

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1866**

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Wednesday, 10 October, 1866.*

*Mineral Prospectors' Rights.*—The Unemployed—New Military Barracks.—Gold Export Duty Act Repeal.—Stamp Duties.—Telegraphic Extension (Rockhampton to Keppel Bay).—The Improvement of the Navigation of the Rivers Brisbane and Bremer.

## MINERAL PROSPECTORS' RIGHTS.

Dr. CHALLINOR moved—

That the answer of the Secretary for Lands on the 25th ultimo, to the question, "Whether the Government will have any objection to issue prospectors' rights, so as to prevent unprincipled persons surreptitiously depriving the discoverers of coal, copper, or other minerals, of the advantages derivable therefrom," is unsatisfactory.

The answer to the question was, that—

"The Government cannot alter the regulations in connection with the selection of coal lands without the consent, by resolution, of both Houses of Parliament, as prescribed by the fourth section of the Alienation of Crown Lands Act of 1860; and as the existing regulations allow persons to secure the right of purchase without competition, by depositing one-fourth of the purchase money, and also entitle them to prospect or search for coal during a term of twelve months, the interests of prospectors appear to be sufficiently protected." He did not mean to say that the first part of the answer was unsatisfactory :—

"That the Government had not power to alter the regulations in connection with the selection of coal lands without the consent, by resolution, of both Houses of Parliament, as prescribed by the

fourth section of the Alienation of Crown Lands Act of 1860 ;"

but he denied that the latter part of the answer was satisfactory—for what were those regulations? The first and second ran thus :—

"Persons desiring to select land for the purpose of mining coal, may apply to the Surveyor-General in the form annexed, and such application shall state the area of the land applied for—not being less than eighty acres, or more than six hundred and forty acres—and shall also contain a clear and sufficient description of the boundaries, and reference to some known point whereby the locality may be defined with certainty.

"Every such application shall be accompanied by a deposit of five shillings for each acre applied for."

Now, from those regulations, it would be seen that before any person could prospect for coal on Crown lands, he must accurately define the boundaries of the land he intended to prospect, and deposit with the Surveyor-General a sum of not less than £20; which sum of money he was liable to forfeit, as well as lose all his labor and expenses; for, by the fifth regulation, before he could obtain the grant in fee-simple, he must not only pay the balance of the purchase money, but—

"Within one year from the approval of the application must have mined from the land, and conveyed to some place where it was available for steam vessels or manufacturing purposes, a quantity of good merchantable coal, not being less than one ton for each acre of land selected by him."

Sinking shafts and boring for coal were very expensive operations; and, as was well known, they were frequently unsuccessful. One gentleman, in Ipswich, who had bored for coal to a depth of one hundred and eighty feet, had been obliged to abandon the search, owing to his want of success and the great cost of the operation. Yet, notwithstanding the great risk which had often to be incurred of losing the whole of the outlay of capital in prosecuting this enterprise, every person who prospected for coal on Crown lands might be prosecuted for trespass, unless he complied with the preliminary conditions of the regulations, which were very oppressive, as compared with the gold regulations. For the sum of ten shillings per annum, a miner could prospect for gold on any of the waste lands of the colony; become the absolute possessor of all the gold he might find within a defined area; and, as a reward for the discovery of gold in any new locality within the limits of a known gold field, he became entitled to receive ten additional claims, and twenty claims if the discovery was situated at a distance of three miles, or upwards, from the limits of any known gold field. The regulations for leasing auriferous tracts and quartz reefs were equally liberal. If coal fields might become more valuable than gold fields, as had been asserted of the coal fields of Great Britain, every encouragement ought to be given to develop them, and thus secure

a valuable export which would assist in counterbalancing the great imports of the colony. Without such encouragement and protection, it was not to be expected that the search for coal, or other valuable mineral, other than gold, would be vigorously prosecuted. For, as the law now stood, by ascertaining the character of the rocks perforated, an expert could deprive the prospectors of the benefits of their discovery, by forestalling their application before the seam of coal had been actually struck, or before they were in a position to comply with the regulations. A case of this kind recently occurred at Redbank; and the same might occur with regard to prospecting for copper or any other valuable non-auriferous mineral. He felt sure that the answer referred to had been framed without due consideration, and he was equally certain that the honorable the Minister for Public Lands, now that the subject had been brought fully under his notice, would take the necessary steps to secure to the prospectors in question the protection sought for.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he had listened to the remarks of the honorable member for Ipswich in support of the motion before the House, and had failed to discover in them anything which warranted the conclusion that his answer to the honorable member's question was an unsatisfactory one. On the contrary, all that had been said must lead to the conclusion that the answer was highly satisfactory. The honorable member himself had shewn that the law was not unsatisfactory, also that the Government had acted in accordance with the law. He had also argued, that because there was a difference between the regulations concerning gold and those relating to mining for coal, therefore the regulations affecting coal prospectors were unjust. But there was no analogy between the two cases, because the right to search for coal was co-extensive with the length and breadth of the land; whereas the right to mine for gold—which, according to the honorable member, was the less valuable product of the two—extended only over a limited area. At the present time, there were mines in operation that could produce more than twenty times what was necessary to supply the colony with coal for very many years to come, whether for local use or export; and therefore the regulations could hardly be deemed unsatisfactory. Legislation, indeed, was powerless to prevent competition amongst prospectors, and it was idle to attempt it. As to the case of personal hardship alluded to by the honorable member for Ipswich, it appeared upon the face of it that the men supposed to be injured had not used the privileges accorded them by law, or even asked for information about them. Moreover, he had heard that those men were actually in the employ of the person who had availed himself of the law to obtain the coal mine by fulfilling the necessary conditions,

and it seemed hardly justifiable that the men should have thus placed themselves in competition with their employer, even during their spare time. But the exercise of vigilance was necessary in mining, as in other enterprises, and the Government could not prevent one prospector watching what another was doing. The fact was, that the law, as it existed, simply gave the same opportunity to all alike to search for coal, and all who complied with the regulations could take up land for mining purposes. To extend the gold miner's right to the finder of coal would not work well at all. In a word, he (the Secretary for Public Lands) conceived that the facts proved that the regulations relating to coal had been wide-spread in their efficacy, and no more liberal law was necessary.

Mr. R. CRIBB said he had a faint recollection of the answer of the honorable the Secretary for Public Lands, but he knew that at the time he considered it very unsatisfactory. He did not think the honorable gentleman had in his speech touched the matter at issue at all. After what had occurred, and been brought before the House by the honorable member for Ipswich, the Government could easily introduce a clause into the regulations to prevent a repetition of such cases as they had heard of, and to give a man who made a discovery a chance of getting the benefit of it. He denied that the existing regulations were satisfactory in their results; though they might be satisfactory to those persons who took advantage of the discoveries of others, and who reaped the benefit of the labor of others. Even though the men in the case that had been referred to did not pay the fees under the regulations, he contended that that was no justification for the man who had the money in his pocket, and who took up the land on which coal had been discovered by those men. As to the argument that men should not come into competition with their employers, by using their spare time for their own advantage, he could hardly stand when he heard that statement from the honorable the Secretary for Public Lands. He trusted that the honorable gentleman would put an end to the discussion, by getting up and saying that he would consent to what was asked for.

Dr. CHALLINOR, in reply, said that when he spoke of coal fields being more valuable than gold fields, he spoke of it as a branch of general industry, and not as to the results of individual miners. The principle of the protection he advocated was fully acknowledged in the Pastoral Leases Act of 1863, which provided that the applicant who first occupied new country with the requisite amount of stock should have a preferential claim for a lease. If the honorable the Minister for Public Lands would promise him to get the regulations amended, he would consent to withdraw the motion, but if he would not he should press it to a division.

The question was then put and negatived, on a division.

Ayes, 8.  
Mr. R. Cribb  
" Brookes  
" Sandeman  
" Haly  
" Stephens  
Dr. Challinor  
Mr. Pugh  
" B. Cribb

Noes, 14.  
Mr. Macalister  
" Lilley  
" Fitzsimmons  
" Harden  
" Taylor  
" Palmer  
" Watts  
" Forbes  
" Wienholt  
" Raff  
" Coxen  
" Royds  
" McLean  
" Bell

#### THE UNEMPLOYED.

Mr. PUGH moved—

That the petition presented by me on the 9th instant, with reference to the unemployed, together with the accompanying petition from sundry merchants and others, be printed.

He regretted, he said, that the discussion, which might have ensued from this motion, had been to some extent forestalled by one that had already taken place on a motion for the adjournment of the House. As the petition in question had been referred to in that discussion, he felt bound to adhere to his motion. The petition merely asked that steps should be taken to relieve the petitioners from the destitution and want which existed amongst them. It had been stated by several honorable members that there was a great dearth of labor in the north, and that the Government might despatch a number of those persons thither, to get employment, which they had failed to obtain in the south. According to the statement of the honorable the Minister for Public Works, very few persons had applied for a passage since the first discussion on the subject had taken place; and he (Mr. Pugh) had had a note put into his hands, in which the writer represented himself to be the secretary to the committee of the unemployed, stating that about one hundred persons begged for return passages from Rockhampton, and that destitution there had reached such a stage, that bakers' carts were being stuck-up in the streets by the unemployed, and bread taken by force. He had merely the statement which had been given to him. The subject was, however, one that should receive some consideration from the House. Under the present difficulties of the country, there were, no doubt, some obstacles in the way of keeping up the relief camps on the scale heretofore maintained. According to the statement of the honorable the Secretary for Public Works, those relief camps would cost £52,000 a year, or £1,000 a week, to maintain them. That was an appalling statement; yet, no doubt, a great amount of destitution did prevail. Not only had the House the statement of the unemployed, in proof of it, but, also, an indorsing petition, which had been sent in by persons of unimpeachable integrity and acknowledged position—amongst them being the mayor of the city, the Roman Catholic Bishop, Anglican clergy-

men, and others—praying that some action might be taken by the House to relieve the present difficulty. He should be glad, upon that, to leave the matter entirely in the hands of the House. He did not know whether he understood the honorable the Secretary for Public Works aright; but, from his statement, he assumed that a number of persons had struck work in the relief camps. The honorable gentleman did not tell the House on what grounds those persons had struck. Although he (Mr. Pugh) was no advocate for strikes, under any circumstances, he believed the principal cause of the strike was that the married men and the single men had been placed on the same level. He believed the Government desired to do all they could for the relief of the really destitute, and to obtain employment for them; but he would like to have more definite information than he yet had of the demand for labor in the north—and in place of the somewhat contrary statement he had mentioned to the House. There might or might not be persons in the neighborhood of Brisbane who had not been relieved, notwithstanding that the "Platypus" had left on the previous day with a large number on board; and he believed she was to make another trip to the north if persons were forthcoming. Honorable members representing Ipswich had, he thought, something to complain of in the matter of the disposal of the unemployed in relief camps and otherwise, inasmuch as those persons might have been employed where their labor was actually required. It had been said that they had been employed in the neighborhood of Brisbane, where they were not actually wanted, while in the neighborhood of Ipswich they could have been of some service. It was absolutely nonsensical to say that there was no work on roads where railways were in course of construction, for the cross roads of the colony must be kept up; and he thought that if there had been greater determination shewn to get all the work possible out of the persons in the relief camps, the unemployed difficulty would have been much narrowed. While he was anxious to see destitution relieved, it had been brought under his notice, and with truth, that in the neighborhood of Brisbane persons had actually left the employment of farmers and others to get three days' employment from the Government for fifteen shillings. Such persons deserved no sympathy whatever; and he trusted that the Government would exercise due discretion, and not employ any such. He did not know with whom the distribution of the relief rested; but if in the hands of the Engineer of Roads, he must say that that officer was a most improper person for the duty. However, it was under the authority of the Minister for Public Works, who, he hoped, would see after everything himself. If the persons employed did not do the work they were engaged for, but went in for the "Government stroke," they should be sent



away; for the country had no right to pay them unless they worked. Unfortunately, a great many deserving persons had been made the victims and tools of others who were nothing but miserable loafers. In the fair distribution of the relief asked for, the Government had to exercise a discretion which could only be exercised by a person thoroughly conversant with the circumstances of the case, and who, therefore, was not likely to be imposed upon.

Mr. MACKENZIE said the question before the House was of very considerable importance, and required to be approached with circumspection. The burden of the petition was, that false representations had been made by the Government, or their agent in England, to induce persons to come here, and that, consequently, the Government were bound to find them employment at the current wages, or else a passage to some other country. He thought the action of the Government in this matter of relieving the unemployed was, in the first instance, very injudicious. He had been years in this country, and had seen much of this sort of thing. After the gold discovery, in 1852, wages rose to a very high rate; employers could afford that rate at the time because profits were large, but the laborer did not make more than he used to make out of moderate wages, at half that rate, because he had to pay more for his rent, his clothing, and every other requirement. Then, the time came when high profits ceased, and matters began to right themselves; but the high rate of wages became chronic, and continued when employers found it impossible to pay high wages. This state of things had been going on for years, and the consequences, that might have been seen approaching by every thinking man, had arrived; and the cause of the present position of affairs was plain. Sooner or later, the laborer must succumb, and the rate of wages must go back to what it was in 1848, when domestic servants had from twelve to fifteen pounds, and laborers from twenty to twenty-five pounds a year. After all, the position of those people was better then, for their requirements generally and their rent were cheaper; they themselves were more frugal, and the public-houses were far fewer. With all their high wages, they had not been better off since. At the present time, although labor was scarce and dear in the interior, many of the unemployed would not leave the neighborhood of the towns. Perhaps that was excusable in the married men with families, but hardly so if they were destitute. He saw that things were mending; the surplussage of labor was moving away north and south with much rapidity every week, and the present depression would soon disappear. As to giving the unemployed free passages, it would be far better to send them to Clermont than to Texas, and it would not cost more. The fact was that employers

could not pay high wages, and wages would have to come down. He thought that the system adopted by the Government, of paying persons so much for a part of the week, and leaving them unemployed for the remainder, was altogether erroneous and indefensible. By the establishment of the relief camps on such terms the Government were competing with private employers. It would be a better plan to restore the road votes and distribute the unemployed upon the roads throughout the interior, where they were wanted. The roads about Brisbane were wide enough, and the people were not wanted to work on them. Another question that arose was, how far the Government were bound by the promises of their agent in England. The only promise made by the Government to immigrants paying their own passages to Queensland was, that they would get on arrival a land order for eighteen pounds, and a second for twelve pounds after two years' residence. They were not bound by the flowery speeches of Mr. Jordan. Yet that gentleman's statements of the rate of wages in Queensland were correct, to a certain extent; for laborers would not reduce them, though employers could not pay them. However, the Government had not gone the best way to work. They should disperse the people; organise them in parties upon the roads; do away with the relief camps, and give them one pound a week to do a week's work.

Mr. BROOKES desired to say a few words. He fancied that the last speaker had made a practical suggestion, and one that was worthy of the attention of the Government; but there were, also, various points in his speech which shewed that the honorable member labored under the old delusion—that he had not availed himself of what were termed any "new lights." The honorable member was following in the old tracks, making the old mistakes, blaming the wrong persons, and entirely misrepresenting the facts of the case. Now, what did the House find before them? A very large number of persons could not get employment. Well, if honorable members looked back some three or four years, they found that the Legislature thought that population was the one thing necessary for Queensland. They sent an agent home, a gentleman in every respect competent, both by natural gifts of speech and by his experience of the colony, as a kind of advertising agent to induce people to come to this colony. They strengthened his hands by empowering him to tell the people at home, that every person who came out here, paying his own passage, should receive on arrival a land order for eighteen pounds, and another for twelve pounds after two years' residence. But, no sooner had that gentleman arrived at home—indeed, by the very mail by which he arrived—although he knew nothing of it—than intelligence was forwarded subversive of his instructions.

This Mr. Jordan found out before he had been in London a week. Almost immediately after he arrived at home, taking with him, as he thought, the correct opinion of the colony, as expressed by the Legislature, by the public press, and the colony generally, he found a Government document awaiting him, which entirely turned aside the objects of his mission. The first blow was then made at the land order system. Mr. Jordan was at that time inclined to relinquish his mission, and return to the colony; but, having taken a warm interest in the land order system, and feeling much interested in introducing population into the colony, he determined to stay where he was, notwithstanding any disadvantages which might arise. These disadvantages increased upon him, and the conclusion he (Mr. Brookes) arrived at was, that it was not the intention of the Government of the colony to carry out the land order system. A gentleman who occupied a high position of influence in the colony, second only to that occupied by the representative of Her Majesty, never was sincere in the manner in which he dealt with that question. He regarded that gentleman as the Judas Iscariot of the colony, and to his conduct was attributable, more than to any other cause, the present state of the colony. If the land order system had been carried out in its integrity, there would have been an ample flow of population of the right sort to this colony. If Mr. Herbert had been assisted by the Surveyor-General, who was a squatter to the backbone, Queensland at the present time would be in a prosperous position. When he heard honorable gentlemen, who ought to know better, say that Mr. Jordan had seduced people into coming to this colony by false representations, he felt that there was no ground for such an accusation. Mr. Jordan had never said a single word about this colony that ought not to be true. Whether it was true or not, was another question. Mr. Jordan, in his most pictorial descriptions of Queensland, had not said anything that ought not to be true; every man in Queensland ought to be able to sit under his own vine, and under his own fig tree. If that were not so, it was owing to the political action which had been taken in the colony; and when he saw people forced, whether they would or not, to become shepherds in distant parts of the colony, he said it was monstrous. He would endeavor to make no remarks that evening that were not based on sound principles of political economy. He trusted that the squatters would take what he was about to say in good part. He was not opposed to them, personally, and he had amongst them many valued friends. They ought to be as a class, the *élite* of the colony; but the squatting system was inimical to immigration and the best interests of the colony. Squatting could not, by any ingenuity, be made consistent with a large flow of immi-

gration. That was the difficulty. He did not think they ought to shirk the difficulty. It was a difficulty which met them on every side. Every question that came before the Legislature was more or less influenced by the fact that twenty-five square miles of land in this colony were held at a mere peppercorn rent, and that every difficulty was placed in the way of those who would make a better use of the land. The French historian, Michelet, had pointed out three distinct periods in the history of France, when the peasantry had become purchasers of land, and those times immediately preceded the three principal eras of French agricultural prosperity. There was, first, a decadence, then a rise. When the decadence took place, the people got possession of landed property, and then prosperity commenced again. This occurred three times in the course of ages. Upon this subject, Mill, in his "Political Economy," had the following note:—

"Whoever would study the reverse of the picture, may compare these historic periods, characterised by the dismemberment of large, and the construction of small properties, with the wide-spread national suffering which accompanied, and the permanent deterioration of the condition of the laboring classes which followed the clearing away of small yeomen to make room for large grazing farms, which was the grand economical event of English history during the sixteenth century."

So long as the land in Queensland was devoted to mere grazing farms, this would never be a prosperous colony; and it would always have to treat with a mass of people who were unemployed. Professor Fawcett, who, he believed, had never been in Australia, said that the country was capable of supporting a large population.

"Australia, for instance, has been only partly explored, and we make a most moderate computation if we say that a population of 100,000,000 might live there, with every comfort that man can require."

Now, it was a fact, that they had, in that session, and within that very week, stopped immigration. A more suicidal policy could not possibly be adopted. He maintained that they ought to keep the stream of immigration flowing. He gave the Premier every credit for having introduced the Leasing Bill, which was calculated to be productive of great benefit to the colony. The only thing he feared, with respect to that honorable gentleman, was, that he would give way, and that his colleagues would bring influences to bear against what he himself knew to be the wish of his heart. The Premier had told him long ago, that the Leasing Bill and the Warwick and Toowoomba railway were allied, and that they were the backbone of the colony. He put it to honorable gentlemen, whether it was not time for them to put an end to that coalition with the Darling Downs squatters;

whose interest was not the interest of the colony. They could not possibly legislate with that impartiality which the just claims of the public were entitled to, so long as they were prepared to do what was technically termed log-rolling for the sake of the Darling Downs squatters. The honorable member who preceded him spoke of low wages. That was a very great question, and if he were to adopt the views of that honorable speaker he should consider that low wages were the great desideratum. From his own experience, he did not believe in low wages. He was in favor of high wages, and when the honorable member alluded to the state of things which existed before the discovery of the gold fields, he was guilty of an anachronism. The honorable member for the Burnett did not wish that squatting pursuits should go back to the state of things which existed before the gold fields, but that wages should go back to what they were at that time. He maintained that high wages was a sure sign of prosperity. If those gentlemen who had put a stop to immigration decried high wages, where was their consistency? How did they expect to have wages low by stopping people from coming to the colony? It was impossible to do justice to that question at that late period of the session, and his object in addressing the House was not to propose a remedy, but, if possible, to induce the Government to take an elevated and statesmanlike view of the matter, to leave the Darling Downs squatters, and to legislate for the whole of the colony. He understood the honorable member to say that the people who were unemployed were hanging about the towns. That was true—where else were they to hang about, they could not go into the bush. He could tell the honorable member, that if he imagined that the inhabitants of Brisbane liked to see these people hanging about in their neighborhood, he was mistaken. They interfered with everything, they taxed the charity of the citizens to the very utmost, and they filled the benevolent asylums. There was a great amount of destitution. He had to pass, every Saturday, a great number of people who were hanging upon the charity of the Government. He maintained that those relief parties were a gross mistake. He understood the Secretary for Public Works to say that the unemployed about Brisbane cost the colony at the rate of £10 000 a year.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS:** I did not say so; but I said that if all the relief camps in the colony were put to work in the same way as those in the neighborhood of Brisbane it might cost that sum in a year.

**MR. BROOKES:** He maintained that if it cost only £5,000 it would be money mis-spent. The only person who had exhibited any presence of mind in dealing with the difficulty was the Colonial Secretary while Minister for Works, but he had got out of that

department. Under the old system of granting relief to the unemployed, it was usual to allow twenty shillings a week for a married man, and one shilling and sixpence for a child, and it was possible for a man to earn twenty-two shillings and sixpence. But, under the present system, the Minister for Public Lands had brought them all down to a dead level of fifteen shillings a week for three days labor, and a man who wished to earn twenty-two shillings and sixpence could not do so. It would be for the Government, during the recess, to devise some means of, not only relieving the unemployed, but of preventing, so far as it was possible for legislation to prevent it, there ever being a similar complaint made to that House from the unemployed. When he heard that petition read, praying the Government to send them to the United States of America, he could hardly believe his ears. Was there more land in the United States available than in this colony? Was there better land in Texas than in Queensland? Was there any other reason under heaven, except the monopoly of land by the squatter, why they should wish to go to Texas? He trusted that Government would lose no time in bringing the Leasing Bill into operation, and that they would take care that the Surveyor-General was instructed to allow no winking or playing into the hands of individual interests, and that if there were any unemployed, that the lands of the colony should be thrown open to them. It was just possible that some one might get up after him and repeat what the Surveyor-General was in the habit of saying, that there was plenty of land surveyed already. He (Mr. Brookes) maintained that that was not true, the land that was surveyed was bad land; he wanted to have good land for the unemployed. He wanted to have good land thrown open under the Leasing Bill; and he would leave the bad land to be taken up a hundred years hence, when they had, as Mr. Fawcett thought they should have, a population of a hundred millions.

**MR. FITZSIMMONS** considered the time had arrived when something should be done for the unemployed, and the subject was one to which the attention of the Government ought to be directed; but the honorable member who had just sat down, after having spoken for a long time against the squatters, failed to bring before the House a single instance to prove the correctness of his statements, and did not ever suggest a remedy for relieving the prevalent distress. It could not be denied that the Agent-General had made statements in England which induced many respectable working men to come out to this colony, and who found when they came here that those statements were not correct. He maintained that the honorable member for North Brisbane, and others who acted with him, forced on the Government the necessity of sending that gentleman back to England. The fault was theirs; it was not the fault



of the squatters. It was the honorable member and his friends who sent Mr. Jordan back to England with a *carte blanche* to do just as he pleased, without respect to the Government. The consequence was, that many tradesmen from England, who were induced by his representations to come out to this colony in the expectation of improving their circumstances, were thrown upon the streets of Brisbane in a state of destitution for want of employment; and those honorable members who affected to represent them in the House, were the very parties who had caused their misfortune. The honorable member for North Brisbane had spoken for a long time, but he had failed to suggest any remedy for the existing distress. The honorable member, Mr. Pugh, had also failed to give expression to a single idea suggestive of any remedy for the evils at present existing around them. It appeared to him that the speech of the honorable member for North Brisbane would have the effect of preventing people from going to those places where they would get employment and plenty of provisions. If the honorable member thought it right to do that, it was incumbent on him to shew by what means the unemployed were to be supported in town. He spoke of the lands of the colony being thrown open to them, for the purpose of cultivation. If he thought so, let him send five thousand of them into the bush, and the squatters would give up the land for them to settle upon. Would that prevent starvation? It was no use to make a long rambling speech without anything in it. It was a melancholy spectacle to see so many of their countrymen walking about the streets in a state of destitution, cringing to the Government for the means of living. He was sorry to see that they were encouraged to pursue that course. He knew nothing so degrading to an Englishman, as to go begging for the means of living. Instead of encouraging those men to go where they could get work and high wages, they were rather encouraged by those honorable members to look to the Government for support.

Mr. RAFF said he did not rise for the purpose of prolonging the discussion, but rather for the purpose of terminating it. He did not suppose there would be any opposition on the part of the House to the printing of that petition—notwithstanding it contained an extraordinary request, which his honorable colleague characterised as perfectly monstrous. Still, as there would be no objection to the printing of the petition, there was a very great objection to their wasting any more time in discussing the subject. They had a certain amount of work to get through, and honorable members had made up their minds as to the time they would give up to the accomplishment of that work; but if they were to go into disquisitions on political economy, and to indulge in attacks upon the Darling Downs squatters, he feared

that some honorable members would not stay until the work was completed. He thought the best policy would be to leave the petition in the hands of the Executive, who would do the best that could be done, under the circumstances, to relieve the petitioners. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, had gone into many subjects, which, if the House had time to discuss them, might, no doubt, have been important. He quite agreed with that honorable member, that it would be a suicidal policy to stop immigration altogether; and that very many of the evils which the colony was at present suffering from had been the result of the very indiscreet interference which had taken place with the working of the land order system. He did not agree with the last speaker, in his strictures on the late Agent-General for Emigration; neither could he agree with his honorable colleague, that that gentleman had not uttered one word which was not true—but he would go the length of saying that he believed Mr. Jordan did not utter one word which he did not believe to be true. He thought it was not fair for honorable members to throw the blame on that officer for the present depressed state of the colony. He believed it would be found that there was plenty of remunerative employment in the colony for all the unemployed; and that it only required a little management on the part of the Government, and a little co-operation on the part of employers to assist the Government, in order to bring about that result. He did not think it was fair to put all the burden on the Government. In his opinion, every employer ought to do the utmost in his power to find employment for those who had nothing to do, and to convey them to those localities where there was plenty of work for them at liberal wages. There was no doubt that much difficulty might be expected in all the colonies, where there was a large influx of immigration, where there was an interruption of the public works, and where there was commercial depression; but in a little time they would get over all that. If the unemployed were of the right class, and the employers did their duty in assisting the Government, the present temporary difficulty would soon be got over. He hoped that honorable members would not prolong the discussion, but would leave the matter in the hands of the Executive. He believed the Government would do what was necessary to be done, and he trusted that employers of labor would endeavor to assist the Government by engaging as many as they could find employment for.

Mr. HALY said the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, advised the unemployed not to take employment when they could get it. He did not know what the object of the honorable member was in giving them such advice, unless he wished to yoke them to his ploughs which he kept



for sale, and make them work like horses in cultivating the land. To tell the unemployed that they could gouge on the land, to cultivate it without money, was a great fallacy. It was a mere electioneering speech, made for the purpose of acquiring popularity among a certain class out of doors. Perhaps the honorable member aspired to become the future Premier of the colony; but when he attained that position, he would find that he must not keep the people unemployed about the town, and that, if he did so, he would soon have more trouble on his hands than he bargained for. The honorable member must have been talking out of the gallery; he certainly could not have addressed himself to sensible men in that House. His arguments were inconsistent. He said that there was too little employment, and yet that immigration must be continued. Did the honorable member mean to say that, if there were already too many unemployed in the colony, it was still their duty to import more labor? Or did he want to bring out more men with a little money in their pockets to buy things from his shop? He could assure that honorable member that labor was as dear two hundred miles inland at the present time, as ever it was. He received, last night, a letter from his partner, who stated that he was employing eight Chinamen at twenty-eight shillings a week, and giving them a shilling for each lamb, in addition to that. These men were good men, and worth their money; but he had also to give twenty shillings a week, and the same per centage on lambs, to inferior men, who knew nothing of the work they had undertaken to do and had never handled a sheep in their lives. His partner also regretted, in the letter, the expense incurred in forwarding thirteen men from Rockhampton, not one of whom was at the present time on the station, and some of whom never arrived there. He mentioned that to shew that there was no necessity for numbers of unemployed to be hanging about the towns, and that the Government ought to send them inland, where the squatters would be only too happy to employ them. The honorable member asserted that high wages was a sign of prosperity. He (Mr. Haly) denied it. A man must not only earn his wages, but the interest of the money that employed him. If he did not, the employer must either cease to employ him, or he would himself soon come to ruin. That was a fact, and he defied the honorable member for North Brisbane to deny it. He might make a dozen electioneering speeches in that House, but he would never convince any practical man. So long as those men stopped about the town, and were employed by the Government on unprofitable works, so long would the distress continue, and so long would they have to pay for it themselves. If the people who were unemployed stuck out for high wages, which employers could not afford to give, it must recoil upon themselves. They

asked to be sent to Texas, but where was the Government to get the money from? Why not send them inland, where there was plenty of work for them? He was sorry to detain the House so long; but he could not remain silent when he heard an honorable member talk such rubbish. He hoped the expression was not unparliamentary, but he could find no more suitable word to express his opinion of the character of that speech. If the honorable member—who, while he was speaking to the House, was really addressing the unemployed out of doors—wished to give the unemployed good advice, he should have told them that, while there was depression existing in trade, all should endeavor to put up with the loss. The honorable member told the House the other day that all the merchants in the town had called their employees together, and reduced their wages.

Mr. BROOKES: I never said so.

Mr. HALY: He had heard the honorable member use the argument several times during the session—that the Government were paying their clerks ridiculously high salaries—that the merchants of the city had met together, and had reduced the wages of their clerks, and that the Government ought to do the same. He (Mr. Haly) believed that the petition of the unemployed ought to be attended to; and that where distress really existed it ought to be relieved; but only to such an extent as would enable a man to keep his family from starvation. If the Government gave a man one pound a week to compete with the employers of labor, they did wrong. That opinion might be unpopular; but he was there to state what he believed to be for the good of the country, without reference to any class. He did not want popularity at all; he only wanted to consult the good of the colony; and it was for the interest of the colony that the views he had stated should be carried out. He only wished that he had the language and fluency of some great orator, for he could then lay before the House such an array of facts as would convince honorable members, and the unemployed, that by the course they were pursuing they were acting wrongly towards themselves and injuriously to the colony.

Dr. CHALLINOR: He was sorry to hear the remarks of the honorable member for North Brisbane about shepherding. He did not see anything in the calling of a shepherd that was dishonorable. If he were himself in want of employment, he should not have the slightest objection to go into the bush and take charge of a flock of lambs and ewes. It was a very humble calling; but in past ages it had numbered among its followers the great ones of the earth. There was nothing in the history of shepherding that would lead any one to suppose that it was a dishonorable calling. At the same time, he was free to confess, that he thought much more might be done than was done to promote the comfort of the shepherds. If

greater regard were paid by employers to the comfort and well-being of their shepherds, there would be far less difficulty in procuring them. He referred to a case in point, which occurred about eighteen years ago to a squatting firm on the Burnett, who had no difficulty in retaining and keeping their shepherds together. They never wanted for shepherds, while others did; and the reason was, that they gave inducements to the men to stay with them; one of those inducements was, that they supplied the men with tobacco at town rates. The consequence was, that they could get men and keep them when others could not do so. He felt confident that if greater regard were paid to the comfort of shepherds, there would be less disinclination on the part of many persons to go into the bush. With regard to the unemployed, he thought that when the Government were compelled to give forced employment to laborers, the rate of wages ought to be considerably below the ordinary rates; because, so long as the Government gave a fair day's wage for a fair day's labor, they would always have plenty of laborers at their relief camps. He was only speaking of forced employment; in that case, they must keep the rate of wages below par, so that there should be no inducement for the men to remain in the Government employment any longer than they were obliged to. Some might not have availed themselves of the offer of the Minister for Works to convey them to other parts of the colony, because they had families, and would be compelled to leave them behind.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; we sent them up to the north, too.

DR. CHALLINOR: Then there was less excuse for them not going. He had heard of some persons who had left private service to get one pound a week under Government. He thought it was a great mistake on the part of the Government to give the men one pound and rations, even though they were navvies. It disturbed the labor market everywhere. He thought it was a great mistake, also, for the Government to give fifteen shillings for three days work. He did not think it was sound political economy. But with respect to shepherding being a respectable calling, he knew men of good family, scions of the aristocracy, who were following that occupation, and whose clothes were made almost entirely of sheepskins. They would not, perhaps, like to appear in town in the dress they wore in the bush; but they appeared to enjoy themselves, and to find employment. If persons who had been delicately brought up could turn shepherds, he did not see any reason why others should be afraid to follow the same occupation. From what he knew, and had read, he had no reason to believe that Mr. Jordan had given too high a coloring to the capabilities of this colony. At the same time, he did not think he had placed it much

below its value. That if he had depicted it in bright colors, the imagination of people of the same temperament had added to that coloring, and increased the depth of the tint; but Mr. Jordan was not responsible for that. No doubt Mr. Jordan was chargeable with errors of judgment; but he (Dr. Challinor) believed, that so far as his singleness of purpose and integrity of character were concerned, he was not worthy of the blame which was thrown upon him. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, was not alone in thinking that one way of getting rid of the unemployed was to give them land to employ themselves upon; but he must confess, that while it might be very desirable, the same idea had occurred to him as to the honorable member for the Burnett, Mr. Haly—how were these men to be kept while they were cultivating the land? It appeared to him that the horse would starve while the grass was growing. They must be kept while they were cultivating the land, and it might be a question whether the Government could afford to supply them with rations while their land was being cultivated, until they got a return. It was a matter of great doubt, but something must be done to relieve the necessitous. The laborers of Ipswich did not wish to stand out with regard to wages. He was met by some of them that day, who told him that all they wanted was employment—enough to keep body and soul together until they could get something better to do. The honorable member, Mr. Haly, had said that the squatters could not afford to give high rates of wages, because the interest of money was so heavy. He admitted there was something in that, but he thought the proposition might be put the other way—that the interest was too great, and, therefore, they could not afford to pay high wages.

MR. HALY: I did not say that. The honorable member said that high wages was a sign of prosperity. I said I denied that, and that he ought to have told the unemployed they would not only have to earn wages, but also the interest of the money with which their wages were paid; as, if they did not, it would not pay any man of capital to employ them. Whether the squatter borrowed the money from the banks, or had the capital himself, the same principle held good—the interest must be paid.

DR. CHALLINOR: He thought he did not in any way misrepresent the honorable member for the Burnett. He understood him to say that the rate of interest which the squatters were paying was very high; and it could not make any difference to the employers of labor, whether they paid high interest and low wages, or low interest and high wages. If property were high they could afford to pay high wages, and *vice versa*. Sooner or later they would find their natural level. With regard to the land order system, he



found no one so much in favor of it as those who had profited by it. None were so strongly in favor of that system as the inhabitants of Brisbane, because they got the lion's share of the discount. But the moment it became known that the land orders were subject to a high rate of discount, and that while nominally worth eighteen pounds each, they were in reality worth only six pounds—that would effect its own cure. He should support the motion for printing the petition. He thought there was a disposition on the part of the Government to meet the requirements of the case; but the finances of the colony were in such a state that it was necessary for them to go about it in the most economical way possible.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he thought the honorable member must have misunderstood what he stated with reference to the expenditure in connection with the camps. What he said was, that the expenditure for the camps in the neighborhood of Brisbane was £383; and if there were other two camps of a similar size to be maintained—one at Ipswich and another at Maryborough—the weekly expense of the three would come to £1,149. He said that, in round numbers, it would cost about £1,000 to keep them going. Now, if he understood the opinion of the House aright, it came to this: that the Government were bound to prevent destitution—but only to prevent destitution. They were bound to supply only those who were actually in want with employment, but had no right to do anything that would interfere with the demand for labor; and by paying only fifteen shillings a week to the men employed on relief works, both those objects, he thought, would be accomplished. He was satisfied, by the deputation that waited upon him on the previous day, that destitution must be existing in Ipswich; for the deputation did not stipulate for wages, but asked for bread only. Now, those were the sort of cases which it was the duty of the Government to provide for; but they were not called on to provide for cases not bordering on actual starvation, or for persons who had left other employment. Of the number of applicants for employment, 153 went to work and 358 left without any other cause than that they refused to take fifteen shillings a week. At the same time, he had offered to convey those who refused work to any other port of the colony. Now, that was all he thought the Government were called upon to do.

Mr. WIENHOLT said he thought that fifteen shillings a week was too much to pay. It was trifling with the public money to pay so much. It was only encouraging the drones of the colony in idleness, and compelling the bees to work for them. He thought the Government was only entitled to give the unemployed sufficient to keep them in food and clothes. There was plenty of work for them all if they would go into the interior.

He thought the Government should give them free passages to the northern ports. They ought to do all they could to retain in the colony those persons who had been imported at very great expense; and they should not forget that the want of employment was only temporary. Things would be better shortly. There would soon be more money in the colony; and when that was the case, the employers of labor would be able to give better wages. But while employers could not give high wages, laborers must take low wages. He did not think it was right towards the working classes, or towards any section of the community, for the Government to pay fifteen shillings a week to most of those who were out of employment; because to do so was only to encourage depravity. If the honorable the Minister for Public Works paid the men fifteen shillings weekly for three days' work, he blamed him very much for it—he blamed him as encouraging laziness and idleness. Every time he came to Brisbane, he saw an amount and character of depravity that surprised him. Any honorable member, by going along the streets of Brisbane at night, might satisfy himself of the increase of depravity in the city—not only amongst males, but also amongst females. He might almost say there was nothing of the sort twelve months ago. He maintained that such depravity was greatly owing to the encouragement given by the present Government to idleness; and he blamed the Government more for it than he did for anything he had felt called upon to blame the Government for since he had a seat in the House. Before the next session of Parliament, if the Government went on as they had been doing, there would be a greater expense on the score of want of employment than there was at present. Idleness was increasing in the towns; while, up in the country, employers did not know what to do for want of labor. There was plenty of employment to be found in the colony at thirty shillings a week. He did not see the right of giving away the money of the working classes to maintain idlers, by paying them fifteen shillings a week for three days work. It was a disgrace for the Government to do so; and he was ashamed of the Government for doing it. But he trusted they would yet see the error of their ways and would mend them. If he might throw out a suggestion, he would say that the Government ought to offer a large reward for the discovery of a payable gold field, say £1,000, and by that means profitable employment might be found for those who were in want of employment. He thought that before long the people of Brisbane would find out their mistake. They had been crying out for more immigration, and they encouraged those who were brought to the colony, at the expense of the colony, to hang about the city for the sake of the tradesmen making something out of them while they had any money. But by-and-by they would have depredations

committed; and depredations, too, that would be worse than robbery. They would then be glad to get rid of the immigrants, when it was found they had nothing more to spend, and when they were reduced to their last shilling; and he could tell the people of Brisbane that the sooner they got rid of them, by getting them to go into the interior, the better.

MR. R. CRIBB said he was very glad to hear the sentiments that were expressed by the honorable the Minister for Public Works. He entirely concurred in them, for no man could be allowed to starve—no man could be allowed to be in want of food. Now, at the present time, there were a great many persons out of employment, who were without the means of living, and it was the duty of the Government to find employment for persons in such circumstances—sufficient employment to justify the Government giving them sufficient wages to provide themselves with food and clothes. Now, while he said that, he also protested, and would always protest, against the Government encouraging men who were either unemployed, or merely pretended to be unemployed, to hang about the towns, when they could get plenty of work at good wages by going into the country. The honorable member for Ipswich had referred to the land order system of immigration. Now, he believed that if that system had never been tampered with, the colony would not now have been in its present difficulty—which he attributed, to a great extent, to the expensive system of immigration that had been carried on. He opposed that system, when it was proposed, and contended that immigration should be confined to the land order system. Though they would nominally have paid a larger sum, they would not actually have done so; and they would have secured that only those who were able to fight their own way in the colony would have come out. They made a great mistake when they departed from that system, and borrowed money to promote immigration. It seemed, however, that now they were to go to the other extreme, and that all immigration was to be stopped.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The land order system will be continued.

MR. R. CRIBB: He was very glad to hear that. As to the unemployed, he thought that what the honorable the Minister for Public Works stated was as good a proposition as could well be adopted in the present extremity—that the men should be paid fifteen shillings a week, and have to work for a week. Such employment and payment would be sufficient to keep them from actual want, while it would not be sufficient to induce any one to hang upon the Government if he could get employment elsewhere. That was the middle course they had to steer—to prevent destitution, and at the same time not give encouragement to loafers to hang about the towns. He did not think that any-

one who applied for work should be objected to—every one who applied for work should be taken on, for he thought the test as to necessity was sufficient. Any man who would accept the offer of fifteen shillings for a week's work must, without doubt, be both industrious and necessitous.

MR. PALMER said that the subject under discussion was one which he thought demanded the very serious consideration of the House. It was a matter of very great importance to the colony in general, and he hoped that the expression of opinion the House would give would strengthen the hands of the Ministry to afford relief to the unemployed, of whom there could be no manner of doubt there were a great many in the colony at present. There could be equally little doubt that there were many who were not of the unemployed, properly so called, but whose object was to get wages without having to work for them. He fully agreed with what was said by one honorable member, that there was work for all the unemployed in the colony, if they would only go to those districts where labor was wanted; and he could state, from personal knowledge, that within a distance of two or three hundred miles of Rockhampton a thousand persons would readily find employment in a very short time. He could also assure the Government that they would never secure such a constant demand for labor as would prevent the recurrence of a similar amount of distress as existed at present from want of employment, till they established depôts in the interior. Till that was done there would continue to be a glut of labor in some parts of the colony, and a scarcity in others. He had heard that a note had been received in Brisbane, stating that many of those who went to Rockhampton would be glad to return, if they could only get a free passage back. He had no doubt of it; and if the Government would only give free passages to and from Rockhampton he had no doubt they would be able to find employment for the whole of the colonial marine. He could not be astonished, either, at the unwillingness of new chums to go to the bush, when he heard the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, recommend them to starve in the towns rather than go to the bush. But he would ask the unemployed to compare the speeches of the honorable member with his conduct, and judge for themselves of his consistency, and of the value of his countenance. What was the conduct of the honorable member when the question of the *ad valorem* duties was before the House? and, he would ask at the same time, if there were no other laborers out of employment but those who were fit for the bush? Were there no mechanics in want of employment? Were there no workers in iron in want of employment? Was the squatter the only one who wanted laborers? The honorable member



could not answer those questions in the negative, and yet he almost smuggled through the House a motion exempting from the *ad valorem* duty those articles in which he himself dealt.

Mr. BROOKES : I beg to inform the honorable member that I do not deal in the articles exempted.

Mr. PALMER : The exceptions consisted of machinery—which he believed the honorable member dealt in,—and piping, and pumps, and boilers. If he understood the exemption clause rightly, a boiler manufactured in England could be landed free of duty; but if the plates were imported in bulk the *ad valorem* duty would have to be paid upon them. Now, the importation of boilers manufactured excluded the mechanics in the colony from employment; but the importation of boilers in plates provided employment for the makers of boilers. The honorable member, however, did not seek the exemption of the latter from the *ad valorem* duty, but only the exemption of the former; and that was the way the honorable member treated the case of the working classes, where his own interests were concerned. How did such conduct, he again asked, correspond with some of the speeches of the honorable member? The honorable member also talked about shepherding; but he knew no more about it than the man who came to the colony only yesterday, and perhaps less. It would be no use, he knew, to try and convince the honorable member; but he might, nevertheless, inform him that there were gentlemen as well born and bred as he was, who never thought it anything derogatory to go shepherding. So much for the honorable member for North Brisbane. He would wish to impress upon the Government to give their attention to the remedy he had alluded to; for he thought it was not yet too late to construct depôts in the interior; and much of the money spent in maintaining the relief camps would be well spent in forwarding those in want of employment to the interior. It was a very different thing to the Government to forward immigrants up country from what it was to a private individual to do so. A private individual might be ruined by the men bolting on the way up; but the Government, if they sent them, would not be losers, but gainers, if anything, by the men bolting, for the sooner they bolted after getting a hundred miles or so into the interior the sooner would the expense of conveyance be diminished, while at the same time the object of the Government would be secured—which was the supply of labor, not to some particular station, as was the case with the private individual taking up laborers, but to any station or any district in the interior. Honorable members would see that the men bolting on the way up would in no way harm the Government, while, to a private

individual taking them up at his own expense, it would be absolutely ruinous. Another remedy for the distress that now existed would legitimately be provided by the voting of money for the making and repair of roads in the interior. If the men were sent to repair roads, upon which the prosperity of the country depended, and were not allowed to idle away their time, but were put to task work, he believed that a great deal of good would be done to the country, as well as to the men. He believed, also, that it was really necessary that the Government should now, for a while, at least, suspend immigration. There was—so it was stated, and he saw no reason to doubt it—a great amount of unemployed labor in the colony at present; and, as the several sections of the railway were completed, there would be a great deal more labor released, and again cast upon the market for employment. Now, the country must have time to absorb the labor; and, therefore, he thought the Government were perfectly right in suspending, to a great extent, all immigration for the present. The honorable the Minister for Public Works had referred to the necessity for relief camps. With the observations of the honorable gentleman on the subject he fully agreed. It would be most disgraceful to the colony, if it could be said that great destitution was known to exist in it, and that no steps were taken by the Government to afford relief. At the same time, he thought the relief given should only be sufficient to keep the men from an extreme state of want, but not sufficient to interfere with the labor market of the colony.

Mr. ROYDS said he would not have risen at so late a period of the debate, but for the fact that he thought there had been a good deal that was undeserved said against the Emigration Agent in England—that was with respect to the inducements he held out to immigrants to come here. As a rule, he thought the promises made by Mr. Jordan were within bounds; but the mistake made by the immigrants was, that they expected to get the rates of wages quoted by Mr. Jordan, at the capital, or at the port at which they arrived. Now, the rates of wages promised were those that were paid in the interior. It was not, therefore, altogether fair to charge the Emigration Agent with having made promises that could not be fulfilled. While he said that much, he must also say, that he was not very strongly in favor of Mr. Jordan, for he considered that the immigrants that gentleman had sent out were not at all of a desirable class. They were not at all to be compared with the immigrants that came out by the last vessel that was sent out by the Emigration Commissioners. The superiority of the immigrants, both male and female, sent by the Emigration Commissioners, over those sent lately by Mr. Jordan, was most marked. With regard to the amount paid by the Government to the

men they employed on the relief works—twenty shillings a week and rations—it had been a source of inconvenience and injustice to not only the residents in the colony, the ordinary employers of labor, but also to the railway contractors. He was told by one of the chief men on the Dalby line, that when the relief works were started a number of men left the railway works, though they had full pay, to come down to the relief works and have a spell. When they had had a spell of light work, for which they received twenty shillings and rations, and had a “spree,” they went back again to the work they had left. Numbers also left their employment on several stations to have a spell on the relief works. Besides the injury done in that way to the employers of labor, the effect upon the men themselves was most demoralizing; for nothing, he held, could be more demoralizing than for a man to accept charity when he could find employment at fair wages. It had been observed at home that charity had a most demoralizing effect, even in cases where it had to be accepted. Now, twenty shillings and rations was about forty shillings a week; and many men when they could get that for a little light work would refuse to accept any ordinary employment. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, alluded to shepherds as squatters’ menials. Now, he should like to know what was the difference between a shepherd as employed by squatters, and the workman as employed by people in towns. Were workmen employed by merchants in in towns to be considered as merchants’ menials; or were the clerks in the shipping companies’ offices shipping companies’ menials? He thought not; and he could inform the honorable member for North Brisbane that, in speaking of shepherds as squatters’ menials, he was throwing a slur upon a most respectable class of persons. The honorable member for Ipswich, Dr. Challenor, made some allusion to the low wages paid by squatters, and the high interest they paid for the money they had to borrow to enable them to carry on their stations. He could only inform the honorable member that he, and many others, would be glad to see the rate of interest reduced to so low a figure that they could afford to pay higher wages.

Mr. COXEN said he had listened very attentively to the speeches that had been delivered, in the hope of hearing something of a practical nature; but, with the exception of the speech delivered by the honorable member for Port Curtis, he had not heard anything that would be of service to the Government. The suggestion about the formation of depôts in the interior was well worthy the attention of the Government. It was a suggestion that could not only be carried out, but was one which, if carried out, would be attended with great success. This was not the first time he had heard it stated that there was a great dearth of labor in the

interior and in the north. He was satisfied there was a great dearth of labor in the north, in the interior; but it was useless to send men from Brisbane to Rockhampton, for they would do no more good there than here. The men would not leave Rockhampton and go to the interior any more than they would leave Brisbane and go to the interior. Now, if the Government would establish depôts in the interior, he would call upon them to refuse relief to those who would not go to the depôts. For his own part, he could not understand why there was such an objection to go to the interior. As to the character of those who preferred to hang about town, he would refer to a case that came within his own experience. A man came to him a few weeks ago and said he was starving—that he had not had a mouthful of food for twenty-four hours, or something like that. He told the man that, if he was really starving, he would give him work at seven shillings a week and rations, and a place to live in. The man went to work, and instead of seven shillings he gave him ten shillings per week. When he had been at work for about a month he came to him and said he wished to leave, as he thought he could get a better job. He told him that of course he could leave at any hour if he could find a better job. The man left, and he saw him drunk in the streets of Brisbane two or three days afterwards, and he was now one of the applicants to the Government for employment as one of the unemployed. He was certain that the great majority of those so-called unemployed would rather hang about the town, where they could spend in drink the few shillings they earned, than accept of employment if they had to go up the country. He saw no objection to working on a station. He had himself spent twenty-three years of his life in the bush, and he would not object to go again if he found it necessary to do so.

Mr. TAYLOR said that he considered this was one of the most important questions that could be brought before the House at the present time. A great deal had been said on the subject of immigration depôts, and he agreed with other honorable members in believing that such establishments would be very useful; but he would defy the Government to carry out the suggestion, for it would not be possible for them to send the people up to the depôts, the expense would be so great. A private employer of labor could send thirty or forty people in two drays a distance of two or three hundred miles up the country; but let the Government attempt to do anything of the kind, and they would be called every name upon earth for it. He had sent forty-two people up to his station on two drays, but if the Government were to do the like of that they would be abused by every one for their barbarous conduct. Until the railways were opened for traffic, it would be no



use thinking of establishing dépôts in the interior. Still, it was in the back parts of the colony that the demand for labor existed; and he was certain that if the people could be got up to the interior districts, there would soon be no unemployed in the colony. As to immigration having reduced wages, he had not found it to be the case. He employed a great many people—about two hundred, altogether; and he could assure the House that the rate of wages he paid had not been reduced to the extent of sixpence a week below what he paid seven years ago, notwithstanding all the immigration that had taken place. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, seemed to think that all the evils the colony labored under at the present time would be cured by the Leasing Bill. But how could that be? How could people improve their condition by going on the lands, if they had not so much as an axe to begin with, and had not the means to purchase a week's rations? He could assure the House that any man who took land under the leasing clauses would not find it profitable to employ families. If there was a large cotton growing district, it might pay to have families there, because the women and children could be employed, during a certain period of the year, at least; and the services they could render on a cotton plantation would be very valuable. A great deal had been said by the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, about the squatters, and the way they treated those they employed; but he should like to see that honorable member's books, and ascertain what he paid his men. He had no doubt he should find they were not paid anything too much; and yet those men had to work very much harder than shepherds. And, as for the Land Bill providing a resource for the unemployed, he did not believe that it would do anything of the kind. He could tell honorable members that he had known men leave his employment with £300 or £400, and, after going and investing that money in land, they had come back and asked him for employment again; because they found that farming did not answer, and they had lost the whole of their savings in trying it. He thought this question of the unemployed was a very difficult one, and the Government deserved great credit for what they had done, except in the case of the honorable the Minister for Public Lands, when he went to Ipswich. What the honorable gentleman did then was a great blunder; but he thought it might yet be corrected. He had been told that one of the results of it was that the men employed on the railway had struck for six shillings a day, and that they would not work for less. He understood that in a short time hence three sections of the railway would be completed, and the men now employed upon the works would then be thrown upon the labor market. Now, how was all that labor to

be absorbed? If the relief camps were to cost nearly £1,000 a week, as the honorable the Minister for Public Works had stated, he did not see where the money was to come from. But, besides the men employed on the railways, some men had been induced, by the liberality of the Government to the unemployed, to leave their employment on stations, where they received thirty shillings a week and rations. Again, the men were not employed upon useful work. The work they were employed upon was work that was made for them. It would be much better that they were formed into road parties, and employed in making or repairing roads, than kept in camps. The men, however, could not be expected to go away and leave their wives and families. The great difficulty in the way of dealing with the unemployed was the women and children; and how that difficulty was to be met he really did not know. The proposal to give the men fifteen shillings a week for six days' work was, he thought, a very good one. It was a very strong test. Fifteen shillings was a miserable pittance; but he did not see that the Government could afford to give more. As to the immigrants that had been sent out, he thought that Mr. Jordan had sent out more families than were really wanted in the colony; and he had also sent a great many very questionable characters. The best system of immigration, he thought, was the one by which those who wanted labor paid half the cost of the passage, and the men themselves paid the other half. That was a very good system, and one that worked well, for the immigrants met with employment as fast as they arrived. He supposed this discussion was meant to be an expression as to what the honorable the Minister for Public Works should do for the future in the case of the unemployed. Well, he thought it had been pretty distinctly declared that fifteen shillings a week was what should be paid for six days' work. That, he admitted, was a miserable pittance; but he did not see the Government could give more.

Mr. PUGH, in reply, said he did not anticipate that so long a discussion would have taken place upon his innocent-looking motion; but he did not think that any honorable member would regret that so much had been said; for, as the honorable member for the Western Downs had remarked, the question was one of the most important that could be brought forward at the present time. He was sorry the remarks of the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, should have provoked the remarks they did; and he was also sorry that the honorable member had indulged in those remarks. Still, he thought that certain motives had been unjustly attributed to that honorable member. He could not agree with his honorable colleague in believing that the Leasing Bill was to be the great panacea for all the evils the colony at present

labored under, because people without means could not make any use of the land. What the people out of employment asked for in their petition was that they should be kept from starvation; and he believed the Government were prepared to grant the prayer of the petition, to that extent. The deputation who asked him to present the petition, informed him that every man whose signature was attached to it was out of employment, and was actually in want. Now, if the Government could employ people so circumstanced, and pay them wages sufficient to keep them from actual starvation, that, he thought, should be sufficient. If the Government could, by any possibility, sift out the loafers, and pay deserving men as much as would shield them from starvation, no more could be expected. He fully agreed with the honorable member for Port Curtis, that it would be well to establish labor depôts in the interior, if it was in the power of the Government to do so; but he doubted very much if it was. He remembered that the subject of establishing depôts was brought up in the House some time ago by the honorable member for the Leichhardt, Mr. Sandeman, but no feasible scheme of working them could be devised. He must say, that a great deal of the distress that existed in the colony was owing to the wholesale importation of so-called navvies; and it was an important question what was to be done with them. There had been two thousand navvies imported for Messrs. Peto, Brassey, and Betts; and there was ample evidence that hundreds of them had crossed the borders; and consequently the neighboring colonies were now reaping the benefit of the expenditure of this colony. He was glad to find that there was no objection to the printing of the petition; and it would be well that it should remain on the records of the House, and form part of the history of the colony. It was well there should be an opportunity of looking back and seeing, from such documents, what were the circumstances of the colony at particular periods of its history. For that reason, he should like the petition to be printed, and bound up along with the other records of the House.

The motion was then agreed to.

#### NEW MILITARY BARRACKS.

Mr. R. CRIBB moved—

That in the present financial difficulties of the colony, it is inexpedient to extend the buildings at the military barracks.

His reason, he said, for bringing forward this motion was, that he found by the answer he received to a question he put to the honorable the Minister for Public Works the other day, that a sum of £8,400 had already been expended on the new military barracks, and that it was intended to spend a further sum of £4,295. Now, he was not prepared for such an answer as that; and he thought that, in considering the

present financial difficulties of the colony, it would be very unwise for the Government to spend any further sum on the new barracks. Referring again to the answer, he found it stated that the £8,400 had been defrayed from the votes for "military barracks," and "furniture for public offices," and the balance it was proposed to charge to the "military contribution," under the Act 28 Victoria, No. 1. Now, the vote for military barracks was £5,000, and no more. As to the maintenance of the military, he found, in the Act referred to in the answer to his questions, the following clause:—

"Payment of so much of the said sum as shall in each year be required shall be made monthly at the rate of forty pounds per annum for each man who shall be on service when the usual monthly return is made of officers and soldiers of Her Majesty's troops on service in the said colony."

That was all the colony was called upon to pay—forty pounds per man per annum. He was not aware how many soldiers there were in the colony; but all that Ministers could take out of the annual vote, after deducting the extra allowance for officers, was forty pounds for each man. The condition on which the military barracks at the top of Queen street were handed over to the Colonial Government was, that they should build new barracks of something like the same value in another situation. He, for one, could not believe that the old military barracks were worth the money which had been expended on the new buildings. They had already spent £8,400 upon them, and had exceeded their bargain, and they were asked by the Minister of Works to spend £4,295 more. They ought not to be called upon to do so; it was an expenditure beyond their means. He perceived, by the accounts in the newspapers, that more troops were coming here. He did not know why they were coming, or why they had been sent for. The House had never been consulted on the subject. He did not see what they were wanted for, or what the use of them would be when they came. He was no party to bringing them here.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You assisted in passing the Bill.

Mr. R. CRIBB: It was true, he did assist in passing that Bill; but the honorable member could find no authority there for sending for more troops than were in the colony already. He intended that they should go to no further expense in that matter. It would be a disgrace to do so under the present financial difficulties of the colony, when they did not know which way to turn for the money to meet those expenses that were absolutely necessary. He trusted the Government would give way, and allow the motion to pass without opposition.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he only wished to make one or two observations on that question, because the matter stood on



so very broad a basis that he did not think the House was likely to be influenced by the arguments of the honorable member for East Moreton. That honorable member had stated that the present erection had already cost as much as the ground, which had been given over to the Government in consideration of those buildings being erected, was worth. But the honorable member forgot that, not only was that contract between the Imperial Government and the colony in reference to the ground on which the present Treasury stood, but it was a contract also in reference to other grounds on which valuable buildings stood. For instance, the building in which they were then assembled was imperial property, and had never been made over to the colony. The hospital which was at present used in Brisbane was also an imperial erection, and when it was given over to the Colonial Government it was given over on the express condition that a certain amount of accommodation should be afforded for the military stationed in Brisbane. The offices of the Colonial Secretary's Department were also imperial property, as were several other buildings in Brisbane. Taking those facts into consideration, the House must see that not only a large amount of valuable property had been taken over by the colony, but the value of that property was largely in excess of the amount expended by the colony on behalf of imperial interests. Papers had been placed before the House by which it was shewn that the colony of Queensland had undertaken, on consideration of that property being handed over to them, to erect military barracks in Brisbane, according to plans sent out from the War Office, the plans to include a hospital and magazine. The Government had hitherto been engaged in nothing else but in carrying out that contract. They had not exceeded the contract made with the Imperial Government, but the faith of the colony was pledged to carry out that contract in its integrity. But when the honorable member said that these buildings were erected for a handful of men, he forgot to read the preamble of the Bill—

"Whereas Her Majesty has required each of the Australian colonies to contribute towards its own defence by paying an equitable proportion of the cost of Her Majesty's troops in proportion to the number of men therein respectively stationed Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Queensland in Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same as follows"—Then, again, the first clause of the Act stated—

"There shall be payable in each and every year to Her Majesty her heirs and successors out of the general revenue of the colony of Queensland a sum not exceeding three thousand six hundred and forty pounds for the purpose of contributing towards the cost of Her Majesty's troops on service in the said colony."

With reference to the remarks made about the Government having no authority to authorise a larger number of troops to come to the colony, he might remark, that the company which was expected to arrive was exactly the quota to which this colony by the Act was entitled; and which number, it would be seen by reference to the papers placed before the House, had long ago been applied for. The honorable member stated that the Government had no right to send for those troops. He (the Colonial Secretary) could not go into an argument at all on that point, because that was a question entirely between the Imperial Government and the Executive; but if the honorable member were to make a calculation as to the comparative expense of providing for the defence of the colony, by imperial troops and by troops engaged in the colony, he would find that the employment of the imperial troops was much the cheaper of the two. The only point for the consideration of the House was: whether the contract with the Home Government should be completed, or whether they were disposed to dispute that contract. It was not as if the House was going into a question which honorable members themselves had the power of determining. It was not as if it were purely a colonial question, in which their own rights only were involved. In that case there would be no difficulty in restricting the amount of work, and limiting the expenditure of money; but this was a matter affecting the whole of the colonies. The contract was entered into with the imperial authorities, and the plans were sent out to the commander of the troops in the colonies. If they refused to carry out the works, they would commit a deliberate breach of faith. He did not think the House would do that. And what was the amount of expenditure they were called upon to meet? There was, as he had already shewn, an Act of Parliament by which the sum of three thousand six hundred and forty pounds was annually set apart as a contribution for military purposes, and which required no vote from that House. He believed that the unexpended balance of that fund would cover the whole of the proposed expenditure. The question was one which the honorable member should not have brought before the House. The colony had received more than the value of the new buildings; and if it were attempted to repudiate the contract which had been entered into with regard to the erection of the military barracks, there was nothing to prevent an order being sent out by the imperial authorities to take possession of the whole of the buildings belonging to the Imperial Government. He trusted that the House would not entertain the motion.

Mr. STEPHENS thought the House ought to be thankful that the paper relating to the military barracks had been laid on the table. He had tried to get a little insight into sundry proceedings which might, to a considerable extent, account for the way in

which the colony was getting into debt. He did not dispute that there was a contract, and that they had to fulfil it to the letter; but he thought that every sum required for that contract should be voted by that House. That was another instance of the gross extravagance which had arisen in consequence of not bringing the matter before the House. He thought he could point out several things which the Government would not have ventured to undertake, if they had first to ask the consent of the House. He always understood that the contract entered into, was to the effect that the old military barracks, and the ground on which they stood, should be made over to the colony, on condition that the Colonial Government gave in exchange five acres of land, in a better situation, and erected the necessary buildings thereon with the same amount of accommodation. But it was now sought to be made out, that not only the barracks, but the whole of the Government buildings should be taken into account. It appeared to him to be simply an attempt to mislead the House. There were some things in the paper laid before the House which were rather important. In the first memorandum, they found that the Executive Council passed a resolution that the Colonial Architect should go on with the building, the expense of which was to be defrayed from the unexpended balance of the military contribution of £3,640 per annum. He believed the Government had no right to touch that sum of £3,640, except to the extent of £40 for every soldier actually in the colony. He understood that the late Colonial Secretary, Mr. Herbert, stated, on a former occasion, that the military contribution would be voted by the House every year; but it appeared that the Executive Council had deliberately passed a resolution to spend a certain sum of money out of that contribution of £3,640 per annum, without the consent of the House at all. In the second memorandum, it was stated—

“When the Imperial Government, at the request of the Queensland Government, agreed to cede the old military barracks and the buildings upon them, it was stipulated that the Queensland Government should erect buildings on the new barrack site, sufficient, according to the regulations of Her Majesty's service, for the proper accommodation of the troops allotted to this colony, viz., three officers and eighty-eight rank and file. The barracks for the men have already been completed, but, as yet, quarters have been erected for only two officers. According to the regulations, three officers are entitled to a mess-room, with its kitchen and other appurtenances.”

The whole of that additional expenditure was for that one officer. And what was the next step? Further on, in the same memorandum, it was stated—

“The plans before the Council are designed to complete the new barracks, and to carry out the stipulation made with the imperial authorities, when they agreed to cede to the Colonial Gov-

ernment the valuable site and buildings of the old barracks. The Colonial Architect calculates that the proposed new buildings will cost something less than fifteen hundred pounds (£1,500).”

He believed it would be the opinion of honorable members that the utmost the Executive Council ought to have done was to pass a resolution to place that sum on the Estimates of the House. Instead of that, it was stated—

“The Council deliberate. This is a matter of contract; besides, there is every wish to provide for Her Majesty's troops in Queensland the same accommodation as is provided for them in the United Kingdom, and in all other parts of the Empire. The Council advise, therefore, that the Colonial Architect be instructed to proceed at once with the erection, as the full complement of the garrison may be expected to arrive shortly. The cost will be provided, as ordered in a former minute, from the surplus of the military contribution, so far as that fund will go; and Parliament will be moved to grant a further sum in case of necessity.”

The next memorandum shewed the gross extravagance which such a mode of procedure gave rise to. At the next meeting of the Executive Council certain plans were laid before them and approved, and a tender by Mr. W. P. Wright, at £5,659, for the erection of the hospital, magazine, and officers' quarters, was accepted. The estimate of the Colonial Architect was that they would cost something like £1,500. The Council, however, passed a resolution that the money was to be expended, and that it was to be taken out of the £3,640 provided by the Act. He would go no further; but he would ask every honorable member to consider this subject, feeling assured that he would come to the conclusion that it was absolutely necessary for the Executive to have the authority of the House for the expenditure of the public money. He hoped the perusal of that paper would convince honorable members that it was absolutely necessary to put a stop to that unauthorised expenditure. He should support the motion of the honorable member for East Moreton.

Mr. PUGH said he would have the greatest possible pleasure in supporting that motion, especially as it was shewn in that memorandum that the colony was about to be saddled with so much extra expenditure on account of the military. He could well understand that the work, which was estimated by the Colonial Architect to cost “something like £1,500,” should have cost £5,659, because that was all of a piece with that gentleman's usual estimates. He objected to the increase of the military. He found they were to have three officers and eighty-eight rank and file. He was not aware that soldiers were of any particular benefit to the colony. They mounted guard at Government House, and over the convicts, for which they were paid; and they also attended at the post office when the English mail came in, which was not a very military occupation. He did

not know anything, but the pusillanimity exhibited a short time ago when some disturbance of the public peace was apprehended, that called for an increase in the number of troops—an increase that would cost about £4,000 a year. He agreed with the remark of the Honorable Robert Lowe, in his evidence given before the committee of the House of Commons—"I don't think it is right to send any troops to New South Wales. A Government of that kind is not fit to be entrusted with Her Majesty's troops." The latter portion of the document which had been laid before the House smacked strongly of a certain quarter. The honorable member at the head of the Government said that if they did not complete the contract, he would not be surprised if the Imperial Government should step in and take away the buildings. In that document, however, he found the following passage—

"It appears that these buildings have never been formally given over to the Queensland Government. It has been estimated that the buildings in Brisbane erected at the cost of the Imperial Government, and the ground on which they stand, must be worth £50,000; whereas the entire cost of the new barracks, when completed, will be considerably under £15,000."

Did that House ever contemplate spending £15,000 on those buildings? No, never. They were told that those buildings had never been given over by the Imperial Government; and yet the honorable member at the head of the Government put them in the schedule of the Parliamentary Buildings Act, which provided for their sale. The first schedule related to the Colonial Secretary's Office; the second, to the Telegraph Office; the third, to the Police-office reserve; the fifth, to the Parliamentary Buildings, Court-house, &c.; the sixth, to the Post-office and Savings Bank; the seventh, to the Survey Office; the eighth, to the Hospital; the ninth, to the Custom-house; the tenth, to the Commissariat, and so on. All those properties, which the honorable gentleman told them belonged to the Imperial Government, and for which they were bound to give some return in exchange, he had disposed of by Act of Parliament previously. He did not suppose that the imperial authorities, unless prompted to do so by interested persons in the colony, would ever attempt to take possession of those buildings. The only reason he could conceive for the increase in the number of troops was the desire for a little more pomp and display on the part of a certain personage whose name he should not mention, but whose fine Roman hand he could detect at the end of that document.

Mr. TAYLOR said he should join the honorable member for East Moreton in endeavoring to stop those works. If Her Majesty the Queen thought proper to seize the buildings belonging to the Imperial Government, let them be seized, and the furniture could be removed elsewhere. Did the Premier think

he had children to deal with, that he should threaten them in that way? The high personage who had been spoken of as influencing that expenditure would not remain long in the colony, and he would leave it, as it was at present, pretty much in debt. He hoped, however, that, what with the departure of some and the hoped-for departure of others, the colony would be able to get on better in future.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said the honorable member who spoke last had not made the sensible remarks he was in the habit of making. He might try to believe that what he had stated was true, and perhaps the honorable member for North Brisbane might imagine the same thing; but he (the Secretary for Public Works) would put a few plain facts before the House, and leave them to judge how far it would be safe for the House to interfere with the arrangement that had been made between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the colony. He would read a despatch from the Secretary of State, to shew that this colony had received very large benefits in exchange for the improvements they were then erecting. Some honorable members imagined that, because the Government had taken possession of those lands and buildings, they had a right to sell them; but they forgot that Her Majesty would have a right to take possession of them again if the Colonial Government did not carry out their part of the contract. A portion of the property which had been taken over from the Imperial Government had been sold for £30,000. He would now read the despatch from the Duke of Newcastle. It was as follows:—

"Downing Street,  
"11th February, 863.

"SIR,

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, of the 25th August last, No. 54, applying, at the request of your Government, for an authority for the transfer to Queensland of the present barracks at Brisbane, and all other military buildings, together with the ground they stand on, in exchange for a better site, and proper barracks to be erected upon it at the expense of the Colonial Treasury.

"I have to acquaint you, in reply, that the Secretary of State for War is willing to sanction this arrangement upon the conditions proposed, and upon the understanding that the designs for the new barracks should be approved by the general officer commanding.

"As regards the transfer of the old barracks and lands, and the conveyance of those taken in exchange, I transmit to you a copy of a circular despatch addressed to the Governors of the Australian colonies, on the 11th December, 1857, forwarding a copy of the Act 18 and 19 Victoria, c. 117, entitled 'An Act for transferring to one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State the powers and estates vested in the Principal Officers of the Ordnance,' and I have to request that (no such Act having been passed by the Legislature of New South Wales previous to



the formation of Queensland into a separate colony) you will, as was therein directed, take an early opportunity to submit to the Legislature the propriety of passing an Act for transferring to, and vesting in Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department, various powers and capacities which are requisite for holding and transferring public lands.

"The Secretary of State for War will take the requisite steps to effect the conveyance to the colony of the land now occupied as barracks, and will give whatever other instructions may be necessary to the commanding officer.

"I have, &c.,

"NEWCASTLE."

The Act referred to in that despatch was transmitted along with that document. It was quite clear, whatever honorable members might wish to do, that the colony had pledged itself to certain things by the then Parliament, and it was incumbent now to carry out what was then agreed to. The contract which was then entered into was being carried out under his direction. He was not spending the whole of the money at once, but was endeavoring to spread it over as long a period as he possibly could. Honorable members who talked of wishing to see the unemployed at work, were endeavoring to throw out a great many more by stopping the necessary public works which ought to be carried on. The military barracks would cost about £15,000, altogether, when completed; but the colony had already realised upwards of £30,000 for the lands given over by the Imperial Government. The Government would still have the buildings in which honorable members were assembled, to sell, after the new Houses of Parliament were completed. He thought the Government had made a good exchange; but if honorable members wished to repudiate what a former Parliament had done, they might expect that the present Secretary of State for the Colonies would, under instructions from the British Parliament, take back the property which belonged to the Imperial Government.

Dr. CHALLINOR said he had some recollection of instructions that were sent out to Captain Wickham, the Government Resident, to dispose of certain buildings and lands the property of the Imperial Government. He had also some recollection that, upon the representation of Captain Wickham, those several buildings and lands were withdrawn from sale. Among those buildings was the observatory. In the despatch read by the honorable the Secretary for Public Works, there was not the slightest allusion to any building but the Military Barracks. The honorable gentleman also referred to certain plans which had been sent up by the general officer commanding the troops in the colonies. Were those the buildings to which these plans referred?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Those were the buildings.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Then he did not see why the Colonial Architect should have been called upon to prepare fresh plans, and why the plans sent up by the general officer should have been set aside. With regard to the military contribution, the Act did not say they were to spend £3,640, but that the contribution should not exceed £3,640; and there was not a single word in the Act with regard to the provision for military buildings. How could there be, when the Act was passed before the contract was entered into? The Government had not the slightest right to spend a farthing of that money beyond the amount authorised by the Act. On looking over the paper which had been put into the hands of honorable members, he was struck with the fact, that while the Colonial Architect said the building would cost £1,500, the lowest tender was accepted for £5,695, or £4,195 more than his estimate. When the honorable member, Mr. R. Cribb, asked the question, the other day, with reference to the cost of the military buildings, he (Dr. Challinor) was struck with the answer of the Colonial Secretary, and the amount put down to be expended on them; and he compared the amount with the cost of erecting a gentleman's villa at Ipswich, which, though it had been put up with every regard to comfort and convenience, and finished in the best style, did not cost the amount put down for those military buildings. He was quite confident in stating that the amount of accommodation provided in that gentleman's residence would be quite equal to the amount of accommodation provided in the military buildings. Loud complaints had been made in that House, that a sum of £20,000 had been expended on the new hospital, which was a cut stone building, capable of providing accommodation for one hundred beds; but he would ask, would the military buildings provide accommodation for twenty-five beds? He had an impression on his mind that some papers had been laid upon the table of the House, in which it was stated that the quota of soldiers to which the colony was entitled would be sent as soon as they could be spared.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was one hundred.

Dr. CHALLINOR: He, for one, did not object to that number. He thought it was unadvisable that the metropolis of the colony should be utterly destitute of any regular force. Circumstances might arise in which their services might be required. He did not think that was an extravagant number, and he did not complain on that account. But with regard to the action of the Executive Council, it was another exemplification of what he had often said in that House, that "might was right." The Government had not the slightest suspicion that they would be called to account for their doings.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We laid the papers on the table.



Dr. CHALLINOR: His own impression was, that it would have been very much better for the Imperial Government to have taken back their property. There was no doubt the Government entered into a contract with the Imperial Government; but he believed that, when the military buildings were erected according to the plans forwarded by the general officer in command, the Government had, so far, fulfilled the conditions of that contract; but if it was found necessary that the additional accommodation referred to should be provided, he did not object to that; but he did object to the Government doing it without first obtaining the vote of that House, and falling back upon a fund which they had no right to touch. He recollected it being stated by the late Colonial Secretary, Mr. Herbert, that the military buildings could be put up for £5,000; but now they were told that they would cost £15,000. The question for their consideration was: had the Government a right to do what they had done, without a vote of that House? He would ask the Government, whether the deed of grant had been already made out for the military buildings?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; the title is still in the ground.

Dr. CHALLINOR: But we want the title.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Then you had better take the means to get it.

Dr. CHALLINOR: But, how long is this expenditure to continue?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is specified, too.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Suppose another company should come here, must other buildings be put up for them? The House did not know the extent of the accommodation which might be required, and which they might hereafter be called upon to provide. He was sorry the honorable member for East Moreton had worded his motion in the way he had done; but, if the honorable member would withdraw the motion, and bring forward another, condemnatory of the action of the Government, he would cheerfully support it. The explanations of the Premier reminded him of a saying attributed to Prince Talleyrand, who, when a Bishop, was upbraided for having used a profane oath—replied: "He did not swear as a Bishop, but as a Prince." But he (Dr. Challinor) would like to know, if the devil got hold of the Prince, where would the Bishop be? And if the devil got hold of the Minister, where would the Premier be?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said that the temper of some honorable members on this question was, perhaps, not an unnatural one at this time; and it was not one that was unusually found in private individuals when placed in circumstances similar to those in

which the colony was now placed; and, indeed, he might say in all other colonies under similar circumstances. Honorable members who had addressed the House had alluded to the subject under consideration as one that was not unfamiliar to them; and they must therefore be aware that they were dealing with an agreement—one that had been recognised by the House by an Act,—an agreement entered into between the colony and the Imperial Government. Now he had not heard any honorable member deny that this agreement actually existed, or that it did exist at the present time. Well, honorable members having admitted that, it did appear to him, in listening to what had fallen from some honorable members, that there was little more than a feeling of remorse and regret expressed by them because of the change of circumstances that had occurred since the agreement was made originally with the Imperial Government; and he thought it was very possible that if the change of circumstances had not taken place; that if the colony was in as prosperous a condition as it was in a few months ago; and that if the land the Imperial Government exchanged for the land upon which the new buildings were erected were as valuable now as it was at the time the exchange was made, in all probability there would have been no such opinions expressed as had been expressed in some of the speeches that had been delivered this evening. But, unfortunately, the times had changed, and there was now a want of money in the colony; and there was consequently an absence of that value in the lands which they possessed at the time the agreement was made. Therefore, it was not unnatural that that which then was so satisfactory should be deemed unsatisfactory now. But he thought honorable members would be unwise to allow such a feeling as that to divert them from the course that had been pursued; for if another course were adopted from that which had been pursued up to the present time, it would amount to something like repudiation. If any action the House might take should have for its effect the stoppage of the works, he believed it would be the most unwise and the most inconsistent act that had ever been performed by the House. But it seemed to him that honorable members would not have objected to the carrying out of those works, or the completion of the contract, if it had not been discovered that the amount of money required was greater than was at the first expected, and that at the same time a great depreciation in the value of land had taken place. But he would especially refer to the amount of money necessary to complete the contract. He would admit that it was a large sum, indeed, that was required to complete the remaining portion of the work; but he could not, at the same time, omit to see that, under the contract, it was an absolutely necessary expenditure. The last por-

tion of the work was equally as necessary as the first portion—which some honorable members, as he was surprised to find, attempted to deny. Some honorable members had said that all that was necessary, under the agreement with the Imperial Government, was that the barracks only should be built, and that those barracks had been built. Now, he thought that was a position the most unlikely for the Imperial Government to have left itself in. It was very unlikely, indeed, that the Imperial Government making an exchange, which it had not been denied in the House was advantageous to the colony, would have attempted to place themselves, or, rather, the imperial troops that came to the colony, in a worse position than they were in when the agreement was made. When the troops had possession of what was now the Treasury, and when the imperial buildings were altogether in their hands, and when the soldiers of the Imperial Government were living here, they had then what they now asked for, namely, a hospital. It was true they had not a hospital on the ground occupied by what was now the Treasury, but they had a portion of the public hospital, which was devoted to the civil portion of the colony as well as to the military. But another change had taken place. The hospital was now altogether devoted to the wants of the inhabitants of the colony, and the portion formerly devoted to the wants of the military was no longer at their service. Now, the very natural condition was stipulated for by the Imperial Government in the contract, that a hospital should be built in connection with the barracks. Well, it came to this, that the erection of the hospital was more expensive than honorable members had any idea of. But was that a sufficient reason why the works should be stopped, and why the House should take a course that would amount to a repudiation of their agreement? Now, it was, after all, merely a difference of opinion as to the amount of expenditure the hospital should have involved; and he would ask what contract, either public or private contract, or building, did not come to a larger amount of money than was originally estimated? He believed that no instance could be given in which such had not been the case. He thought, then, even for that reason, if there were none other, it would be unwise to interrupt suddenly the agreement; for the stoppage of the works would have a most injurious effect upon the minds of the Imperial Government, on whose part the interruption of the work could be clearly put as a breach of agreement by the colony. The Imperial Government, on their part, had carried out that portion of the contract that was left for them to fulfil. Under the agreement, plans had to be submitted to the imperial authorities, and the plans were ultimately approved of. It was also part of

the agreement that the imperial authorities were to send out to the colony one general officer to approve of the buildings that were erected in exchange for those given to the Government. Now, it was a fact, that one general officer—more than one, for it so happened that two general officers who had come here had expressed their dissatisfaction with the buildings that were erected, unless the buildings were completed by the erection of another building which was now going on, namely, the hospital. It must, he thought, be clear to the mind of every reasonable man, that there must be a hospital connected with any military buildings for occupation by British troops, and he did not see why that part of the contract should not be completed as well as the other. Though it was, he admitted, an expensive work, it was not so much so as to afford any reasonable ground for declining to carry it out; and he trusted the House would not come to a resolution, the effect of which would be to interrupt the work that was going on.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS said he did not think it would be right to interrupt the carrying out of any agreement that had been entered into with the Imperial Government. The honorable the Minister for Public Lands had made some remarks to the effect that the works were objected to because of the changed circumstances of the colony—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He did not mean to say that a change of opinion had taken place on the subject as a whole, because of the changed circumstances of the colony, but that there was now an absence of satisfaction with the contract in consequence of the changed circumstances of the colony.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS: A change of circumstances would not make any change of right and wrong. There was one circumstance that had struck him as being very strange, and that was that the Colonial Architect should have stated that a building erected according to the plans submitted would not cost more than one thousand five hundred pounds—that the cost of erection would be under that sum; and yet, almost immediately afterwards, he came and said that the contract should be taken for five thousand one hundred pounds. Now, either the man who did the like of that was unfit to be the Colonial Architect, or he must have been influenced by the Government to alter the sum. That struck him as a singular matter, but he would not dwell longer upon it. There was one thing he would like to know, and that was, whether the Government had a right to expend the money without consulting the House. If so, and if it was made clear to him that such was the case, he would be satisfied; but if not, if the Government had no right to expend the money without consulting the House, they were decidedly in error in doing so.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the main object of the motion, and of the discussion upon it, was the stoppage of the expenditure on the military barracks. Now there could be no doubt, that in the despatch, and by the Act of Parliament that was passed in pursuance of the recommendation founded on the despatch, the colony was bound under engagement with the Imperial Parliament to carry out those buildings. Some confusion seemed to have arisen in the mind of the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, as to whether Her Majesty had not granted to the colony the old military barracks, and other imperial buildings, with the waste lands of the Crown. Now, the military barracks, the buildings occupied by the Legislature, the old factory buildings, the commissariat, and all those buildings that were vested in the Board of Ordnance, were not included under the term "waste lands". They were special property, and to further the carrying out of the arrangement with the colony, an Act was passed in the Imperial Parliament divesting the Board of Ordnance of the buildings and the lands upon which they stood, and vesting them in the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Now, under the agreement that was entered into, not only were the old barracks, but all the ordnance buildings, given to the colony on condition that new military barracks were built, according to approved plans and specifications. And honorable members must bear in mind that the title of the colonial Government to sell or dispose of the present Parliamentary Buildings, and other buildings, depended on the faithful performance of the contract with the Secretary of State with respect to the new barracks. The Government here had got no grant as yet from the Secretary of State of those imperial buildings. There was a despatch which, for the present, was as good as a title; but, on the other hand, the Colonial Government had not yet given a grant of the site of the new barracks to the Secretary of State. So far, therefore, the arrangement might be said to be as yet in an inchoate condition—each party going on in the performance of his part of the contract, which would be completed only when both parties had completed their part of the contract. Unless the colony was prepared to surrender their right to the buildings given by Her Majesty, he did not see that the present proposition could be carried out. The military had, of course, to be housed; and he did not see that the Government had done anything very far wrong in proceeding with the erection of the requisite buildings. It might have been better that the money had been voted by the House, and it might be better now that the House should formally pass the vote. For his own part, he fully approved of such a course, and he should always be glad when the House acted, itself, in respect to money matters. If the question as to the expenditure

of the money by the Government without a vote being brought before the House was raised in a formal way, he must say that he did not think the Government had done so much wrong. The question now was, whether certain buildings necessary to be erected were to be erected. Well, the colony was under an engagement with the imperial authorities on the subject—that was admitted—and could not withdraw from the engagement without giving up all claims to what were formerly imperial buildings. He must, himself oppose the motion, and he hoped the House would not consent to pass it.

Mr. R. CRIBB, in reply, said he was sorry the Government had met the motion in the way they had. He was sorry they had not acknowledged their mistake; for that they had made a grand mistake was undoubted. The honorable the Colonial Secretary had met the question with his usual bravado; and he had endeavored to make it appear that the whole matter rested on a broad basis. The honorable gentleman said the colony ought to give a fair equivalent for all the lands and buildings that had been granted by the Imperial Government, and he contended that that had not been done. Now, for his own part, he denied that *in toto*. The arrangement was, that the colony should erect new barracks on a convenient site equal in accommodation to the barracks that were given up, and nothing more. He was a member of the House at the time, and, therefore, he knew as much about the agreement as did any member of the present Government. It was stated at the time that the expense of the new buildings would not exceed £5,000, and to that amount of expenditure the House agreed, as would be seen by the Estimates passed in 1862 to 1863. He maintained that that was the compact, and he defied any member of the Government to prove the contrary. He remembered saying at the time that he thought the bargain to put up new buildings, at a cost of £5,000, was rather in favor of the colony; but that there would also be a benefit to the military from the new barracks being in a more healthy locality. Now, if the Government required more money to complete the barracks, why did they not come to the House and ask for it? The compact was, that the colony, in consideration of the lands and buildings given up by the imperial authorities, should erect buildings upon an approved site, according to plans to be approved of by the military authorities at home. That, he contended, was done, and no member of the Government could shew from any records of the House that it was not done. If the plans were produced, it would be found that the contract was, on the part of the colony, completed in its integrity. It had been said that a title would not be given to the lands, with the buildings that stood upon them, that were to be given up by the imperial authorities, till the new



barracks were satisfactorily completed. But what was the fact? An Act was not only passed for the sale of those lands, but it was sent home, and was approved of. And, what was more, some of the lands had been sold, and grants issued to the purchasers. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer next came down with a great flourish of trumpets, and after quoting the preamble of the Bill accused him of not having read the Act 28 Victoria, No. 1. But what had the preamble to do with the matter at all? It was only the ordinary preamble to a Bill setting forth what the Bill was for. It had nothing to do with the barracks whatever. But the first clause of the Bill said—

“There shall be payable in each and every year to Her Majesty her heirs and successors out of the general revenue of the colony of Queensland a sum not exceeding three thousand six hundred and forty pounds for the purpose of contributing towards the cost of Her Majesty's troops on service in the said colony.”

Now, £3,640 was the maximum amount which the colony was to be called upon to pay; and that Act was passed in conformity with the despatch that was sent out by the Home Government. That despatch said that Queensland had been put down to contribute towards the maintenance of the military in the Australian colonies to the amount of £3,320 per annum; but the colony went beyond that by £320 per annum. But the despatch further said that it would be unfair that the colony should pay that amount annually, as the full number of soldiers it was calculated to provide for might not always be in the colony; and it, therefore, fixed the amount to be paid at £40 per man per annum. Under the Act, then, the Government could not pay one shilling more; and they had no right to use, for building purposes, one farthing of the amount the colony was liable to pay towards the maintenance of the force. The sum of £40 per man of course meant that the officers should have more and the soldiers less. But the Act had nothing more to do with the expenditure for the new barracks than the man in the moon. An honorable member of the Government had said that by reference to a despatch, laid upon the table during a former session, the terms of the contract would be seen; but no member of the Government had produced that despatch. The only paper produced was the secret paper from Government House. Now, if that paper gave the Government the power of spending the money, there was no use for a Legislative Assembly. If something cooked at Government House authorised the expenditure of money, then the elected representatives of the people no longer had anything to do with the purse-strings. The famous despatch alluded to by the honorable the Minister for Public Works was dated 11th February, 1863

—a year after the compact was made—a year after the £5,000 was voted and the compact made.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was before the Act of Parliament was passed.

MR. R. CRIBB: The Act of Parliament had nothing whatever to do with the matter. He had no doubt that all that was contained in the despatch, as undertaken to be done by the Imperial Government, would be done. The Imperial Government, unlike colonial governments, never flinched from anything they undertook. Now, this colony had carried out their part of the contract; and if the plans were produced it would be seen that such was the case. It had been said that if the works were stopped the consequence would be an increase of the number of the unemployed. That was such a bare-faced piece of argument, that he would not further refer to it. The honorable member for Ipswich, Dr. Challinor, had said he could not vote for the motion, unless it was so altered as to blame the Government. Well, he must inform the honorable member, and the House, that he had put the matter as mildly as he possibly could, in the hope of inducing the Government to accept of it. If he had framed the motion in any way corresponding to his own feelings on the subject, it would have been a rattler. All that he said was:—

“That in the present financial difficulties of the colony, it is inexpedient to extend the buildings at the military barracks.”

Now, what could be milder than that. He thought the honorable member could not help voting for that. The honorable the Minister for Public Lands had said that it was the changed circumstances of the colony that called forth this motion. Now, he denied that such was the case. Honorable members had shewn that the colony, as represented by them, would not flinch from doing all it had undertaken to do. Had they not saddled themselves with taxation to an enormous extent to enable them to fulfil all their obligations? and was it, then, to be said that it was because of a change of circumstances that this motion had been brought forward? It was the bounden duty of the House—

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: To repudiate?

MR. R. CRIBB: Yes; to repudiate the action of Ministers who would take upon themselves to expend moneys they were never authorised to expend; and such repudiation he for one would approve of. He would not detain the House longer at that late hour. He hoped the motion would be carried; but whatever the result of the voting might be, his object was accomplished so far, that he had shewn that the Government had been expending money recklessly, and had been expending money they were not authorised to expend.



The question was then put, and the House divided as follows:—

Ayes, 7.	Noes, 11.
Mr. Brookes	Mr. McLean
" Stephens	" Macalister
" R. Cribb	" Watts
" B. Cribb	" Palmer
" Fugh	" Fleming
" Royds	" Sandeman
" Taylor.	" Wienholt
	Dr. Challinor
	Mr. Haly
	" Lilley
	" Bell.

#### GOLD EXPORT DUTY ACT REPEAL.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS moved—

That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to consider of an address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause a Bill to be introduced to this House to repeal the Gold Export Duty Act, now in force, and to abolish all export duty on gold.

He said he did not think there would be any objection to this motion. Until very lately, there had been no attraction for gold diggers to visit this colony. There was, however, some inducement for them at the present time to embark in mining pursuits, and in the northern districts with prospects, he thought, of great success. Under those circumstances, he did not think it would be advisable for the Government to throw any obstacles in the way; but, on the contrary, he thought it would be advisable for the Government to render every assistance and every encouragement towards the development of the gold fields of the colony. If the motion should be accepted by the House, it would have the effect of sweeping away the whole of the obstructions that had hitherto existed to the advancement of gold mining, and would probably have the effect of bringing to the gold fields of the colony some thousands of diggers from the neighboring colonies. He believed that no subject had ever been before the House of greater importance to the colony at large than the one he now brought under the notice of honorable members; more particularly when viewed in connection with the circumstances of the colony at the present time, when hundreds of persons were walking about the streets in a state of destitution from want of employment. The debate that had taken place to night would convince honorable members that it was absolutely necessary that something should be done for that class of people at once; and he was of opinion that the Government ought to offer a reward, as had been proposed by one honorable member in the course of a preceding debate, for the discovery of a payable gold field. Not only that; but he thought that, in the present state of the colony, the Government was called upon to stimulate, in every possible way they could, the development of an industry so valuable to the colony. It was evident, from the debate that had taken place, that the attention of the Government would

have to be directed immediately towards relieving the distressed circumstances of the working classes; and he must say that he did not know of anything that would so effectually tend to remedy the evil as doing away with all obstructions in the way of developing the gold fields. The amount of revenue derived from the export duty on gold was very trifling; but, even if it were a large amount, he would advocate the abolition of the duty, as he considered that the industry of the diggers should be encouraged in every way. Since the gold fields were discovered in New South Wales, a sum of money had been put in circulation in that colony to the amount of about £24,000,000 sterling—and that entirely by the industry of the diggers. Such a powerful industry as that was therefore one that ought not to be lost sight of in this colony. He believed there were large gold fields in this colony; and there was a large number of diggers in the colony; but, as he—having been one of the original members of the Queensland Legislature—could state, the diggers in the colony had never been fairly represented. If the development of the gold fields was encouraged, he had no doubt there would soon be large and valuable gold fields discovered. He knew that some other honorable members were determined to take an active part in this matter, they being of opinion that this matter should be dealt with by the Government, and that not in a niggardly way, but in a way that would stimulate many experienced gold miners to the discovery of auriferous deposits.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that no doubt the sympathies of the honorable member, who had brought forward this motion, were very strongly with the mining community, seeing that he represented a district now rising in some extent into a great deal of importance, in consequence of the late discoveries of gold in the neighborhood of Rockhampton. But honorable members must look at what would be the results of doing away with such a source of revenue as the export duty on gold, especially at the present time. As shewing how the development of the gold fields, and the expenditure attached to the gold fields, affected the revenues of the colony, he would quote some figures from a return he had received from the Treasury. He found, from that return, that there had been expended, from the first of June to the 30th of September last, £1,912 15s. 8d., in wages, salaries, and for forage for officials attached to the gold fields; while the revenue derived from miners' rights and licenses for the same period amounted to only £1,821 2s. 11d.—shewing a loss upon the gold fields of more than £100 during eight months of the year. He would also point out to honorable members, that in the other colonies the gold fields were a source of considerable revenue. In New South Wales the revenue derived from the

gold fields amounted, in 1865, to £30,807, while the expenditure connected with them amounted to only £13,815—leaving an absolute profit to the colony of nearly £20,000. In 1866, he found that the probable receipts from the gold fields in New South Wales were set down in the Estimates at £30,000, and the probable expenditure at only £10,666. He had no doubt that all honorable members agreed with the honorable member for Rockhampton, that it was very desirable to encourage in every possible manner the search for gold, and the development of that industry; particularly at the present time, when there was plenty of labor that might be diverted to the development of that industry. But the honorable member must acknowledge that the present was not the time to do away with any revenue that could be obtained; and till the honorable member could shew that the colony could afford to part with some of its present sources of revenue, he was afraid the House would not consent to do away with even the £937 that was derived from the export duty on gold. Last year the revenue derived from the gold fields amounted to £3,566 13s., and the expenditure connected with them to £2,695 11s. 6d., which was something less than £1,000 of actual profit to the colony. But that was nothing to the revenue that was derived from the gold fields in the other colonies; and when the expenditure on the gold fields in this colony was in excess of the revenue derived from them, he did not think the colony could afford to do away with the revenue from the export duty. He did not think the Government, without the express command of the House, would be justified in carrying on the expenditure necessary for the protection of life and property on the gold fields if the export duty was abolished. If the duty were abolished, the Government would be compelled to do away with the police and other means employed for the protection of the miners. In New South Wales, last year, the revenue derived from the export duty on gold alone amounted to £20,000; and the whole expenditure upon the gold fields altogether was only £13,000. That shewed clearly that in other colonies the gold fields were looked upon as a source of revenue. Now, the honorable member for Rockhampton sought, by his motion, to make the gold fields in this colony a source of loss to the colony. He must say that he could not agree with the motion; and he hoped a majority of honorable members would not agree to a declaration that the rest of the colony should support one portion of the population because they were called gold miners.

Mr. BROOKES said he hoped that in "Hansard" there would be a full and correct report of the speech of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, because it would be a most useful speech for quotation the next time a motion was brought forward for the imposition of an export duty on wool, tallow,

and hides. The honorable gentleman had not used one argument that he could have wished him to omit; but had made out a clear argument in favor of the motion that was before the House a few nights ago for a duty on wool, tallow, and hides. As to the motion before the House, he must say that he did not agree with the honorable member for Rockhampton for one moment, nor did he believe that the abolition of the export duty on gold would in any way affect the production of gold in the colony, even though the duty were double its present amount.

Mr. PALMER said he would support the motion, because he believed all export duties were bad, in theory, in principle, and in practice, and because he thought that instead of the diggers being discouraged they ought to be encouraged, and that as much as possible, and one of the best ways of doing so would be by abolishing the duty that was now placed upon their industry. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer had read some figures, which were no doubt correct, shewing the amount of revenue derived in New South Wales from the export duty on gold; but the honorable gentleman should have informed the House, at the same time, that in New South Wales the duty was going through a process of diminution towards its total abolition, and that in Victoria the duty had altogether ceased to exist. Now, honorable members might not be aware that the duty pressed very unequally upon the miners. But such was the case, and in this way: that all the steerage passengers in the steamers leaving Rockhampton for Sydney direct were searched, though the saloon passengers were not; and why there was such an exception he did not know. But on board the steamers leaving Rockhampton for Brisbane no one was searched; nor were any of the passengers by the steamers from Brisbane to Sydney searched. He thought honorable members would see, that by such an arrangement the duty could not fall equally upon all the miners. If a northern digger came to Brisbane, and then sailed by another steamer from Brisbane to Sydney, he escaped having to pay any duty upon the gold he might have with him. As to assisting to pay the expenses, the revenue from the duty came to only about £900; and he thought that if the duty were abolished the loss of that amount of revenue would be more than compensated for by the amount of gold that would, in consequence of the abolition of the duty, be brought into circulation, and by the increase in the customs revenue on account of an increase of population on the gold fields. He considered it was most impolitic to impose this duty. It was a sort of class legislation, a kind of legislation that he always objected to; and, therefore, if the motion went to a division, he would vote for it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he, for one, had a decided objection to taxes

on exports; but honorable gentlemen must recollect that that duty was put on, not for the purpose of creating revenue over and above the expenditure. In New South Wales the revenue derived from that tax was greater than the expenditure, so that they could afford to reduce it. The duty was put on in the first instance for the purpose of reducing the charge for miners' rights. At the New South Wales and Victorian diggings that charge was thirty shillings, which the miners very much objected to, and preferred paying the export duty on gold, because it was not an excessive one. It was not one that was felt, and the successful man alone had to pay it. Still, while he said that, he thought that the principle of taxing exports was a very erroneous one. But what would be the effect of reducing that duty? The Government must immediately increase the charge for miners' rights, which the miners strongly objected to. He thought that, as that tax had not pressed heavily on the gold digger, and was not one which had been specially objected to, it should not be removed. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, attempted to make some capital out of the remarks of his honorable colleague in favor of his pet subject, a tax on wool and tallow, but there was no analogy between them. It was well known that wool and tallow produced a very large revenue to the country, but the gold miner produced no revenue at all. The export duty on gold was put on merely to avoid the necessity of increasing the charge for miners' rights; and while he objected, on principle, to a tax on exports, he thought it would be better to leave the tax on gold as it stood.

Dr. CHALLINOR said the honorable the Minister for Lands was quite right when he stated that the object of putting on the export duty on gold was not so much for the purpose of revenue as for the purpose of affording special protection to gold diggers. He also agreed with the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Brookes, that the export duty upon gold did not affect the production of gold in the slightest degree, and so far as the gold diggers themselves were concerned, the more they could multiply the one and sixpences the better they would be pleased. He did not think there was anything wrong in the principle of an export duty; it was a mere matter of expediency. If it were right to raise a revenue for excise duties, he could not see how it could be wrong to put on an export duty on produce for the purpose of revenue, for if it were right to make the home consumer pay, it could not be wrong to tax a foreign consumer. The only argument against the export duty was, that it prevented the home producer from competing with the foreign. There was certainly great cause for complaint in the matter referred to by the honorable member for Port Curtis,

Mr. Palmer. He did not see why a search should not be made in vessels leaving direct from Brisbane to Sydney, as well as in those that traded between Rockhampton and Sydney. If it were necessary to search in the one case he thought it was equally necessary to do so in the other; and, with regard to the distinction made between the steerage passengers and saloon passengers, it was one that was not made at home; there, saloon passengers were searched as well as steerage, and he did not think there was any greater honor attached to saloon passengers in this colony than there was in Great Britain. The honorable the Minister for Lands drew a distinction between the ten shillings paid by the miner and the amount paid by the pastoral tenant of the Crown, but the difference between them was this, the one had only sixteen feet square of ground and the other had, he did not know how many acres, for the same amount. The Colonial Treasurer and the Minister for Lands supported the imposition of an export duty on gold, on the ground that it was required to cover the expense of special protection afforded to the diggers. But if the same argument were carried to its legitimate extent, they should put an export tax upon wool, tallow, and hides, for the purpose of defraying the expense of the native police protection afforded to the squatters. If they took into consideration the whole of the expense incurred for the native police, it would make very sad havoc in the amount of revenue received from the pastoral tenants of the Crown.

Mr. R. CRIBB said the honorable Minister for Lands stated that the pastoral tenants of the Crown were heavily taxed. He denied it. They were merely taxed for the food they ate. He would oppose the motion, simply on the ground that it was really put forward to get rid of another motion for an export duty on other articles.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS, in reply, said some remarks had been made about the removal of the commissioners and the police from the gold fields, in the event of that tax being done away with; but honorable members would understand that protection was needed in every part of the colony. The commissioners of gold fields acted also as police magistrates. The Colonial Treasurer did not appear to be well read up in New South Wales news, or he would have known that the Treasurer of that colony had recommended that, in the establishment of a national bank, the export duty on gold should be entirely abolished. With what degree of justice could that duty be kept on until January next, when it was to be abolished in New South Wales and Victoria? They had been talking a great deal about getting employment for the people who were out of work, and he asked what could they do better for them than to throw open the gold fields?



The COLONIAL SECRETARY : So we do ; and we give them free passages to get there.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS : The honorable member for Ipswich had made a comparison between gold and other materials. There was no comparison to be instituted between them, because gold would never change its value. He thought the Government would do a great deal to injure the prosperity of the colony, if they did not abolish that tax.

The question was then put, and negatived, on a division, as follows :—

Ayes, 8.	Noes, 12.
Mr. Fitzsimmons	Mr. Macalister
„ Palmer	„ Bell
„ Lilley	„ B. Cribb
„ Fugh	„ E. Cribb
„ Taylor	„ McLean
„ Sandeman	„ Stephens
„ Wienholt	„ Fleming
„ Royds	„ Watts
	„ Brookes
	Dr. Challinor
	Mr. Edmondstone
	„ Reed

#### STAMP DUTIES.

Mr. BROOKES, in rising to move the resolution standing in his name, said : I am sorry to introduce this motion at so late an hour of the night, because it involves a fundamental principle ; but, at the same time, I will quote authorities, to justify the House in acting upon it, if they think the circumstances warrant their doing so. The Stamp Duties Act is a very oppressive Act ; and it was introduced in a very unjustifiable way.

The SPEAKER : We are not going into the Stamp Act now ; we must, therefore, know on what ground the honorable member brings forward his motion.

Mr. BROOKES : I will go at once to that. The inadvertence which I refer to is the following : you, sir, put the question “That this Bill do now pass ;” I submit that the form should have been “That this Bill do pass.” I moved “That the Bill do not pass ;” and you decided that that amendment could not be put. I came to you then, and said : “Will you, sir, be good enough to suggest to me some form in which I can put the question ;” and I understood from you that you did not feel it within your functions to shew me how that question could be put. Now, sir, I maintain, with all deference to the Parliament of Queensland, and the heads of both Houses, that I had a right to expect from you that guidance. In consequence of not receiving from you that guidance, the House fell into the inadvertence alluded to in this motion. My own experience and knowledge of the forms of the House failing me, an error was committed, and if that error be not corrected now, the consequence may be that, in some future time, when every member here is gone and forgotten, the House may be led by this precedent into serious difficulties. I will now refer to the authorities which point out the modes of relief. I will first allude to what I consider the less important authority, though I would have you understand that I do not consider it to

be an inferior authority in a legal sense to May. I quote from “Cushing,” paragraph 2394 :—

“Where a Bill is sent from one House to the other by mistake, or is wanted in the originating House for the purpose of reconsideration, or for any other purpose, a message is sent from the former requesting its return.”

I therefore have embodied in my motion a request that the Stamp Duties Act be returned by the Legislative Council for reconsideration by this House. My next authority is “May.” I quote from page 437.

“If the Bill or clause be carried to the other House by mistake”—

And I maintain the Stamp Duties Bill was sent to the other House by mistake. If you do not like that, it was not only sent by mistake, but I will say it was sent by error ; and if you do not like those two, I will say it was sent by mis-direction.

“or if any other error be discovered, a message is sent, and you have the Bill returned, or the clause expunged, or the error otherwise rectified by the proper officer.”

I would also direct the attention of honorable members to a foot-note on the same page. I think it is very applicable to this Bill ; nor will the date of the authority, in the mind of any intelligent member of this House, detract from its present value—it ought, indeed, to add to its value.

“On the 17th March, 1588, a private Bill was sent up with only four or five members, and the Lords took exception to the smallness of the number, and said ‘that they had cause to doubt that it passed not with a general consent of the House, because it passed not graced with a greater number,’ and left it to the consideration of the House to send it back in such sort as it was fit.”

Now you will understand, Mr. Speaker, that I do not wish to detain the House ; and it is with considerable embarrassment that I have brought forward this motion. It is not a trifling matter. We are overwhelmed by a Government Ministry. We have five Ministers on the Treasury bench. We are outnumbered. I say that the Bill was not fairly or legitimately passed through this House. I say it with great pain, that it passed by misdirection from you, Mr. Speaker. I therefore move—

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council, requesting that, in consequence of an inadvertence in the passing of the Stamp Duties Act through this House, the said Act be returned for re-consideration.

The SPEAKER : I feel quite confident—as confident as ever I did on any subject—that this motion cannot be put. In the first place, the honorable member stated I did not put the question as it should have been put—that I put the question “That the Bill do now pass,” and that I ought to have put it “That the Bill do pass.” But our standing orders say that it should be put “That the Bill do now pass.” Therefore, the Bill was passed in a proper manner. It is certainly not my duty

to give advice as to the manner in which motions should be made. An honorable member comes to me while the Bill is being passed, and asks me to shew him some other way by which it should not pass. I never heard of such a thing before. I am always ready to give honorable members advice, but I will never give advice on such a question as that. The honorable member has found something about a private Bill passed in 1558; but he should recollect that all matters relating to private Bills have been very much altered since that time. I am also very much at a loss to know where there was "misdirection." The honorable member quotes "May." As for quoting "Cushing," that is out of the question altogether, because we do not go by the American practice. Cushing quotes the practice of the American legislature, and we go by ours. May states the practice in the British Parliament to be as follows:—

"If a Bill or clause be carried to the other House by mistake, or if any other error be discovered, a message is sent to have the Bill returned, or the clause expunged, or the error otherwise rectified by the proper officer. In 1844, an amendment made by the Lords in the Merchant Seamen's Bill was omitted from the paper of amendments returned with the Bill to the Commons. After all the amendments received by the Commons had been agreed to, the Lords acquainted the Commons, at a conference, that another amendment had been omitted, by mistake, and desired their concurrence. But the Speaker having stated that, in his opinion, it would establish a most inconvenient and dangerous precedent if they entertained the amendment, the House gave reasons, at a conference, for not taking the amendment into consideration, and the Lords did not insist upon it."

I say, again, and I rule with the most complete firmness, that the question was correctly put. If the House do not think I am right, they need not uphold my ruling; but I say now this motion cannot be put.

The motion accordingly dropped.

#### TELEGRAPHIC EXTENSION (ROCKHAMPTON TO KEPPEL BAY).

Mr. FITZSIMMONS, on rising to move the resolution standing in his name, said the subject of it was one which had been often brought under the notice of the Government, and anticipating that they would not make any objection to it—indeed, he had reason to believe they would entertain it favorably—it would not be necessary for him to say more in support of the motion, which was as follows:—

1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient, and of urgent necessity, that a branch line of telegraph be constructed, as soon as possible, between Rockhampton and the Heads of Keppel Bay.

2. That the cost of construction be defrayed out of the amount authorised to be raised for the construction of branch lines of telegraph.

3. That these resolutions be embodied in an address to His Excellency the Governor.

He did not anticipate any opposition to the motion from honorable members of that House. He believed it was well known that the trade at Rockhampton was increasing very much in importance, and the arrival and departure of ships and steamers might be taken as matters of daily occurrence. The port itself was the centre of a large and flourishing trade, which, he thought, rendered it advisable that this matter should be brought before the notice of the Government. The want of early information in the town of the arrival of ships in the bay was greatly felt at Rockhampton. It often happened that a ship arrived in the bay, and nothing was known of it until the captain's boat came alongside the wharf at Rockhampton. The cost of constructing the line would be unimportant. The distance was short, and timber of the best description could be obtained along the line. He would leave the matter in the hands of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the Government was placed in a peculiar position, with reference to this subject. They had no desire to stand in the way of the erection of the line, were it not that the present circumstances of the colony rendered it undesirable to incur any additional expenditure, as his honorable colleague, the Colonial Treasurer, had said, respecting another vote, that if it were carried he did not know where the money was to be found. His honorable friend seemed to think that the cost of the line would be unimportant; but he had forgotten to tell the House that it must traverse a distance of something like sixty-five miles, with half a mile of submarine cable. The cost would not be less than £2,300. At the present moment the Government were scarcely in a position to carry it out; but he admitted that something of the kind was necessary, in order to facilitate communication between the bay and the town. He would suggest that the honorable member should withdraw his motion, and the Government would get a detailed estimate of the cost of the line prepared. If they found that the money could be procured, they would be very happy to construct the line. No great harm could arise from delaying the matter until it was seen how the financial condition of the colony would turn out. He thought the honorable member would do well to accept the proposition of the Government, who were really favorable to the matter.

Mr. PALMER said there was an unexpended balance to the credit of the branch line of telegraph extension of £3,550 13s. 7d., which might be applied to the construction of the proposed line.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS said, that after the assurance he had received from the honorable the Colonial Secretary, he was inclined to withdraw his motion.

The motion was accordingly withdrawn.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE NAVIGATION OF THE RIVERS BRISBANE AND BREMER.

Mr. B. CRIBB moved—

That the following resolution, viz :—" That it is desirable to stop further expenditure on the works for improving the navigation of the river between Brisbane and Ipswich,"—come to by this House, on Tuesday, the 2nd instant, be now rescinded.

He said his principal reason for moving the resolution was that the sense of the House had not been taken on the question to which it referred. The question was discussed, but through some slight error and misunderstanding at the time the sense of the House was not taken upon it, and the motion was passed without a division. He, therefore, felt it to be his duty, as the member for West Moreton, to bring the matter before the House. The improvement of those rivers was a subject which was always treated with ridicule when brought before that House. The necessary expenditure was spoken of as ridiculous and extravagant. One would suppose that the expenditure referred to as being so exceedingly extravagant was something very large ; but what did it amount to? He found, by the " Votes and Proceedings " of the House, that there had been spent on the basin about £4,000; on the Junction, £2,017; and at the Seventeen-mile Rocks, £6,998; making, on the whole, a gross sum of £13,015. That expenditure extended over six years, from 1860 to 1866, being an average of a little more than £2,000 per annum. That was the largest expenditure which had been incurred in improving the rivers Brisbane and Bremer. He did not find honorable gentlemen complain of the expenditure on the roads; but he thought, if they compared the amount expended on the roads with that spent on the improvements in the river, they would find the former greatly in excess. It should be borne in mind, that the roads were only for passenger traffic, while the river was the highway of trade. By reference to the " Votes and Proceedings " of the House, it would be found that the following sums had been expended on the road between Brisbane and Ipswich :— In 1861 there was a sum of £1,000 placed on the General Estimates, and another £1,000 on the Supplementary Estimates; in 1862, there was on the Supplementary Estimates £1,000, and on the Additional Supplementary Estimates, £1,500; in 1863 there was another £1,000; then, for Bundambah Bridge £700, and for a bridge at Goodna £250; in 1864 there was placed on the General Estimates a sum of £3,600, and in session number two there was another £1,000, and on the Supplementary Estimates for the same year there was a further sum of £1,000; in 1865, the sum voted was £1,756, and in 1866, £1,000—making, altogether, in six years, a total expenditure of £14,806 for the passenger traffic on the road between

Brisbane and Ipswich, with which no fault had been found, while the £13,015 which had been spent in improving the river had been characterised as extravagant and wasteful. Then, again, he found on the Estimates for 1860 a sum of £4,500 for the road from Brisbane to Drayton. He could not say how much of that was spent on the road between Brisbane and Ipswich, but, probably, the lion's share. In 1861 there was a further sum for the same road of £3,250; in the same year there was a sum of £7,000 for the road from Brisbane to Dalby; and, in 1862, the sum of £4,500 for the road from Brisbane to Drayton. He supposed about one third of that sum had been spent upon the road between Brisbane and Ipswich. At the same time, the road was less passable now than it was seven years ago. Then, again, as to the expenditure upon the river. He was not an engineer, and, therefore, he would not venture an opinion upon the works; but he might say that he had heard gentlemen, who professed to know something about such matters, express strong doubts as to whether the Seventeen-mile Rocks should have been disturbed. The work carried on there had been a great expense. It had cost somewhere about £6,919; and that expenditure had always been thrown in the teeth of the honorable members for West Moreton, but the honorable members for West Moreton were not consulted as to the amount. There was a report as to the clearing of the river at the Seventeen-mile Rocks, dated in 1861, which recommended that the south rock should be blown away, and the shingle at the foot of the rock cleared away. The passage that would have thus been formed would, it was expected, have allowed such a body of water to pass through as would have kept the channel perfectly clear. Now, he must say that he thought that would have been the best way to secure a clear passage. There was just another thing he would mention, and it was this. The river communication between Brisbane and Ipswich had always been spoken of as a trifling and unimportant matter. But he could inform honorable members that when he first came to the colony there was only a small boat called the " Experiment " that went up and down the river. She left Brisbane at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and did not reach Ipswich until four o'clock on the following morning. That would give honorable members some idea as to what was the state of the river then. A great part of the delay was caused by the boat having to wait at the junction of the Brisbane and the Bremer till the water rose sufficiently to enable her to get over the bar. But what was the case now? There were five or six vessels of large tonnage now employed upon the river between Brisbane and Ipswich, besides a considerable number of smaller vessels and sailing craft. Now, seeing that traffic by the river was increasing, he maintained that it was as



much the duty of the Government to take steps to deepen the river for vessels, as to improve the roads for vehicles. If the Government considered it justifiable to go to a great expense in providing railways for interior districts, he did not see how they could come to the conclusion that they would not be justified in expending a comparatively small sum so to improve available rivers as to render them as navigable as possible for the class of vessels required. The Government, he held, were equally called upon to remove impediments to the river traffic between Brisbane and Ipswich as to remove the bar at the mouth of the river to enable sea-going vessels to come up to Brisbane. But there was another and a very strong reason why the navigation of the river above Brisbane should be improved as much as possible. As honorable members were aware, coal mines had been opened some distance up the river; and, in several districts, extensive deposits of coal were known to exist. There could therefore be no doubt that in a few years a large river trade in coal would be developed; and if the river were sufficiently improved to allow vessels to go up to the mines, coal might become an article of large export from this quarter, which would be a great benefit, not only to Brisbane, but also to the whole colony. The resolution that was come to the other night, unless it were rescinded, would preclude the Government from doing anything further for the improvement of the river after the end of this year. But, if the works were to be stopped now, all the money that had been already expended would virtually be thrown away. Unless the works at the Seventeen-mile Rocks were completed, all that had been done up to this time would be useless, and, he believed he might say, worse than useless. It would be positively injurious, the cutting having been made so far, unless it were completed. He was given to understand that, if the passage was cleared, the river at low water at Ipswich would be much lower than it used to be. He admitted that such might be the case; but, on the other hand, the river would be deeper at high water. He was given to understand that if the works at the junction of the Brisbane and the Bremer were completed, the depth of the river above that point would be increased by about four or five feet at high water. For his own part, he saw nothing preposterous or ridiculous in the proposition for the deepening of the river. On the contrary, he held that it was a most useful and important work; and he hoped that, as it had been commenced, the House would, by agreeing to his motion, determine that it ought to be continued and completed; but, whether such a conclusion should be come to or not, he trusted he would receive from the House a full expression of opinion upon the whole subject.

The SPEAKER: I am sorry to say that this is a motion with respect to which there is a

considerable difficulty; for it really brings the same subject to be dealt with twice during the same session. That difficulty, however, might have been got over by simply moving to rescind the motion included in the motion now before the House. But, however wise the general principle of this rule may be, if it were too strictly applied, the discretion of Parliament would be confined, and its votes made subject to irrevocable error. A resolution may therefore be rescinded, and an order of the House discharged, notwithstanding a rule urged (April 2, 1604)—“That a question being once made, and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again, but must stand as a judgment of the House.” Technically, indeed, the rescinding of a vote is the matter of a new question; the form being to read the resolution of the House, and to move that it be rescinded; and thus the same question which had been resolved in the affirmative is not again offered, although its effect is annulled. The same result is produced when a resolution has been agreed to, and a motion for bringing in a Bill thereupon is afterwards negatived, as in the proposed reduction of the malt duty in 1833. This difficulty might be got over; but there would still remain the greater difficulty that the resolution which it is now proposed to rescind has been sent to the Legislative Council. It is out of our hands now. It has been sent to the Upper House, has been adopted by that House, and has been returned by message to the Assembly. We cannot, therefore, discharge it. I cannot see how that difficulty is to be got over.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think it may be rescinded, though it may not be discharged.

The SPEAKER: I think the one would follow the other. The motion has been passed, and if it is rescinded it must be discharged. But it has passed the Upper House, and we cannot rescind a vote that has passed the Upper House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No; but we are only proposing to rescind a vote of this House, passed without a division; and I think the motion might be rescinded so far as this House is concerned. If that could not be done the House would be deprived of that power of reconsideration that should always be possessed by it.

The SPEAKER: That could be effected by withholding the resolution from the Upper House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think my honorable friend gave notice of the motion now before the House the very night the resolutions were sent to the Upper House. The transmission to the other House of the resolution now desired to be rescinded escaped my notice.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It appears to me that this is a new question that is before the House.

The SPEAKER: The rescinding of the motion might be accomplished if the matter

rested with this House alone; but the vote having been sent to the other House, and having been adopted by that House and sent back to this House, we have not the power to rescind it.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:** If the honorable member altered his motion in some way, and left out all mention of rescinding; that, I think, would meet the objection.

**THE SPEAKER:** The mere alteration of the words of a motion, without any substantial alteration in the object of the motion, would not meet the rule.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** But supposing a second resolution were added to the one now before the House, and that the motion so agreed to were transmitted to the Legislative Council for concurrence. Supposing it was this: that the motion before the House be transmitted to the Legislative Council for its concurrence. The reconsideration of the motion would then take place with the concurrence of both Houses. Or it might be put in another form, and the second resolution might run thus: that the Legislative Council be invited to reconsider the resolution.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not think we could rescind it ourselves.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Well, the honorable member might amend his motion by making the addition I have suggested, and thus get over the difficulty.

**MR. B. CRIBB:** I understand you do not object to the rescinding of the motion that was passed the other night.

**THE SPEAKER:** No; if the motion had only passed this House. But it has gone to the other House, and has been passed by that House, and there was a division in the other House upon it.

**MR. STEPHENS** then said he understood the object of the honorable member in bringing forward this motion was to obtain the sense of the House upon it. Now, seeing it was a quarter past twelve, and that there was not a quorum present, he would propose that the motion be allowed to stand over to a later period of the day. He would, therefore, move that the House do now adjourn until a later hour of the day.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** said he was astonished at the honorable member for South Brisbane bringing forward a motion that the House do now adjourn. The honorable member must be aware of the circumstances under which the resolution was carried; and it ought to be the duty, and was the duty, of all honorable members, to see that the matter was reconsidered. That was all that was sought for with reference to the motion. He was not aware the honorable member for South Brisbane had any authority for stating that there was not a quorum within the precincts of the House. As to the motion now under consideration, it was one which he thought the House ought to agree to; and he thought the reasons given by the honorable mover were amply sufficient to warrant the House to take the course he

suggested. He did not know if it was necessary for him to add anything to what the honorable member had stated; and he did not know that anything he could say would add anything to the result; nor did he know that any arguments he might advance, or any course he might adopt, was likely to meet with approbation in those quarters where he was most entitled to be considered as most concerned; for he found that, in those quarters where it might be expected he was most concerned, he had been generally misrepresented; and it had even been asserted that he was not present when this question was previously before the House. Honorable members, however, knew that that was not correct. The divisions on the series of resolutions to which the present motion referred was one of the largest that took place in the House when those resolutions were carried; and why no division was called for on the one in question was beyond his comprehension. For his own part, he was under the impression that the proposition of the honorable member for Maryborough was negatived, and it was not till the honorable member for West Moreton called his attention to the fact that he found the decision of the House was the other way. But it was too late then to call for a division, and so the motion was thrown over. But to come to the subject of the motion, there had been strong reasons urged why the works on the river should be continued—as strong, at any rate, as any arguments that had been advanced against the works; and he maintained, that if the works above Brisbane were discontinued, the works at the mouth of the Brisbane must be discontinued also, for it would be a monstrous robbery to spend £100,000 in opening the bar at the mouth of the river to allow vessels to come up to Brisbane, if the expenditure of a few thousands in opening the river to the second town in the colony was to be objected to. He had always looked upon the opening up of the river as a matter that deserved to be very seriously considered by the House; and he held that they had no business to deepen the river above Lytton. They had no right to encourage large ships to come up the river, bringing with them, perhaps, the seeds of some ravaging disease. He thought they ought to take the course that was adopted in all hot climates, which was, to keep sea-going ships at a distance from the capital of the country. That was the course adopted in India; and no large vessels were allowed to approach nearer Calcutta than Garden Island. Now, he thought the people in Ipswich were entitled to have the river above Brisbane cleared sufficiently for the vessels that were in the practice of plying daily between Brisbane and Ipswich. If only one half the amount that had been spent on the road between Brisbane and Ipswich had been spent in clearing the river, all that

the honorable member desired by his motion would have been effected. Now, what would be the position of this matter if the Government were called upon to stop the works? Already nearly £20,000 had been spent in the purchase of plant necessary for carrying out the works; and if the works were ordered to be discontinued, the next proposition that would be submitted to the House would be one recommending that the plant should be brought down the river, and employed in the removal of the Eagle Farm Flats. Now, that kind of selfishness altogether disgusted him. He was not aware that the people of Ipswich objected to the spending of money for the deepening of the river below Brisbane; and he did not see why it should be said by the honorable members for Brisbane that the expenditure for the deepening of the river above Brisbane was a wasteful expenditure of money. There was no wasteful expenditure at present; but if the works were stopped, there would be a wasteful expenditure, for all the work that had been done would be wholly lost. Now, when honorable members came to consider the immense amount of traffic that was carried on the river—that at least two-thirds of all the traffic that came to Brisbane from the interior, and that went from Brisbane to the westward, was carried by the river—he thought it must be admitted that the amount expended upon the river was not nearly what its merits entitled it to; and there was not the slightest doubt that, if the colony had not been separated, but had continued a portion of New South Wales, the river between Brisbane and Ipswich would have been cleared years ago.

Mr. R. CRIBB said he was willing to move the adjournment of the debate till a later hour of the day.

Mr. STEPHENS said he would withdraw his motion for the adjournment of the House, and move, instead, that the debate be adjourned till a later hour of the day. He objected to so thin a House coming to a decision upon the motion. There were only sixteen members present, and it would not be fair for so small a number to rescind a resolution that was passed by twenty-five members. It was clear, from the state of the House, that a division could not take place upon the motion.

Dr. CHALLINOR said he did not think the honorable member for South Brisbane was treating the honorable members for Ipswich and West Moreton with that amount of courtesy he ought to have shewn to them—

Mr. STEPHENS rose, and said he understood the honorable member, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, intended to make a long speech; and, therefore, he begged to call the attention of the Speaker to the state of the House.

The House was then counted out.