some instances of favouritism, and of disputed boundaries occurred, but then it should be borne in mind that the commissioners who were appointed were of the worst class that could have been selected for the purpose. They were bound to visit every run and decide frequent cases of dispute boundaries. They had also to collect the license fees, and were, to a certain extent, compelled to keep itineraries, who, by their actions, often brought a vast deal of odium on the system. After a time, however, a much better class of men were appointed, and

the system was properly developed. It was for hon. members to consider whether it would be advisable now to return to that system. The speaker then read and commented on several clauses in the bill, the object of which, he said, was to return to the former system, so many years in vogue. Alluding to the system of tendering for runs which came into operation in 1847, he said it was not then attended by such evil consequences as now. It was originally devised as a means of preventing parties from taking up immense tracts of country to the exclusion of others in a better position, and equally entitled to occupy them. One thing, however, had been omitted in the previous regulations ; he alluded to the stocking of the runs. Only within the last 3 or 4 years parties could tender for any run, without being compelled to stock them, and this evil had at length reached such a height that it was found impossible to continue it any longer, and the subject was brought under the notice of the New South Wales government, who at once put on an assessment on the value of each run in preference to ordering payment to a large amount for each run remaining unstocked. The house would, he thought, be surprised to hear the number of tenders in new runs received by that government. In 1848 there were 44 ; in 1849, 224 ; in 1850, 361 ; in 1851, 312 ; in 1852, 100 ; in ‘53, 142 ; in ‘54, 480 ; in ‘55, 385 ; in ‘56, 361 ; in ‘57, 262 ; in ‘58, 406 ; in ‘59, 1484 ; and this year, up to last month only, no less than 1476. He could instance cases of runs tendered for in the year 1842 not being reported till 1849. Again tenders received notice and was required to be on the ground to meet the Commissioner when the run was given up ; but in many instances he did not care to meet the latter, and had sold the run in the meanwhile to some other person. He would suppose about 1000 tenders for about—say 30,000 square miles accepted. This would give pasturage to four million sheep, yet all this land lay waste. To show what he meant he would inform the house that about 977 tenders had been received for runs in the new district of Kennedy and Mitchell alone, and the number of tenders for runs on the west bank of the Warrego river, which had only been opened to tender since January last, was 90, making a total of 1067 runs containing 26,675 square miles. In fact sacks full of tenders were sent up from Sydney, but had to be returned with an intimation that they could not be received, not being endorsed. Hon. members could therefore readily appreciate the confusion that ensued. (A laugh.) The speaker here showed the house a map or plan giving the position of the runs, which had been sent up to facilitate adjudication, and said that had it not been for the zeal and energy of the present Surveyor- General the work cut out for the government by such a mass of applications pouring in at once, could never have been got through at all. About 258 were opened per day. (A laugh.) He would say a few words as to the necessity of limiting the size of each run. (Hear, hear.) Heretofore any one was at liberty, if he found his run too small for the purposes, to go out and find another station. He would suggest that each be confined to a run not less than 25 or more than 100 square miles in extent. The former would allow of 4000 sheep, and a block the latter size would allow of four times as many. Respecting the limitation clause he was of opinion that 10 years should be the minimum period allowed for occupation.

Mr. RAFF was unprepared to vote for the second reading, considering, as he did, that the bill had not been sufficiently long in the hands of the house. And he thought that most honorable members present would agree with him when he said that the measure was introduced by the Government without due consideration. (Hear, hear.) He thought it but of little avail to legislate upon the occupation of Crown lands situated some 200 miles beyond the extremity of the present outlying stations. He would confess that he had not given the bill attentive consideration, but his reasons were that he was anxious to see a more comprehensive and suitable measure introduced which could coincide with the bill before the house. He considered that the Government ought to be prepared to develop their scheme for a Land Bill more fully. The Colonial Treasurer had given the house the history of the rise and progress of the squatters, but had totally failed to lead hon. members to any conclusion as to how the Government was prepared to deal with the question. He saw no reason at all why all the lands dealt with by the two bills introduced should not be comprised in one bill. (Hear, hear.) Another reason why the measure should be postponed was, that hon. members should become acquainted with the important evidence given by the Commissioner of Crown Lands when examined. (Hear, hear.) He would state, as the chairman of the committee, that they had agreed to a progress report, which they

naturally expected to see in the hands of the house that day ; but he was told it could not be got from the printer. He should move that the consideration of the bill be postponed until—

Several hon. members : This day week.

The house then divided on the question of the adjournment of the debate, with the following result :—

| Ayes, (9.) | | Noes, (15.) | |
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| Mr. Buckley | | Mr. Blakeney | |
| " Edmondstone | | " Fitzsimmons | |
| " Jordan | | " Forbes | |
| " Moffatt | | " Ferrett | |
| " O'Sullivan | | " Gore | |
| " Raff | | " Herbert | |
| " Richards | | " Coxen | |
| " Lilley | } Tellers | " Mackenzie | |
| " Broughton | } | " Pring | |
| | | " Royds | |
| | | " Thorn | |
| | | " Haly | |
| | | " Watts | |
| | | " Taylor | } Tellers |
| | | " Macalister | } |

The motion was lost.

Mr. LILLEY said he certainly had anticipated more courtesy to the house on the part of the government in allowing hon. members the opportunity of giving to such an important measure the consideration to which it was entitled. He understood that the request made for an adjournment would have been acceded to, and was surprised at the opposition now manifested by the government and their forces. (Oh!) He thought the least mark of courtesy the house had a right to expect from the government was that a brief period should be accorded to enable hon. members to see what it really was they were called upon to vote for, and he hoped the government would clearly understand that hon. members were not prepared, on such short notice, to consider such a measure as a land bill. He should move that it be taken into consideration that day six months. He could assure the government that the bill was far from suiting the taste of the public and the country. He thought the trickery and chicanery— (oh ! oh !)—to say the least—that had been manifested by the government was disgraceful. (Cheers, and cries of order.) It was merely a repetition of the old dodge practised with regard to state-aid, (Laughter.) They (the government) had gone about gently feeling the pulse of hon. members before they could summon up sufficient courage to introduce any measure at all. (Oh ! oh ! and laughter.) The Grammar School Bill and several others were introduced in precisely the same way. First came the Governor's speech—which contained nothing ; then the Colonial Treasurer's bill and speech—which were equally void. (Laughter.) Thus was the house tickled and entertained for the profit of an incapable and powerless government. He had heard it whispered that it was his ambition to sit on the treasury benches opposite—(a laugh) :—but all he could say was that they might be filled by better men than the present government. (Laughter and cheers.) He thought their conduct positively indecent when they actually demeaned themselves so far as to solicit hon members in the street, and sound them as to their views and intentions. (Interruption.) He would repeat what he had said ; he himself had been invited to a private conclave at which only a few select members were to be present to discuss the present question. He supposed they were to meet over a cup of coffee and proceed to mutual enlightenment on a topic upon which he thought they certainly did require a little information. (Loud laughter.) To use a homely phrase, they were " holding a candle to the devil." (Loud laughter, cries of order, and confusion.) Well, he would withdraw that phrase—(laughter),—and substitute—that they were willing to accommodate everybody. (Renewed laughter.) He would dare say the Colonial Secretary had often used the objectionable phrase

when out of doors. (Laughter.)

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Oh, no ; very seldom. (Laughter.)

Mr. LILLEY : Throughout the bill he detected here and there a little bit of the Assessment Act, introduced, no doubt, to set it off. He was not prepared to say that he opposed the Assessment Act, but what he wished to be informed was, What was the scope of the present Ministry's Land policy ? Was it merely the policy of somebody else, a policy that had been cast out—he should say kicked out from other colonies, or was it one they had matured and prepared to meet the requirements of the colony. He thought not. He thought the present Ministry incapable of legislating on such a measure for the colony. (Hear, hear.) He supposed they would first of all be treated to an occupation of Crown Lands Bill, then another, and another, and eventually a score of Bills, all on the same subject, and which he believed could be embodied in one Bill. (No, no.) Why not ? But he would take the two Bills introduced as a specimen of what the government could do, or rather what they were trying to do. Why could not the house have the whole land policy of the government at once ? He complained when they took office of their own declaration of a land policy. He did not object to the Ministry on the part of his constituents only who were townsmen, but on behalf of the whole country, and for the squatters. The government had no ideas of their own, and their conduct, no less than their measures, was a disgrace to any government. (No, and laughter.) He wanted to know where they got their measures from. Was it from New South Wales ? All he could say was that whatever they adopted they only mangled it ; certainly did not improve it. They found a measure providing for the establishment of mayors and aldermen in our settled districts. This was a fine idea, and forthwith they proceeded to carry it out without the faintest idea how to do so, or whether there was any necessity for a corporation in the wilderness. He would ask the Colonial Treasurer to point out one single section which would abolish the tendering system. Not a single clause existed to prevent jobbery. Any man could transfer his license and—(no, no) ; but he (Mr. Lilley) maintained he could do so. He had nine months to speculate with his run. (No.) He (Mr. Lilley) said he could, and that he had that power. He might buy or sell ; there was no restraint whatever to prevent alienation. (Marks of dissent.) Did the government can that abolishing the tendering system ? He called it a cool trap, cleverly concocted to blind their eyes and deceive their judgment. It was nothing more nor less than an attempt to foist upon the people of this colony the iniquitous tendering system for 10 years to come. They would find several gross blunders in the bill, and then would follow nineteen or twenty bills each to rectify the other, and all could be contained in one or two. The government had descended to meanness in its ministers meeting members in the street to canvass them. (Mr. PRING, "No.") Mr. LILLEY : I say yes ; I was asked myself.

Mr. GORE : I presume the hon. member refers to me, I certainly did ask him, but it was entirely on my own responsibility. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. LILLEY : Then I am right after all. Our pulses have been felt. I hope the Attorney-General, when next he ventures on a contradiction, will be more happy in his assertions. However (proceeded the hon. member) it was quite impossible that the house could discuss the subject properly not knowing the land policy of the government, and they might rest assured the bill would meet with disfavour throughout the country. He looked upon it as quite unworthy of any government seeking to govern Queensland, and should therefore oppose the second reading.

Mr. JORDAN said we could not approach this land question in any form without feeling how much might depend upon the result of their deliberations. Wise legislation here would be the making of the colony ; a single mistake might be fatal to its interest. In reference to that part of the question now under consideration he supposed the great object was the settlement of the country ;—to get the pastoral lands occupied ;—to fill the coffers of the treasury ;—to give employment to labor, and to make the country wealthy and prosperous. The speaker alluded to the colony of Victoria, where there were 800 squatters, and the annual exports of wool amounted to 60,000 bales, and argued that if the pastoral lands of this colony were as fully occupied as theirs, with a proportionate number of squatters, the amount of wool exported would be enormous, as well as the revenue derivable annually from the rent of the runs. This was " a bill to regulate," and he

supposed to encourage " the occupation of unoccupied Crown land"—that vast spread of country as yet unmarked by the first footprints of civilisation. If this was the intention he could not but think the measure was a perfect failure. He believed with Dr. Lang that nature had evidently designed that this territory should become a pastoral country, and be devoted in a great measure to the rearing of sheep and cattle. The speaker believed that nine-tenths of the land must remain for a great while devoted to pastoral purposes, and it was in Queensland that the great pastoral interest must be developed to an extent as far exceeding that existing in any other of the Australian colonies as the extent of our magnificent territory exceeded theirs. This was a grand opportunity for a great measure—he could not but think it had been thrown away by the substitution of the bill now before the house. The speaker referred to several clauses of the bill, determining its general character—he would confine his remarks to two or three points. The assessment which would be allowed to remain upon certain lands—the facilities it would give for the perpetuation of some of the great evils of the tendering system—and the heavy charges it imposed upon the outside pioneer squatter. As far as the intermediate and the nearer unsettled lands were concerned it was fair they should still pay the assessment as their rents were nominal and their profits were large, but the assessment fell with crushing weight upon those who had stocked runs in the far off districts. It would be said the intention was to compel occupancy, but this might have been effected " directly," without the violation of any compact, and without imposing a burden upon the pioneer squatter which was too heavy for him to bear. The speaker animadverted upon the wording of the 11th clause, fixing the description of leased land. It appeared to be ingeniously, he would not say intentionally so worded, as to make it as easy as possible for persons by the aid simply of a map and vague general description to obtain and keep possession of large tracts of pastoral land. By another claim of this bill it would be seen that runs might be held upon a license one year before any attempt was made to put stock upon them, during which time they would have ample opportunity for selling them at an immense profit, and much land would thus be seized upon and made available for the illegitimate purpose of speculation. The hon. member then dwelt upon two or three other portions of the bill, especially objecting to the price the occupant of new land would almost immediately have to pay. Instead of having his run for a term of five years at a nominal rent he would be jumped up in three years from twelve pounds ten shillings to forty pounds a block. He thought the measure intended to carry an appearance of reform in making squatters pay and making runs small, while it cleverly contrived to make the burden fall upon the enterprising individual who went into the far off wilderness with his life in his hand, to open it out, and make way for its permanent and profitable settlement. The speaker dwelt upon the difficulties, such persons have to contend with in heavy land carriage, scarcity and price of labor, and other disadvantages with which the first settler had to contend, alluding to the history of this class of early settlers in Victoria, who had there reclaimed the wilderness, and sown the seeds of prosperity, while their successors had reaped the harvest of their toils. He objected to this bill because it did not at once boldly grapple with the whole question. A measure was wanted which would lay down some principle of pastoral occupation, which would at once have taken effect on the lands in the intermediate districts, the leases of which were now falling in and which would have been applicable in turn to the lands held on 14 years leases on their expiration ; and so on with the outside lands when their leases fell in ; and he could not see what obstacle there had been to the introduction of such a measure but the timidity of the government. Were the holders of the intermediate lands to remain 7 years until the 14 years leases of the unsettled lands fell in before they had any fixity of tenure granted them as a security for the outlay of their capital ? Would they meanwhile extend their money in making wells and reservoirs, knowing that in the present state of the law anyone might have parts of their run surveyed and put up for sale ? He deprecated selling the pastoral lands either to the squatter or to anyone else. He would divide the lands into pastoral and agricultural ; glut the market with the latter at a low price and reserve the pastoral lands undepreciated in value to bring in a permanent and ever increasing revenue to the public treasury. He was disappointed with the measure, because where they had expected a wise and comprehensive scheme, they had nothing but an elaborate display of the power of doing nothing, which " resembled ocean into tempest tost, to waft a feather or to drown a fly." The measure before the house ignored every

other interest but the pastoral interest, and while it purported to protect and encourage that, it was only calculated seriously to damage it, because it would leave one class of squatters unprotected, and would oppress another class with an intolerable burden, and, in his opinion, was calculated to check the advancement and general interests of the country.

Mr. GORE thought the question before the house was merely whether a bill urgently demanded should be considered then and there, or whether it should be indefinitely postponed. The last speaker had, in a discussion speech, entered very fully into the merits of the question, but the opposition he exhibited was mainly confined to the 11th clause, which he (Mr. Gore) thought necessary, inasmuch as it gave only a reasonable latitude to those who took up the runs. He was a pioneer squatter himself, and did not see why he should not hold a dozen runs if he thought proper. It did not follow that because a man was possessed of a large run he should not have stock enough to depasture on it. He thought the amount to be paid by the pioneer squatters should be determined in committee, but he would mention that, whereas he had previously sold wool at 9d. per lb., it now averaged 1s. 6d., which sufficiently showed that the pioneer squatters were much better able to pay more now than some time ago. But if any hon. member would come forward with a suggestion as to reducing the tax, he thought the committee would readily listen to him, and adopt his views if found practicable. He was of opinion that it would take two or three sessions to deal completely with such a comprehensive subject. He concluded by expressing his approval of the bill.

Mr. WATTS had listened attentively to the remarks which fell from the hon. member for North Brisbane, and thought it was very clear that he knew but very little about squatting. He considered the present government had acted wisely in introducing bills separately, and the latter as a distinct measure. It was a very important question. He deprecated hasty legislation, especially upon such a subject as that under discussion. It had been taken in hand by several governments, and all had failed to comprehend the system in its entirety. He believed every member in that house had addressed his constituents upon the iniquitous system of tendering for runs, and he thought if all those tenders were accepted a great deal of disputing and confusing would ensue. He disagreed with the principle that outside squatters should pay as much as those located in settled districts. The 66th clause of the Consolidation Act was framed especially to protect the rights of these squatters, and the present bill proposed to deal with that question. If aggrieved they could easily appeal to the home government, and they would be compelled either to abandon or to stock their runs, which was all that was required. He should vote for the second reading.

Mr. RAFF said he felt unprepared to go fully into the merits of the bill, and would be sorry to endorse the statements uttered by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. He had no particular objection to his pulse being felt,—(a laugh)—but knew that it would always indicate what his feelings were. He blamed the government more for not acting on the information thus acquired than for seeking the knowledge they had gained. He considered the government had not dealt with the question so as to meet the expectations of the country, or in a manner at all creditable to themselves. They had always shown a laudable desire to defer to the opinions of the house, (hear, from Mr. Lilley), and not continue to oppose or obstruct the measure, and would suggest that he should withdraw his amendment on condition that the government would not press the measure hastily through committee.

After some discussion raised by this suggestion, the house adjourned for a short time.

The house having resumed,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that, although it had been suggested by certain hon. members that the second reading should be postponed, he was anxious for, and should press, the second reading now. When the bill was under the consideration of the committee, hon. members would then have an opportunity of discussing the various matters of detail. Certain hon. members appeared to be unaware that it was a parliamentary precedent that on the second reading of a bill the main and leading principle was to be discussed, and if possible fixed. This course he should always be most happy to adopt. In reply to a remark which fell from the hon.

member for Fortitude Valley, he would emphatically state that he had never solicited from any hon. member of that house a vote, either directly or indirectly, for any measure the government might have brought forward, and he regretted more for the hon. member than himself, that he (the hon. member) should have made such a charge. He believed that the house had nothing to complain of the treatment it had received from his hands on the part of the government. He would remark that the bills had been some time before hon. members, and their provisions had been well ventilated, he had no doubt. In reference to the two new districts to be opened in August next, it was, he thought, desirable that they should be under the operation of reformed principles as now put before the house. The Assessment Act was repealed only so far as unoccupied lands were concerned. The government certainly did look upon the pastoral interest as the mainstay of the colony, but at the same time the agricultural interest was not to be neglected, but in every legitimate manner encouraged. He believed that the measures under discussion would be found to be both liberal and complete. The hon. member then spoke generally in support of the bill, and believed that different points involved in the land question would be properly met, and be distinct branches for legislation.

Mr. BROUGHTON said that at an early part of the session he had applied for certain returns bearing upon the present question. These returns had not been supplied, which he much regretted, as he believed they would have been of considerable assistance in the discussion. He believed those returns would not only show the inherent badness of the present law, but the inefficiency of the men who had to execute it.

Mr. TAYLOR complimented the Government in having at last got to work upon so useful a measure of reform, and he should feel it his duty to support them. The hon. member then gave it as his opinion, the result of twenty-one years experience as a squatter, that the present system of tendering was destructive of the best interests of the colony, and expatiated on the hardship and injustice of its operations. He felt sure that the squatter would accord his agreement to the present bill, provided security of tenure were granted.

Mr. HALY spoke of the tendering system as a great curse, and contended that occupancy was the only means of stocking the country.

Mr. COXEN supported the second reading of the bill, and agreed with other hon. members in condemning the obnoxious tendering system.

Mr. BLAKENEY urged hon. members to remember that at the second reading of a bill the principle only was open to discussion, and not the details. He deprecated the conduct of those hon. members who had thought proper to oppose the second reading, and trusted the house would show their determination of speedily passing it, and give an example of wise legislation to the southern colonies.

Mr. FORBES supported the second reading.

Mr. BUCKLEY would not oppose the second reading. In the course of his remarks the hon. member said that the suggested clause relating to occupancy he thought was unfair, many persons might not be able to stock new country in the time set out, and would consequently be subject to having their run forfeited. He would, however, recommend that if country was not occupied after the expiration of a reasonable time instead of forfeiture, a double or treble rate of assessment should be imposed.

Mr. MACALISTER replied to certain portions of the last speaker’s remarks relative to the question of occupancy. The hon. member declared himself in favor of the second reading.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the government had responded to the public voice in introducing the present measure, and he believed the country would appreciate the course the government had adopted. The hon. member then replied to the arguments and charge brought against the government by the hon. member for the Valley, contending that the bill was strictly legal, and that he should be prepared to stake his professional reputation upon it, by recommending the Governor, if it passed, to give his assent to it.

Mr. LILLEY accepted the pledge of the Colonial Secretary that the bill should undergo the requisite alterations in committee, and with the leave of the house, and the consent of the seconder, he would withdraw his amendment. At the same time, he was not sorry the discussion had taken place, for, when the house went into committee, hon. members would be better prepared to discuss the bill than they would otherwise have done. (Hear, hear.)

The bill was then read a second time, and, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, was ordered to stand an order of the day for Friday week.

## BUSINESS POSTPONED.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the two next orders of the day stand part of the business for to-morrow (this day), which was agreed to.

The house then adjourned, shortly after 10 o’clock till 3 o’clock next (this) day.