

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 22 AUGUST 1865

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 22 August, 1865.

Question of Privilege.—Inspection of Primary Schools.—
Civil Service Act Repeal Bill.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

MR. MACKENZIE said he rose to bring under the notice of the House a matter which he considered to be a question of privilege; and he would shortly state what the question was. It appeared that, on the last day of sitting, when the Estimates were under consideration in committee of supply, the honorable member for Maryborough made some remarks about the honorable member for the Mitchell district. He did not know what the remarks were, for he was not in the House at the time; and it appeared that the honorable member for the Mitchell was not in the House at the time. However, the next morning, the honorable member for the Mitchell had a letter in the newspapers, taking the honorable member for Maryborough severely to task for what he had said. Now, it appeared to him, that when the House was sitting, it was the duty of an honorable member to bring such a complaint before the House, as he considered the House was the proper place in which to bring an honorable member to task, and not the columns of a newspaper. It appeared that the head and front of the offending of the honorable member for Maryborough consisted in his asking the question—"Who is the Crown Lands Commissioner for the

Mitchell district?" and the letter went on to say—"This inquiry is thoroughly characteristic of the member for Maryborough. He knew well who the Commissioner for the Mitchell was, but an ignorant malice requires a foul barb, and the plea of inquiry suited a dastardly purpose." He did not need to read further to shew that this was an attack on the honorable member for Maryborough; and however allowable it might be for one honorable member to bring another to task in the House, it did not look well, to say the least of it, for one honorable member to attack another through the columns of a newspaper. It appeared that the local Crown Lands Commissioner was a great friend of the honorable member for the Mitchell, and that the remarks of the honorable member for Maryborough respecting that gentleman had greatly offended him. But the question that affected the House was, as to whether this was a breach of the privileges of the House; and upon that question he thought it was desirable they should obtain the decision of the honorable the Speaker. He was sure that the honorable member for the Mitchell must have been laboring under great feelings of irritation when he wrote the letter, as the language was so different from that usually employed by the honorable member. Having said that much in bringing the matter before the House, he would conclude by handing in the paper to the Clerk, and moving that the writing of the letter on the part of the honorable member for the Mitchell was a breach of the privileges of the House.

MR. DOUGLAS seconded the motion.

The Clerk then read the letter which was as follows:—

"A COWARDLY ATTACK.

"To the Editor of the Guardian.

"Sir,—In the parliamentary debates of Thursday night, I see Mr. Walsh, in his own singularly disingenuous way, asks, 'Who is the Crown Lands Commissioner for the Mitchell District?'

"This inquiry is thoroughly characteristic of the member for Maryborough.

"He knew well who the Commissioner for the Mitchell was, but an ignorant malice requires a foul barb, and the plea of inquiry suited a dastardly purpose.

"Had I been in the House I should have told the member for Maryborough that the Commissioner for the Mitchell was a gentleman incapable of attacking any man behind his back, and compared with whom, in ability and learning, the member for Maryborough is but as a puling infant.

"No one can for one single instant doubt the paltry personal object of a gentleman whose conduct the first Minister of the Crown only too correctly designated on a very recent occasion; and an attack from such a quarter but too well indicates a foul charge and a cowardly retreat.—I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

"J. GORE JONES."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that instead of the honorable member for the Burnett asking the opinion of the honorable the Speaker on this matter, he would have preferred hearing how the honorable member came to consider the publication of the letter to be a breach of privilege. He could understand how a thing said by a person not a member of the House, with respect to an honorable member of the House, was a breach of privilege, but it was a different matter as regarded two honorable members of the House. If an honorable member chose to publish in a newspaper what he was privileged to say in the House, he did not see there was any breach of privilege, though the writer of the letter in such a case might be liable to an action for libel. Before he expressed an opinion on the matter, he would like to hear how the honorable member for the Burnett proposed to make out that this was a breach of privilege.

Mr. MACKENZIE said he did not say that it was a breach of privilege, but merely expressed an opinion that it was a breach of privilege.

Mr. SANDEMAN said there was no subject which had come before the House since he had had the honor of a seat in it that he looked upon with more regret than that which was now the subject of discussion. He did not rise on that occasion as the apologist of the honorable member for Maryborough. He differed from that honorable member most materially in some of his presumed motives and the modes of action he adopted on many occasions, and while he accorded to him full credit for the action he had taken in some of the questions he had advocated, he thought the honorable member would have done more credit to himself, and been of more service and benefit to the colony, if, instead of addressing himself so pertinaciously to objects of minutiae, which had taken too much of a personal bearing—if instead of busying himself with what might be termed the entomology of legislation—he had devoted himself to the anatomy of abuses, which must more or less belong to the administration of government. But honorable members were now called on to uphold the dignity of the House and its privileges, and he maintained that by the publication of the letter that had just been read by the Clerk, the privileges of the House had been grossly encroached upon. What would be said if a member of the House of Commons adopted the course that had been adopted by the honorable member for the Mitchell? If honorable members were to be called to task in this way through the newspapers for every hasty expression they might use in the heat of debate, they would soon relapse into a condition, as to the liberty of speech, such as prevailed during the dark ages. He was surprised that the honorable member for the Mitchell should have adopted the course he had. He was surprised that a gentleman of his mature

years—that a gentleman of his education, experience, and professed knowledge of the world, should have so committed himself, and not only so committed himself, but should have acted in a way so unworthy of his constituency, which, whatever might have been said of its apathy and indifference to its elective privileges on a late occasion, he knew was composed of gentlemen of intelligence and education, and he (Mr. Sandeman) considered that in the course the honorable member had adopted, he had failed in the respect which was due to himself and to those he represented. He thought that a gross breach of the privileges of the House had been committed by the honorable member, which could only be atoned for by an ample apology, not only to the House, but also to the honorable member for Maryborough.

Mr. PUGH considered that a gross breach of the privileges of the House had been committed by the honorable member for the Mitchell by the publication of the letter that had been read, and that it came within the meaning of the 5th clause of the Act 25 Victoria. If the letter was not an insult to the honorable member for Maryborough, he was at a loss to know what an insult was; and such a letter being written by one honorable member towards another, the House, he considered, was bound to take notice of it.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he considered the publication of such a letter came within the scope of the Act relating to breaches of privilege, and maintained that, even if it did not, it was one of the functions of the House to say when a breach of privilege was committed. He thought the House ought to agree to the resolution, and thereby affirm that a breach of its privileges had been committed.

Mr. JONES said he understood the question before the House was simply whether what was said in a letter which appeared in a newspaper, and which appeared to be signed by a member of Parliament—a letter which he avowed to have been written by him—attributing motives to another member of Parliament, was a breach of the privileges of the House. He thought it would puzzle honorable members on the Opposition side of the House who, he understood, had been at a great deal of trouble in the matter, to produce from the proceedings of the House of Commons a case analogous to the one now before the House. Consultations, he was aware, had taken place on this matter, and some honorable members had looked over all the books in which they thought it likely they would find a precedent. They had ransacked the shelves of the library, they had consulted May, and every other book that would teach them anything on the subject; and he did not think they had been able to find a case in which the conduct of one honorable member of the House of Commons towards another was similar to that which formed

the question now before the House. The honorable member for the Burnett had merely asked, in the first instance, if the publication of the letter was a breach of the privileges of the House, but concluded by moving that it should be declared a breach of privilege. Now the House, he presumed, represented the good sense of the colony; and he trusted honorable members would not be led away by any party or personal feeling, to establish that to be a breach of privilege which had never been considered before to be a breach of privilege. If so, it might happen that an honorable member, on entering the House, might neglect to bow to the honorable the Speaker, and if there should be fourteen or fifteen members in the House who did not like him, they might band together and pass a resolution charging him with a breach of privilege. He must say that he was very much astonished to find the honorable member for Maryborough changing his opinion so soon as to the proper place for one honorable member to reply to an attack that might have been made upon him by another honorable member. He recollected that only a few nights ago an epithet was made use of towards the honorable member, which, he said, if it had been made out of doors he would have known how to deal with. Well, he (Mr. Jones) had made remarks out of doors respecting the honorable member, which, it seemed, gave grave offence to him and his friends; and yet the honorable member seemed to be not one whit better able to deal with it out of the House than in the House. The conduct of the honorable member reminded him of a story which, though humorous, might be instructive to some honorable members. The story was that of an Irish drummer, who was employed in flogging a comrade. When the drummer applied the whip to the back, the soldier who was being punished called out to him "for the love of God, Paddy, hit me lower"; and when the drummer, willing to oblige his comrade, hit him lower, he made a similar appeal to him to hit him higher, whereupon the drummer replied that it was impossible to please him, hit where he liked. And so it seemed to be with the honorable member for Maryborough; for, whether he was attacked in the House or out of the House, it was impossible to please him. He did not think the honorable member could suppose that his remarks respecting a highly-esteemed friend did not give him offence, or that he could not see they were intended to give him offence personally; but did he not go back to the days of infancy—and there was something said about an infant in the letter—did he not go back to the days of infancy, and mistake the Speaker's gown for his mammy's,—did he not come whining to the Speaker for his protection? He would, however, ask if it could be expected of him, by honorable members, that he should patiently listen to another honorable member attacking a friend

of his merely because the gentleman did not happen to agree with him in politics, and to accuse him of being unfit for the performance of his duties? The honorable member had made charges against his friend of a kind that might deprive him and his family of their daily bread—of their very means of subsistence—not because the gentleman did not properly perform his public duties, but merely because he did not happen to please the honorable member for Maryborough, as the returning officer for the Mitchell. He had heard many things said about returning officers, but he held too high an opinion of the gentlemen who held office in the colony to repeat hearsay stories of them in the House. Now, he would inform the honorable member for Maryborough, that if he happened to hear anything about the returning officer for the Mitchell, it was a breach of all that was gentlemanly and manly, or decorous in social life, to mention it to the House. He hoped the gentlemen in the civil service were to be protected in their public position from the assaults of private malice. There were heads of departments, and the proper course was to bring before them any complaint against a member of the civil service. The letter, which was the subject of this discussion, he wrote in the heat of the moment, and in it he gave full expression to his feelings with respect to the honorable member for Maryborough; and he did so, without the slightest intention of offending the House, for his only thought was that such a persistent and disingenuous system of attacking a gentleman, as had been manifested by the honorable member for Maryborough, called for rebuke. He was perfectly satisfied, that if Dr. Carr Boyd had not happened to be the returning officer for the Mitchell, they would never have heard of his name. It was a mere excuse—a mere pretense—to ask who was the Crown Lands Commissioner for the Mitchell district, and if he had not also been the returning officer for the district his name would not have been mentioned. When he saw that an attack had been made upon a gentleman, who was a highly-esteemed friend of his, and when he considered the nature of the attack, and why it was made, he felt so intensely disgusted, that in rebuking the honorable member, he had used language, which, he must say, he was not the least sorry for having used. If, as regarded the respect that was due to the House, he had used language towards an honorable member which he ought not to have used, he was sorry for having done so; but he felt when he wrote the letter, and he still felt, that the attack was not made by the honorable member for Maryborough upon Dr. Boyd because of any deficiency in the discharge of his duties as Crown Lands Commissioner, but simply because he was an instrument in an election which was unsatisfactory to the honorable member. But when

he wrote that letter, other things were stirring in his mind, and he felt that on previous occasions he had not been treated honorably or justly by the honorable member for Maryborough; and he understood that the honorable member was not only the petitioner against his previous return for the Mitchell, but that he was also the adviser, the consultant, and the prosecutor, in the matter of that petition, though he did not care for that, as he was able to rebut all the charges made against himself; but when the honorable member came and in that House attacked a friend of his who was not there to defend himself, and who could not defend himself from the attacks made by the honorable member in his place in that House, he considered it was his duty to come forward in his behalf, and, in doing so, he used language, he confessed, as strong as he could use, and he was not ashamed of it, or that he had evinced some feeling in the matter.

The SPEAKER remarked that the honorable member for the Mitchell had made reference in his speech to the honorable member for Maryborough having consulted authorities, and high authorities. He did not know if the honorable member included him in his remarks, as one of the authorities that had been consulted; but he might inform the House that he told any honorable member who consulted him, that he would not give any opinion on the question whatever, in the House or out of it. And he would say this also, in reference to what the honorable member had said—for it was his duty, as Speaker, to do so—as to the dignity and privileges of the House: when he said that an analogous case in the House of Commons could not be adduced, he begged to say that the honorable member was wrong. He could state, from his own recollection—a recollection probably extending over a larger period than that of the honorable member himself—for he went back for forty years. He referred to the case of Lord Dunfermline, when Mr. Abercrombie brought a charge against the High Chancellor of England, for citing in his own court some words that Mr. Abercrombie did not use, and turning them to his own meaning. Now that was a much stronger case, for the words were referred to by the High Chancellor in his own court. He thought this took place in the year 1824. He did not clearly remember all the circumstances of the case, but he knew it was a much stronger case than the one now before the House.

Mr. JONES did not know if he might rise in explanation, but he wished to say that he understood the honorable the Speaker to say that the High Chancellor used words which Mr. Abercrombie did not state.

The SPEAKER: The High Chancellor, referring to something that had been said by Mr. Abercrombie in the House of Commons, said that which Mr. Abercrombie said was untrue.

Mr. JONES: Quite so. That was quite a different thing.

Mr. BROOKES considered the publication of the letter which had given rise to this discussion, was a breach of decorum, and all the more so as the letter was written, not by a private member of the community, but by an honorable member of the House who might have defended his friend in another way, and more effectively, in his place in Parliament. It was, he considered, a matter of regret that the question had been brought before the House at all, but as it had been brought up, the House, he considered, would be laying aside its privileges if it did not take notice of the letter. If any one thing was more important than another, it was to see that both branches of the Legislature should have their privileges conserved; and if this letter encroached on the privileges of either House, no more important duty could devolve upon the House than to resent such encroachment. He thought the offence itself was greatly aggravated by the letter having been written by a gentleman who, from his education, his profession, and his position, ought to have known better. If that honorable member were allowed to set an example in wrong doing, a precedent would be shewn, the consequences of which it would be difficult to predict. His own opinion with respect to this matter was, that the honorable member for the Mitchell had insulted the House; and he thought he would have consulted the interest of his friend if he had brought his complaint before the House, and had left the matter with the honorable the Speaker. For the honorable member to attempt to defend himself, and to ingratiate himself with the public, through the lower medium of the press, was derogatory to the House and destructive of its privileges.

Mr. COXEN said he should have considered the letter to be an insult if it had been addressed to him. Of course, it was for every honorable member to form his own opinion of it; and if it was deemed by the House to be an insult, then the next step was to say if it came within the terms of the Act, 25 Victoria. It was the duty of the House fully to consider this matter, and to say if they would allow themselves to be insulted in the way the honorable member for Maryborough had been insulted. If they were to allow the letter to pass without expressing an opinion, and that a strong one, they would be doing what they should not do, and would be countenancing an indignity they ought not to suffer to be cast upon any honorable member.

Dr. CHALLINOR considered that a most unwarrantable breach of the privileges of the House had been committed by the honorable member for the Mitchell, for he was present in the House during the whole of the debate that was said to have occasioned the letter to be written, and he

must say that he did not hear the honorable member for Maryborough exceed in any way the privileges of the House in anything that he said. He thought it was the duty of every honorable member to see that the civil servants performed the duties for which they received their salaries, and if they did not do so, it was the further duty of any honorable member to bring the matter forward. He looked upon the publication of the letter as a breach of privilege, and he considered the House was bound to exact full satisfaction for the indignity that had been cast upon it, and upon one of its members.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that notwithstanding the opinions which had been expressed as to this being a matter that came within the scope of the Act 25 Victoria, his opinion was that the Act did not apply at all to the case before the House.

Mr. Forbes and Mr. Miles supported the motion.

Mr. TAYLOR reviewed the circumstances out of which the question had arisen, and commented at some length on the personalities that were indulged in by some honorable members in the course of the debate. He said he hoped the honorable member for the Mitchell would make an ample apology, but at the same time he considered that the House was making far too much of the matter. He greatly regretted that the letter had ever been written.

The SPEAKER, in reply to an observation by Mr. Brookes, said it was a rule of Parliament, that if an honorable member was accused of anything, he was heard in his place and then retired.

Mr. JONES then left the chamber

Mr. FITZSIMMONS defended the character and conduct of Mr. Boyd, and as to the matter of privilege, he said he would not interfere with it.

The question, that the letter in the paper was a breach of the privileges of the House, was then put and carried.

Mr. MACKENZIE next moved, *pro formâ*, that the honorable member for the Mitchell be called to his place, and be there reprimanded for his misconduct from the Chair.

Mr. DOUGLAS seconded the motion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he would like to know what authority there was for reprimanding the honorable member? He had been found guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House, but under an Act of Parliament, and therefore he held the House could not do anything with him.

Mr. MACKENZIE took it for granted, that if the House had power to find the honorable member guilty of a breach of privilege, they had also the power to punish him for such breach.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he had no personal motive in bringing the question before the House; but, suppose the honorable member were called in, and told that he had been found guilty; if he questioned the

right of the House to reprimand him, he would have again to withdraw while the House debated the question. Now, he thought it would be better to debate the question before the honorable member was called in. His own opinion was that, as the honorable member had been found guilty under the 5th clause of the Act of Parliament, the House might fine him, but could not reprimand him.

The SPEAKER: The honorable and learned gentleman, the Attorney-General, was mistaken. The motion was, that the letter was a breach of privilege. There was no reference to a section of the Act.

Mr. LILLEY said he thought they might relieve themselves from the difficulty in which they were placed, if the honorable member for the Burnett would modify his motion, so far as to require the honorable member for the Mitchell to be called to appear in his place, and to be informed that he was considered to have been guilty of a breach of the privileges of the House, for which it was necessary he should apologise.

The SPEAKER read the following standing order, number ninety-two, as applicable to the question:—

“ Any member having used objectionable words, and not explaining or retracting the same, or offering apologies for the use thereof to the satisfaction of the House, will be censured, or otherwise dealt with, as the House may think fit; and any member called to order shall sit down, unless permitted to explain.”

Mr. MACKENZIE adopted the suggestion of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, and amended his motion as follows:— “ That the honorable member for the Mitchell be summoned to attend in his place, and there he be informed that in the opinion of this House he has been guilty of a breach of privilege.”

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Then I should like to know what is to be the consequence? Suppose that he does not apologise, what follows? I should like to know how the House are to act?

Mr. BROOKES: I really think, sir, that it is hardly the thing for the Attorney-General to be asking questions which the House might fairly put to him. The House have declared that the honorable and learned member for Mitchell has committed a breach of privilege; and the honorable the Attorney-General is, I do think, rather taking a part that appears to be an obstruction to parliamentary action.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I must defend myself against what I think a very unwarrantable attack. It is my business, from my position, to inform the House when they are taking a course that may not be the right one, and to prevent them from going wrong. I should be guilty if I did not do so. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, has no right to make such an observation.

Mr. TAYLOR: There is no difficulty in the matter, if we make none. The honorable member for Mitchell will apologise. Why not let him be called in at once, and let the thing be done with?

Mr. LILLEY: My object in making a suggestion was, that the honorable member for Mitchell might be left to himself—to clear himself from what the House has resolved is a breach of privilege.

Mr. R. CRIBB: As we have gone so far as to say that an honorable member has committed a breach of privilege for something done outside of this House, the motion is not strong enough. It is strange that, after passing such a resolution, something more should not be hanging to it.

Mr. TAYLOR: What will you do?

Mr. R. CRIBB: That is what I want to know. I have heard what the Attorney-General has said, but I think we should go somewhat further than that. It appears to me to be quite a farce to come to a solemn resolution that an honorable member has been guilty of a breach of privilege, and then to supplement it with a motion that he be called to his place only to be told so. If there is to be anything subsequent to that, it is another thing, but as the matter at present stands, there appears to be nothing in it at all.

Mr. LILLEY: If the honorable member had read the Act—or if he knew the law—or if he had reflected for a single moment, he would have seen that the motion is quite in order: that is, if we are dealing with this question in the spirit of the 5th section of the Act:—

“Each House of the said Parliament is hereby empowered to punish in a summary manner as for contempt by fine, &c.”

Now, we could go to that length at once. But in all courts of justice—and I assume that we are the highest court in this colony—there is always allowed a place of penitence: a party may purge his contempt. It is quite possible that if the honorable member for Mitchell comes in, he may choose to clear himself. He is a lawyer, and knows how—I presume so. He may be called in before we proceed to the extreme point, this evening, and make use of the penal power given to us by that section of the Act.

Mr. DOUGLAS: It may be that I agree with what has been said by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley in supposing that, when the honorable member for the Mitchell is called to his place, he will clear himself. Whether he does so or not, what is that to us? We have declared that his conduct is a breach of the privileges of this House. That, I think, is a sufficient condemnation of him—a sufficient justification of ourselves, and of the honorable member for Maryborough. Supposing that the honorable member for Mitchell did add to this insult the further injury of refusing to admit that he has been wrong, could we place ourselves

in a better position by sentencing him to a fine, or imprisonment for a week or a fortnight, or anything of that kind? Would that be a stronger condemnation than what we have passed? The honorable member is not punishable by this House by fine and imprisonment, if he is not punished now. He is, and I trust deservedly, punished by the censure the House have passed on him.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS: The honorable member should, after the motion that has been passed, have an opportunity of coming before the House and saying whether or not he bows to the decision that has been come to.

Mr. WATTS: I think it is a pity to debate the question. The honorable member will bow to the decision of the House. I think the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, did not place this section fairly before the House—he did not read far enough. As I read it, there must be some fine imposed, as it is laid down in the standing orders of this House. I should like to know where we have laid down any fine? We cannot inflict a fine, and after this motion shall have passed, we will be only where we are at this present moment. I shall read the section:—

“Each House of the said Parliament is hereby empowered to punish in a summary manner as for contempt by fine according to the standing orders of either House, &c.”

Mr. LILLEY: By the 101st standing order, the fine for arrest is £20. The honorable member for Mitchell may be arrested “for contempt.” I see no difficulty. I wish the honorable member to clear himself of his contempt.

Dr. CHALLINOR: I say that this is the peculiarity of the position. The honorable member has already expressed his willingness to apologise—indeed, he has apologised to the House, as a House; but the House have taken a different view of the matter, and say it is necessary that he should apologise to the individual.

Mr. TAYLOR: The House say nothing of the sort.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Undoubtedly it is so; because I do not see in what other way we can sufficiently justify the privileges of this House, unless an ample apology is made to the member.

The SPEAKER: The House will recollect that it is not an insult to the individual—it is an insult to the House, to have written that letter; and, therefore, if an apology is made at all, it must be made to the House.

The question was then put and agreed to.

The SPEAKER ordered the Sergeant-at-Arms to inform the honorable member for Mitchell that he was required to attend in his place; and

The honorable member, Mr. Jones, having returned to the chamber, and taken his place,

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the honorable member for Mitchell, that a resolution has been agreed to by this House, that

the letter read by the Clerk, and signed John Gore Jones, is a breach of the privileges of this House.

Mr. JONES said: Mr. Speaker, I have to express to you, sir, and to this House, my great regret at having been betrayed into a breach of the privileges of this House, by writing that letter; and, I have also to add, sir, that I deeply regret that my conduct on that occasion should have caused so much waste of public time.

INSPECTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. DOUGLAS moved—"That an address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for 1866 a sum not exceeding £2,000 for the purpose of inspecting primary schools not under the operation of the Education Act of 1860, and for granting gratuities to the same, according to efficiency and ascertained results." He said he feared that he should be tedious, though he would strive to be as concise as possible. He should have to quote a few figures and to make some remarks on the general bearing of the education question. It was one of great importance, and one to which the attention of the House had been very frequently directed. From the report of the Board of General Education, which had been laid on the table of this House, he found that the number of children on the roll of the schools under the Board during the year 1864, was 4,450, and that the average attendance at all those schools had been 2,176. The expenditure of the Board during that period had amounted to £12,735, shewing an average expenditure per head, including the cost of buildings, of £5 17s. 3d. He took the average attendance; and in his remarks, both with regard to the system as applied in Queensland and as in other places, he would take the average attendance, because he believed it was generally admitted by persons interested in educational subjects, that that was the only true test by which to try the amount of education which was really given. Applying that test, he found that the average expenditure, exclusive of buildings, during the last year, had been £3 7s. 1¼d. per head. Then, taking the amount of money which had actually been spent on teachers' salaries, he found that the average cost had been about £2 2s. per head. The number of private schools, according to the return made by the Registrar-General, was 65, throughout the colony. They averaged 37 pupils on the roll. There were 29 in Brisbane, averaging 36 on the roll. The total attendance was 2,408. As he (Mr. Douglas) had taken the average attendance in the one case, he thought it would be only right to deduct an equivalent amount for the average in the other; therefore he had reduced the roll attendance in what he called private schools—he presumed they were all, more or less,

primary schools—to 1,204 children. The total number of children, therefore, who were receiving education, who were really attending some school, amounted to 3,380. Referring to the census, and adding the proportional increase since the census was taken—the present population being above 80,000—he estimated that the number of children now in Queensland between the ages of six and thirteen years—perhaps he might say between five and thirteen, which was the educational age—was something nearly approaching 11,000. That left unaccounted for some 7,630 children, who were not really attending any school whatever. Or, if he took the number on the rolls, it left some 4,150 who were not subject, at any rate at present, to any system of education whatever. This, he thought, was not a very satisfactory result, even after making full allowance for the difficulties of imparting education in a country like this, where the population was so scattered. He thought it could hardly have a consolatory effect to know that only one-fortieth of the population were regularly attending schools under the Board. It had been customary to praise the system of education administered under the Board, and to say that it worked admirably—in the newspapers and elsewhere peans were sung upon it. He did not wish to throw any impediment in the way, but the truth should be known, and a remedy should be applied to make that system satisfactory to the country, which it was not now. The remedy that would be most pleasing to him, would be, to know that, sinking all minor differences, the grand object of the Board was the education, by some mode or other, of the juvenile portion of the population. There might be a germ in their present system which would produce better results for the future; but there were no grounds for the congratulations that had been expended on the working of our great Queensland education system. In order to derive some information from what was going on in the neighboring colonies, not with the wish to detract from our own efforts—for we were a new community, and had hardly learned to walk in this matter of education—he invited the attention of the House to some figures he had tabulated. Taking New South Wales first, he found that on the rolls of the national schools, the vested schools, in that colony there were 10,173 children; the average attendance was 6,812. On the roll of the denominational schools of New South Wales, there were 22,746 children, and the average attendance was 16,879. In the non-vested schools, the number of children on the rolls was 6,641; the average attendance was 4,666. The total average attendance in the schools under the National Education Board of the neighboring colony was 11,478. The total number on the rolls of the schools under both systems in New South Wales, was 39,560; and the average attendance, national

and denominational, was 28,357 children. The probable population of New South Wales was 350,000, in round numbers. That shewed an actual attendance at the schools which were receiving aid from the Government of about one-twelfth of the population. He had made one or two extracts from some of the reports of the school inspectors, with which he would trouble the House, for the subject was most interesting, and one upon which the public mind should be informed. Mr. Macintyre, in his report upon the northern districts of New South Wales, spoke thus of the character of the instruction in the non-vested schools :—

“About one-half of the schools in the northern district are non-vested, and, in every instance, the instruction is the same in all respects as in the vested. The promoters of these schools appear to be satisfied with the amount of scriptural instruction and moral training administered by the national system, because there is no *special religious teaching whatever* given in any of the non-vested schools in this district, by managers, teachers, clergymen, or others. The only difference between the two classes of schools is, that the vested buildings have been partially erected at the public cost—that they are better furnished, more suitable for the purposes of teaching, and afford better accommodation for the teachers. The great object of the establishment of non-vested schools was not to satisfy any want felt for special religious teaching, but simply for the immediate organisation of schools in temporary premises, in order to meet the educational requirements of the colony, until permanent buildings could be erected. In almost all the non-vested schools, I found children belonging to all the three leading denominations living in peace and harmony with each other, and from whose parents I never heard any complaint in the matter of religion.”

He read that because it was an exemplification of the working of the non-vested system, a system which he held—as a matter of personal opinion—had not had fair play at the hands of the honorable gentleman opposite (the Secretary for Lands and Works). As to the cost of education, Mr. McIntyre said :—

“The education of each pupil on the rolls of the schools for the last quarter of 1864, cost the commissioners, on an average, a few pence more than £2 (two pounds) for the year, and the people one-third of that sum in the shape of school fees. The local supervision of the schools remains unchanged. Many of the patrons are but little impressed with the importance of the duties of their responsible office, and few of them make any provision for the education of the children of the poor, or visit the settlers in their school district in order to ascertain how many children are growing up uneducated.”

That shewed that the cost in New South Wales was very considerably less than that which we were at present paying. He admitted, of course, that in all things the Government of New South Wales was very much cheaper than in this colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : No.

Mr. DOUGLAS : But it ought to be the tendency, and he trusted it was the aim, of honorable members on the treasury benches to secure efficiency—to secure economy, at any rate, without sacrificing efficiency. There was another gentleman, the inspector of schools in the Hunter River district, whom he would quote :—

“It is just possible”—“that the want of proper provision being made for the educational and other wants of these children, is, in part, owing to the existence of two distinct systems of education, and to the large unnecessary expense which, without any commensurate return, the country is thereby put to. It is much to be desired, for the sake of education itself, that the two existing systems should be amalgamated, particularly when the adoption of the non-vested principle by the National Board, would seem to have removed the most formidable obstacle to such a union.”

There was a triumphant apology for what the honorable gentlemen (the Secretary for Lands and Works) opposite always took credit for having done. He (Mr. Douglas) perfectly agreed with what was stated in the last quotation, and also with what had been stated by the honorable member himself; but he submitted that the non-vested system had not had fair play yet. We had amalgamated two probably antagonistic systems, but in consequence, probably, of the insufficiently liberal administration of those opposite systems by the Board of General Education, the advantages had been confined to one: the Board did not attempt to seek that which was sought after at present in New South Wales. Turning to Adelaide, it seemed to him that there a most admirable system of education was carried out—so far as he could judge from the reports and some correspondence he had had with gentlemen interested in education there. The results were very remarkable indeed. The population of Adelaide now amounted to nearly 150,000. According to the last report, issued in April last, he found that the number of children who were receiving some sort of instruction actually amounted to 19,000. It was estimated that one-eighth of the population was receiving instruction. This almost rose, he believed, to the highest standard in old and established communities. However, the actual number of children under the operation of the Board was set forth in the report of 21st April, at 12,719; the average attendance was very large in comparison, being 10,293. The average attendance at each school was 38. The expenditure was remarkable, as compared with the number of children at school. The amount spent last year, exclusive of inspection, was £12,914 10s.; an amount not very different from that which we had expended to educate some 2,000 children. The amount of school fees which had been received from parents had amounted, during 1864, to £13,562 4s. It would be well, in future, if the Queensland Board, in issuing their reports, also stated

the amount of school fees received. He found no allusion to school fees in the reports of our Board. The total amount expended by the Adelaide Board on teachers was £1 3s. per head of the children who attended school; and the entire cost, by payments by the Board and by school fees, had been £2 0s. 10½d. per head. The system, so far as he was able to judge, was of the most liberal character. Under it all schools were licensed that applied to be licensed under the Board, and the conditions were exceedingly easy. Certain hours of attendance were specified, and during those hours no sectarian teaching was allowed—none on religious subjects at all; but the Scriptures were read: and that system appeared to give the utmost satisfaction there, for all classes of the community found, that without doing violence to their consciences, they could send their children to the schools; and the result was, that the education of those children was effected at a lower price to the parents, and in a more efficient manner than in any of the other colonies. That shewed the very different spirit which people displayed there from that which was dominant here. Mr. Wyatt, the secretary of the Board, said:—

“It appears to be a generally expressed opinion, that all aid to schools in centres of population, and especially in Adelaide, should be withdrawn; but in the absence of any schools endowed by the munificence of private individuals, as in England and many other long settled countries, the Board consider that it is highly politic for the Government to dispense aid in towns as well as in the country districts, as being more likely to promote the establishment of better schools, and the erection of better school buildings than would be the case if the schools in towns were entirely excluded from Government superintendence.”

If the system of education, as carried out in Adelaide, was at the same cost as that in Queensland, the expense would be £50,000 or £60,000 a year. Going to Victoria, the probable population of which was 550,000, the number of children on the school-roll was shewn to be 56,584; and the average attendance to be 42,339; there was actually in attendance at the schools under the Board of Education of Victoria, one-twelfth of the whole population. The amount paid in 1864 for education was £100,406 on account of salaries and allowances; and the cost of inspection and the maintenance of the staff amounted to seven per cent. on that sum. The total cost per head for that large number of children in the schools was—aid from the Government, £1 17s. 5d.; school fees, £1 5d.: making a total of £2 17s. 10d. Between three and four years ago, in 1861, an Act was passed in Victoria amalgamating the existing national and denominational Boards; and it now appeared that the operation was a complete success. Shortly after the new Board had assumed office, it was thought desirable by them to attempt to follow out the principles

which had been adopted in England tolerably successfully, namely, the Privy Council system; and they had succeeded in grafting that on the system which was originally in force in the colony, not, however, without great distrust on the part both of the Legislature and the denominational portion of the community. All sorts of evils were predicted. Indeed, the Legislature at one time passed resolutions which led the Government to suppose that they were not justified in allowing the Board to carry out the system; but the results had proved that they were justified in doing so, as the following extract from a letter addressed to the Government by the Board testified:—

“We are desirous of drawing attention to the fact that the system of examination on certain fixed standards by competent persons will not only have the effect of inducing greater assiduity on the part of teachers, and of advancing the minimum standard of primary education, but may, in our opinion, be made to subserve a much higher purpose. It must necessarily happen that out of some sixty thousand scholars annually under tuition in the common schools of the colony, some few will be found to possess a strong natural aptitude for learning, or perhaps even a force of genius immeasurably superior to the common mass, which if subjected to successive culture, may be expected to develop into a high degree of excellence, whereas under ordinary circumstances, such minds, from the very necessity of their position, are withdrawn early from school to engage in inferior avocations, and thus their early aspirations are effectually quenched.”

Finally, after a long correspondence as to the right of the Board to interfere with what the Government supposed to be the system which was recognised by law, the Board were allowed to apply theirs as a tentative principle which came within the scope of the law. In 1865, after the principle had been tested for two years, the latest report of the Board shewed that their system was working admirably. He had gone through the reports of all the inspectors, and he found that, without a single exception, they were in favor of the fixed standard for both children and teachers. Without going the length of asserting that the system was entirely successful in Victoria—for the colony had had but a short time to test it—the whole results, judging by the reports of the Board and of the different inspectors, shewed that it was working very satisfactorily, that the standards of education were being raised higher than they were in England. The system in Victoria had been worked very much on the Privy Council system of England. A great deal had been said about it—long debates had taken place upon it—it had been strongly opposed, on the one hand, by the great religious educational societies, under the belief that it would subvert their principles; and, on the other hand, it had been supported by the Government, and by the exponents of the

Government, on the ground that, instead of subverting, it gave the fullest indulgence to religious belief, while it gave that sufficiency of education in which the State was interested. In the work of Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, giving an account of the state of education in England for 1832 to 1862, it was shewn that the whole tendency of that system had been to support voluntary effort—and it had now been crowned with remarkable results;—a tendency which had been admitted by the commissioners appointed in 1858 to report on the system, who had actually embraced a portion of the following extract in their report:—

“In so far as the report of the commissioners approves of the present system, that sanction has its value, as the result of a careful critical analysis by a body of able men, selected, because they had no previous connection with this administration, and, for the most part, none with the controversies attending its establishment. Their report, in the main, agreeing with experience, points to a statesmanlike perseverance in those efforts hitherto made with so much success by the committee of Council, to develop in the existing system, all its civil and secular elements, in harmony with the religious, and also with liberty of conscience.”

This was the most important portion of the passage:—

“The force which will ultimately transform the whole, will be the result of education itself. When the people know that they have even more interest in the education of their children than their rulers have, they will more and more take charge of it. They now bear two-thirds of the burthen; but that third which they do not pay has given value to what before was of little worth, and has thus created a transient power destined to pass from the Government into the hands of those who will take the charge. The transference of administrative power to the local managers and the parents, will attend the gradual assumption by them of the payment of the pupil teachers, and of the whole of the stipend of the certificate teachers, consequent on the effects of education on some generations of parents, and on the middle classes.”

Admitting that the Privy Council system was still experimental, he (Mr. Douglas) affirmed that, so far as it had gone, it was one well calculated to enlist confidence; and, probably, it would eventually induce the House and the country to follow its example. The people of England, in 1858, when the commission was appointed, were becoming frightened that the expenditure under the Privy Council regulations was becoming so enormous that it would be a serious financial question, and that the number of schoolmasters and pupil teachers coming under the direct influence of the Government would raise throughout the country a sort of phalanx of Government supporters—and if supporters, they would also be, on occasions, the masters: that grand army, supported by the Government, might be inclined to make terms with the Government. The people

became alarmed, not only at the expenditure, but at the political consequences of the power of those who had the most direct beneficial interest in that expenditure. The grand object then was, without sacrificing the efficiency of the education, to get rid of any direct control over the teachers, and yet to afford them encouragement in the form of gratuities in addition to those they received from their pupils. The result of that was the revised code—and there had been two revisions of that revised code since. The expenditure on education was, in 1859, £723,000; in 1860, it amounted to £836,000. In 1860, he thought, the commissioners reported, and subsequent to that, the revised code, or some other portion of the revised code, came into actual operation. He had not the exact returns for 1861; but in 1862, under the revised code, the expenditure was £774,000. Yet, so great had been the increased efficiency, that in 1862 the number of children had increased over that of 1859 by 269,000; and all those children were educated at an increase of only £51,000 upon the expenditure of 1859. So that, for the short time that the system had been in operation, it shewed remarkable results in economy, and, at any rate, in presumed efficiency. The whole number of children educated in 1862, under that system, was 1,378,000, at a cost of £774,000. The actual expenditure, on the part of the Government, for all purposes, buildings, teachers' salaries, gratuities, and so forth, during the last twenty-five years had amounted to about £5,000,000; but it was a remarkable fact, that that large amount had been increased by £10,000,000, the sum derived from private sources—exactly double that expended by the Government;—so that for that £5,000,000, the country had received £15,000,000 worth of education. The honorable member quoted a lengthy extract from a speech of the Hon. Robert Lowe, in the year 1862, referring to the report of Her Majesty's commission on the subject of education, in 1859. The responsible heads of departments under the Government, who had to administer the resolutions of the Privy Council, could not entirely agree with that report, but they accepted the fact announced by the commissioners, in accordance with the evidence produced before them, that out of the number of scholars at that time educated, only one-fourth were efficiently educated in the rudiments of learning, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. The system, therefore, required some remedy, and the only remedy which could be applied was to bring the pupils up to the requisite standard. The inspectors under the Privy Council had reported voluminously as to the high moral worth, the general ability, and efficiency of the masters. But large grants had been made on behalf of education; it was proved that the country did not get money's worth for the amount voted, and the only resource left was to apply a test. It

was conceded on all sides, that the great object was to afford good secular instruction, the difficulties in the way of affording religious instruction in this colony being so great, that if good secular instruction were afforded all would be achieved which was aimed at. During the previous session he had drawn the attention of the House, by means of a resolution, to the fact that

“The Board of Education having failed to frame regulations calculated to give full effect to the Education Act of 1860, the operation of the said Act has thereby been confined within limits which are not sufficient to provide for the promotion of primary schools in Queensland.”

He thought he had sufficiently established the fact that the Board did not then, and had not since, supplied the demand for primary education in Queensland. In his opinion, the Board had failed to do their duty in not accepting the assistance which they might have received from the non-vested schools, which they had ignored altogether. The result of the resolutions he had brought forward last session, together with the action taken by himself and colleagues on that occasion, was that the most obnoxious portion of the regulations—that which virtually ignored the non-vested schools—was done away with, and the operation of the non-vested system was nominally admitted. That was brought about principally because it was found impracticable to carry out the vested system in some of the squatting districts, and not to meet the just claims of the country. Applications had frequently been made to the board on behalf of non-vested schools, but they had not been met in the spirit in which they had been made—that of a desire to come under the Board and submit to its regulations. Excuses of all sorts had been found in order to withhold aid to schools under the non-vested system. After the rules had been altered, an application was made by the Right Reverend Dr. Tuffnell, on behalf of a school at Ipswich. One would have imagined that application was one which the Board would have jumped to recognise. There was a school containing upwards of one hundred children receiving instruction; a building already completed, and everything in working order; and a desire evinced to submit to the rules and regulations of the Board. But the Board said—“No; we have one school at Ipswich, and we do not want another.” He found in the report of an address, presented by Dr. Tuffnell from some residents in Brisbane, the right reverend gentleman was stated to have said :—

“It has recently been said, that our continuing to urge these remonstrances against the system at present administered, has become vexatious because the Board have recently made such alterations in their rules as to allow our just claims to be considered. And you will perhaps be surprised to be told that the only alteration which has been recently made in their regulations by the Board has been the omission in their regula-

tions with regard to vested and non-vested schools of the words ‘are already in existence.’ Those words were an interpretation not to be met with in the regulations in force in New South Wales, and ought, I conceive, never to have been allowed in the regulations of the Queensland Board; inasmuch as the Primary Education Act of 1860 expressly provides that the rules promulgated by the Board shall be in all respects in accordance with the spirit of the national system of education, as hitherto carried out in the colony of New South Wales. Those words have now been removed; their removal will allow for the establishment of non-vested schools upon private stations in the pastoral districts of the colony, but it does not remove the disabilities under which our Church of England schools have hitherto labored, because the Board have hitherto refused to withdraw another obnoxious regulation, under color of which they claim to themselves the power to refuse aid to a non-vested school in any locality in which they may themselves have a vested school.”

Now he (Mr. Douglas) had been in hopes that the Board really intended to meet the claims of those persons, who, although they had refused to form vested schools, were perfectly willing to come under the regulations of the Board. But that had not been done, and the resolutions which he now brought forward were framed to meet such cases. He had no desire to interfere with the Board of Education as at present established by law in Queensland, but he believed they had been actuated by a narrow, instead of a generous spirit, in carrying out the Act. He found that the vote this year had been considerably exceeded, and that, according to the statement of the Registrar-General, there were twelve whole police districts where there was not a single school. That being the case, he would be quite willing to leave the Board untrammelled, to deal with the many difficulties it had to encounter in providing education for a large extent of sparsely populated territory. But when he came to the towns and found that even in the thickly populated districts, according to the statistical returns before the House, the Board were not doing their utmost to contribute to the education of the people, then, he affirmed that he might fairly claim a certain amount of assistance for persons now voluntarily educating themselves at their own cost—in some cases providing education for the poor and destitute. According to the lowest calculation, there were at present some 1,200 children attending the primary schools,—the return said 2,000, but he would take 1,200 as the minimum,—and being educated by voluntary efforts. He asked the Board to go to those schools and inspect them, and if they approved of the instruction afforded, and if those schools were willing to submit to the regulations of the Executive, although from conscientious motives they decline to become vested schools, then the Board would only be doing good to assist them. The amount he asked for, was a very small one. If the resolutions were carried into effect, the appointment of an inspector would

be necessary, who would be under the Government. It could not, therefore, be said that the schools so assisted would not be under sufficient control. The amount, he repeated, was a very small one, certainly not more than £1 for every child who, he estimated, would come under its operations. What could be more reasonable than to comply with a request to give aid to those schools, in which the conditions insisted on by the Executive were complied with? The resolution before the House, asked that very strict conditions should be enforced—that the school should be situated in a healthy locality; and, again, an average attendance of forty was required. It was not at all desirable that aid should be given to schools with a less number of attendants. He did not desire that dame schools should be supported, or that any hedgerow schools should spring up in consequence of extended liberality on the part of the Board. He only desired to see schools of a *bona fide* character supported—schools that were permanently located amongst the people. Neither did he ask aid for schools of a worthless character, but he desired by the appointment of inspectors to keep them up to a certain standard. He would not mind if it were made a condition that the masters should be certificated, although he knew that there were some very efficient masters in schools now in existence who were not certificated. He supposed he should be told that his resolution was antagonistic to the principle of education already established in the colony, and that he was introducing a sectarian element, and that element he had no wish to introduce. But the system of education in force in this colony was not the national system as carried out in Ireland,—certainly not the system adopted in New South Wales. It was altogether a continental system, in which the Government were the chief donors and the curators of those whom they educated. What was the sectarian element which was said to be introduced? Was not liberty of opinion upon religious matters to be tolerated, and were not persons who held different views on that point to receive any assistance in education of their children? The Government could not ignore the fact that in all great communities religious societies had chiefly interested themselves, whether rightly or wrongly, in the cause of education; and although the education they had been foremost in providing had at times possibly been defective in moral as well as in physical training, yet those societies had undoubtedly done much to assist in the education of the people. Were the Government prepared to ignore entirely the influence and assistance which could be obtained from such quarters? It was not necessary to inquire into the details of the religious dogmas of those societies, but to assist them in forwarding the paramount object of affording a secular

education to the young. Let them be allowed to inculcate the feeling of liberty of conscience, and if the schools came up to the standard required, it was but right to give them a fair amount of assistance. Those persons whose views he was advocating were looked upon as not being satisfied with the system of education now in use—as men who were not up to the times, and who were actuated by sectarian motives. He would quote from a work written by Mill, on Liberty; and he believed it would be conceded that the author of that book could not be accused of sectarianism. On the contrary, he was a man of deep learning and philosophical training, one who lived in an atmosphere of exalted philosophy. He (Mr. Douglas) would quote the extract referred to:—

“The objections which are urged with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education, which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another. And as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation, in proportion as it is efficient and successful it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example, and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence.”

Now that was all he asked for. It might be considered by some persons inexpedient and undesirable to carry out the principle he advanced; but he affirmed it could not be called a narrow or sectarian principle. It had been urged that the system of education, as at present in force in Queensland, was only an experiment, and that time enough had not been allowed to give it a fair trial. If his resolution were overthrown upon that ground, he would admit the justice of the claim, but he could not admit the justice of any opposition to it upon sectarian grounds. It was a fact, which could not be gainsaid, that in all the principal towns and centres of population in the colony, non-vested schools were being conducted efficiently; and because the persons who were interested in those schools could not with full liberty of thought and conscience, subscribe to all the regulations of the Board, were they to be entirely ignored, and to receive no assistance whatever? He upheld the resolutions he had brought forward on the principle of voluntarism, which he

affirmed ought to be carried out in education, as well as in religion. To carry out strictly a national system of education, it would be necessary to have a national church, for what would that be but a sort of higher school for adults? He asked the House to apply the same principle to education. All he desired was, that they should endeavor to meet what was manifestly felt to be a great public want, and to do what might have the effect of allaying a great deal of the irritation which existed in many parts of the colony, which could be done as he had pointed out, by the employment of increased machinery at a slight cost. He would apologise for having detained the House so long upon the question, which, however, was one of great and increasing interest to the colony. He might state that whatever was the result of the motion, he should not again trouble the House during the present Parliament with anything further on the subject.

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS said, that in speaking immediately after the honorable member who had just sat down, he felt that he would be laboring under difficulties of no ordinary magnitude. The greater portion of that honorable gentleman's speech had consisted of extracts from works and speeches which had been written or delivered in the neighboring colonies or in the mother country. The House, therefore, could not expect that he could go into the mass of figures and varied reports and speeches which had been referred to by the honorable member. He would, however, endeavor to shew the House that the arguments made use of by the honorable member were not supported by the writers of the present time who were generally regarded as the best authorities on the subject before the House. Before doing so, he would express his regret that the motion had been brought forward on the present occasion. It was known that the national system, as carried out in the colony, had met with the greatest success throughout the length and breadth of the land. There was scarcely a hamlet in the colony that contained any number of inhabitants whatever, which had not expressed a desire to participate in the benefits of the system. He had hoped, therefore, that a few years would be allowed to go over their heads without any interference being considered necessary with the working of the system—at all events, until it was seen whether or not its success would continue. For some time to come he considered that it would be most injudicious and unwise to attempt to introduce another system. In spite of what had been stated by the honorable member, there could be no doubt that his aim and object in introducing the resolution was to introduce the denominational system. He thought the honorable member hardly acted fairly in charging the Board with narrow and sectarian views. No honorable

member could possibly bring such a charge against the Government. All that was required was that the system of education adopted by the House and suited to the state of the colony should be carried out; and he maintained that was now being done. The honorable member for Port Curtis, however, was endeavoring to bring in a system which in other colonies had proved to be the base of education. The honorable member, at the outset of his speech, had stated that the aggregate attendance of children was one in forty of the population of the colony. How did he arrive at that fact? He could not have seen the statistical returns of last year, which stated the population of the colony to amount to 60,000; and the honorable member might observe by reference that the aggregate attendance of children at the schools during that year amounted to 4,000, and that was in reality the average attendance. That was equal to the returns of education in the colony of Victoria. Another statement made by the honorable member was to the effect, that under the Board of Education, it had required £5 to pay for the education of every child.

MR. DOUGLAS: Including buildings; excluding them the cost had been £3 7s. 1d.

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: He did not hear the honorable member say anything about buildings. But, however, he would go into the facts. Last year the sum voted for primary education was £9,000. From the report of the Board it would be seen that of that amount £6,460 had been spent on buildings, leaving a balance of £2,540 for the education of 5,000 children; so that, instead of its costing £5 or £3 a head for educating those children, the real amount was something like 10s. a head—a smaller cost for education than had been arrived at as yet in any of the Australian colonies. It was plain that the cost of education had not been £3 a head, or anything like it; and it was equally plain that the object sought to be attained by the honorable member was the introduction of denominational teaching. If the object were to extend primary education under the national system, he could state that if the schools referred to by the honorable member had any existence at all, they could be at once brought under the regulations of the Board, and receive the assistance they required.

MR. DOUGLAS: No, no.

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: The honorable member said "No, no," but he (the Secretary for Lands and Works) could point out that the Education Act would effectually prevent the Board from refusing aid in the manner alleged by the honorable member. He would put it to the House to say who was right. The 7th clause of the Act stated:—

"The Board may assist any primary school that may be submitted to its supervision and inspection and that may conform to the rules

and bye-laws and fulfil all the requirements of the Board provided that it shall not be competent to the said Board to contribute towards the building or repairs of any school unless the fee simple thereof shall have been previously vested in the said Board."

The 8th clause read thus :—

"The Board shall cause all schools receiving aid under this Act to be periodically visited by paid inspectors and all assistance shall be immediately withdrawn from any school which shall not be conducted in accordance with the rules and bye-laws of the Board provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorise any inspection of or interference with the special religious instructions which may be given in any such school during the hours set apart for such instruction."

Honorable members would admit that the power given by the Act to the Board of General Education was clear and explicit—there could be no doubt whatever as to its extent. Yet the honorable member informed the House that they were limited by the Act. He would invite the attention of honorable members to the wording of the regulations framed by the Board of Education upon that Act to enable them to give assistance to non-vested schools :—

"The Board will give assistance to schools of which the fee simple of the land whereon they are built is not vested in the Board, provided that such schools are conducted in conformity with the principles (so far as they are consistent with the regulations set forth below) laid down for the management of vested schools. The Board will, however, discountenance any attempt to make these schools further the ends of denominational rivalry, and they will not grant aid to a non-vested school in any locality where it does not appear that the existing means of public instruction in vested schools are insufficient.

- "1. The aid to non-vested schools will be limited to salary and books.
- "2. Before aid can be granted, the Board must be satisfied that the case is deserving of assistance; that there is reason to expect that the school will be efficiently and permanently supported; that the school-house is sufficient for the purpose, and suitably furnished; and that the teacher's competency has been ascertained by examination before the general inspector and one or more examiners appointed by the Board.
- "3. To entitle a school to the continuance of aid, the house and furniture must be kept in good repair by means of local contributions; the school conducted in all respects in a satisfactory manner, and in accordance with the regulations of the Board, and the instructions of their inspectors, 'Provided (24 Victoria, No. 6) that nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorise any inspection of or interference with the special religious instruction which may be given in any such school during the hours set apart for such instruction; and there must be

an average daily attendance of at least thirty children.

"NOTE.—The Board reserve to themselves the right of giving aid in special cases to schools where the average daily attendance may be *temporarily* below thirty.

- "4. While the nomination of teachers in non-vested schools will rest with the local patrons or managers, the Board will require to be satisfied with the conduct of the teacher and the efficiency of the school, as a condition to the payment and continuance of the salary.
- "5. A time table, sanctioned by the Board, must be kept constantly hung up in a conspicuous part of the school-room.
- "6. During the hours appropriated in the time table to the ordinary instruction of the pupils, the usual routine of a national school must be observed in non-vested schools; but the Board will not exercise any control over the use of the school at any other time.

"NOTE.—Any religious instruction imparted in the school must therefore occupy some time before or after the hours fixed for the ordinary duties, so as to admit of the convenient absence of any children whose parents object to their attendance."

Honorable members would observe that the aid given to non-vested schools, according to those regulations, was superior to that which was proposed to be given by the honorable member, because all that was required was the attendance of thirty children. It would not be necessary for him to read the five remaining clauses of the regulations, as he had proved sufficiently from the Act of Parliament, and the regulations themselves, that if the honorable member were really sincere in not desiring to introduce the denominational system, in connection with the schools he had referred to, every one of them could receive support under the regulations of the Board. Having satisfied the House upon this point, he did not think it would be necessary to detain the House much longer, but he would invite the attention of honorable members to the conditions attached to the resolutions moved by the honorable member. The first thing which must strike honorable members was the absence, in the conditions, of any test whatever to be applied to the teachers. In point of fact, there was no guide as to their efficiency whatever. He admitted, however, that no great qualification could be expected from a man who was to live on forty pounds a year, for that was all he was to receive; and that was all he would endeavor to qualify himself for. The consequence would be that they would raise up a new race of teachers in the colony,—a race he could not describe otherwise than as a parcel of hedge teachers, travelling through the country, and who, instead of doing good to education, would damage it most materially. Now, the honorable member had stated that those gratuities to be given to teachers were to be measured by results, that was, they were to be ascertained by fixed standards. As the honorable member had observed, the fixed standards for results

were to be found in the revised code of the Educational Board of the Privy Council; and so far as he (Mr. Macalister) could discover, those regulations were the most unpopular of the numerous never-ending regulations of the Board. Now, what did Mr. Lowe say, to whom the honorable member referred and quoted as an authority on the subject?—Mr. Lowe, who was Vice-President of the Committee of the Privy Council, said, with respect to those regulations:—

“Such is the extraordinary difficulty and complexity of the regulations, that you cannot expect any statesman who is not practically acquainted and connected with the department to master them.”

There was the objection which also occurred to him with regard to those results. In the first place they involved a return being made by the teachers, and they offered a temptation to the teachers to make false returns, and he maintained it was not too much to say that such a temptation would be acted on. It had been the case in New South Wales under circumstances very similar; for whether it was by results, or by the number of children, if a return had to be made, either under one system or another, the temptation was precisely the same. He found, on referring to some evidence that was taken before a select committee of the Legislative Council of New South Wales some years ago, the chairman of which was Mr. Lowe—a gentleman who had been mentioned as an authority;—and the witness he was about to refer to was a gentleman formerly a resident, and well known in Brisbane, and who now held a high official position in New South Wales—he referred to Mr. Duncan, a gentleman who it was well known was not actuated by any sectarian views, but a gentleman of a highly cultivated mind, and who desired to extend the blessings of education to all alike, and who had a practical experience in the matter of education, as he had been a teacher himself, and knew the system to which he had referred as to those returns, and knew the effect of those returns in the case of small schools—that gentleman was examined before a select committee of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, and one of the questions put to him by the then Colonial Secretary was as follows:—

“In point of fact, are not schoolmasters very inefficient? They are.

“That arises from there being a number of them instead of one? Yes.”

Now, that was one of the difficulties to which the honorable member alluded, because he allowed that in large towns no such difficulties would arise. Mr. Duncan was next asked by Mr. Cowper—

“You do not speak from your own knowledge? I speak from my own knowledge, because I was engaged in conducting a school for some time at Maitland, and I became so disgusted with the

thing that I gave it up, though I should have preferred it above all other occupations if I thought it was possible to do anything like justice to it. I may mention here the corrupting influence of the present system of paying the schoolmaster. The Government gives a half-penny a day to each child; the children do not attend above the half time, and it is left entirely to the schoolmaster whether he shall charge for the whole time or so many days as the child has really attended. In several cases I have known the same child to be put down for the whole quarter in two different schools. There is no check upon this; for though the clergyman signs the paper, he only sees the return of one schoolmaster, and even if he saw both, he could not take trouble to examine whether the two William Duncans mentioned in the returns were the same individual.

“You know this as a fact? I have seen the papers.”

Now that, he thought, would be admitted to prove that any system of returns that would be required to be furnished, held out a very strong temptation to the teacher to make a false return. But while the system, for the reason he had given, was unsound in principle, he maintained that it was also positively unjust. The honorable member took the trouble of quoting a great many authorities to prove the advantage of the system to which he referred; but he (Mr. Macalister) must confess that, with the exception of one individual, to whom he referred when talking of results in connection with the system of the Privy Council regulations, he entirely failed to satisfy his mind that there was any advantage in the result system, or that the principle itself was a just one. In looking over an article on the operation of the French systems of education, in the *Quarterly Review* for last April, he happened to come on a paragraph which exactly met the very objection, or rather supported the very objection, he was arguing, or was about to argue. Now, what he maintained was this—and the honorable member knew it well, for he had called his attention to the fact—that in all public schools it was a well-known fact, that every boy who shewed an aptitude for learning, who had a natural gift for it, gave the teacher less trouble than any of his other scholars—

MR. BLAKENEY: There's nothing in that.

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: “There's nothing in that,” says the honorable member—

MR. BLAKENEY: There's no disputing it.

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: There is no disputing it, and he was glad to hear the honorable member say so, for if it was admitted that the scholar who shewed the greatest aptitude for learning gave the least trouble to the teacher, what followed? Did it not follow that the teacher neglected those whom he ought to teach—those who required his teaching—and gave his attention to those who did not require it? That was not only a conclusion, but was a well

known result. The writer in the *Quarterly Review*, with reference to this subject, says:—

"We remember complaining, somewhat severely, of the demoralising effect which the species of ambition must almost inevitably have upon the teachers, inducing them, for at least six months before hand, to bestow an undue portion of their time and care upon the very pupils in whose case no inducement is needed (for it must be, certainly, much pleasanter at any time to teach a clever boy than a dull one); and, while helping those who do not absolutely want help, to neglect the far larger number who can only move if they have some one occasionally at hand to induce and encourage them. An intelligent Frenchman replied, that this was but a part, and not the worst part, of the evil. He observed that not only were the clever pupils thus severed from the class, but that a similar operation went on in the minds of the picked boys themselves. For that, when any one was selected to compete in that particular line for which he had most aptitude, his special gift, indeed, was submitted to all the appliances of forced cultivation; but the rest of his faculties and tasks were allowed to drag behind in utter neglect. This observation seems worthy of the attention of more persons than the French Council of Public Instruction; but the injury done to the average boys (who are, of course, by far the most numerous) by this exclusive training of a few, is so direct and so immediate, that not even the warmest friend of these contrivances can shut his eyes to it."

He thought he had shewn, at any rate he had endeavored to do so, to the House, that the conditions the honorable member had affixed to his proposition, were both unsound and unjust, and that they ought to have no place in any system of education supported by the Legislature. He had said, perhaps, enough upon the question, because he had really, beyond meeting the honorable member upon some salient points, to confess he was not able to go into a great amount of detail which was involved in the honorable member's observations. But he could not refrain from observing that the system introduced into this colony, notwithstanding everything that had been said against it, had been eminently successful, and that the report of the Board for the present year would shew an increase over last year, of no less than thirty-nine per cent. He would desire again to impress on the House, and on the honorable member himself, the fact, that while it was most desirable, if they could carry it out—and he saw no difficulty about it—to have one system of education in the colony, it behoved all who had an interest in education, and who were not actuated by sectarian prejudices,—who were not bigoted enough to demand that the Board should extend support to sectarian schools—to support the Board, and to place the schools under the Board; and if they did so, a much greater amount of good would be effected than the Board had yet been able to carry out. He was happy to say the feeling that existed on that point at one time, was not so strong now, and during the last few

months several non-vested schools had come under the Board, and submitted to their conditions, and were carrying them out very successfully. He thought that, with those facts before the House, it was not too much for him to ask the honorable member to withdraw his motion. The honorable member stated that the system he was desirous of initiating was the voluntary system. Well, the system of education as carried out by the Board was a voluntary system, and required action at the hands of those who wished to take advantage of it; and he maintained, in the name of the Board, that no application that had been made had been refused, where the parties were willing honestly to comply with the conditions. Now, what did the honorable member wish to apply tests for? Reading, writing, and arithmetic? Surely the honorable member must think that a very small amount of education was necessary for those children, if he would substitute a new system with tests for those three branches of education only—for the three R's as they were frequently described. He believed the honorable member was aware, both from the character of the teacher required, and from the nature of the system, that a much larger amount of education than that he seemed to propose, was given at the schools under the Board. Without going into that point, he thought he might well compare the description of the teachers under the national system with that of those proposed to be introduced by the honorable member. As he had already observed, the honorable member applied no test to the character of the teachers—no test whatever—but he admitted this, that he did apply a test to the pupils which he (the Secretary for Lands and Works) presumed he was justified in applying to the teacher, and which was that he should be able to read, to write, and to count. Probably that was as much as a teacher of that description could be expected to possess if he was only to receive forty pounds a year. He did not see they could expect more. Perhaps the House would like to be informed as to the character of the teachers the Board required. The regulations said:—

"The appointment of teachers rests solely with the Board, who will, however, pay regard to any recommendation of candidates by Local Patrons. A teacher should be a person of Christian sentiment,"

The honorable member did not require that—

"of calm temper and discretion, imbued with a spirit of peace, of obedience to the law and loyalty to the Sovereign; and should not—"

He would here ask the honorable member's attention—

"only possess the art of communicating knowledge —"

The honorable member would admit that that was an important art—that a man

might possess a very excellent education himself, and not be able to communicate it to others—

“but be capable of moulding the minds of youth, and of giving a useful direction to the power which education confers. These are the qualities for which patrons of schools, on their recommendation of teachers, should anxiously look. They are those which the Board are anxious to find, to encourage, and to reward.

“Candidates for appointment as teachers must possess at least a competent knowledge of the subjects usually taught in the primary schools, that is, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography. This knowledge will be tested by an examination before the general inspector, and one or more examiners, who will report thereon to the Board. Candidates must also attend for a sufficient period at the Normal School, to acquire a familiarity with the methods of teaching there adopted. As a general rule, no teacher will be appointed who has not undergone such a course of training and examination at the Normal School, and whose competency has not been thoroughly tested. Teachers, on first entering the service of the Board, or who have not been classified, are termed probationers, and receive reduced rates of salary, at the discretion of the commissioners.

“The Board will not appoint or continue as teacher any person who is a recognised minister of religion, or who acts in public as a religious instructor, the exercise of such a function by a teacher being calculated to excite religious jealousy, and thus to interfere with the impartial and national character of the school.”

Now, qualified teachers under the Board received a salary running from £100 to £200 per annum, and the reason for giving them that amount was to induce the best teachers in the national schools in the mother country to come amongst us. Many of the teachers under the Board, indeed by far the largest number, were men of families, or men who had passed examination in the normal schools of Ireland, and who had come out fully qualified to teach the youth of the colony, and to give them a good education. The honorable member had stated that the system under the Board was not the highest system. But he thought the honorable member had failed to establish that by proof. Now he, on the contrary, thought he might maintain that the system taught in the schools under the Board was precisely the same as the national system of Ireland. He found an opinion by the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on the national system of Ireland; and he could compare that system, and had well compared it, with the system of the Privy Council.

“The Lord-Lieutenant recently visited the National Model Schools in Marlborough street, Dublin, which he minutely inspected. His Excellency was then conducted to the training institution, where a number of teachers who had completed the prescribed course of studies were then undergoing examination. His Excellency took much interest in the proceedings, and put several questions to the teachers. At the close of the examination he delivered a short address to

them. After congratulating them on their creditable answering, he said that the national system was one of the greatest features in the country's progress:—It has now, he said, been established upwards of thirty years, and it is a matter of satisfaction to see by the last report of the commissioners that it is progressing with a most striking and gratifying result. It is true that there are many things in Ireland not so well managed as in England, but in the matter of education, Ireland is considerably in advance of England; and I look forward to the day, though distant, when we may possibly see in England such a system as that which exists in Ireland. We have made considerable progress in England, but the progress made in the working of the English system is inferior to that of the Irish system, and I hope that the same system of education will continue to be given to Irishmen, and the same inestimable benefit continued to this country. We have the happiness to see that, notwithstanding much opposition, the national schools are extending their benefits to all creeds and denominations in this country; and, perhaps, nowhere is this more shewn than in those schools where we now stand, where we see working in harmony teachers belonging to the different religious denominations in the country.”

Now seeing the system adopted here was entirely the same as the national system of Ireland, a man did not require to belong to any particular or peculiar denomination, in order to become a teacher in one of their schools; but under the system proposed by the honorable member, the teacher must belong to a certain class or denomination, and no others would be admitted into the schools. That was one of the reasons he would assign for not being able to agree with the honorable member's resolution. The honorable member had said that there were twelve police districts in the colony without schools. Whose fault was that? Would the honorable member be able, under his system, to supply those districts with schools? The honorable member stated that the standard of attendance required under his system was forty children; but under the system of the Board the standard of attendance was only thirty children. The honorable member had alleged, as a charge against the system of education under the Board that there were no fewer than twelve police districts in the colony where there were no schools. Well, the Board of Education system was the voluntary system, and it was open to the districts to make application for schools, and, if the promoters complied with the regulations, they could have schools, either of the vested or non-vested class, supported by the Board, though there should be a less attendance of pupils than the honorable member required. The honorable member, he thought, asked the question, why not take up the other schools? Well, the Government and the Board were prepared to take up the other schools, and always had been; and, if the applicants chose to comply with the conditions he had read to the House

—and no honorable member would deny that those conditions were fair and reasonable—the Board was prepared to take them up, and must do so. The honorable member, in conclusion, referred to clerical influence and clerical—

Mr. DOUGLAS said he did not use the word clerical at all, but referred to certain religious societies.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: The honorable member said he did not use the word clerical, but referred to certain religious societies. Now, he would be the last to interfere with any gentleman, clerical or lay, who took an interest in the advancement of education; but it was not because the party taking an interest in education was a clergyman or belonged to a religious body—it was not because of that, he admitted, that he was placed in a better position, or had superior advantages given to him, or displayed superior advantages in the education of the young, to those of the person adopted by the Board. Honorable members would admit, if they went back into the history of England, that the very men to whom the honorable member had referred were the very men who had stood in the way of education, and had prevented it. He hoped he had not stated anything that was likely to give rise to any acrimonious feeling. He had gone as deeply into the matter as he thought it was necessary to do. As he said before, they had a system of education that was the likeliest to succeed, and that now was being carried out with the utmost success; and he, therefore, protested against the introduction of any other. The principle laid down by the honorable member, or any other, would, in his opinion, instead of advancing education, do much to retard it. He trusted that the honorable member would withdraw the motion, and, if he would not, that the House would reject it.

Mr. WALSH proposed the adjournment of the debate, in order that honorable members might have an opportunity of carefully considering the important speeches that had been delivered on the subject; but as several honorable members opposed the proposition, he withdrew it.

Dr. CHALLINOR contended that the national system was equally applicable to municipalities as to the country districts. He said the honorable member for Port Curtis had complained of the regulations and conduct of the present Board, in contradistinction to the conduct and regulations of the New South Wales Board, while the honorable the Secretary for Lands and Works had stated what were the conditions on which aid was given under the regulations of the New South Wales Board; and one of those clearly shewed that non-vested schools receiving aid were not to forward denominationalism, and that aid was only to be afforded to them where the accommodation of the national schools was insuffi-

cient. Now, he understood that when application was made for aid to non-vested schools and refused, it had been because the trustees refused to comply with the conditions of the Board under which aid could be granted. He needed not to refer to the disadvantages of paying masters according to the number of children attending school; because, at any rate in a young country, it would not be right to regulate the remuneration of a good man in that way: if the teacher performed his duty well, he ought to be remunerated, whatever the number of scholars he taught, large or small. With regard to the cost of tuition in the schools under the Board, he found that in 1864 the sum of £4,642 4s. 10d. was paid to the teachers of all ranks, and that the number of scholars on the roll was 4,450, leaving a fraction over £1 per head as the expense to the country of teaching the children. The honorable member for Port Curtis had directed the attention of the House to the standards required under the Privy Council system at home. If he remembered the regulations of the Board of which he was once a member, he should know that standards were fixed for testing the fitness and the attainments of the teachers; and that it was also specified by standards what were the attainments required in children, in the respective classes; and, still further, that for certain acquirements, pupils received scholarships which enabled them to complete their education at the Grammar School. He (Dr. Challinor) had no doubt that was a very great stimulus to numbers of the children at the school;—it was not a dead letter, for a number of scholarships had been already awarded. The commission did not report that the Privy Council system was the best: they were rather in favor of purely secular education; but they stated, that under existing circumstances, considering the number of schools established, the amount of property vested in them, and the religious feeling existing amongst the denominations, it was the only one which was practicable in England. As already referred to, the increase in our national schools during the past year, was thirty-nine per cent. This, he believed, was a greater percentage of increase than the increase of the population; and it shewed that the system was growing in favor with the population, notwithstanding the opposition that had been brought against it by interested parties. He was quite sure, and he had indubitable proofs of the correctness of his opinion, that if the people were left to themselves, they would support the national system of education—they would have no desire for denominational education;—if the laymen were left alone, they would not trouble the country for the establishment of denominational schools, but would go in strongly for national schools. He hoped the honorable member for Port Curtis would withdraw his motion; or, if not, that the honor-

able member would accept the decision of the House as unfavorable to him, and would not trouble them any more this Parliament with such motions.

Mr. DOUGLAS, in reply, admitted that there did not appear to be any desire on the part of the House generally to discuss the question that he had introduced. He believed the House were quite sensible of its importance, and wished to do justice to it; but, at present, probably it was the opinion of the majority that nothing was to be gained by his needlessly pressing his motion. He confessed that he took the step of bringing it forward without consulting any one in the House. He was not attached to any party in the House, and he took his own counsel in the matter. Of course, it was not to be supposed that such a motion was to be carried without some concert; and, therefore, he was prepared for its not receiving any consideration further than that which it had received, for which he thanked the House. He did not think that the honorable gentleman who had replied to him had done so in the spirit of a man who desired to deal with the subject of education in a frank spirit—simply to settle the claims of the conflicting interests, and to give education to the largest possible number of the community. The figures that were before the country would shew the public that those assertions which they saw in the papers were not correct, and that the national system, as at present administered, did nothing like what it ought to do for the country. He did not wish to stand in the way of the administration of that system; but it was extravagant to an unparalleled extent, and the figures that he had quoted from the last page of the report were irreconcilable with any other conclusion. The honorable gentleman opposite (the Secretary for Lands and Works) was extremely disingenuous in his reply. There was an expenditure of £12,735. What was the use of blinking it?—why not meet it boldly?—why not say that it was necessary?—why not say, We are determined to carry out the system at all hazards; we are willing to carry it out, and we shall have our own way? All authorities agreed that it was not fair to take the number on the roll, but to take the average attendance at the schools. He (Mr. Douglas) had done so, and applied it in every instance; and he affirmed that there was no reliable test except the daily average. He was not an upholder of the denominational system. There had, he believed, been a great waste of money under that system from improper inspection. The mistake was that the money had been handed over to the heads of the denominations;—he did not uphold that. It was shewn by one of the inspectors, from whose reports he had already quoted, that frauds were committed by highly respectable persons, in falsifying the returns of the attendance of children at

school, so as to ensure the Government allowance in support of the denominational schools. It was, however, ridiculous for the Government of Queensland to say that they could not apply to other schools the same principle they applied to the national schools to secure efficiency. He (Mr. Douglas) did not plead for inefficiency; he pleaded for the utmost efficiency; and he contended that it could only be secured in the way he proposed. The honorable gentleman, the Chairman of the Board of Education, had dwelt upon the fact that even those teachers who might have an average daily attendance of forty children, would receive only £40 a year. That was a good deal. The teachers were not to live on that alone; they received school fees, and so did the teachers under the National Board. But, as he had before remarked, there was no return of those fees; and he complained of it. The average receipts of the teachers under the Government were represented to be £77. He thought it would be nearer the mark, including their fees, to put them down at £120. However, he hoped that the tendency of his remarks, and the growth of popular opinion, would force the honorable gentleman to admit a larger number of the non-vested schools than were at present admitted to a participation of the public expenditure controlled by the Board. There was no doubt the Board had thrown all the obstacles they could in the way, on the ground that the schools were denominational—which had no right to be a ground with them at all. The moment the schools came under the Board, they were national;—if at any time they objected to the system of the Board, they ceased to belong to the Board. He knew that there was a capital school building on Spring Hill which had applied for aid, but had never received it; and others had been deterred from applying for aid, from the notorious fact that the Board ever refused it. He asked the honorable gentleman, was there one non-vested school receiving aid, which did not receive aid before Separation? The schools were deterred from applying for aid, because their applications had been in so many instances refused.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS: One within the last month, at Redbank. Let them comply with the conditions of the Board, and they would receive aid.

Mr. PUGH: At South Brisbane, too.

Mr. DOUGLAS: He was sorry to contradict the honorable member. It was a fact that there was no non-vested school, except that at Redbank and the one at Yandilla, receiving aid from the Board that had not been in receipt of aid before Separation. Yet there were a dozen schools in the colony which were giving effectual assistance to the education of the people, and they received nothing.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS : Perhaps the Board had schools in the same places.

Mr. DOUGLAS : The honorable member had said that one of the results of the standard system was to induce an unnatural attention to the best boys, and that the boys were forced. That was the opposite of what he (Mr. Douglas) took to be the effect of the standard system : a low standard was adopted, and it was according to that the tests were applied. The schoolmaster was not paid for the few well-preserved boys who were crammed, but for the large number of boys who were educated up to the standard—who shewed a certain proficiency in the three essentials of education—in reading, writing, and arithmetic. However, all the objections that the honorable gentleman urged had been early anticipated in Victoria. All he contended for was, that those essentials should be afforded by the Government. He did not go in for the teaching of mathematics and foreign languages as the duty of the Government. The duty of the Government was not that of education in its highest sense—the building up of the human being to his most exalted development and aims. It would be inexpedient to attempt it. He knew that once to infringe on the domain of opinion was to cease to be tolerant; that even to propound opinions the most sacred, and the most accepted, was to enter the region of controversy; and there the conflict of opinions began and tolerance ended. Therefore, the Government were not bound to interfere in the inculcation of speculative opinion. This was a delicate subject to touch upon; the extracts from the Scriptures that were read in the national schools by the children would enable the teachers to instruct them in the fundamental truths of Christianity; but there were some principles in those extracts which he was not sure it was wise that the teachers of the Government should inculcate. These things should be left entirely in the hands of those whose special duty it was to inculcate them—the clergy; not the Government. He must take exception to the term bigotry, which the honorable member had applied to him.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS : No, no.

Mr. DOUGLAS : That was in violation of all principles of toleration. He might turn round, and, *tu quoque*, call the honorable gentleman a bigot. He should not like to affirm that of him.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS assured the honorable member for Port Curtis that he did not apply the term to him.

Mr. DOUGLAS : Well, it was applied to some persons in or out of the House. The honorable member seemed to suppose that if some such motion as that before the House were adopted, the education of the young would fall into the hands of hedgerow teachers—that men would be picked up in the high-

ways and by-ways for the purpose of educating the young. It was a fact that the honorable member believed certain Roman Catholics—he had not used the words, but he meant that—would come out, and, because they were of that denomination, he was against the motion.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS : The honorable member was laboring under a delusion. The greatest number of our teachers were Roman Catholics, and it was perfectly ridiculous for the honorable member to talk like that.

Mr. DOUGLAS : Well, he meant that they would come from Ireland.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS : Germany.

Mr. DOUGLAS proceeded to argue at length in the same line, and quoted from the reports of authorities on education in the other colonies, to shew that it was not absolutely necessary that all teachers should hold certificates of their educational acquirements, and that certain persons who would not submit themselves to an educational test might possess a special aptitude for imparting instruction to the young. In conclusion, he said that the opinion of the House was against him, and he wished not to force it further. Still, he thought it well that the matter should have been discussed, because the discussion would tend to dispel some illusions, and it would pave the way for much better things in the future. He asked the leave of the House to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

CIVIL SERVICE ACT REPEAL BILL.

The House ordered, on the motion of Mr. PUGH, that the order of the day for the second reading of this Bill, and the Bill itself, be discharged from the paper.