

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

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**Legislative Assembly
17th July 1860**
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Extracted from the third party account as published in the
Moreton Bay Courier 19th July 1860

The Speaker took the chair at a quarter past 3 o'clock, and read prayers.

NEW MEMBER.

Joseph Fleming, Esq., the newly-elected member for West Moreton, having been introduced by Messrs. Moffatt and Macalister, took the oaths and his seat.

WAYS AND MEANS.

The COLONIAL TREASURER, with leave of the House, moved, without previous notice, that the Committee of Ways and Means have leave to sit again to-morrow.

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

PETITION.

Mr. MACALISTER presented a petition from David Perrier, setting forth that he had tendered to the New South Wales Government for a run situated in this colony, before separation, and that his tender had been accepted. He had complied with the regulations in every particular, and paid the rent and assessment. He received notice, however, from the Government of New South Wales that his right to the run had been cancelled, and that the money he had paid into the Treasury would be returned to him. Having made enquiry, he found that the run in question had been previously tendered for by Mr. Gideon Lang, who had neglected to follow up his claim, and allowed the run to be forfeited. Other persons had subsequently sent in tenders, which were refused. One, however, had been accepted, which was sent in after that of the petitioner. The successful gentleman was a friend of the Commissioner, and, in the opinion of the petitioner, had obtained an undue and unjust preference, in consequence, for his claim. The petition prayed that the House would take the circumstances of the case into consideration, and undo the wrong which had been perpetrated against the petitioner by the New South Wales Government.

COMMUNICATION WITH ENGLAND.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of his intention to move a series of resolutions with respect to the discontinuance of the mail contract with the P. and O. Company, and the propriety of communicating with the Governments of New South Wales and New Zealand respectively, on the subject of the establishment of steam communication with Singapore via Torres Straits for the conveyance of the English mails.

THE CLARENCE RIVER.

Mr. TAYLOR gave notice of his intention to ask the Colonial Secretary, whether the Government proposed taking any steps to open up communication by steam between Brisbane and the Clarence River.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. MOFFATT, pursuant to notice, asked the Colonial Secretary:—“(1.) Whether the Government have taken any, and if any, what, steps towards defining the amount of rent and assessment to be paid upon those portions now in this Colony of such runs as have been divided by the present boundary line between New South Wales and Queensland. (2.) Whether any claim will be made by this Government upon that of New South Wales for the rent and assessment accruing since separating upon those portions of runs so subdivided, belonging to this Colony, but paid into the Treasury of the latter.”

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in reply, stated that, in the account furnished by New South Wales to the Government of this colony, it was admitted that we are entitled to receive a proportion of the sums collected for rent and assessment on runs divided by the boundary line. He had no doubt that when the sum of £18,000 previously referred to was paid over to this colony, the amount due to Queensland for rents and assessment collected on the border would also be handed over. He thought it would be advisable for this Government and the Government of New South Wales to make a joint survey of the frontier, in order to settle the question as to how much of the rent and assessment hitherto paid belonged to each colony. The government had not been able to take any steps for arriving at a settlement of this question, but he had no doubt that, as the claim of Queensland had been duly recognised by the New South Wales government, the proper amount would in due time be honorably handed over to us.

NORTHERN ROADS TOWARDS THE BURNETT.

Mr. JORDAN postponed the motion standing in his name with reference to the granting of £2000 for repairing the northern roads via Durundur and Kilcoy, till Tuesday next; the committee appointed to enquire into, and report upon, the state of the roads generally not having completed its labors or brought up its report.

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS BILL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in rising to move the second reading of this bill, said that the question of education might be considered under three heads—as primary, grammar school, and collegiate. The bill introduced into the other branch of the legislature was intended to provide for primary education, principally under the National system; and would make adequate provision for imparting fundamental instruction, at a cheap rate, so all classes of youth, without distinction of creed or religious profession. The bill he had introduced into the Assembly was intended to provide for a higher order of instruction, or a useful and thoroughly practical character, by establishing grammar schools easily accessible to the colonial youth of all denominations throughout the country. He did not think it either necessary or advisable, in the present circumstances of the colony, to provide for collegiate education, as the number of persons that would avail themselves of it, or who could afford to avail themselves of it, would be very limited; and as the advantages to be derived would by no means compensate the colony for the cost. It was desirable that the instruction to be afforded in the grammar schools should be afforded at a cheap rate, so that as many as possible might avail themselves of it, and that it should be such as would best qualify the youth of the colony for discharging the duties that would devolve upon them in after life. He did not think it would be necessary to furnish a classical education of a high order, as the middle classes would not take advantage of it. It had been found in England, where grammar schools were established for the education of the children of the middle classes, that classical instruction did not suit the wishes of the people; and where much attention was bestowed by the teachers, in importing classical knowledge, the number of scholars diminished, and the general usefulness of the schools was much impaired in consequence. There was no necessity in this country for high classical attainments; and the long time needed for acquiring them would be thrown away. At the same time he did not wish to speak slightly of classical education in itself. He had derived much benefit from it himself; but thought for all practical purposes, where it was useful in one case, it was entirely the reverse in others. He thought it would be sufficient to provide a sound English education, in the grammar schools to be established under the bill before the house—a knowledge of history, arithmetic, geography, and

some modern language, like the French. He did not desire, however, that there should be no means of acquiring a classical education. The natures of the colony showed greater aptitude for acquiring classical knowledge than the youth of England; and that such of them as might desire to acquire it might have an opportunity of gratifying their wishes, he thought there should be at least one grammar school where such an education could be imparted. The colony was suffering at present from the want of good schools, where a liberal and cheap education could be obtained. There were many children in Brisbane and Ipswich whose parents would be glad to send them to superior schools if they were established. At present these children were growing up comparatively neglected, and it was the interest of the country to provide a means of furnishing them with a liberal education. He considered it better to establish a number of cheap schools throughout the colony, than one expensive school, that would be accessible only to a few; and he did not see that if they were cheap they need not be good. The 1st clause provided for the establishment of schools in each district, on certain conditions being complied with by the inhabitants. The government proposed that £1000 should be subscribed by the people before application could be made to the treasury for a grant from the state. The sum he thought might be considered too large; it would be in the option of hon. members, however, to reduce it in committee, as there were many small districts where it would be necessary to establish schools, but where it might be a difficult matter to raise £1000 by private subscription. At the same time he thought no school should receive aid from the state unless it were shown that a suitable building could be erected, with good play-grounds for the children, and a residence for the teachers. The bill likewise proposed that £500 a year should be granted to each school for the payment of salaries and to meet current expenditure. It is possible that in many instances this sum would be too large, and more than would be required. It would be for hon. members to state from their experience in the various districts what amount would be necessary, while he advised them against economising too much in so important a matter. The proposed reserve of ten per cent, on all government grants was intended to promote laudable competition amongst the youth of the schools, and to spur them on in their studies to acquire instruction of a higher character, by providing for the maintenance of successful competitors at one or other of the colonial universities. It was moreover provided that at a certain time the yearly grants from the treasury should cease, and the schools be enabled to become self-supporting. With this view, it was proposed to endow each school with certain lands, the revenue from which would render government grants unnecessary; and would enable the schools to give higher prizes, to get the best teachers, and to furnish the youth with the best education. The system of endowing schools with land has been tried in Canada, not successfully he admitted, but he thought, under better auspice, it might be tried with advantage here. The hon. baronet who presided over the other house, and who had devoted much of his time to the study of the education question, had afforded the government much valuable advice in drawing up this bill; and he had expressed himself strongly in favor of the principle of land endowments. Another clause provided for the appointment of trustees to draw up regulations, as to the general management of the schools, the attendance, and the fees of scholars. On the first establishment of these schools, he did not think it would be prudent to lay down stringent rules for their management. That duty would best devolve on the trustees, who would draw up codes in accordance with certain general principles to be laid down for their guidance by the government. It was not advisable to fetter the trustees by any strict rules, as their experience would enable them to devise proper means for managing the schools under their restrictive charges. He hoped that the house would pass the second reading of the bill; and he would be happy to meet the views of hon. members with regard to any improvement in its details that might be suggested in committee. He was anxious for the passing of the measure, and he was sure that every hon. member present was as solicitous as himself to provide good education for the youth of the colony.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded the motion.

Mr. FORBES feeling as he did the necessity for the establishment of grammar schools throughout the country, hoped the government would be disposed to receive in a friendly spirit any suggestions that might be offered with regard to improvement in the clauses of the bill. (Hear,

hear, from Colonial Secretary.) He thought the whole of the trustees should be elected by the subscribers to the schools, subject however to the approval of the government. Such a course would inspire the public with greater confidence in the trustees, and would induce the public to contribute more readily than they would otherwise do. The boards of education hitherto appointed had not enjoyed the confidence of the country; and without that confidence it could not be expected that the schools would advance in public estimation. He considered that subscribers of £5 should be entitled to one vote in the election of trustees, and that they should have one additional vote, up to five votes, for every additional £15 subscribed by them. Besides, he thought it would be necessary to appoint a Board of Education to superintend the whole of the schools, and that the members of that board should be composed of men capable of testing the fitness of persons applying to be admitted as teachers, for discharging their duties in an efficient and satisfactory manner. And in order that this Board should be directly responsible to the country, he thought two members of the Executive, for the time being, should be members of it. Every inducement should be held out to persons willing to subscribe large amounts for the establishment of schools; and he would suggest that any person advancing £25 or upwards should have his children education at a reduced cost, until the amount was exhausted in fees. He himself would be glad to advance £200 for such an object, even on the score of economy; for at present he could not send his boys to Sydney for education at a less cost than £120 per annum each; and he knew that many gentlemen were in the same position as himself, and would be glad to get over the difficulty in the manner he had suggested. In many places not £1000 only, but £2000 would be readily subscribed by the people; and he considered that every inducement should be offered by the government for raising the larger amount, in order that the schools to be established might be an honor and credit to the country.

Mr. MACALISTER had no intention of detaining the house by offering any lengthy suggestions at present, while he agreed with the honorable member for Ipswich in thinking that every inducement should be offered by the Government towards procuring large subscriptions from the public, he did not coincide with that hon. member in thinking that two of the trustees of each school should be members of the Executive. Those gentlemen could not be expected to be in a position to direct the affairs of a whole series of schools established throughout the country. He thought that it would not be prudent to make many alterations in the bill at present; but that after a few unimportant changes with reference to its minor details, it should be brought into immediate operation and tried for twelve months. If at the end of that time the system was found to work badly, their experience should enable them better than at present to suggest alterations with a view to improvement. With regard to the other measure, for providing for primary education referred to by the Colonial Secretary, he thought it should not have been introduced into the other house first, but should have originated in the Assembly, as it involved the expenditure of public money, and therefore should have been first assented to by the representatives of the people. He suggested that the bill should be withdrawn from the council and laid before the Assembly.

Mr. FORBES explained with reference to an objection raised by Mr. Macalister that he did not say that two of the trustees of each school should be members of the Executive, but two of the members of the Board of Education.

Mr. BLAKENEY thought the Government deserved great credit for having at so early a period introduced two such important measures as the one then under discussion and the Primary Education Bill before the other house. With regard to the latter, if the hon. member for Ipswich could show that it was a mere money bill, he would then be in a position to show that it ought to have originated with the Assembly. The principal objection he had to the bill was that only such towns as Brisbane or Ipswich could take advantage of it, as no other town in the country possessed the required number of inhabitants. (No, no, and cries of Toowoomba, Drayton, Warwick, and Maryborough). He thought the standard of population should be lowered; and that the amounts of money to be granted by the Government should be regulated by the population of the localities for which the schools were required. And with regard to the appointment of trustees, he thought if the Government were satisfied with three and allowed the subscribers to elect four, the public would more readily come forward with their subscriptions. He

was in favour of the appointment of a Board of Examiners, as suggested by the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Forbes), to test the competency of persons desirous of becoming teachers in the various schools under the superintendence of the Board. He thought, however, that the revenue of 10 per cent for scholarships and exhibitions was too high, and that half the amount would be amply sufficient to send successful competitors to the neighbouring universities in Sydney. He objected altogether to the proposal to endow the schools with land, as he had heard sufficient of the malappropriation of such grants in the mother country or permit himself to suppose that the system could work beneficially here. On the whole, however, he thought the measure an excellent one, and that the Government deserved the thanks of the country for introducing it.

Mr. GORE rose to express his cordial approval of the bill. He thought with the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Forbes) that it was not desirable to limit the government grant to schools erected in districts where the population was not under 1000 souls. He considered it would be better to make the grant proportionate to the money raised, without reference to the population at all; as it would be unjust to deprive small towns of the advantages of the bill, if the people were willing to exert themselves and raise the large amount required by the government. He objected to granting land for the purposes of endowment and so give rise to land jobbing amongst the trustees. If the government retained the land in their own possession they would be better able to give grants of money in aid of the schools, and would have them more under effective control.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, with reference to what had fallen from the hon. member for Ipswich, that the government had considered carefully the nature of the primary education bill before introducing it in to the Upper House; and he was sure that when the bill came down to the Assembly it would be apparent to every hon. member that no privilege of the house had been infringed. The hon. member for Warwick (Mr. Gore) was in error in supposing that there was any possibility of land jobbing, at the expense of the country, by the trustees of the schools under the provisions of the bill. The sixth clause would effectually prevent any possibility of the kind, for it deprived the trustees of all power to alienate the land, and bound them to apply the revenue, to be derived from it, to specific purposes clearly indicated by the bill.

Mr. TAYLOR said the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Blakeney) had as usual assumed that there were only two towns in the whole colony, Brisbane and Ipswich. He reminded him of the existence of Toowoomba, and asked what use he had made of his experience in that place on a recent occasion. With regard to the 5th clause, he would not give the trustees an inch of land over and above what was necessary to build upon. Even a grant of 2000 acres to a school in the neighbourhood of Brisbane would be of no use to it. No man in his senses would rent it. For himself he would not give a farthing per acre for any land about Brisbane or Ipswich for agricultural purposes. He objected to the election of trustees by the subscribers; and considered the appointments would be better vested in the government, who would be answerable directly to the legislature for their actions, and could be adequately rewarded for misconduct. He denied that the public would have greater confidence in trustees elected by the subscribers than in those appointed by the Crown; for if some extensive individual, like Mr. Forbes, subscribed £500, he would have the whole matter in his own hands, and could elect whom he pleased independently of the people altogether.

The question, having then been put, was passed, and the bill was read a second time accordingly.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the committal of the bill was fixed as an order of the day for Thursday.

LIEN ON WOOL BILL.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, the third reading of this bill was postponed till Thursday, the bill, as amended in committee, not yet having issued from the press.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY having moved the adjournment of the house, the business paper having been exhausted, a long discussion, in which Messrs. Taylor, Watts, Buckley, Pring, Macalister, and Haly joined, took place relative to the amount of business transacted by the

house. Messrs. Watts and Taylor having complained that, as country members, they desired to work longer on each day, in order that the session might come sooner to a close, Mr. Buckley reminded the honorable gentlemen that he had attended in a committee room that morning for an hour with the Attorney-General and he been obliged to go away without doing any business, because, in consequence of the absence from their places of the hon. members for Drayton and Western Downs respectively, no quorum could be got together.

Mr. TAYLOR said he had never been summoned to attend.

The question having then been put, the house adjourned at half-past four, till three o'clock the next day.