

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 1865

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 28 June, 1865.

Claims of the Central and Northern Districts.

CLAIMS OF THE CENTRAL AND
NORTHERN DISTRICTS.

MR. WALSH: Sir, in introducing the motion which stands in my name on to-day's paper, I think it necessary to ask the forbearance of this House if I should detain you longer than the subject may seem to require, or if I should fail to do justice to it. It will be in the recollection of the House that on the 30th May last I put the following question to the honorable member at the head of the Government:—

“Is it the intention of the Government, during the present session, to introduce any comprehensive measure or measures calculated to meet the necessities or advance the peculiar interests of the northern districts of the colony.”

The reply which I received at that time was not such a reply as I think should have been given to any member of this House, and the consequence was that I founded the present motion upon it. Sir, I may explain that it was not my intention at that time, though I believe such a construction might have been put upon it, that this motion should be considered in the light of a vote of censure upon the Government. I rather wished it to be understood that so far the Government had been the reflex of the wishes of this House; but that now the constitution of the House being to a certain extent changed —

THE SPEAKER: I must really call the attention of honorable members to the loud conversation which is being carried on in the House, and which renders it impossible for me to hear a word of what the honorable

member is saying; and I must request honorable members, if they have occasion to converse with each other, to do so in a whisper, in accordance with the practice of Parliament. I will take the opportunity of reading the rule which is laid down upon this point:—

“In the Commons all members should be silent, or should converse only in a whisper. Whenever the conversation is so loud as to make it difficult to hear the debate, the Speaker exerts his authority to restore silence by repeated cries of ‘Order.’ On the 5th May, 1641, it was resolved—

“‘That if any man shall whisper or stir out of his place to the disturbance of the House on any message or business of importance, Mr. Speaker is ordered to *present his name* to the House, for the House to proceed against him as they shall think fit.’”

I take this opportunity of cautioning the House, because the habit has been increasing every day, and it is one which I think ought not to obtain in this House.

Mr. WALSH: I am not at all surprised, sir, that a motion of this kind should be met by such proceedings as you have very properly taken notice of. Too long have the northern districts of this colony been treated with this indifference. It was, sir, because I thought the Government had been so far the faithful expositors of the policy of this House, or at least the policy of a majority of its members, that I desired, at the earlier part of this session, to shew that the northern districts being now in an altered position, and, in some degree, more fairly represented, it was not right for the Government to pursue that southern policy to which the north has never ceased to object. The reply which I received on that occasion from the honorable Colonial Secretary, intimated that the Government were not aware of any peculiar interests possessed by the north distinct from any other portions of the colony. And as I raised the point in my question to the honorable gentleman, I shall now, sir, feel it my duty to shew that there are distinct interests in different parts of the colony, and that I was fully justified in adverting to them. Sir, I say again, I wish distinctly to be understood that I had no intention whatever of bringing a vote of censure upon the Government. I disavow any such intention. I repeat, that I merely wish this House, with its altered constitution—altered in so far that there are members in it representing districts which have hitherto been unrepresented—to announce that it will enable and require the Government to do equal justice to all parts of the colony, whether they be near or far. I believe I am correct in stating that the occupied portions of country extend from the seaboard, from latitude twenty-nine degrees to latitude eleven degrees. I do not mean to say that there is anything like a fully stocked country

extending so far down as latitude eleven degrees or the parallel of that latitude. What I mean to say is, that the Government have to watch over the interests of a population extending over an immense distance, comprised within latitude twenty-nine degrees and latitude eleven degrees. I believe the districts of this colony which are recognised by the Government and represented, do not extend over a greater distance than that between latitude twenty-nine degrees and latitude seventeen degrees or eighteen degrees. I am most anxious not to exaggerate in my remarks or to be misunderstood, and I believe that the extent of seaboard which we consider to embrace the southern portion of the colony is confined between the 29th and 26th or 27th degree of latitude. That portion of the colony is geographically separated by an inaccessible range of mountains, so much so that, whatever may be the wishes of the inhabitants on either side, they are compelled of necessity to carry on their business separately. Sir, the southern portion of the colony comprises the trade and interests of some three degrees of latitude to the seaboard; while the northern district comprise an extent of seaboard which at this moment is considerably over one thousand miles. I am unable at this moment to state the exact area of the districts which are connected naturally, as well as in a business point of view, with what I term the northern and southern portions of the colony; but I think I am justified in saying that the area of the south as compared with the north bears a proportion of not more than one to four—I should probably not be far wrong if I were to say one to ten, but I will confine myself to the proportion of one to four. Now, sir, I find, from the observations I have made and the information I have been able to gather, that there is no very great disproportion in the capabilities of these different portions of the colony. I find that whatever has been done in the south can be done equally well in the north. I find that the great advantages which the people of the south have assumed to themselves in the pastoral capabilities of their districts are equally claimed by the holders of pastoral country in the north, and that whatever may be the merits and advantages of the south, they apply quite as much to a very large portion of the north. And although I do not agree with those gentlemen who state that there are stations of greater value in the north than those of the Darling Downs squatters, I do not think there is such a difference between the two as to lead to this exceptional government in favor of the Darling Downs. I find, sir, that while three-quarters of the colony is occupied and under the attention of the Government, at this moment it is very disproportionately populated. By the last census put forth by the Registrar-General, which I admit is but an approxima-

tion, but still the only data we have to go upon, the whole population of the colony is estimated at between 74,000 and 75,000 souls, and it is proportioned in this way: that there are supposed to be about 28,000 people inhabiting the northern districts, leaving about 46,000 odd to the south. I find, sir, that for some reason, which can be better explained perhaps than I can explain it, the lands of the colony are not occupied fairly by the inhabitants, and that the southern portion of it must therefore enjoy some peculiar privilege, or possess some attraction which draws from the rest of the colony the population that would otherwise settle upon it. Upon reference to the customs returns, I find that, during the six months ending 31st March, there were £93,806 12s. 6d. collected at the various ports of the colony. On taking the population of the south, compared with the north as eleven to seven, the south contributed £59,977 9s. 10d., against £33,828 2s. 8d. contributed by the north. I wish to shew, by quoting these figures, the areas of the different portions of the colony and the amount of population. And I find that, in the contributions to the customs, there is no such large disproportion in the contributions of the north and south, as I shall shortly shew, there has been in the amount of expenditure bestowed upon them; nor, in reference to the population, is there such a disproportion as would justify the overwhelming expenditure which has been made upon the southern portion of the colony. I am sorry I am not in a position to give a detailed statement of the rents which have been collected in the various parts of the colony. Nor can I give details as to the sale of Crown lands. It will be in the recollection of this House that I moved for several returns on the subject, having this object in view, which were not furnished. I do not mean to cast any blame upon the Minister whose peculiar duty it was to have afforded those returns—they were perhaps more troublesome and voluminous than I thought. I merely allude to the subject to shew that I am unable to supply one of the most useful of my quotations. But I think I may say that three-fourths of the runs in this colony are situated in the northern districts, and I may fairly arrive at the conclusion that three-fourths of the revenue from rents and assessments is collected from them. As far as rents and assessments are concerned, the south only contributes one-quarter of the revenue. I will now, sir, endeavor to shew that, although there is so little disproportion between the north and south in these respects, the north is not fairly represented at this moment. I am thankful for the measure which was brought into this House and passed last session, as it was a step in the right direction. But, considering that there is no such disproportion in the population of the north, and that it is bringing into utility such a very large portion of the territory of the colony,

I say the number of members who represent northern districts in this House is disproportionately small. Reference to the alphabetical list of members will shew at once that, out of thirty-two, there are only eight members who can properly be termed northern representatives. I will instance two towns, to shew what a large proportion of the representation is accorded to the south. The town of Ipswich is set down in the census as comprising 10,000 inhabitants; but I believe that return comprises the population of the districts surrounding it. It takes in West Moreton, and I may safely say that the inhabitants of Ipswich, at this moment, ought not to be considered more than 5,000 or 6,000. Of course, I am speaking subject to correction, as I have no data to go upon.

An Honorable MEMBER: 4,000.

Mr. WALSH: I am just informed it was only 4,000 by the last census; and even supposing it to be 5,000 or 6,000, how handsomely is it represented, in proportion to any northern town. The last census taken of the town of Rockhampton shewed a population of something like 4,000 people, and Rockhampton, at this present moment, has only one member, while Ipswich returns three, and the country immediately interested in it and around it returns three more. In fact, while Ipswich and its environs return six members, Rockhampton returns but one, although there is scarcely any difference in the population of the two places, and if there is any, it is in favor of Rockhampton. Sir, as long as this House admits such a disparity in the representation of the different districts, so long will the northern towns, and especially Rockhampton, be justified in asserting that they are unfairly dealt with. But, sir, there are other reasons which warrant the statement, that the north has been for a long time utterly and unfortunately neglected. I say it contains such an excess of the territory of this colony, its population has so rapidly increased of late, that it is entitled to more than the mere nominal representation which it has had hitherto. The three members sent down from the north, were literally overwhelmed with the work which devolved upon them, and the difficulties they experienced in introducing that work into this House. Finding themselves in such a minority, they felt a diffidence in bringing forward the questions affecting the districts they represented, knowing the inutility of advancing their claims; and for a long time they occupied a very unfortunate position in the eyes of the colony. I do not, sir, so much blame the Ministry, because those districts were so distant that the Government were unable to attend to them. I believe the Government were but carrying out the policy of the majority of members of this House, in paying so little attention to the north. It is because that portion of the colony has been so poorly represented, and

so little known, that it now behoves the northern members to bestir themselves to awaken this House to a sense of its duty to provide not only for its immediate wants, but to make up some of the arrears which have been so long accumulating. Now, sir, having shewn that our contributions to the consolidated revenue have been equal to those of the south, in proportion to our population, I will endeavor to shew that the expenditure out of that revenue given to the north has been entirely disproportioned to what we are entitled to. I find that the amount of consolidated revenue expended upon the northern districts, that is to say upon three-quarters of the territory of this colony, during the last year, amounted to £150,785 9s., against £288,348 19s., given to the south. That, sir, is a frightful disproportion, because, surely that portion of the colony which contains the largest area must have the greatest interests, and that portion of the colony which collects the largest revenue from rents and assessments, is entitled to the greatest consideration. It is a part of the colony which is yet in its infancy, but which may be swelled and increased to an almost indefinite extent, if the peculiar wants of its inhabitants are attended to, and its resources properly developed. I will now come to another source of expenditure. I say, sir, that the money expended upon the north, from the loan fund of last year, has been to a still greater extent—to an extent which appears absolutely ridiculous—I will go further and say absolutely shameful—disproportioned to the importance of that portion of the colony. According to the Auditor-General's Report, the amount of money expended from the loan fund of last year was £401,421 6s. 10d. Now, sir, I have carefully noted all the items expended upon the districts which form the northern portion of this colony; and I think the honorable member for the Burnett will not doubt my statement as to the disproportion in the expenditure when I quote the following figures:—out of £401,421 6s. 10d., I find has been expended on the northern districts—upon more than three-quarters of the territory of the colony, upon that portion which requires the greatest attention at this moment, and the greatest number of improvements, and which has been the most neglected—the paltry sum of £29,904. Sir, I ask if that fact is not sufficient to justify me in bringing forward this motion. In round numbers, £30,000 has been spent upon the north, out of an amount raised by loan of £401,421 6s. 10d., or something like one-sixteenth of the amount. I am dealing entirely with the past, I wish it to be distinctly understood. The question I put originally to this House referred chiefly to the past. My object was to shew that the north has peculiar wants and interests, and that those wants and interests have been neglected in consequence of the inclination of

this House, which was strictly carried out by the Government. I will now, sir, allude to another question, to shew that we have not had a fair share of either one branch of the revenue or the other. I will now shew that the portion of the colony which requires the greatest amount of labor to meet its peculiar wants, and to develop its resources, has been served in the same way in reference to immigration. I find, from the best information I have been able to obtain, that during the year 1864, twenty-one ships arrived in this colony freighted with immigrants. Seven of these came out under the auspices of the Emigration Commissioners, and I have no doubt contained a very valuable class of colonists. But not one of those seven ships went to any other port than Brisbane. Now, sir, if there had been any intention on the part of the Government to act fairly towards the north, or if there had been any intention on the part of the House to exercise the same watchfulness over the interests of the different portions of the colony, the north would have received some share of this immigration, or at least it would not have been withheld without objections being raised by some member of this House. I find, further, that eighteen merchant-vessels arrived in this colony, bringing immigrants, more or less, in each of them. Out of these eighteen ships I admit there were three which cannot be taken into consideration, as they were not really immigrant ships, but they brought a few persons to the colony—somewhere about fifty. But the remaining fifteen vessels, with the exception of three, were also sent to Brisbane. Out of all these ships arriving in the colony in 1864 with immigrants, three only were sent to supply the great demand for labor in the northern districts. But, worse than that, not one of those three ships which were allowed to go to the northern ports, was freighted with immigrants indented to those ports. I find that those three vessels, which may be supposed to have brought out between 800 and 1000 immigrants, but 700 were indented or cleared in England for the northern ports of this colony. And, sir, if this statement is not contradicted, I think I may claim from this House an acknowledgment that I have sufficiently made out, at any rate, part of the case—that the north has been greatly neglected. The north possesses peculiarities which the south does not. It is, comparatively speaking, an unknown country. It has resources which have probably never been dreamt of, but which, I submit, a paternal Government, anxious to advance its interests, should have endeavored to ascertain. Its climate is different to the climate of the south, and the products which are raised in it cannot be raised in the south, while the products of the southern districts are not suited to the north. If they are different by nature, and have different claims; if one is semi-tropical, and the

other tropical, or if one semi-temperate, and the other temperate, then I say their respective resources should be developed. I need not point out that the districts which are the most distant, are necessarily and invariably neglected; the whole history of the colony will prove it. That was the case when we were struggling to obtain what was due to us as a portion of the colony of New South Wales; the efforts we made for Separation, must be in the remembrance of every honorable member. I now ask honorable members who participated in that struggle, to say, whether the districts whose interests I am now advocating, are not still more distant from the seat of Government than we were from New South Wales—whether our repeated complaints of neglect have not some foundation in truth, and whether their previous experience does not lead them to believe in the justice of our claims? Having now, sir, shewn that the expenditure upon the northern portions of the colony have been utterly disproportioned to their population, to the extent of occupied territory in them, as well as to their contributions to the revenue, I will endeavor to prove that, not only have we not received a fair share of the revenue, but that the portion we have had has not been well or wisely expended. I need not point out to the House that, if we raise a million of money by loan, every district in the colony is equally liable for its repayment; and therefore, what all pay for, all have an equal right to seek a share of. I refer now more particularly to that part of the colony in which I have been so long a resident; and I may say that, when I have travelled over the country through which my business leads me, and which extends some hundreds of miles, I have been perfectly ashamed at the state of the roads, and the way in which the money has been spent. I say that the roads about here are princely, in comparison with the roads in the northern districts. And as to the bridges, in comparison with those I have seen in this part of the colony, the structures which span the water-courses in the district I have been living in are not worthy of the name; they do not appear, either in form or design, to have been intended for the same purpose. We have had, I admit, some works of the kind, carelessly constructed, in consequence of our repeated applications to the Government; but in no way do they resemble the bridges in this part of the country. And if bridges are to be made, why should they not be as well made in one part of the colony as another? Why should not the roads to the northern towns and centres of population have the same amount of care bestowed upon them as the roads in the southern districts? I observed that the bridges to the north are rudely tarred over instead of being painted white, as they are about here. And although that is only a trifling matter, it shews the way in which the

north is treated by the Government. I mention this merely to shew the manner in which the money is expended by the Government, or the officers under them. It is the unfairness, the partiality of their conduct, that I wish this House to check. I have taken the trouble to go over a few of the statistics which have, at various times, been laid upon the table of this House during this session; and as I said just now, even in trifling matters, we discover what is the real policy of the country, and what is the action of the Government. If we refer to the list of officers employed by the Government, we shall find the disproportion in favor of the south quite amusing. I find that the number of officers who are supposed to be capable of administering the affairs of the Government in carrying on the necessary works in the north, is 130, exclusive of the police, white and black; while the officers employed in this favored portion of the colony exceeds 400. No proof can be adduced to shew that there exists any necessity for such a concentration of officers in the south; but that is only part of a policy which has long been carried out. I will now refer to other statistics. If honorable members will look at the report from the Engineer of Roads, for the northern districts of this colony, of works carried on in the north during the year 1864—a report which, I think, should not for one moment be received, either by the Government or by this House; for, as far as I can see, it is a fiction, made for the purpose of gulling us;—it is made, I believe, for a specific purpose,—to shew that the north has no claims upon the Government, and that its wants have been well attended to. I will venture to say, if they scrutinize it closely, and examine the different items, they will find that nearly every work that is said to have been carried on in 1864, and which it is intended to shew was carried on in consequence of expenditure voted for that year—that four out of every five are works which were provided for in 1863. I have a personal knowledge of some of those works, and I say it is a fact, that a large proportion of those works were provided for and initiated in 1863, and finished in 1864; and, therefore, the report is a sham, and, I believe, was laid on the table of this House to delude us. I find the same thing in the Colonial Architect's department, though probably not carried out to such an extent. Honorable members will observe that there is a whole column devoted by the Colonial Architect to the enumeration of works which he has been superintending during 1864, and that nearly the whole of that column is taken up in describing works which are peculiarly southern works; there is scarcely any reference to the north, until within five or six lines of the bottom, where there are one or two items connected with the north. The first of these refers to a work which, I presume, did not cost more than £100—a court-house at Nanango, and

that can hardly be called a northern township. The next is a lock-up at Maryborough, which, I suppose, would cost about £50; the next is a bonded store at Maryborough, which was commenced in 1863; and, as far as I can see, except in a few minor cases, every work referred to in the Colonial Architect's report appertains to the southern portion of the colony. I ask, is that fair towards the requirements of the north? Have proper buildings, suitable to the wants of the public in the northern districts, been erected? Has any proper accommodation been afforded to immigrants;—have any barracks been constructed? Sir, in every single town in the north, which I visit, I hear the same loud complaints,—complaints of neglect on the part of the Government. Now, sir, the report from the Engineer of Roads for the northern districts of the colony, which treats of roads extending over a thousand miles in a straight line, contains two or three sheets of items which, I maintain, ought properly to be questioned. But, sir, the report from the Engineer of Roads for the southern districts, where the roads are so limited in extent, and which will be almost entirely intersected by the gigantic railway scheme which has been initiated, is a ponderous document compared with the other, and, as far as I can see, it does not contain the same objectionable features. It does not treat of works commenced in 1863 and carried out in 1864, but is especially confined to works which could not have been commenced, because they were not provided for by vote, until 1864. Why, sir, I ask, did the Government allow such a distinction to be made, when they were carrying on public works in different parts of the colony? As long as this partiality is displayed, and such cooked accounts are put forth to the country, so long will I, at any rate, claim that the north is not properly governed, either by this House or by the Government. And again, sir, on the subject of railways—have we been fairly dealt with? Is there any peculiarity in our part of the colony to prevent our having railways into the far interior, either on the score of population or requirements? Do we boast that our roads are better than these roads? We merely say they are longer, and capable of being used for a larger traffic; we only say, if our wants were properly attended to, there would be much more traffic upon them than upon the southern roads. We go further than that—we say that all the roads of the colony should be treated alike, because in proportion to the attention which is paid to a road is the traffic which goes by it. For the colony being in a state of transition, one part of it only requires to be as thickly populated as another to become of equal importance, and we hold that there should be no disproportion in the expenditure on that account. Give the northern districts the roads you have here; enable us to bring our produce to market as

readily as you can; and I do not hesitate to say that our produce will be doubled and trebled in a very short time, and our population will very soon exceed yours. It is the neglect we have received that has so long kept us back, which limits the amount of our produce and prevents the flow of population to the north. If the people who arrive in this colony saw that the north was progressing—that large works were being carried on there—and that there was a chance of picking up some of the public money there; if they had the same opportunity of getting hold of the lands of the colony; if they had the same opportunity of addressing the Government, and enjoyed the advantages to be obtained in the nearer and more favored districts, they would be induced to proceed to the interior of the country which was, perhaps, their original destination. There is now, I believe, something like a million of money to be expended upon railways in the southern portion of the colony, and I have no doubt that before the work is completed, that amount will be doubled. For I have never yet heard of any financier who could say beforehand what would be the cost of a railway; and I do not believe that we have arrived at that state of accuracy. I believe, too, that those gentlemen who have been so anxious to promote this gigantic work, are well aware of the fact, and look to a continuance of this large expenditure for their prosperity. They do not look to the railway itself to make their fortunes, but they know that the expenditure of large sums of money in their neighborhood will make them prosperous, and that is what they look for. Well, sir, upon the subject of railways, what has been done for the north?—absolutely nothing in comparison to what has been done for the south. I have shewn that our population is by no means inconsiderable; that our resources are boundless, and only require the nurturing hand of the Government to develop them. I can shew that our gold fields, in the opinion of men well able to judge, are illimitable. I can shew that years and years ago, it was prophesied that the gold fields in the northern portions of this colony would exceed in value those of any other part of the country; and what has been done to develop them? A gold field springs up in a southern district; the fact is notified to the Government; a visit is paid to it by a Minister of the Crown, who hawks about a piece of the gold; and a full-blown Gold Commissioner is appointed, and proceeds to the spot. That is what is said to have occurred when the Talgai gold field was discovered; and it is also said to have been declared by a Minister that the Talgai gold field was the richest in the colony—the only known gold field in Queensland. Now, sir, we know what is the effect produced upon gold diggers and others from a statement like that made by a member of the Ministry. I mention this, sir, as another sample of the

unfair policy which has been pursued towards the north. Were I in possession of the return I asked for, I should be in a position to prove that the gold fields of the north produce fifty times as much gold as those of the south. I know that the productions of the Boyne and Calliope gold fields at this moment are immensely superior to those of the Talgai gold field, yet no special Commissioner has been appointed to them. Then, why should a full-blown Gold Commissioner be appointed to Talgai, when gold fields in the north, which have existed so long, and are of such importance, should have to put up with a police constable, or an occasional visit from a magistrate, living thirty miles away, who has been ordered to perform the duties of Gold Commissioner? That, sir, is another of the consequences of being at a distance from the seat of Government. Have we been fairly dealt with in reference to lighthouses? Is it not a fact that more than a thousand miles along our coast is traversed by steamers, without a single light to warn travellers of the dangers of the route? How is it that Moreton Bay is studded with lights, supported by the funds of this colony, so that safety is secured during the darkest nights, while the northern harbors and rivers are totally neglected? How long, sir, I ask, would such neglect towards this part of the colony be tolerated either by this House or the Government? And what difference ought to be made between Moreton Bay and Keppel Bay, or any of the northern ports, except that the latter are distant from the seat of the Government, and have not the means of redress? Those honorable members, sir, who have travelled along our coast, can tell of the dangers and delays to which we have been subjected, for want of proper lights. Not long ago I was on board a steamer which was nearly wrecked, from the absence of a light upon a certain point. And, sir, if such a statement were made in reference to any part of Moreton Bay, how long would it be before the evil was remedied? How long would it be before a southern port was allowed to be without a pilot, as Hervey's Bay is absolutely, as far as any practical service is concerned, at the present moment? I repeat, sir, that it is virtually without a pilot, for the only pilot who is supposed to take the charge of vessels to that port is stationed some seventy miles from the scene of his labors, and the harbor is practically without a pilot. We have repeatedly remonstrated with the Government to no purpose. I say, sir, that a vessel came into Hervey's Bay not long ago, and the captain, after looking about him in vain for some one to take the ship in, was compelled to anchor for a day or two, and finally to take to his boat and go up to the town, leaving his ship seventy miles off; and the first intimation of the arrival of the vessel, was the presence of the captain, shaking hands with the

people of Maryborough while his ship was anchored at a distance of seventy miles from the place. Sir, that is a case in point; there might have been urgent reasons to bring the vessel into harbor; she might have had sickness on board, and it might have been necessary to put her into quarantine, in order to avoid contagion. Now, sir, if the Government had expended a few hundred pounds in stationing a pilot vessel at Fairway Buoy, in Hervey's Bay, this could not have occurred. I mention this as another instance of neglect towards the people of the north. And if that has occurred at a comparatively adjacent port, in what condition are the more distant northern ports of this colony? These are some of the difficulties under which we labor, and I trust, now that I have brought them under the notice of the House, the Government, if they cannot cope with them, will at least admit that some steps ought to be taken. Sir, I shall not occupy the attention of the House much longer, but before I sit down I will quote a short extract from an article which appeared a few days ago in the *Maryborough Chronicle*, which will give some idea of the feeling in the northern districts on the subject to which my motion refers. The writer says:—

"The central and northern districts would have no interests distinct from other portions of the colony requiring to be specially fostered, but for the special legislation which has already characterised the Government of the colony; but just as special legislation has wronged these districts, it will require special legislation to right them. Is this special fostering care by the Government of the fortunate Moreton Bay denied? Whence, then, have come the vast improvements that have been going on since Separation from New South Wales, in its bays, its rivers, on its highways in every town and hamlet of the south? Lights and lighthouses, steam dredges, costly public buildings, bridges, railways, do not spring out of nothing—have not been called into existence by the greater energy and enterprise of the people of that portion of the colony over others—have not resulted from their material resources being richer or greater. It is undeniable that the pre-eminence of Moreton Bay is solely owing to Government expenditure, to maintain which a perpetual drain is made upon other portions of the colony, and the very life-blood sucked out of them."

In dealing with this question, I may here state again that I have no wish to bring a vote of censure upon the Government. For that reason, I have made up my mind, with the permission of the House, to withdraw the second clause of my resolution, so that, as I shall put it to the House, it will involve a mere abstract question. If I have failed in proving the allegation I have made, it is, and I believe the House will consider it so, solely from the want of ability on my part to do justice to the subject. I trust the figures I have quoted will not be overlooked; and, unless my assertions are proved to be wrong, I hope I shall be considered to have

proved to a great extent that I was justified in tabling this motion and pressing it upon the House. I should be glad if it led to a better state of feeling between the north and the south. And, if honorable members will take into consideration the peculiar position of the northern districts, their distance from the seat of Government and the losses which it naturally entails upon them—losses which are wholly irremediable—they will admit that such a vast territory requires peculiar watchfulness on the part of the Government, and great attention, to develop its resources. If they will take into consideration that the unoccupied part of the country has peculiar claims upon the Government, from the fact that it ought to be occupied, and to become so, requires at least a fair or a greater share of the immigration—if they will take into consideration the fact, that all new districts necessarily require a large expenditure to make them habitable, useful, and productive—if, for the future, they will abstain from meeting with such indifference the claims advanced by the northern districts, and be a little more considerate towards the efforts of the northern members—I am not particularly alluding to this session, but to every session hitherto—if they will do this, sir, and the House will meet our wants, and will acknowledge that we have some claim upon the Government, I, for my part, will do all I can to do away with the acerbities which have sprung up between these two portions of the colony, and to remove the divisional differences which have continually existed. I now move, sir—"That the central and northern portions of this colony have not hitherto received that attention from the Government which their extent, importance, and requirements demand."

The SPEAKER: I did not interrupt the honorable member in his speech, or call him to order, because it did not strike me at the moment. But I take this opportunity of informing the honorable member that he was out of order in alluding to some papers laid on the table of this House, as "cooked accounts." That is a charge which cannot be made against the Government incidentally. If the honorable member wishes to prefer such a charge, he must bring forward a motion to that effect, but he is out of order in doing so incidentally.

Mr. WALSH: Sir, I bow with submission to your remarks and ruling, and I wish to state that, when I made use of the expression, I felt it was one I should not have made use of, and I qualified it by a statement to this effect, that the Government should not allow officers to cook accounts.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is worse.

Mr. BROOKES thought honorable members would agree with him, that it was possible to talk a long time about nothing. They had listened now for an hour and a-half to what might have been, without the use of any of the ingenious mechanical inventions of

the age, compressed into one-third of the time. He was one of those unfortunate members who said there was now no organised opposition—it was dead he thought, and perhaps it was—or was in a trance, or galvanised, but the galvanism that afternoon had been so extreme that he should continue his dissension to any abuse of the Government that might have been expressed in the speech of the honorable member. He thought the honorable member had failed to make out a case such as he might have intended against the Government. He thought, after listening with all the attention he could give, and he might say with all the attention he could borrow, that the honorable member seemed to consider he not only represented the central, but also the northern, portion of the colony. Now, on that point he entirely differed with the honorable member. The honorable member might be an old colonist—perhaps he was; but he thought it would have been more courteous of him to have left it to the northern members to have spoken of the wants of the districts they respectively represented. At all events, he thought that the paternal influence the honorable member for Maryborough seemed to attempt to persuade the House he exerted, not only over the central but the northern interest, was of that description of goods which tradesmen called reserved stock. Honorable members were accustomed now and then to have speeches made for an express purpose—for a purpose other than for the interest of the colony. It might be, and he really did think there was not entirely wanting evidence to shew, that the speech of the honorable member was one of those that would induce the House to think the honorable member for Maryborough had been nursing it for a long time; and he must confess he thought that, like many delicately nursed children, it had not thriven under his nursing. Now, he would appeal to honorable members, and ask them if they did not know that there were some honorable members who were impatient of long speeches? and he said this, though he knew that he himself sometimes inflicted long speeches on the House. At the same time he felt this, that in the longest and most prosaic speech he ever delivered, he never was devoid of this conviction, that the House desired to arrive at the truth in the shortest possible way. Now, he would ask if that desire was met by the long speech they had listened to that afternoon? For his own part, he thought the House would come to an entirely opposite conclusion. There were many points on which he differed with the Government, but he did not think it could be said of the Government that they had not given to the northern and central portions of the colony that attention which their interests demanded. He was, therefore, at issue at once with the honorable member; and all that had been said had not shaken him in that conviction. He must confess that he

hardly knew where to take up the points of the honorable member's speech. The speech was so long that he hardly knew where to begin. However, he would start with the remark made by the honorable member, in the course of his speech, which seemed to imply that he considered if a district was fully stocked it was fully peopled. In that opinion, he was sure there was not one honorable member of the House, or even any one engaged in pastoral pursuits, but would agree with him (Mr. Brookes) that such was not the case. On the contrary, it was not when fully stocked that a district was fully peopled, but the reverse. He was not very well acquainted with the districts to which the honorable member had referred, or their wants. It might be that they were not so fully supplied with population as they should be. He did not know, as he was not fully conversant with their requirements. He did not wish to excite any angry feeling, but he thought that if any one thing more than another could be adduced to shew collaterally that those districts had not received much attention, it was that they, the central and northern portions of the colony had not had so much population sent to them as they required; and if they brought their claims before the House properly and concisely, no honorable member would advocate it more warmly than he would. He believed the ultimate success of those districts would depend on a continued stream of population. But there was a complaint in the resolution against the Government, which he did not think had been sustained by the honorable member for Maryborough. He thought all those arguments that were based upon charges of irregularity and inequality of representation were not of much worth. Now, he would ask if the House was going to admit that the Government had been negligent of the claims of the northern and central districts? He thought the House would not come to that conclusion. In all the inevitable and in all the objectionable mistakes the Government had fallen into, he did not think that this was one of them. He did not think the Government was chargeable with not attending to the wants of those districts in the matter of encouraging population. He thought the honorable member had glossed over a good many things, and he would remark that, as a rule when an honorable member had a case of a doubtful character to bring before the House, he generally left out what was objectionable to his purpose; and when the honorable member thought that he was doing things adroitly and cleverly, bystanders saw where his failure lay. Now, when the honorable member said that in the northern district there was expended only £150,000, while in the southern districts the expenditure amounted to £288,348 in the course of the last six months of last year, and admitted that the population of the southern districts was about two-thirds of the whole population,

he shewed that, dealing with those proportions, the northern districts had an equivalent to more than one-half of the whole revenue derived from them expended in the district. The honorable member, therefore, in making those statements, admitted the whole case as against himself. Had the honorable member confined himself to his own district, he would not have complained; and he must also say, that according to the honorable member's own shewing, he did not see that there was any case made out why the House should concur in this resolution. There were many other reasons he might adduce, but which he did not want to adduce at that time, because he wished to avoid the error into which the honorable member for Maryborough had himself fallen, and especially as he wished to allow the honorable members for the northern districts to speak for themselves; and also, because he was confident that if the honorable member for Port Curtis addressed himself to the question, in that large point of view, and in that statesmanlike point of view, in which he usually addressed the House, it would be found that he would not go in for Rockhampton or Port Curtis, or any of the northern districts in particular, but would go in on the broader view of looking at the interests of the whole colony, and would not comment on the Government as the member for Maryborough had done. He would tell the honorable member for Maryborough this, and he did not mind telling it to other honorable members, that if an honorable member talked for an hour and a-half, he was sure to miss the object he had in view. Other honorable members got so tired that they really did not know what the honorable member was speaking about. With those observations, he would conclude by stating that he would vote against the motion on the general question, believing, as he did, that the northern and central districts had had all they had a fair claim to, and leaving it to the honorable members for the northern and central districts to make out a better claim, if they could.

Mr. MACKENZIE said he rose on that occasion for the purpose, not of further tiring the House, but for the purpose, if possible, of inducing the honorable member for Maryborough to withdraw his motion. The honorable member had had his say, and that he thought was enough. The effect of the motion would, in his opinion, be to create an ill-feeling between northern members and their constituents, and place the former in an inviolable position. As he represented a district very closely connected with the one the honorable member represented, it might be expected that he should follow him in this debate. He, however, felt he was unable to follow the honorable member through all his details; but at the risk of offending his constituents and being called upon to resign in consequence, he should state his views on this question, and vote against the motion. The

honorable member had brought forward a number of objections as to the way in which the Government treated the northern and central districts. One of the principal charges made by the honorable member was, that a sufficient number of ships with immigrants were not sent to the northern ports. Now, he knew that every endeavor had been made by the Government to induce the Commissioners to send immigrant ships to the northern ports. He was always glad to be able to approve of anything the Government did, and he could say that, from having seen the correspondence, the honorable the Colonial Secretary had endeavored to get the Commissioners to send ships with immigrants to Hervey's Bay, Wide Bay, Keppel Bay, and Port Denison; but they could not get shippers to do so. That, he ought to remark, was at a time when there was a difficulty in getting ships to go there, on the ground that their insurance would be affected. Such, however, was not the case now, and he believed that as many ships could be got as they could send, and that as many immigrants were sent as could be absorbed. They also knew that a large number of the immigrants that arrived in Moreton Bay were forwarded by the steamers to Wide Bay and others of the northern ports; and in this way, by the number of vessels that went there regularly, they ascertained the number of immigrants those districts could absorb. One of the reasons why the honorable member himself voted for the continuance of the subsidy to the Queensland Steam Navigation Company lately was that the Government might still be able to send immigrants to the northern ports, which shewed that he was aware of the desire of the Government to supply immigrants.

Mr. WALSH remarked that he did not say so when the question was before the House.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Well, the honorable member, at any rate, very strongly supported the motion. However, he would remind the honorable member that a vessel was sent direct to Maryborough with immigrants, and she had to come down to Brisbane, because the district was not able to absorb the number of immigrants she took up. He knew, for certain—and honorable members could satisfy themselves by looking at the circulars issued by the agents, and by the newspapers—that there was a great amount of labor wasted there at present. He could answer for his own district, that there was a large number of working people going about there out of employment. Therefore, he believed the Government had done, and were doing, all in their power to see that the northern districts had a sufficient supply of immigrants. The honorable member had also spoken of the want of lighthouses, and of the want of pilots, along the coast northwards. Now, the honorable member for Maryborough must be aware that a committee sat last session with respect to this very subject; and the proposal for the

appointment of the committee came, he believed, from the Government. The committee conducted the inquiry for which they were appointed, and brought up a report recommending the erection of lighthouses at certain points along the coast; and he had no doubt that their recommendation would be carried into effect by degrees, but the work could not be done all at once. He was also given to understand that a pilot vessel for Hervey's Bay was on the way out, under a vote that was passed last session for the purpose. Now, as regarded the advancement of the northern portion of the colony, he would like honorable members to compare any of the towns at the present time with what Brisbane was a few years before Separation. Would any person tell him there was any ground for comparison between Port Denison, and other towns, and the backward position of Brisbane ten years before Separation took place? The Government, he considered, did all it could to promote the advancement of the northern ports; and he believed that already Port Denison even was far superior to what Brisbane was before Separation. And, as to Maryborough, when he visited it a year or two ago, it was a very flourishing place, and, no doubt, would continue to be so, though it might, at present, be suffering from the depression that all other places were experiencing. But no one in his senses could deny that the advancement of the ports in the north was ten to one what that of Brisbane was while the colony belonged to New South Wales. As to the remarks of the honorable member about the indifference of the southern members to the wants of the northern districts, he could say this, that while there were frequent disputes between the representatives of the southern and the western districts, there had always been a remarkable concurrence between the members for Brisbane and the members for the northern districts, and the members for Brisbane had always supported any reasonable request that was made by the northern members. As to the wishes of the northern constituencies, he had often pointed out that, if they wanted anything, they should make a proper representation through their respective members before the Estimates were framed. He had asked his constituents over and over again to do so; and when they wrote to him, he endeavored—before the Estimates were prepared—to have their wants attended to. When the Estimates were laid on the table of the House, if he found that the matter was not attended to, he then brought forward a motion on the subject. Now, he thought it was unfortunate that this motion had been brought forward after the Estimates had been prepared, because the honorable the Treasurer had made up his calculations as to his income and expenditure. He had also impressed upon his constituents the desirability of having provincial councils for the expenditure of the moneys voted for the district, and also

the expenditure of grants from loans; but they would never do so, because they seemed to think that the Government should do everything for them. The honorable member for Maryborough had also referred, in the course of his remarks, to the state of the roads in his district, as compared with what he was pleased to term, the "princely roads" about Brisbane. The honorable member, in so describing the roads around Brisbane, must have been laboring under some singular delusion, that would soon be dispelled if he were to travel—as he had to do every day—over one of the most execrable roads that could be imagined. He hoped it would not be supposed by the House that, in making those remarks, it was with any direct intention of supporting the Government; for the question before the House was, in every respect, an open one. The honorable member for Maryborough had also alluded to the expenditure of the railway loan fund; and complained that none of it had been expended in the northern districts; but he must have forgotten to tell the House that an appropriation had been made out of the fund, which would be expended. But every honorable member knew that, on the question of railways, the Government gave way, and consented to the construction of a main line through the northern districts. He was not, of course, alluding to the Maryborough and Gayndah line—which would come in good time, and he was waiting for the time to come, and when it did come, none would join more heartily than he would with the honorable member in getting the work done. There was only one other thing he would touch on, and that was the question as to the gold discoveries. The honorable member spoke of the gold fields as being very productive. Well, that might be quite correct, and he hoped it was, but unfortunately all the gold went out of the colony—being sent to Sydney, and nothing whatever of it was known in the metropolis. The community, in fact, separated themselves in a sense from Brisbane, by sending all their gold to Sydney and conducting all their commerce with that city. Now, while that was the state of the case, on the one hand, they had on the other the fact that the Government had appointed commissioners to every one of the gold fields in the north, as well as to Talgai in the south. The honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works had informed them that a most valuable gold field was likely to be discovered at Talgai, and hence the absolute necessity for the appointment of a commissioner there, at as early a period as possible. The honorable member for the Maranoa had, he considered, a good case, for he had stated broadly that the Government had not spent any money in his district at all. If the honorable member could therefore establish his statement, he would support him in any motion he might bring forward; and he would do so in the case of all the northern districts, respecting which a suffi-

cient case could be made out; but he could not support a motion of so vague a nature as the one now before the House, and which, in fact, meant nothing. He hoped the honorable member would withdraw the motion; and he believed that the majority of the northern members, notwithstanding the desire to look after their respective districts, could not support the motion of the honorable member for Maryborough.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS said he had entertained some hopes that the motion would have been withdrawn, or, if not so, that the honorable member would have endeavored to have alleviated in some degree the bad feeling that had existed for some time between the inhabitants of the northern and southern districts. Considerable irritation existed for a long time, but he thought the action that had been taken by the Government to provide, as far as they could, for the known wants of the northern districts, would have alleviated that feeling. From having had several opportunities of speaking with honorable members of the Government on the subject, he was satisfied that it was their intention to deal out even-handed justice to the northern districts—that was, as far as they were able to do so. He should be glad if such were the case, and he might state that he had as much ground of complaint as any other honorable member in the House. But he would now like to see all irritations that had hitherto existed quieting down—in fact, he would like to see all the bad feelings that did exist buried in the cemetery the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Blakeney, was desirous of providing for them. It was possible the honorable member might yet be induced to withdraw his motion, but, if not, he should be compelled to vote against it. He thought he had proved the other day that the north was entitled to more consideration at the hands of the Government than was given to it; and he had endeavored to prove by figures that Rockhampton should have as many representatives in the House as Ipswich had, or at any rate, within one of that number. For the last six months of the previous year Rockhampton, which returned only one member to the Legislative Assembly, contributed to the revenue the sum of £21,317; and Brisbane, which had five members, contributed only £45,459. The revenue derived from Rockhampton, it would be seen, was nearly half the amount derived from Brisbane. Now that was, he thought, as clear as figures could make it that Rockhampton was entitled to have more members than it had at present. Then Ipswich, which had three representatives in the House, returned to the revenue during the same period £14,318, or only about two-thirds of the amount returned by Rockhampton. This, he thought, demonstrated to a nicety that Rockhampton was entitled to more members. However, he was satisfied that the Government were desirous of doing as much for the northern districts as lay in

their power, and he regretted to see such a sweeping motion of censure against the Government, when they were inclined to do what was right.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, he was almost ashamed to take up the time of the House after such a long speech as they had heard from the honorable member for Maryborough, but he felt compelled to do so, in order that he might express his dissatisfaction with the tenor of the speech of the honorable member, and also his regret that the honorable member should have considered it necessary to bring forward such a motion at the present time. He could not but feel that it might tend to rake up the bad feeling that existed some time ago, between the northern and the southern portions of the colony. Every honorable member would agree that it was a matter of great gratification to see that such bad feeling was rapidly dying away. He had listened with considerable anxiety to the honorable member for Maryborough, in order to see how he would substantiate the charges he had brought against the Government; but he could not see that he had succeeded in substantiating any of the charges except in one or two points. The only points the honorable member had in his opinion established, were certainly, in the first place, those as to immigration. The Government, he was aware, had attempted to introduce immigration into the northern portions of the colony, and in December, about two years and a-half ago, a ship with immigrants was sent to Port Denison, the chief port at the time of the district he represented. The Government sent the ship there no doubt with the best intentions, in order that the immigrants, who were a very excellent body of people, should be landed there for the benefit of the community. The local immigration officer, however, was of a different opinion, and because the immigrants were not taken away within a week, he re-shipped them and sent them down to the southern portion of the colony. The outlying settlers did not get information of the arrival of the ship in time, and when they came down to the port to engage laborers they found she had left. Well, it was seventeen months after that before another vessel with immigrants arrived at Port Denison, but he could hardly attribute that to the want of attention on the part of the Government, but rather to the absence of the Emigration Agent in England, who should have remained at his post and seen that a proper stream of immigration was sent to the district. He trusted that, for the future, the Government would require that officer to attend to his duties, and see that nothing of the kind again occurred; and that if it did occur, the Government would place such a person in the position as would enable them to carry out their views for the benefit of the colony. He believed that it was now about two years since a measure was introduced into the House, and to a certain extent carried out,

for the introduction of Coolie immigration to the colony. He would not enter into the question as to whether Coolie labor would be a good thing to the southern portion of the colony or not, but would confine himself to the proposition as applicable to the northern portion of the colony. Now, he was sure, from his experience in other parts of the world, that Coolie labor would enable the settlers in the northern districts to raise tropical productions to a large extent, and thereby increase the prosperity of the colony to a great degree. He maintained that it was impossible for white men in the northern districts in a tropical climate to work in summer during the extreme heat of the day; and medical statistics would shew that in Rockhampton as many as six men had been knocked down in one day by sun-stroke. In every place where Coolie labor was admitted, the white man was more prosperous, and rose to a higher position.

Mr. BROOKES rose to order. He considered that the honorable member was departing from the question before the House.

The SPEAKER said he did not think the honorable member was departing from the question before the House, as the subject of immigration was included in the question before the House.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said he was proceeding to shew that, so far from Coolie labor being detrimental to the interests of white men, it was beneficial to his interests, as it aided the employer as well as the employed; and he trusted the Government would carry out the principles enunciated two years ago, and enable the northern settlers to obtain that amount of Coolie labor which was necessary to the development of the resources of the districts. There was another point touched on by the honorable member for Maryborough, in which he agreed with him; and that was as to the question of railways. He thought the interests of the northern districts to the westward required railway extension to a greater degree than the district along the Toowoomba and Warwick branch line. He certainly thought that whatever money there was to be expended on railways, should be expended in the construction of main trunk lines, before branch lines were undertaken. It had been found that branch lines did not pay elsewhere, and he was sure they would not pay here either. The lands along the western district from Rockhampton were as rich as any other in the colony. Mr. Deuchar, who had been there for many years, and who had traversed the country of the Comet, the Nogo, and the Peak Downs, had stated that no finer country could be found in the colony, and that it was better than the Darling Downs. He (Mr. Dalrymple) did not say that such fine country was of very large extent, but there was a sufficient extent of good country there to justify him in urging that it was the duty

of the Government to connect it by railways with the seacoast. He did not think it was in any way antagonistic to the interests of the southern portions of the colony, that railways should be carried out in the northern districts, or other means taken for their development. He could not go with the honorable member for Maryborough in many parts of his speech, for when he looked into the Estimates he could not help seeing that it was the intention of the Government to deal with the north in a fair and good spirit. He observed, that for the district with which he was connected, an engineering staff was appointed, which shewed that the Government were doing something towards improving the roads in the districts of Rockhampton, Port Curtis, Port Denison, and Rockingham Bay, and the making of roads throughout the interior. He could not, therefore, agree with the honorable member for Maryborough, that those branches of public improvements were neglected. He could not see, either, that they had obtained all their requirements, but he believed they had only to appeal to the Government in a proper spirit, in order to obtain what they required. They also had in the north the dredging of the Fitzroy River carried on, though he must say that the works that had been carried on had not been in the right direction till a few months ago, but he thought they were now being carried on in the right direction, and the Government should have some credit given to them for initiating those works. The honorable member for Maryborough was also very severe in reference to the mercantile marine being unassisted by lights along the coast, or by pilots. Now, when the Government proposed to erect lighthouses on Great Sandy Cape, Bustard Head, and to place buoys in Hervey's Bay, Keppel Bay, and provide harbor lights for Port Denison, he thought it must be admitted that the Government were doing something towards remedying a great deal of what was complained of by the honorable member, and he hoped that those works he had referred to, were only an earnest of the intention of the Government to light the whole coast between Port Curtis and Port Denison, and, ultimately as far as Torres' Straits. He might say that in the course of his experience, both in his private and public capacity, when he had any grievance to represent to the Government, he found that if he made the representation in a proper way, he was received in a most courteous manner, and what he desired was done, if it could be done. He hoped the honorable member for Maryborough would not press his motion to a division, but would withdraw it.

MR. DOUGLAS: MR. SPEAKER—I have very great regard for the manner in which my honorable friend, the member for Maryborough, usually presses his duties on this House. I thoroughly estimate the conscientious manner in which he attempts, and, I

think, succeeds, in filling the responsible position of representative for his constituency, which I believe is a somewhat neglected one—indeed, a very much neglected one. I can well understand how the honorable member, living as he has for some years in that district, enjoying, as he has proved to-day, the confidence of those gentlemen who sent him here—being in a position to estimate their wants, and the negligence of the Government—believes, and he is justified in believing, that the Government have neglected that district. I can understand, sir, how he can come down to the House with a certain amount of fervor and indignation in tabling the motion which he has to-night. He is sensible that the expenditure on roads is very far from commensurate with the requirements of the district. He is sensible that, in respect of the pilot service established in Hervey's Bay, very great neglect has been displayed; and he is also aware that the number of immigrants he had a right to expect—I think, as proposed by the minute of the Executive, in reference to the proportions that were to be sent to each port—did not arrive, and that the compact has not been maintained with regard to that district; and, therefore, I can quite understand the feeling with which he has been actuated in speaking to this motion. He has also entered on the larger question—the amount of neglect which has been shewn to the northern districts as a whole, and he has grouped these together to give effect to his motion. Now, as far as regards the motion itself, though it may be true, I have no hesitation in saying that I question the discretion, at the present juncture, of moving that motion. No doubt discretion is admitted to be the better part of valor; and, although it may have been valorous in the honorable member to move it, I think it was scarcely discreet; though I quite accord with him that the course of events has been such as to justify some such comment as he has made. Still, taking into consideration the change in circumstances, and what I believe is to be a better disposition of the House towards those districts, it is quite possible that the tabling of this motion may inconvenience us and force us to what is undesirable. The honorable gentleman, in his lengthy address, alluded to the proportion of expenditure in the northern and southern districts, and into this question he went at considerable length. His remarks, it seemed to me, divided themselves into two heads: first, the yearly expenditure from votes of the House; and second, the expenditure from loans raised for the construction of public works. Now, I quite agree with the honorable member in the latter proposition, in which, I think, he succeeded in shewing that a due proportion of money has not been expended in those districts out of the loans for public works; but I do not think he established his case as regards expenditure under the

votes of the House last year. There was an interesting, and, I trust, a reliable document laid on the table a few days ago, which shewed the proportionate amounts expended in the different districts. It was a document prepared by the Auditor-General. I cannot say if the returns are exactly correct, but I think they approximate near enough to enable us to draw some proportion as to the expenditure. I find by this statement that the northern districts did not come off so badly; for the expenditure on the northern districts was tolerably high, and reached the average amount expended in most of the other districts in the colony. The amount expended in the district I represent was at the rate of £7 7s. 2d. per head of the population. In the Wide Bay district, however, the expenditure was below the general average, and still it was not so low as the expenditure in some other districts. The amount expended in that district was at the rate of £5 11s. 8d. per head of the population. But in the Kennedy district, the expenditure has been larger than in any other district, and has amounted to £8 4s. per head. I think the annual expenditure in those districts for the usual purposes of Government has been very fair, and it does not appear to me that we would be justified in drawing the conclusion the honorable member for Maryborough has himself arrived at. The returns, however, I must say, shew great neglect with respect to one portion of the Port Curtis district, which at present looks upon me as its representative. I refer to the charming little town of Gladstone, and I must confess that the expenditure there has not been commensurate with the expectations of the inhabitants of that municipality. The people of Gladstone expect, I believe, that their town will, some day, become the capital of a colony. I do not know how far they have any reason for that expectation; but I have been told that the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works has sung their praises, and if I am rightly informed, has given them to understand that they might look forward to their town being, at some future day, the capital of a colony. I do not know if this has been rightly attributed to the honorable gentleman, and I do not know but that the honorable member has succeeded in ingratiating himself with them, and enjoys their favor to even a greater extent than I do. I cannot say if the honorable member has raised false hopes in the minds of the people of Gladstone, or if his representations are to be attributed to some far-seeing policy. I do not know if the honorable member has the faculty that was attributed to me on one occasion by an honorable member, of taking a bird's-eye view of politics. I do not lay claim to any such ability, but it is possible that the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works may, when soaring into the aerial heights of politics, have seen such a future for Gladstone. However, be

that as it may, I observe that the expenditure on Gladstone has been small, though its revenue is very considerable, and is increasing every day in consequence of the success attending the gold fields and other mining operations. I can assure the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works that those hard-working and energetic men, the miners, are not satisfied with the Government, and do not look upon them with a very loving eye. They look upon the Gold Fields Act as being anything but a satisfactory measure. It is an Act that has been superseded in the neighboring colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, and is unlikely to promote the development of the resources of the colony in respect to the novel industry of gold digging. If the honorable gentleman has not yet turned his attention to this matter, I hope he will do so, and that at no distant period. An amendment of the Act was very much desired by the miners on the Calliope and the Peak Downs. The miners were not men who troubled the House much about their wants, and I think that if the honorable gentleman were to provide better means for developing the gold fields and otherwise meeting the requirements of the miners, he might still further ingratiate himself with them. The police force is another matter that was brought under our notice by the honorable member for Maryborough, and I must say that I think the police force is scarcely on a scale commensurate with the requirements of the northern districts; and there is one district in particular that has been too much neglected in this respect by the Government. I refer to the neighborhood of the Flinders or Albert rivers in the district of Burke, where at no distant period, if proper police protection be afforded, there is every likelihood of an important settlement being established. But I believe that, though there is a considerable population throughout that district, there are no police there at all, and there is no expenditure whatever. There is no local commissioner there, and the nearest authorities are only a thousand miles from Brisbane. Whether it is desirable to have a commissioner there or not is another question; but this is certain—there is no Government expenditure, no commissioner, and no means of arriving at just conclusions as to boundaries of runs and other matters, that will shortly call for the interference of the Government. It was only the other day there was an inspection of the mouth of the Albert and of the Flinders rivers for a place for a settlement, and I have no doubt that a town will be established there before long; and if the Government gives attention to the requirements of the place, they will be amply repaid in a short time by the revenue they will derive from the district. There is another matter I may mention in connection with this part of the subject, which has not been referred to by any previous speaker. It is the matter now under the

consideration of a joint committee of both branches of the Legislature, involving the prospect of steam postal communication by way of Torres' Straits. Now, if the Government give effect to the recommendations the committee may make, I consider that in doing so they will materially assist in developing the resources of the colony; and the expenditure will be looked upon by the inhabitants of the northern districts as an instalment of that amount of justice they have long looked for, which they are now beginning to receive, but which they have been a long time without. In referring to the expenditure under the loan account, I understood the honorable member for Maryborough to say that, in 1864, the total expenditure from that fund was £401,000, and that of that amount the portion expended in the northern districts was only £29,000. Now that is a very miserable proportion; and it has been the large expenditure of money in the southern districts—of money raised by way of loan—that has, to a great extent, raised those feelings of dissatisfaction which existed in the minds of the people in the northern districts. They saw large sums of money expended in the southern districts in the promotion of public works, and for the purpose of attracting population, and when they saw this, and compared it with the miserable and fractional amount that was expended from the same source on the northern districts, they very naturally drew the inference that the Legislature of this colony was carried out partially and unfairly. I do not mean to say that the money spent upon the works in the south was unwisely spent; but unless some principal of allocation is adopted in reference to the proportionate outlay in each district, there will always be this unpleasant feeling. It will be remembered that I have always advocated some such system of dividing the amount of borrowed money for public works. At the early part of last session, I brought forward a motion for a vote of money to be spent on the roads of the northern districts, and that vote, small as it was—that small instalment of the expenditure of £29,000 in the northern districts in 1864, had, it will be remembered, to be in a great extent wrung from the Ministry. The honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works will remember that at the close of last session I felt it to be my duty to draw the attention of the House, and to obtain a resolution of the House to authorise the honorable member to expend a portion of the money raised by way of loan in the improvement of harbors and rivers in the northern districts. Up to that time the honorable gentleman professed to believe that the northern districts were hardly entitled to any portion of the loan. However, in consequence of a vote of the House, the honorable gentleman found it necessary to make some expenditure on the flats of the Fitzroy River. Early in the previous session, the House also voted a small sum out of the

loan for expenditure on the roads of the northern districts, and I am afraid that the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works opposed that vote, though he supported the vote for a larger sum to be expended in the southern districts. However, the House voted £5,000 out of the loan for expenditure on the roads in the north, and I have no doubt that it was expended. But these are miserable sums, in comparison with the sums now being expended on public works in the southern parts of the colony. However, last session a new era dawned upon the north, and the Government thought it was time to commence a railway from Rockhampton to Westwood. The Government felt the strength of the arguments that were brought to bear against them, and they found the necessity of commencing a large work in the north. Well, they consented to a vote of £200,000 for the commencement of a railway from Rockhampton, and £10,000 for the construction of a jetty at Bowen. A very fair start has, therefore, been made towards doing justice to the northern districts, with the exception of the Maryborough, Burnett, and Wide Bay districts. The Government, by the prosecution of those public works, are providing a sort of counterbalance to the large expenditure in the southern districts; for I look on it in that light to a considerable extent. There was another statement made by the honorable member for Maryborough, to which I must take exception. The honorable member complained of the few officials in the northern districts. Well, the total number of officials in the colony was 400, and of that number 130 were employed in the northern districts, which I must say is not, in my opinion, an unfair proportion, when we take into consideration the number of the population in the north. The honorable member for Maryborough has no doubt watched the proceedings of the House for some time past, and if so, it must have come under his notice that we have had hard battles on subjects connected with the northern districts. No doubt we have had strong battles on those subjects, but I must say that on all occasions we were well supported by the honorable members for Brisbane. We were in a fair minority, but we had a fair fight, and the Government, in consequence of those propositions, were now acting more equitably as between the north and the south. At that time I was to some extent the member for Rockhampton. A great deal of new country was discovered about that time, and a great many persons were attracted to the northern districts; and many who were of an ambitious turn of mind looked upon Rockhampton as the most suitable place to be made the capital of Queensland; and looking on it in that point of view, they felt their hopes would be overturned if it were not made the capital; and those hopes, not having been realised,

occasioned to some extent the feeling that exists in the north towards the south. However, the inhabitants find now that it is unnecessary to rest their claim on the ground of greater commercial prosperity, and are no doubt content to bide their time. But I believe that they still hold the opinion that some point at Rockhampton, or somewhere in the neighborhood, would be a better place for the capital than Brisbane. There is no doubt they have fully expressed their opinions on the subject, and are now content to hope the best from any Government that may be in power. Such being my views on the general question, I should be loth at the present time to vote against the motion, especially as the honorable member deserves every support I can give him. I am satisfied that a different state of things have arisen from what formerly existed, and not only has a different course been taken by the Government, but the members for the north are much stronger in the House, and my honorable friend the member for Maryborough is a standing proof of that; and the honorable member for the Kennedy, who has spoken, has stated that he will give active support to the interests of the north, and I have no doubt that he will be a most effective representative of the wants of the district he represents. As my honorable friend the member for Rockhampton, without an undue preference for the Opposition, or myself, on the one hand, or the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works on the other, is determined to do his duty, and as I have no doubt he has made himself materially felt previously, the Government will be careful how they treat northern members and northern interests for the future; though our position is not all we think it should be, for we do not think the northern districts are yet adequately represented. I think some remarks fell from the honorable member for North Brisbane (Mr. Brookes), which do not correspond with the views he has previously expressed. I think he was with me when the other two members for North Brisbane were against me, on the occasion when the Bill for the increase of members was before the House. And I think I am correct in saying the honorable member mentioned that the Bill did not provide for a sufficient number of members for the northern districts. To-night, however, in alluding to the observations of the honorable member for Maryborough, he maintained that we ought not to base representation on population. However, no doubt, as we are now stronger, and believing the House is prepared to meet our claims with justice, I hope the motion will be treated with due leniency by the House. I would not do myself or the honorable member the injustice of moving the previous question; but I would suggest that by such an amendment the *amour propre* of the honorable member would be preserved. If

the motion be pressed to a division, the northern members will, no doubt, be found to vote one way; but some of us do not wish to say yes or no to the abstract proposition before the House, and we, as well as the honorable member, would be relieved from our difficulty by the previous question which, though agreed to, would not negative the proposition.

Mr. HALY said, that in the few observations he would have to make, he would not take the wide latitude embraced in the speech of the honorable member for Maryborough, which ranged from twenty-nine degrees south to eleven degrees south, but would confine himself to his own district. He thought that if they were to agree to the motion before the House, they would do a great deal of harm, and would again raise up those angry feelings between the north and south, which he was happy to observe were dying away; he meant the angry feelings with respect to the neglect of the north in the matter of immigration. He would now refer to the state of the road between Gayndah and Maryborough, which he was well acquainted with, having had to travel over it within the last two years in connection with two elections. The road was in a most disgraceful condition, and the neglect of the Government to put it in repair was characterised as being most shameful. He considered the people in the district had just grounds for saying so, for he believed there was a sum of £3,000 voted for the purpose of repairing the road yet unexpended. Every honorable member in the House must know that now was the time for the Government to expend the money, if they wished to expend it to the best advantage, as this was the dull time of the year, when labor was abundant, and when men were not so much employed as they would be during the sheep shearing season in August and September. He was, however, very much puzzled to know whether he should vote for the resolution or not, at the same time he would recommend the honorable member to withdraw it. He might, from what he had stated, have to go with the honorable member, but he would prefer that he withdrew the motion.

Mr. PUGH, referring to the remarks of the honorable member for Maryborough, with reference to the neglected state of Hervey's Bay, in regard to lighting, as compared with Moreton Bay in that respect, said the honorable member should have remembered that the lighthouse on Moreton Island, and the lightship at the mouth of the river, were provided previous to Separation. The only other lights which had been provided since, were some kerosene lamps, which, he believed, were laughed at by the captains of vessels trading to this port. He believed, also, that the necessary apparatus for lighthouses, to be erected on the points mentioned by the honorable member for the Kennedy, had been ordered from England, and was probably on

the way out by this time. Again, when the honorable member was making the comparison as to the number of lighthouses for the northern coast, and for Moreton Bay, he should have remembered that a greater necessity existed for lights for Moreton Bay than for the northern ports. If he had done so, he might have informed the House that last year, while only 21 vessels entered Hervey's Bay, for Maryborough, 274 came into Moreton Bay. Now where there was the greater maritime commerce, there should also be the greater expenditure for the shipping interest. Then, in respect to expenditure also, he thought the honorable member had travelled beyond the bounds of strict accuracy, for he found by a return which had been laid on the table, that the expenditure in the northern districts bore a very just proportion to the amount of revenue derived from those districts. If any district in the colony had cause for complaint, on that score, it was, he thought, the Darling Downs district. The revenue derived from that district during 1863 amounted to £81,431, and the expenditure to only £66,000; while for the same year the revenue derived from Wide Bay and the Burnett districts was £33,000, and the expenditure amounted to £37,000, so the expenditure there was in excess of the revenue. Now, though the honorable member might say that the revenue was swallowed up by the general expenditure, he could not object to the proportion expended in his district. While the seat of Government was in this district, the expenditure here would have to be large; but every part of the colony would profit by the general expenditure. The honorable member for Maryborough had also complained of the inadequate representation of the northern districts. Now, it was well known that, during last session, the members for Brisbane were as anxious as any honorable members on the Government side, or on the Opposition side of the House, to give those districts that were unrepresented a fair share of representation, and seats were created for Rockhampton, for the Mitchell, the Kennedy, and Maryborough. Now, what did they find as the result? The member for the Mitchell was returned by the returning officer; and, at Clermont, there was not a sufficient number of voters present at the nomination to demand a poll for the opposing candidate. At the Peak Downs there were only twelve persons present at the nomination. If the people in the northern districts were so anxious to have representation, as by their previous agitation they seemed to be, why were they so negligent of the benefit when representation was accorded to them? Then, as to Rockhampton, he thought the honorable member who represented that town, if his modesty would allow him, would admit that his being there at the time was a god-send to the community. The honorable member, he believed, was accidentally there at the time, and, having previously represented the dis-

trict, he was looked upon as the proper person to be returned.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS: There were two other names on the list.

Mr. PUGH: Well, he was pleased to hear it. He did not mean in any way to disparage the honorable member, but merely mentioned the circumstance to shew that, while the north had been crying out loudly against the south for the want of representation, the electors in the north, when increased representation was given to them, did not, in the opinion of those who had to deal with such matters here, value it so highly as they might have been expected to do. He had no doubt that, hereafter, honorable members would find there were persons who would take an interest in the matter of representation, and as the population increased, representation would also have to be increased. The House would have to go on increasing the number of members. At present the number was thirty-two; but, from time to time, additional members bills would have to be brought in, and perhaps, before many years, the number of members would be increased to fifty. As to the returns of revenue and expenditure that had been referred to, he thought more attention should be paid to them, and that they should be regarded in a more valuable light than they seemed to be, as they were prepared from figures in the Auditor-General's office, and might, therefore, be depended upon. As to the question before the House, he hoped, with the honorable member for Port Curtis, that the previous question would be proposed and carried, and that the motion would not be pressed to a division.

Dr. CHALLINOR said, that he should not detain the House long, for he should be very sorry to say anything that would disturb the harmonious feeling which had characterised the discussion. He wished again to remind the honorable member for Rockhampton, who seemed to have forgotten the explanation given by the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. B. Cribb, that the return laid before the House of the customs duties collected in Ipswich was no criterion of the amount of duty paid by the merchants of Ipswich; for a large proportion was paid in Brisbane, on goods sent to Ipswich, and consumed there, or forwarded thence to other parts of the colony. And with regard to immigration, he (Dr. Challinor) merely wished to point out two or three things referred to by the honorable member for the Kennedy. He was not aware that the Government had done anything to interfere with the carrying out of the wishes of the House; if there was not enough immigration in the northern districts, he did not think it could be laid to the door of the Government. He would point out, too, that if many Europeans had suffered from sun-stroke in those districts, it would be found that there, as here, the fault must be laid at the door of the sufferers. The utter carelessness of Europeans, about taking the pre-

cautions necessary to protect themselves from sun-stroke—and there was no necessity whatever why they should expose themselves at all, by working in the middle of the day—would account for the cases that had occurred. He was not at all disposed to think a colored population would be more free from sun-stroke, if they exposed themselves in the same way. It would be found, as a matter of fact, that the colored natives of tropical regions invariably struck work in the middle of the day.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: No.

Dr. CHALLINOR: He thought it was a fact that colored populations in tropical regions invariably rose at break of day to work, and that they did not work during the heat of the day.

Mr. BLAKENEY: Question, question.

Dr. CHALLINOR: This question had been mooted, and he was in order in discussing it. He believed that in all countries of that description, the colored people performed their work in the early morning, and rested in the middle of the day. He knew that such a custom prevailed in the East Indies.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: No, not in the East Indies.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Then he had read to little purpose, for that was what he learned from various works on that country.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: I have worked there myself, and I know.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Books told him that work was performed in the early morning. The people did their marketing in the early morning, and most of the work was done before the heat of the day. He knew that the same practise prevailed at the Cape of Good Hope. But the great fault was that Europeans would carry their customs into tropical regions, and endeavor to keep them up, though they were found objectionable. When the hours of labor were suitably appointed, it was found that white people did prevail over the colored population wherever they were; and it was not on account of the extra skill manifested by Europeans, but in point of physical strength, that they prevailed. Everybody knew that the Sepoys were well trained, and had all the advantages of European science, yet they were unable to cope with British soldiers in India. Then, again, to prove that the Government had shewn no inclination to favor the southern districts beyond the northern districts, he referred to their conduct with regard to the dredge "Bremer." There was not the slightest doubt that the dredge had been built for the purpose of clearing obstructions in the Brisbane and Bremer Rivers; but she had been sent up to the Fitzroy, and no vessel was built to take the place of the "Bremer." To prove the statement he had made with regard to white and colored people, he might cite the communication recently addressed by Mr. John Jardine to the Colonial Secretary, in which it was shewn that the white population at

Port Albany were capable of enduring, with the necessary precautions, the heat of that tropical region. He did hope the honorable member for Maryborough would withdraw his motion, because it appeared, even from the statement of the only honorable member who felt constrained to support the motion, that there could not exist such very great scarcity of labor; because he had told the House that the time when it could be profitably employed on the Government works in the Wide Bay district was at the season when there was no employment in the interior. There might be a scarcity of labor in certain seasons of the year; but it was not such as to justify the House in passing the motion now before them. For those reasons it was perfectly clear that he (Dr. Challinor) could not support the motion.

Mr. SANDEMAN: I think, sir, the members representing the northern districts proper should feel very grateful to an honorable member representing a purely central constituency for taking such a great interest in their affairs; but I think, also, considering the feeling which has existed in the past, and which has to a great extent been overcome—the feeling of antagonism between north and south—that we can exclaim, on this occasion, "save us from our friends." The honorable member for Maryborough said, some time ago, that you could prove too much: it appears to me that, on this subject he has attempted to do so. If the honorable member had been in this House some three years ago, and had then brought forward the motion that is now before the House, I am sure there is not an honorable member for the northern districts who would not have supported it. The true grievances that were made out three years ago—or two years ago—or even less than that, shewed that the northern districts had a good deal to complain of. This I admit. But this I also know, that the members representing the northern districts have not been idle, nor have they neglected the interests of their constituencies; and I am happy to say that their applications to Government to provide for the requirements of the northern districts have been met—and a very considerable instalment of expenditure has been granted to the northern districts; and I think it is not fair that the honorable member should now tell us this is a question relating to the past more than to the present, and that he should come here and tell us at the same time that the grievances—many of them redressed—are still existing as strongly as ever they did. I cannot, myself, see the justice of that. It is only fair to quote one or two instances of expenditure proposed in the present Estimates, which will shew that the northern districts are certainly getting a larger amount of expenditure than they formerly got; and I think, myself, that they are getting a very fair share of expenditure. Of immigration, I am quite prepared to admit that they have not had

what I conceive a sufficient supply. We require a very much greater proportion than we have received; and the expense for immigration is, I find, comparatively trifling. Now, with regard to telegraphic communication, I find in the Estimates the amount set down is £8,477, out of which, for the northern and central districts alone, £4,476 is to be spent. For the judicial department of the police, there is an amount in the Estimates of £10,740, of which the central and northern districts are to receive £4,955. For the executive department of police, the amount altogether on the Estimates is £36,361. The amount appropriated to the northern districts is £18,537—above one-half of the estimate. I have merely mentioned these items, because I think it is fair that the truth should be stated as regards the consideration that the Government have given to the northern and central districts in some respects. With regard to immigration, I have said I do not think the northern districts have had their fair share; and I do sincerely hope that they will, for the future, have a greater amount than they have received in the past. There is one thing I will point out to the Government which it is desirable for them to do; it is to establish depôts in the interior districts. I think they would be a great adjunct to our immigration system. It is well known that a great deal of labor is retained about the towns that ought not to be there. The immigrants from some cause or other, will not remove from the neighborhood of the towns. If they went into the interior, they would get full employment and receive remunerative wages. I think, if the Government would adopt the plan the expense would be amply repaid from the establishment of immigration depôts in various parts of the interior. I do not think the immigration system can be carried out properly, unless some plan of the kind is adopted. I fully agree with what the honorable member for the Kennedy has stated with regard to immigration; and I agree with him on another branch of the question of immigration—namely, that of Coolie labor. I do sincerely desire to see that class of labor introduced into the northern districts. There are those who have a prejudice against that kind of labor. I am not one of those, I confess; but whatever our prejudices or desires may be, I believe, we must bow to Nature. In a tropical climate, we must have a class of labor fitted for the kind of work that is to be done in such a climate. The honorable member for Ipswich, Dr. Challinor, has said that European laborers can do their work, if properly protected from the sun. I have some knowledge on this subject, and I maintain that, with all the protection or the appliances that an European can have, he cannot do a fair day's labor under a tropical sun; and we must eventually go to that class of labor which alone is fitted for the extreme heat of the northern climate. The honorable member is wrong, and I must put him

right, in one respect—having employed Coolie labor to some extent. He says that the Coolies do not work in the heat of the day. They work all day long, only taking a certain time for meals. The honorable member understands that in other countries they go to market in the morning; well, if they go to market in the morning, they cannot work. The fact is, I am sure they are a class of laborers that, taking them altogether, is very desirable; and the northern country can never be properly developed unless we employ them to a large extent. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, has alluded to the apparent apathy which, I am sorry to say, exists in some of the northern districts with regard to representation; but the honorable member should recollect that people there can not come together with the same facilities as in the towns. There is a great deal of difficulty in getting them to meet; not that they are careless, but it is almost impossible to get them at times to come together in large numbers. There is one great want in the interior districts: we require a greater number of polling places—places where men can meet without going a hundred miles to record their votes. In fact, I have no doubt it only requires to be mentioned to the Government, to have that defect remedied. There is one other subject that I cannot omit to mention; it is that of railway communication to the north. A great deal has been said on this subject, and a great deal has been done; but I do not think the north has received its fair share of railway expenditure; and I do hope the Government will take into their serious consideration the necessity for granting a survey of a line from the present terminus of Westwood to a point at which the roads from Springsure and the Barcoo, and the Peak Downs meet. That will be a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles, altogether, from Rockhampton. As a sum has been granted for a line to a similar distance in the southern districts, surely the northern districts should have an equal share of public money. There can be no question as regards the profitable results of the line that I suggest; if any line will ultimately pay, that must. I do not advocate railways unless there is fair ground shewn that they will be self-supporting. The northern line must be as self-supporting as any other line in this colony; for there are two lines of road converging at the point to which I think it should be carried, and upon each there is, and will be, an enormous amount of traffic. There is all the traffic from the northern parts of the Warrego; there is the traffic from the Comet, from the Mitchell, from all the Barcoo country; there is the traffic from the Peak Downs. And, I say, that if a line is carried to the point which I mention, the combined traffic converging there will pay a large amount on the cost of the work. I hope the Government will take this into consideration, and do equal justice to the northern districts with the south. I

hope after all that has been said to-night on this question, the honorable member may yet be induced to withdraw his motion. If he does not, I shall be inclined to adopt the suggestion of the honorable member for Port Curtis, and move the previous question. If he will say that he will withdraw his motion, I shall not do so.

MR. WALSH: I cannot withdraw it.

MR. SANDEMAN: Then, sir, I beg to move the previous question.

MR. R. CRIBB said, that though not exactly connected with the subject, as Coolie immigration had been mentioned by previous speakers, and particularly by the honorable member for the Kennedy, he desired to offer a few observations upon it. That honorable member had stated that he hoped the Government would carry out the measures initiated about two years since. There was the Act, and the regulations which had been framed under it by the Government, for the introduction to this colony of Indian labor; and if the honorable member for the Kennedy, and those who thought with him, were inclined to import Coolie labor, let them do so—they had all the machinery ready for them. He (Mr. Cribb) could not understand what the honorable member meant by asking the Government to carry out the Act, because nothing in it or the regulations would enable the Government to take any further step than what was therein laid down. There were certain protective regulations published in the *Gazette*—all the clerks of petty sessions in the colony were created protectors of Coolies; certain food was to be allowed to the Coolies; medical men were to be provided for them, and many other things—but the Government could not take any further step themselves. So, he could not understand what the honorable member meant, unless his statement was put forth as a “feeler” of the pulse of the House, to ascertain if they would be inclined to support any step which the Government might take beyond the law—to take measures for the importation of Coolies.

MR. DALRYMPLE: No, no; not at all.

MR. CRIBB: Then, what could the honorable member mean? He could not see. He should not have spoken, but for the introduction of this topic into the debate; and he trusted that if any attempt of the kind he hinted at was made, the House would put it down directly.

DR. CHALLINOR said he thought it would be very unwise of the House to adopt the amendment of the honorable member (Mr. Sandeman), because it would be directly in the teeth of the expressions of honorable members for the north, with one exception; and it would be leaving the question an open one, whether full justice had been done to the north or not. They ought to meet both the motion and the amendment by a direct negative. The principal speakers, this evening, were honorable members who represented northern constituencies, and all, except the honorable member who had brought forward

the motion, admitted that they were now receiving great consideration at the hands of the Government; that they had received favorable consideration for some time past, and that they looked forward to a continuance of that treatment. For the House to adopt the amendment would be to lose all the advantages that had been gained by the House and the public from what had been stated by the honorable members themselves who were most interested in the northern districts. He thought he should allude to one or two facts, which would bear out his statements in reference to the customs in tropical climates. In India, he thought he was perfectly right in saying that even horse-racing was conducted before breakfast; and that all military movements, including European and native troops, were conducted before ten o'clock in the morning. If those were not indubitable facts as to what obtained in India, and as to the rule that guided the appointment of hours of labor, he did not know what were.

MR. DALRYMPLE said it was not his intention to take up the time of the House any longer, but, as it seemed he had started a very fruitful topic in alluding to the introduction of Coolies into this colony, which had caused remark from honorable members on the other side of the House, who seemed to be somewhat in error in their ideas as to the action taken by the Government, and to think that nothing further could be done; he took the liberty to offer a few observations in explanation. The other day, when he was in Sydney, he received from Mr. Rolleston, the Auditor-General, who was a squatter in this colony and took a great interest in the introduction of Coolies to the north, a letter from Sir William Denison, who, as honorable members knew, was the present Governor of Madras, and who was very much astonished that we had not carried out to the full extent the wishes of the Indian Government in the initiation of measures for the introduction of Coolies. His Excellency said that we had done everything but sent the money to India, and that the Government of this country should make arrangements with those parties who desired Coolies, and get the money paid and remit it for them to the Indian agent for the Coolies to be sent here. He had also a letter from the agent in India to that effect, and in his previous remarks, he alluded to the facts set forth in the letter.

MR. WALSH rose to reply, and begged, at the outset of his remarks, to apologise to the House for having made a mistake by quoting wrong figures in his address. He had stated that all the moneys which had been expended in the northern portions of the colony out of the loan for 1864, amounted to £29,904. That was a mistake—not of reckoning, but of reading. He should have looked further down, and seen that the full amount expended in the northern districts was £39,788 16s. 9d. That, he believed, was the full amount; and

it appeared strange, even extraordinary, that if he was in error—if he had misled the House, or had misstated anything—either with determination or inadvertently, no member of the Ministry, or any follower of the Ministry, had thought it necessary to get up and correct him. That reticence during the debate informed him of the interest evinced in the question by honorable members opposite—that, notwithstanding the question affected nine-tenths of the territory of this colony, and certainly one-third of the population, the Ministry were so indifferent to the subject that they could treat it in such a contemptuous manner, irrespective of whether it was one that should have been brought forward or not. There could be no more striking example of their indifference to the interests of the country, than that not one member of the Ministry thought it his duty to speak and meet his statements with some promise, or give some proof of the sincerity of the Government, that should satisfy either the requirements of the north, or the expectations of the House. He thought it was unexampled in the Legislature—unexampled in the history of the country—that a question had been spoken to so ably by the gentlemen who had followed him, and who, without exception, had found some fault with the Government in respect to their treatment of the north; for not one had spoken at any length who had not said that, on more than a single occasion, the Government had signally failed in their duty, had caused the business of the north to stagnate, had retarded its progress, and had interfered with its welfare; not one had spoken who had not endorsed, more or less, the motion before the House;—and yet the Ministry could treat the motion, those honorable members, and the House in such a way, that they could remain quiet on the Treasury benches, and abstain from taking part in the debate at all. Whatever might be the immediate result of the debate, he knew what the ultimate effects would be. So sure as the Government could treat with such marked indifference a motion which was so closely connected with the interests of a large portion of the colony, so surely would that Government and their followers reap the fruits of their indifference. He was not at all sorry for it—he did not regret the course that the debate had taken. The Government had had plenty of time since he tabled the motion to arrange matters as to how they should proceed this evening. He was satisfied to press the motion to a division, though he should be in a small minority. The fewer the members who voted for it, the greater would be the effect on the country; and it would convincingly shew the inhabitants of the northern districts, and the inhabitants of the other colonies, that there was no such thing as justice, either in the administration of the Government, or in their examination of questions brought before the House touching the north—that there was no such thing as justice shewn to the north, when matters

were laid before the Government in an inconvenient form. If he could come down and so far forget his constituents and his bounden duty to them, as to admit that he knew the Government had done wrong—that he knew their neglect had amounted to public robbery—but that he felt that they had done it in good faith, and that they did not intend to do wrong for the future—no doubt he should have received some support. He could not tell the Government that they had not done their duty, and then say he should not vote against them. That had been the mode of proceeding during the debate. If the honorable the Attorney-General had been in the House when the honorable member, Mr. Brookes, spoke, the observations of the honorable member for North Brisbane would have been addressed, as usual, to the Minister, and not to him (Mr. Walsh). As to the honorable member for the Burnett (Mr. Mackenzie) his strange course of proceeding on the present occasion was one for which he would, on reflection, blame himself exceedingly; because, if there was a district in the colony which had been studiously and systematically neglected by the Government—legislated against by the Government—it was the district which that honorable member represented. He (Mr. Walsh) was gratified that his colleague (Mr. Haly), who usually voted with the Government, was unable to endorse the statements of that honorable member; and had administered a reprimand to him. He should look with some curiosity to see the effect upon his (Mr. Mackenzie's) constituents when they read his speech. He did not hope that they would send him a petition to resign; because he knew that if they did, the honorable member would obey it; and he should be sorry to see the House lose the valuable services of the honorable member. But he trusted they would take a milder course, and that they would read the honorable member a lesson which would prevent him from making—he (Mr. Walsh) most deferentially said it—such a spectacle of himself as he had on this occasion. He should have been prepared to have accepted a suggestion made to him by several honorable members during the evening—though from conviction he could not withdraw his motion—but for the amendment moved by his honorable friend the member for the Leichhardt. He was satisfied that the honorable member had acted and spoken unadvisedly; and it was very evident that he had not consulted those with whom he felt it his duty generally to act, and that he was not inclined to press his amendment. He (Mr. Walsh) should be content to be alone, or, perhaps, with another honorable member, in the division on the motion. If he awakened the people of the northern districts to a full sense of the danger that hung over them for their lukewarmness, their backwardness in advancing and maintaining their own rights, he should feel that he had done, not so much as he had expected

to do under the circumstances, but that he had done something that was beneficial. The Government had by their conduct this evening endeavored to shew that either the mover of the question before the House was unworthy of their notice, or that the motion itself was. Now it was only a logical deduction to assume that if the northern districts were not to be neglected for the future, they had been neglected during the past; and what objection could there be to affirming that proposition by agreeing to the motion? If the Government had got up and promised to regard the interests of the north for the future, then he would have withdrawn the motion; but as they had not done so, and the House had refused to allow the matter to be met by the previous question, he would press his motion to a division.

The previous question was then put,—
“Shall this question be now put,” and the House divided.

Ayes, 22.		Noes, 6.	
Mr. Herbert		Mr. Sandeman	
„ Pring		„ Dalrymple	
„ Macalister		„ Fitzsimmons	
„ Bell		„ Pugh	
„ Lilley		„ Douglas	} Tellers.
„ Haly		„ Blakeney	
„ Mackenzie			
„ Watts			
„ R. Cribb			
„ Forbes			
„ Walsh			
„ Edmondstone			
„ Brookes			
„ Royds			
„ Miles			
„ Groom			
„ Coxen			
„ Wienholt			
Dr. Challinor			
Mr. Stephens			
„ Taylor	} Tellers.		
„ McLean			

The original question was then put and negatived on division.

Ayes, 4.		Noes, 25.	
Mr. Walsh		Mr. Macalister	
„ Blakeney		„ Bell	
„ Haly	} Tellers	„ Miles	
„ Douglas		„ Herbert	
		„ Davis	
		„ R. Cribb	
		„ Pugh	
		„ McLean	
		„ Watts	
		„ Lilley	
		„ Brookes	
		„ Sandeman	
		„ Groom	
		„ Wienholt	
		„ Forbes	
		„ Stephens	
		„ Coxen	
		„ Taylor	
		„ Fitzsimmons	
		„ Mackenzie	
		„ Edmondstone	
		Dr. Challinor	
		Mr. Royds	
		„ Dalrymple	} Tellers
		„ Pring	