

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

...
**Legislative Assembly
24th April 1863**

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Extracted from the third party account as published in the
Courier 25th April 1863

The SPEAKER took the chair at ten minutes past ten o'clock.

ROAD BETWEEN IPSWICH AND LAIDLEY.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Secretary for Lands and Works—Whether it is the intention of the Government to place any special sum on the Estimates of this year for forming and making that part of the road to the Downs between the Seven-Mile-Creek Bridge and the Rising Sun Inn?

The SECRETARY for LANDS replied that the government would place a sum on the estimates for the special work referred to by the hon. member.

DISMISSAL OF CONSTABLE DEMPSEY.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Colonial Secretary—Whether there is any objection to lay before this house the Petition of Constable Dempsey, of the Warwick Police, to his Excellency the Governor, praying for an investigation into the cause of his dismissal from the forces, and also the action taken by the Executive in reference thereto?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY would feel obliged if the hon. member for Ipswich would postpone the question until some future occasion, as he (the Colonial Secretary) was scarcely in a position to answer the question at that moment.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, with the consent of the house, would postpone the question until Wednesday next.

SALARY OF THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS.

Mr. MACKENZIE asked the Colonial Treasurer—(1.) Whether the salary of the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands has been paid to him as an unforeseen expenditure, or from the annual vote for unforeseen Expenses? (2.) Whether there has been any communication between the government and the Auditor-General relative to this particular salary?

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in reply, said that the salary of the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands had been paid from the vote of £2000 for unforeseen expenses, pending a distinct vote of the house, provision being made for the office in the supplementary estimates about to be submitted. Secondly, there had been no communication between the government and the Auditor-General with reference to this particular salary, though in a letter to the Acting Colonial Secretary, upon another subject, the Auditor-General incidentally alluded to the matter.

TENDERS FOR CARRIAGE OF MAILS.

Mr. MACKENZIE asked the Colonial Treasurer—What was the last date of the receipt of tenders from the Australasian Steam Navigation Company for the conveyance of the English mails from Sydney to Brisbane, and what was the action taken on this occasion by the board appointed for opening and deciding on such tenders?

The COLONIAL TREASURER, in reply, stated that tenders for conveyance of English mails to and from Sydney and Brisbane were opened on the 3rd November last. The downward mail only was then accepted.

THE ROSEWOOD SCRUB.

Mr. GROOM asked the Secretary for Lands and Works—Whether it is the intention of the government to take immediate steps to render passable that portion of the road leading from Ipswich to Toowoomba, known as the Rosewood Scrub?

The SECRETARY for LANDS said, in reply, that tenders had been invited for three large culverts over the Nine, Ten, and Eleven Mile Gullies, and arrangements are being made to drain the adjacent swamp, by cutting an outfall drain into the Bremer Creek.

MR. INSPECTOR GREGORY.

Mr. GROOM asked the Colonial Secretary—Whether Edward Gregory, Esq., of Goondiwindi, recently dismissed from the commission of the peace, is still in the employment of the government?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that Mr. Gregory was not in the employment of the government.

QUEENSLAND COMMISSIONERS AT INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—“(1.) That the thanks of this house be given to Matthew Henry Marsh, Esq., M.P., Arthur Hodgson, Esq., and Alfred Denison, Esq., for the ability and success with which they have acted as commissioners representing this colony in England at the International Exhibition. (2.) That the Legislative Council be invited to concur in these resolutions, and that they be transmitted, by address, to his Excellency the Governor, with a request that he will be pleased to communicate them to the above named gentlemen.” In rising to submit the above motion, he thought he might state that there was little doubt but that the house would willingly accord those gentlemen, who had expended so much time and trouble in displaying the products of the colony to the best advantage, sincere thanks. And he was sure that had honorable members had an opportunity of judging, they would have been much surprised at the success which had attended their (the commissioners’) efforts. Besides, Queensland having been allotted a larger quantity of space than might perhaps have been expected from the number of her inhabitants, the commissioners had succeeded in obtaining in England many additional specimens of her products, and most of the woods that were sent home had been re polished and prepared. The department had been very tastefully furnished, and although, perhaps, the furniture had not cost more than one-tenth of that in other departments of equal size, it looked quite as well. Mr. Hodgson, in consequence of having more time at his disposal than either of his colleagues, had certainly done most, but it was very satisfactory to know that all three had done all that could be expected from them. Under these circumstances, he was convinced that the house would not, for one moment, hesitate to pay the commissioners the well-deserved compliment of returning them thanks. (Hear, hear.) He might state that the various medals and honorable mentions granted to the colony were on their way here, as was also the silver medal which had been ordered by the colony. He had seen a proof of it, but it was not in a sufficiently advanced state for him to bring it out with him; although, on its arrival, it would, doubtless be found to give every satisfaction. It was probable, too, that they would shortly have the pleasure of seeing one gentleman in the colony to whom he had referred, on which occasion that gentleman must be pleased on perceiving how his efforts had been appreciated.

The motion was then put and carried.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION.

Mr. MACKENZIE moved: “That a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, and sit during any adjournment of this house, to inquire into and report on the best means of improving, without further delay, the internal communications of this colony; such committee to consist of the following members, viz:—Mr. Macalister, Mr. Haly, Mr. Ferret,

Mr. Bell, Mr. Edmondstone, Mr. McLean, and the mover. Since placing the above motion on the paper, he had perceived that the government had given notice of a motion bearing on the subject. He did not think that the committee would in any way interfere with the government; but that it was rather calculated by its labors to assist them than otherwise. The committee need not be in existence a long time; but by the exercise of due diligence it was possible that it might be made to last a very short time. It was well known to every hon. member that there was a deal of difference of opinion as to what was the best kind of road for the colony. As far as he was concerned, he might state that latterly his opinions on the matter had undergone an entire change; but he saw plainly enough the urgent necessity which existed for altering the present arrangements. By the rapid manner in which the colony was advancing, it was evident that as far as the roads were concerned, we were much behind—it was, in fact, going ahead of us all; and it therefore behoved them to deal with the matter in a broad manner, and not calculate upon the expenditure of thousands, but of millions. As such was the case, it was highly important that the money should be spent properly—that on the northern roads a proportionate amount should be spent to that on the southern. As it was at the present time, the northern districts were virtually disfranchised; and it was very doubtful whether or not it would be advisable to defer the settlement of the question of internal communication until after the new Electoral Bill had made its appearance. In his opinion, the house, as at present constituted, did not represent the country; and he therefore thought it would be as well should an appeal to the country be made before the question was entered into by the house.

The SECRETARY for LANDS did not rise for the purpose of offering any needless opposition to the motion, but at the same time he thought it very desirable that the house should know the precise position in which the government were placed. A bill bearing on the question, as hon. members were aware, had already been introduced by the government, and it was quite probable, should the committee as proposed be appointed, that they would not be able to get through with the bill during the session; and he wished it to be distinctly understood that the government were not prepared to submit to anything that would cause the delay of the bill. He very much doubted if the formation of the committee would effect any material good. What an awkward position the government would be placed in should the report of the committee be in direct opposition to the report which the government might expect to receive from their engineer. They might find it necessary to adopt one or other of them, but which one was the question. With reference to what had fallen from the hon. member with regard to the new Electoral Bill, he (the Secretary for Lands) must admit that he could not see any connection that bill would have with the question then before the house. The Electoral Bill to be introduced by the government during the present session would provide only for the representation of those districts that were at present unrepresented. The question of thorough electoral reform would be considered at some future date. He would state, however, that as far as regarded the committee the government were entirely in the hands of the house, and would be happy to afford every assistance in their power to any committee which might be appointed. At present the government was looking after the erection of bridges, and making good the bad portions of the roads. He would conclude by stating that should they get into the system using macadamised roads, what with the first cost, and the yearly outlay required for the repair of the roads they would find that a macadamized road would cost double the amount for which they could procure a railway.

Mr. R. CRIBB agreed with the last speaker as to the desirability of obtaining railway communication with the interior, but was opposed to the matter being taken in hand by the government—believing that it would be more calculated to benefit the country generally if taken in hand by a private company, to whom inducements might be offered by the government. He would suggest to the hon. member for the Burnett the advisability of withdrawing his motion, at all events until the government bill was before the house.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, although not a lover of select committees generally, could not conceive that a report would be adopted by any committee in direct opposition to the suggestions of the government engineer, who would of course be examined. [The MINISTER FOR LANDS: What is the use of the committee then?] He admitted that the last committee on a similar subject had not given general satisfaction. With reference to the question of railways, he had been always in favour of them; in fact that part of his Excellency's speech referring to railways, was the only part

which he could cordially approve of, and as far as his single vote was concerned the government could depend upon his assistance in the matter. With regard to the proposed Electoral Bill, he could honestly state that he did not think the present house represented the country. How was it possible that it could be so? At the time of separation there were about 20,000 persons in the colony; now there were double that number of inhabitants; therefore, it was impossible that the present house could properly represent the country. He disagreed with a statement made at Rockhampton by the hon. the Secretary for Lands, who denied that population should be made the basis of representation. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) must insist that an eye should always be kept upon the number of the population in framing an Electoral Bill. In conclusion, he thought it was very desirable that the hon. member for the Burnett should consent to withdraw the bill for the present, at any rate.

Mr. GROOM quite concurred with the observations of the hon. the Minister for Lands and Works, but still he must say that the road from Ipswich to Toowoomba was a disgrace—it was, in his opinion, about the worst road in the colony. He did not think that the northern roads would require to be in so good condition as the southern, seeing that the north possessed such an extensive seaboard.

Mr. LILLEY must disagree with the hon. member who had just sat down, as to the sea traffic of the north having any influence on the amount of money to be spent on the roads there. If that hon. member had visited Rockhampton lately, he would have seen that the state of the roads prevented all communication with the interior. It was impossible for the stations to send in their produce, and equally impossible for them to receive their supplies from the town, so that some of them might almost be said to be in a state of starvation; the drays being delayed a very short distance outside the town, and the north at the present time certainly was suffering the pinch. They must remember that Rockhampton had sprung into existence during the past three years almost by magic, and it was certainly entitled to its share of representation in that house, at present, with the exception of perhaps himself, it was totally unrepresented. He regarded it only as a principle of justice that there should be returned to every district, as near as possible, in public works, the amount of revenue that was derived from that district, of course after deducting the amount necessary for carrying on properly the public affairs in Brisbane. It was very bad to see a lavish expenditure of the public money in and about the metropolis whilst other districts were almost totally neglected. Hon. members had only to remember how the colony was served previous to separation by the government of New South Wales, in order to sympathise more fully with the Northern districts of Queensland. He thought, seeing that the colony had progressed so rapidly, what with the land order system, and other good legislation of a similar character, during the past three years, with the strides of a youthful giant, that the house should keep pace with it; and there was no doubt that the duration of parliament for three years was quite long enough. There should be some increase to the representation. It became evident to him, after the expiration of the Tramway Company that the formation of either a tramroad or railroad into the interior was absolutely necessary. For his own part he preferred works of a permanent character; as far as regarded the comforts and convenience of travelling we ought certainly not be behind the other colonies—we should stand in the front ranks, and be at least equal, not behind, other places in those respects. He was of opinion, too, that posterity should bear some portion of the expense. (Hear, hear.) He entirely agreed with his hon. friend, Mr. O'Sullivan, that railways were preferable to any other mode of travelling. There was no reason to doubt that some advantage might be gained by the formation of the proposed committee. It would be useful in gathering evidence from skilled engineers and other persons competent to give opinions on the subject, but perhaps it would be most convenient if the hon. member for the Burnett would consent to withdraw the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the great inconvenience which would arise from the motion of the hon. member for the Burnett was the danger of its clashing with the bill introduced by his hon. colleague, the Minister for Lands. From many remarks he had heard, he believed that the majority of the house concurred perfectly with the railway scheme proposed in his Excellency's address. There was no doubt that the northern districts did not possess their fair share of representatives, but still he did not think that their interests had been neglected. They were looked upon as being peculiarly in charge of the whole house; and the government might

almost claim to have been a committee appointed to see after their welfare. He must say that any sum which had been placed upon the estimates for public works in the north had been cheerfully voted by the house; and he thought that although they did not actually return the necessary number of members, the house would be able to do justice to them for some little time to come. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. FORBES said it had been laid down by political economists that in a community where there was no adequate combination for co-operation, it was the duty of the government to step forward and take the business in its own hands. Nevertheless, not having the will of the government in their hands, hon. members were in doubt as to what its provisions and scope were. He agreed that there was a difference of opinion as to whether railroads, tramroads, or such roads as at present existed should be the fashion to keep up the communication with the inland districts; and he thought that the consideration of the question could be best gone into when the bill was before the house. The hon. the Secretary for Lands and Works had told the house that the cost of macadamised roads was twice as expensive as railways; then he (Mr. Forbes) had no doubt, if the hon. member could show that when the second reading of his bill came on there could be no opposition to the Railway Bill. With regard to the question of electoral reform introduced into the discussion, it was somewhat irrelevant at this time; and it would be most competent for the house to deal with it when they had before them the bills in reference to the progress of the colony. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. CHALLINOR thought it would be very inopportune to appoint a committee on the present occasion. If the government had an honest desire for the welfare of the country they had at their disposal all the information which the committee could command—(hear, hear)—and it would be only right that the house should hear their opinions of the state of matters founded upon information which the house had not. (Hear, hear.) Like other hon. members he should have something to say when electoral reform came before the house. He was always in favor of short parliaments, because he believed that good men were to be obtained for the representation by giving the people the fullest opportunities to obtain them. (Hear, hear.) Yet he did not think it at all followed that, because the population was not the same now that it was when the parliament first represented the colony, the parliament did not fairly represent it. Seeing that we had short parliaments, he had no objection to the matter being immediately attended to. The northern districts had no reason to complain of the way in which they had been treated by the house. We had scarcely recovered from the wound inflicted on us by the Sydney government as to forget to attend to the wants of our outlying districts. (Hear, hear.) He did think that, as far as possible, the returns of a district should be spent upon it. He never went further, and thought that there might be a time when it would be more desirable to spend more on the outlying districts than the returns seemed to warrant. However, it could not be denied that the great centres of population contributed most largely to the revenue, and should have their wants first attended to. He hoped that the hon. member for Wide Bay would withdraw his motion.

Mr. WARRY objected to the waste of time in the discussion, after the government had stated their intention to bring in a bill. He could not see why any reasonable man could object to the withdrawal of the motion; and he, therefore, hoped that the hon. member for Wide Bay would withdraw it.

Mr. BELL said that whether the house did or did not represent the country, they had a duty to perform. He believed it was understood that the feeling of the house was in favor of railways;—the whole system of railways could not be gone into immediately, but he hoped that the measure for a part of that system which government had prepared, would be brought forward as soon as possible. When the house better represented the country, would be the time to bring forward for consideration the propriety of a large public loan (hear, hear); so that the requirements of the country might be carried out. Then it might be desirable to have a committee different from that of the hon. member, namely—a committee to consider the best way to expend the money for the benefit of the country. (Hear, hear)

Mr. MACKENZIE: In accordance with the wish of the house, he had no intention whatever of pressing the motion. In fact, from his experience of select committees, he would rather have nothing to do with them; but he brought the motion forward as a public duty. He wished to point

out to the hon. member for East Moreton that, however anxious he might be to withdraw the motion, he could not interrupt the speakers upon it. (Hear, hear.) He was glad to hear the hon. the Secretary for Lands and Works speak of a government engineer; perhaps he would be kind enough to inform him who he was?

Mr. MACALISTER: Engineer!—which engineer?

Mr. MACKENZIE: The one you mentioned.

Mr. MACALISTER: The Engineer of Roads?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Perhaps I may ask whether he is a civil engineer?

Mr. MACALISTER: I believe he is.

Mr. MACKENZIE: That is not the question.

Mr. MACALISTER: I believe the Engineer of Northern Roads is.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes, I think so, too. He continued—It was his opinion that on all the great lines of public roads, if the government confined themselves to building bridges, and making impassable places passable, that was all that was required; and he quite agreed with the hon. member as to the cost of macadamised roads as compared with railways. He did hope that if the government built bridges they would see that they were properly constructed. He had been travelling on all the roads, and he could tell the hon. member for Toowoomba that he was mistaken in saying that the road to the Darling Downs was the worst in the colony. (Hear, hear.) Bad was the best, but that was the best of all. (Hear, hear.) He had travelled over one on which £3000 was expended, and the bridges were either washed away or at places where they were not required. He had no doubt that if his hon. colleague (the Speaker) could speak he would agree with his statements as to the bad state of the road. (Hear, hear.) With the leave of the house he would withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

THE IMMIGRANT SHIP CONWAY.

Mr. BLAKENEY moved—“That an address be presented to the Governor, praying that his Excellency may be pleased to cause to be laid on the table of this house, the Minutes of the Immigration Board, with all correspondence and papers in connection with the immigrant ship Conway, after her arrival in Moreton Bay.”

Mr. HERBERT rose in a position of considerable difficulty to make a reply, on behalf of the government, to the motion of the hon. member. The hon. member gave notice of the motion yesterday evening, when he (Mr. Herbert) had no means of getting the information, and now he had come down to the house before his office was open, and he had no further information to offer. [Mr. BLAKENEY: Postpone it till Tuesday, then.] Oh! no. He had an idea that the papers referred to some small matters between the Immigration Agent and some firm in this town with respect to “Somebody’s Luggage.” (A laugh, and an expression of dissent from Mr. Blakeney.) The government had no objection to agree to the motion, and would produce the papers. He hoped and trusted that he was right in believing that there was no grave matter at the bottom of it.

The motion was agreed to.

MR. ALEXANDER’S CASE.

Mr. MACKENZIE moved—“That the petition of Mr. Robert Alexander, of Preston, presented by him on the 23rd instant, be printed.”

Mr. BLAKENEY seconded the motion.

Mr. HERBERT did not understand exactly whether the hon. member would propose a resolution after the printing of the report [Mr. MACKENZIE said that was his intention.] On that understanding he consented to the printing of the petition. There would be something very important to be said on the part of the government at the proper time.

Mr. MACKENZIE suggested that his motion should be amended by adding that the petition should be taken into consideration on a future day.

Mr. HERBERT had no desire to hurry the hon. member's arrangements.

The motion was agreed to.

DISTRIBUTION OF BILLS.

In reply to Mr. R. CRIBB,

Mr. HERBERT said that he was sorry hon. members had not yet received their copies of the bills introduced by the government. He was informed, yesterday, at the Government Printing Office, that they should be distributed that afternoon with the votes and proceedings. He should take care that they were distributed with the next issue of the votes and proceedings. (Hear, hear.)

On the motion of Mr. HERBERT, the house adjourned at a quarter past eleven o'clock until Tuesday next.