

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 1867

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denying it, the slanderous and malicious attack made on himself in another place, he could not allow to pass without notice an attack made in the same spirit on a gentleman of his district—the district he represented in the Assembly—a neighbor of his, and an innocent gentleman;—because he (Mr. Clark) felt that the House would fully understand and believe that the gentleman was innocent, and that the attack made on him had not been made in a straightforward way, when he read a letter which he had received from Mr. Sinclair, the Police Magistrate of Warwick, referring to the report of a speech made in another place by the honorable Mr. Gore:—

“Warwick, September 28, 1867.

“My dear sir,—I perceive that Mr. Gore has given an untrue version of what occurred in connection with the refusal of Kingsford's license. He says I asked him to sit on the bench, and that I said that Kingsford was a ‘*bad character*.’ Both statements are *untrue*. It was he who offered to sit with me, to my great astonishment, seeing we had never exchanged one single word before, except on one occasion; and that he had *sworn*, as I was informed, when I was appointed as Police Magistrate of Warwick, that he would never sit with me. I certainly did not say to him or to any one else that Kingsford was a *bad character*. Mr. Gore came to me after he had refused the license, and asked my opinion of the law in the case. I pointed out to him, in the Act 1863-64, that there was no discretionary power allowed when no objections were made and sustained by sufficient evidence, and that, consequently, his action was illegal. Of course, he pooh-poohed my opinion. Unfortunately, I am precluded from defending myself through the press; but will do so, so far as the rules of the Civil Service will allow, on the next court day here.—In haste, yours very faithfully,

“D. M. SINCLAIR.

“G. Clark, Esquire, M.L.A.”

Thus, the statement of Mr. Gore was distinctly denied—that he had consulted the Police Magistrate, and that he had been told by him, his reason for refusing the license in the first instance was that the applicant was a bad character. He (Mr. Clark) believed it was not competent for him to quote the honorable gentleman's, Mr. Gore's, speech in another place; but honorable members had a report of it in their hands, and they could look at it for themselves. He asked if this was not a further proof that the accusations brought against Mr. Gore, by an almost unanimous vote of the House, were true—that that gentleman did often act in the district from motives of political bias? He considered it was. He had been requested to table a motion to the effect that Mr. Gore was not a fit person to remain on the Commission of the Peace; but he would not do that. He was a near neighbor of that gentleman; he had tried for three years to be on good terms with him—not to quarrel with him—and he would best discharge his duty by leaving the matter in

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 2 October, 1867.

Kingsford's Case.—The Honorable St. G. R. Gore and Mr. Sinclair, P.M.—The “Platypus” and the Maryborough Sugar Company.—Application of Taxation and Expenditure.

KINGSFORD'S CASE—THE HONORABLE ST. G. R. GORE AND MR. SINCLAIR, P.M.

Mr. CLARK said he was deeply sorry that he was obliged to trespass on the time of the House in discussing again the character of a gentleman who had already been blamed severely by their vote. But, although he would not take the trouble to defend, beyond

the hands of the House. After Mr. Gore opposing him, too, in politics, as he had done, it might be considered that he was actuated by motives of hatred, if this matter were carried further by him. The House would bear him out, that in all the debates in the House with reference to Mr. Gore, he (Mr. Clark) had tried to deal with him as leniently as he could. He was sorry that gentleman had not seen fit to deal with him in an equally straightforward manner. Taking leave of the matter, he did so with the feeling that he had done his duty in defending an innocent man, who, according to the rules of the service, was not able to defend himself.

Motion—That this House do now adjourn.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the present occasion afforded him ground for making an explanation which he should have made, and had intended to make, at the earliest opportunity. A discussion took place a few evenings ago on a petition presented to the House by the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, in reference to the refusal of a license to Mr. Kingsford, and the action of certain justices in connection therewith. He (the Attorney-General) delivered an opinion during the progress of the debate; and, he thought, he subsequently informed the House that it was an off-hand opinion, given without looking into the authorities. He thought he was correct in stating, also—if he did not absolutely state so, he intended that honorable members should infer—that his opinion, even as Attorney-General of the colony, should be taken only for what it was worth. He never dictated, nor wished to dictate, to the House or the colony, the value, or the infallibility, of his opinion; and he hoped that, whenever it was to be given to the House or the Executive, or to any other body to whom he was bound to deliver it, that his opinion would be accepted as given in good faith, and to the best of his ability. He merely wished to observe that, if other gentlemen in the colony, or in another place, differed from him in opinion, he should concede to them a perfect right to do so, and he would do them the justice to think that they did so in good faith; but, he would also go so far as to say that, as he understood the Acts of the Legislature at present in existence, there was no single Act about which any two men might not differ in opinion.

Mr. GROOM considered that what had been stated by the honorable member for Warwick fully corroborated what he, himself, said in the House on a previous day; and he very much regretted that information which he had received in Brisbane fully bore out the statement of that honorable member, and was to the effect that the magistrate in question—he would not speak of the gentleman as a member of another place—had left the city, neglecting his public duties here, and gone to Warwick to sit on the bench at the

hearing of Kingsford's renewed application for a license. That, if anything, shewed that not only political animus, but personal animus, actuated the conduct of that magistrate. When a magistrate of the territory was prepared to avail himself of his parliamentary privilege to make an attack upon a police magistrate, who was deterred by the Civil Service regulations from defending himself, it was the duty of the Government to take steps to inquire into the matter. The honorable member for Warwick hardly took up the proper position in this case—he did not go far enough. The petition in Kingsford's case was signed by fifty residents of Warwick, some of them magistrates of the territory, and including the whole of the legal profession of the town, who stated that the procedure of the bench was illegal, and that the man was unjustly deprived of his license. What would they think when a gentleman, formerly a member of the Assembly, and a Minister of the Crown, at present a member of another place, and a magistrate of the territory, deliberately stated, under cloak of his privileges, what the police magistrate now declared to be untrue—and the statement had had sufficient effect in another place;—what would the petitioners say, if the subject was not investigated and dealt with on its merits? The police magistrate in question had taken the only course open to him—the proper course—to defend himself against the privileged justice of the peace who had made injurious statements regarding him, by sending a letter to the honorable member who represented the district in which he was stationed, and thus informing the House, at the earliest opportunity, that he had never done what was imputed to him. The present question, if looked at in the proper light, involved a very important issue. If such conduct in a justice was to be tolerated, occurring so near and in such a populous and influential town as Warwick, what might not occur in the outer districts of the colony?—what immunity might not be claimed by justices? Besides all that had been stated, it was known that the gentleman so much affected by the present action of the honorable member for Warwick had, within the precincts of this House, charged Mr. Kingsford with having sought to obtain a license for purposes which he (Mr. Groom) would not offend the House by mentioning—charges about as reliable, doubtless, as his statements of what the police magistrate had told him; and, after all this, if the Government would not take notice of his conduct, it was time that the House should give their attention to it.

Mr. WALSH said a great deal had been made out of this publican's case. If every publican whose license had been refused was to cause the time of the House to be taken up, as at present, their trouble would be interminable, and they would have little else to

do. But the matter had assumed another phase; and what they had now to consider was, the relative veracity of the two magistrates in question—one paid and the other unpaid. The House had before them the letter of a police magistrate, stating that an assertion made by a magistrate in another place, respecting the discharge of their magisterial duties, was false; and it was considered that either the writer of the letter was unfit for his position, or that the person whose statement he contradicted was unworthy to remain in the Commission of the Peace. A magistrate who could openly utter a falsehood was incapable of being trusted with the honorable functions pertaining to him. Seeing that the issue was so changed, he hoped that the Government would accept the letter that had been read as a record of the House, and then inquire into the facts, and ascertain which of the two magistrates had told a falsehood, and deserved to be removed. He protested that it was unfair for the Government to thrust the duty of deciding such matters on honorable members. He did not think the present Government would shirk their duties; but he, for one, objected to be obliged to be continually placing himself in the van to trace out evils in the administration, which should be the common object of the Government.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL, with the permission of the House, observed that the issue raised by the honorable member for Maryborough, with regard to the functions of the Government on this occasion, was a very important one; and he wished to inform the House of the position of the Government in relation to the magistrates of the colony; and he would simply state that it was out of the power of the Government, as a Government, to regulate the appointments of the justices of the peace. That was the Queen's prerogative, and was, as far as he understood the question, vested in the Governor, as Her Majesty's representative. It was true, His Excellency might take the advice of his responsible advisers when revising the roll of the Commission of the Peace of the Colony; but he (the Attorney-General) questioned whether a resolution of this House could be taken as a sufficient reason or warrant for striking a magistrate out of the commission. It appeared to him, that, a discussion having taken place, and the matter having been ventilated, it might well be left to those persons who ought properly to take it up: whether their advice might or might not be taken, on some subsequent occasion, to determine the question at issue, remained to be seen.

Dr. CHALLINOR was rather surprised at the remarks of the honorable and learned Attorney-General; because, he had in his possession certain correspondence shewing that the Governor did not take upon himself the responsibility of making appointments to the Commission of the Peace, or otherwise,

but devolved it upon the Executive Council. Two cases had recently occurred, familiar to honorable members, of magistrates being removed from the commission by writ of *supersedeas*. It would be well for the House to know whether this was the independent act of His Excellency, or the result of the action of His Excellency's advisers. In the question raised, the Ministry themselves, after an expression of opinion by the House, had a right to act. It was the duty of the Government themselves to take action and to relieve the House from the necessity of passing a resolution. The question had assumed those proportions, that, if the Government did not interfere, the House would.

Mr. WALSH, in explanation, called attention to the fact that the House had moved in such a matter before; and it did not seem that the Ministry of the day were withheld from action. On the 11th June, 1861, a distinct motion was made by an honorable member of the Legislative Assembly, who subsequently filled the office of Attorney-General—Mr. Lilley—that

"The conduct of Mr. W. H. Walsh, a justice of the territory, in disobeying a summons from a committee of this honorable House, is highly reprehensible, and merits the severest condemnation of the House.

"(2.) That this resolution be communicated, by address, to His Excellency."

In consequence of, and understanding the meaning of, that, he sent in his resignation as a magistrate; and, in reply, he received a communication from the Colonial Secretary of the day, stating that his resignation was accepted, but that, in consequence of the wish of the House, he should have been removed from the Commission of the Peace whether he had resigned or not. He made those statements in order to shew that in former times to remove a justice was not understood to be such a special prerogative of the Governor; nor did he believe, seeing how the appointments were made, that His Excellency would undertake to be responsible for them. It was, however, plain to the House, that one of the two magistrates under notice must be removed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he never denied the right of the House to discuss the position of the magistrates, or any other person in the colony. What he had wished to point out was that no resolution of the House to strike a magistrate off the roll could have any effect whatever. Far be it from him to say that the House should not, if they thought proper, enter into the discussion of any question; or that a resolution, if transmitted to the Governor, would not be taken into deliberate consideration by His Excellency. Far be it from him to say that a resolution of the House would have no weight. He should be the last man in the world to say such a thing. He might explain the usual course of striking magistrates off

the Commission of the Peace, on the annual revision of the roll:—First, on cause shewn; second, by a writ of *supersedeas* for cause shewn; and that cause might be well brought before the Governor, either by resolution of the House, or any extraneous evidence. Any resolution of the House would receive the serious consideration of the Governor.

Mr. CLARK would not, as the matter had been ventilated, press the motion further. He had accomplished all he wished, and he felt that justice had been done, in the minds of honorable members, to a gentleman who had been accused unjustly without the opportunity of answering his accuser.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

THE "PLATYPUS" AND THE MARYBOROUGH SUGAR COMPANY.

Mr. WALSH said he was sorry to take up the time of the House upon a somewhat similar motion to the last; but it was due to himself and a certain member of the late Government that he should do so. He would relieve the House at once by saying that he was not about to allude to that terrible threat made yesterday by the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Bell;—he was happy to say that nothing serious had as yet come out of it.

Mr. BELL: You have given no cause for it, yet.

Mr. WALSH: What he wished to refer to was—in consequence of the most unwarrantable inuendo attempted to be cast on himself and the honorable member for Eastern Downs by the Chairman of Committees—a matter touched upon in a question brought before the House on the previous day. He knew that the honorable member, Mr. Pugh, was not following the dictates of his own heart when making the peculiar motions, and asking the curious questions that he occasionally indulged in; and he knew that an honorable member who was not a very regular attendant of the House since he had gone into opposition, invariably worked upon that honorable member, and in a peculiar degree influenced his conduct, if he did not guide his proceedings. The House would learn, if they could only get a proper explanation, that it was not the Chairman of Committees who wanted to find fault with him (Mr. Walsh) and the honorable member for Eastern Downs; but that it was the late Premier, who had employed the Chairman of Committees to do this.

Mr. PUGH rose to say that he never exchanged a word with the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Macalister, on the subject of the resolutions which he had brought forward.

Mr. WALSH: In Government phrase, "A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse;" and the honorable member was so used to obeying the honorable member for Ipswich, his leader, that he did not require them to be specifically stated, in order to know what

he was required to do. It would be remembered that, the other evening, he (Mr. Walsh) felt it his duty to make an open, not a covert, charge against the honorable the Chairman of Committees; that he distinctly, in the most unmistakeable and direct language he could use, charged him with neglecting his duty to his constituents—shirking them, in fact—and accused him of saying one thing on the hustings, and walking out of the House when he should act upon what he had said and protest against unauthorised expenditure by the late Government. The consequence was, that no sooner did he sit down, than the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, jumped up and tabled a motion, evidently intended to fasten some charge on him (Mr. Walsh) with respect to the steamer "Platypus." It was because he wished to refer to that, that he now wished to make an explanation, and to enable him to do so, he moved the adjournment of the House. He would begin by stating that he had nothing whatever to do with the company on whose behalf he had employed the "Platypus;" he had no interest in it; he had not one share, not one pound, in it, and probably never would have. He had received from the chairman of the company, a letter to this effect, dated 28th March last:—

"Is that Government clipper, the 'Platypus,' overworked? Could you get the Government to send her to Maryborough with the sugar machinery and boilers daily expected per 'Royal Dane'? If they would not do it gratis, they might probably do it upon payment of" ———

He could not exactly make out the words—"which I heard would be about £50."

In consequence of that letter, he put himself in communication with the Colonial Treasurer of the day. He told that Minister how necessary it was that the sugar machinery should be up by a certain time—in which the honorable gentleman concurred, and frankly stated, that in such a piece of business the Government would most willingly assist;—and the honorable gentleman further stated that the cost would be at the rate of £10 or £12 a day, that he would make inquiries if the Government would spare the steamer, and that if the company would pay the freight she should be put at their service. He had no further communication with the Government until he received the following telegram:—

"Maryborough, April 18, 1867.
" 'Platypus' granted. Act for the company; pay freight, which is at your order with Commercial Bank, Brisbane.

"R. TRAVIS."

He then saw the Colonial Treasurer, who informed him that the charge for the "Platypus" would be £12 a day, which he willingly acceded to, on behalf of the company. He felt it necessary to employ an agent, as the Government would not undertake the responsibility, to see to the tran-

shipment and re-stowing of the plant; and he employed Captain Banks, of this town. After the lapse of several days, that gentleman came to him and said that the Government steamer was so badly managed, and the crew under so little control, and the captain so incompetent, it would be a losing thing for the company, if they had to pay for the laziness of the crew—for the "Government stroke," which was the term Captain Banks used. He (Mr. Walsh) then went to the Treasurer, and told him what he had heard. The Treasurer admitted that the Government saw it, and were aware that they were incompetently served, which was the reason why they wished to get rid of the steamers; and he further admitted it was not right for the company to pay for what the Government could not control, and asked what could he (Mr. Walsh) give as a lump sum for the use of the steamer. He refused to say; and the Treasurer then asked him if he would give £100. He replied that it was large; but eventually a bargain was struck for that sum. He had applied since, in another quarter, and had been informed that a private company would have transhipped and conveyed the plant to its destination in a week. It took only twenty-four hours to go to Maryborough, and twenty-four hours back, and to tranship and land seventy tons of cargo would not take more than four days. However, he admitted, for the sake of argument, that it would have taken seven days, which, at £12 a day, would amount to £84. Therefore, the Government would be handsomely paid at £100, if the work had been competently performed. The Government steamer was not well conducted; she had "crawlers" on board; and the captain was a gentleman who, he was told, had been a very zealous clerk in a newspaper office, and a very efficient one, but who subsequently did not shine as captain of one of Her Majesty's vessels. It was entirely in consequence of the uselessness of the crew that the Government lost about £180 by the transaction with the company. The honorable member who had brought forward the motion might, without much trouble, have found that the £100 paid was a positive gain to the Government; for if the "*Platypus*" had not earned the £100, her expenses would have been running on all the same. Seeing that he (Mr. Walsh) had had nothing else to do with the affair than to serve, not friends, but constituents, and that the sum paid was according to a proposition of the Government, it was disingenuous of the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, to move for the returns in the way he did. He trusted that, as far as he was concerned, the honorable member was quite satisfied he had no personal gain from the transaction.

Mr. PUGH wished to say, merely, that he knew that, at the time he made the motion,

the honorable member for Maryborough had previously told him that he was not interested in the matter. But he did not think his motion was disingenuous at all. The honorable member for Maryborough had been making a long speech about unauthorised expenditure; and, as it had come to his (Mr. Pugh's) knowledge that that trip of the Government steamer had entailed the unauthorised expenditure of more money than was earned for freight, or under the charter, he thought it was as well that the House should be made acquainted with it, even though the honorable member had not noticed it. That was the reason why he had put the motion on the paper.

Mr. ARCHER said that the explanation of the honorable member for Maryborough would satisfy every one that, whatever he had done in the matter under question was for the benefit of the country, and not for his own private advantage. But it was premature for the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, to move in the matter, until he had found out who paid the balance of unauthorised expenditure, over and above the £100 earned by the steamer. He (Mr. Archer) had found that the balance, £180, was charged to "Northern Railways"! He thought it rather strange to bring forward a motion such as the honorable member for North Brisbane had made, when the honorable member for Maryborough might very well have brought forward that unauthorised expenditure of £180, charged for railway purposes, as an additional item to those he had in the first instance questioned.

Mr. DOUGLAS observed that it was as well he should make some explanation with regard to the remarks of the honorable member for Rockhampton. He presumed that the expenditure ostensibly charged to northern railways was charged in this way:—The whole expenditure upon and of the "*Platypus*" had been hitherto charged to northern railways. Honorable members opposite, now having the power to do so, would transfer the expenditure to some other head;—they had exercised that power of transference in other matters, why not in this? Whether it was desirable originally to have bought the "*Platypus*" was a question he would not discuss; but she had been bought with the view of carrying rails and plant up to Rockhampton for the northern railway. The charges made, at the time, by coasting steamers and schooners was so great that the responsible head of the Public Works Department considered that he was effecting a saving to the country by purchasing a steamer to do the work. That policy having been adopted, the Government accounts represented all charges of the "*Platypus*" against the northern railway. He (Mr. Douglas) thought that the facts of the case had been pretty correctly stated by the honorable member for Maryborough. He had charge of the "*Platypus*" for a very

short time; she was not satisfactory to have anything to do with. He found that the gentleman who commanded her was not by any means, an active man; and he could not get money's worth out of the steamer. He might say, that at the time the honorable member for Maryborough first came to him to make a proposal, that he (Mr. Douglas) should assist him, he told him he was very glad to meet the honorable member's views, if he could do so to the interest of the Government. The proposition he made to the honorable member was not calculated to go against the interests of the Government. It was contemplated, at that time, to send up part of the Bustard Head Lighthouse; and, as he understood that the weight of the sugar plant would not be so heavy as it afterwards proved, he thought that the "Platypus" could take the plant when going to Bustard Head, and, after landing the lighthouse material, on her return, call at Maryborough and deliver the sugar machinery. He found, however, that the sugar plant was enough for a load; but, having given a pledge to the honorable member, Mr. Walsh, he felt bound to keep it, and the plant was forwarded. At the time, the steamer might have been employed in taking railway plant up to Ipswich.

Mr. ROYDS: Would that be charged to northern railways?

Mr. DOUGLAS: But he was told by, or, rather, he understood from the commander, that she might be run ashore; and, as getting something from the trip was better than earning nothing, she was sent to Maryborough. The steamer had bad weather. Captain Banks had promised to facilitate matters as much as possible; but he (Mr. Douglas) must affirm that there were some delays in getting the plant on board the "Platypus" which the Government were not accountable for. When she put out to sea, she was met by heavy weather—so he had been informed—and it was found that the cargo had not been properly stowed; she had to return, and the plant was taken out of her and re-stowed, and, of course, there was great delay thereby. The "Platypus" had been employed twenty-two days instead of a week, which should have been ample time.

Mr. MYLNE remarked upon the circumstances under which the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Pugh, had given notice of his motion—in the midst of jeering and laughing from honorable members on the Opposition side of the House; and said he had observed that the honorable member for Maryborough had scarcely resumed his seat, when the motion was tabled. He thought, if the honorable member for North Brisbane had taken time for consideration, he would never have brought this most frivolous thing before the House.

Motion for adjournment, by leave, withdrawn.

APPLICATION OF TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE.

Mr. FITZGERALD moved—

1. That the inhabitants of every part of Queensland are fully entitled to claim and enjoy equal political rights and advantages.

2. That it is the highest duty of the Parliament of Queensland to assimilate its functions, as far as possible, to those of the Imperial Parliament, and to provide that the Government of the country shall be carried on, as in Great Britain, upon well defined and easily understood fundamental principles, ensuring equal justice and fair taxation to all persons under its rule.

3. That in the application of taxation to Queensland, the same principles which have for so many centuries been successfully applied in Great Britain should never be lost sight of—especially that which requires all burdens for public works or local improvements to be made a direct charge on the property improved by them, while it forbids the imposition on the industrial classes, whether laborers, miners, artisans, manufacturers, or dwellers in towns, of taxes for the improvement of any property, that may be hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away from them, in which they are in no way interested.

4. That whilst this House, for the protection and consolidation of the general interests of the colony, fully recognises the necessity of keeping under its own control the construction and maintenance of statute laws, the administration of justice, the customs, and other departments concerning the colony as a whole—it is equally ready to recognise the undoubted right of all British subjects in the different districts of this vast colony to direct and control, through elected local authorities, all their own local affairs, as well as their right to progress as rapidly as the natural peculiarities of their different districts may allow, without being held in check or kept back by the slower progress of their fellow settlers in other places.

5. That as money paid for rents, or purchase of waste lands, is in reality a form of land tax that occupiers or owners pay to supply funds for opening up the country by roads, bridges, railways, or other local improvements, as well as providing labor by immigration for working such lands, without imposing taxes for these purposes on those who have no right to bear them—this House declares that land revenue should be classed as local revenue, to be expended for local improvements and immigration within those districts of the colony that produce it.

6. That this House, whilst declaring the necessity, for reasons of general policy, of keeping in its own hands all legislation in reference to the waste lands of the colony, is willing to entrust the administration of them to properly constituted local authorities, who shall be under the immediate control of, and responsible to, the people most interested in their proper management.

7. That the foregoing resolutions be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

He said that, in moving those resolutions, he felt really an overwhelming sense of the importance of placing them clearly before the House. He was almost afraid of the

responsibility he had undertaken, because of his inability really to do justice to the very important matters to which the resolutions referred. The real question to be tried by those resolutions was not so much the affirmation of them, for that after all would only amount to a declaration of principles; but the real question at issue was, whether the colony was to remain united as a whole, or whether separation would be forced upon the people in the north. Now, he said so, because he, and also the honorable member for Rockhampton, had come to the House, with every determination to do what was fair and reasonable; and without any desire to foment disputes, but on the contrary, as far as possible, to allay them, and be able to return to their respective constituencies and assure them that it was the disposition of all honorable members in the House to do justice to all parts of the colony—and to allay those feelings which it was natural for the people in the north to entertain. It seemed to be generally thought that the northern members were a set of radicals, whom it was difficult to satisfy—who were continually grumbling, although they had very little reason to grumble; and that it would be well to get rid of them. But he hoped to be able to shew to the House that the complaints of the people in the north were such as any fair and reasonable man ought to listen to. He would ask honorable members for southern constituencies to put themselves in the position of the northern members, and see things from the same point of view as they saw them. He was sure that, if they would but do so, they would admit that, however inconvenient and tiresome it might be to have to listen to the detail of those grievances, it was not unreasonable to ask to bring them before the House. Northern members, and the people in the north, were very much against subdivision, because the thinking portion of the people, however wrong their thoughts might be, or however poor might be their ability to think, looked forward with hope to the future; and they were very much against separation, because they thought and believed that, no matter how large the area of the colony might be, with proper government the statute laws of the colony could be advantageously administered from one source; and that subdivision would only entail weakness on the subdivided parts. They would rather that the colony should remain united as at present; and they only asked the House to make such arrangements as would provide for fair and equal justice to all—as would allow taxation to be equally applied, and give to the people of the north those powers that should not be denied to any British subject. He believed that a great deal of the irritation and uneasiness that was felt in the north was occasioned by the very unwise way their reasonable complaints had been from time to time rejected or unnoticed by the former Governments of the

colony. Now, it might be that those Governments had had too much to do in the south, and had occupied their attention with local matters they should not have taken any part in, to be able to give attention to the affairs of the northern districts. For his own part, he believed it was more from pressure of business than design that the interests of the north had been neglected. He believed that most of what the north complained of had arisen from the central Government being burdened by a great deal of local matters. He believed it was that that had caused them to neglect the general business of the colony. However it might have happened, a great many people in the north were red-hot for separation, because of the way their complaints had been disregarded. Their representatives, however, had spoken out very strongly against it, and had said to the people—"Let us try and obtain those advantages we are entitled to under the Constitution Act which has been given to us; let us use every endeavor we can to obtain from our fellow-colonists a recognition of our fair claims; and we are sure that if they are properly put before them there will not be any necessity for rushing into decided action for separation." The steps that had been thus urged were the steps he now proposed to take. The northern members would do everything that reasonable men could be expected to do; and there was no doubt that it would strengthen their action; no matter what it might have to be. If honorable members should see fit to recognise their claims, if they considered them just—and the north did not want them otherwise—everything would be set right, and affairs would go on smoothly. But, if not, their present action would not be damaging to any ulterior measures which it might be found necessary to take. It was very difficult in reality for honorable members, and for the inhabitants of southern towns and districts, to realise the state of things that prevailed almost entirely over the north from Rockhampton upwards—to realise the apparent total want of interest on the part of the Government of the colony in the affairs of the settlers there; whilst everything that those living in the southern centres of population wanted from time to time had been either provided or promised to a liberal extent, in the shape of roads, bridges, waterworks, railways, &c. Now, the people in the north had had great difficulty in getting the commonest assistance for the making of roads passable—roads which could scarcely accommodate the traffic that was now usual over them. He would not take up the time of the House in detailing many instances, but would quote one which, from having come under his own observation, he could speak of with confidence. In the Mackay district, where he had been residing, he had watched the land sales and the amount of revenue accruing from them, and he knew that since

1863 there had been realised from land sales in that district not less than £14,000; and large amounts had been received every year besides from rents; yet, during all that time, and in spite of incessant applications to the Government to do something towards improving the district, there had been nothing done in the district except in the expenditure of two trifling sums, amounting together to £2,500—and the greater part of that was provided for, not out of revenue from rents, but out of an English loan. Even the custom-house and bonded stores that were built there were paid for out of a loan. The expenditure of £2,500 in the district was but a trifle, and most of it was out of an English loan—and it was but a trifle compared with the amount subscribed by the settlers in the district. Now, where did the money that was obtained from the district go to? The tax-gatherer and the custom-house officer were always provided to raise money in the district; but repeated applications to expend money even for the most necessary works were taken no notice of. He supposed honorable gentlemen were too busy in the south to take notice of those matters. What was true as regarded the Mackay district was true as regarded every other place in the north. Now, under such circumstances, people residing in the north naturally asked what became of the money paid for the purchase of lands and the rents of lands. The northern people claimed an equality of rights with the people of the south, and they could not understand why those moneys that should be expended in the district for its improvement should be taken away and expended for the benefit of other districts. Unless it were shewn to the people in the north that they had a right to pay tribute to their fellow-colonists in the south, they could not understand why they should not have a fair share of expenditure out of the revenue to which they contributed—always, of course, deducting the amount necessary for the purposes of general government. The view held in the north generally with respect to colonial government was that it was an association of equals under the sanction of imperial power for mutual advantage—that a colony was a political company or firm, with the head office at the capital, and the partners, who were the people, in the different districts of which the colony was composed. Now, towards the general expenses of that firm or company, and for the ordinary conduct of its affairs,—such as postal communication, the administration of justice, the management at head-quarters, and for the buildings necessary for general purposes, such as the Parliament Houses, courts of justice, telegraph offices, post offices, and so on,—the people had a right to contribute in equal proportions. But when that was done the liability ceased, and the private resources of the different partners should be applied to their

own use and advantage only. If one of the partners chose to live too fast and overdraw his account at the bank, he ought to be brought up and made to square his accounts with the firm; or if he could not pay up his liabilities, the partnership, so far as he was concerned, should be dissolved. Now, in every well-managed partnership business, the accounts of the several partners were made up every year, and when the books were balanced the profits were apportioned; and something of the same kind ought to be done in the case of a colonial Government. The people in the various districts, of course, had a right to pay a fair share towards the general expenses of the colony—no more; and when those expenses were defrayed, the Government should exercise the strictest justice in the subdivision of what money remained for the improvement of the several districts from which it had been obtained. It was only by the observance of a plan of that kind that such a Government as that of Queensland could be continued. If the partners, who were equals, found that, by a wrong system of keeping accounts, one of the set of partners was injured by the negligence of another, would it not awaken, and justly so, expressions of the strongest indignation? He did not mean to say, so far as the parallel was applicable to the management of the affairs of the colony, that such a thing had been done willingly or knowingly; but such was the view taken by the people of the north as to the way in which the Government of the colony had been carried on. The illustration he had attempted precisely shewed the case of the north. The people in the north had been protesting for years against the extravagant expenditure, from every source, for the aggrandisement of other places; and had asked from time to time for statements of accounts, but had never been able to obtain any. That was what occasioned the strong complaints of the north. They acknowledged that they were liable for the loans. They had indorsed the bills and were therefore justly liable to the creditors of the colony abroad; but they came to the people of the south and said—"You are honorable gentlemen and are honestly disposed—you do not want to oppress us—you have ample resources for your own wants in your own hands—now use those resources and let us have ours. Do not let us have un-made roads, and rivers without bridges, where bridges are required; do not let us be without those improvements that are necessary in the district, and which we are entitled to; but do that which is fair and right. We have naturally felt much indignation at no accounts being rendered to us year by year, as in a well conducted firm they should be; and by which we would see that justice was intended to be done to us." Now, in not rendering accounts there was an amount of injustice done, but he believed that the want of

accounts arose from the press of business more than anything else. But he still said, and he put it to the House to say, if it was not a great mistake on the part of the Government of a free people not to take voluntarily some measures to clear themselves from imputations that might be directed against them of governing without rule and without principle. He did not hesitate to say that the Government of Queensland had been more despotic than any despotic Government in Europe. No Government in Europe could be more despotic in the matter of taxation than the Government of Queensland had been. The people, it was true, were supposed to have the power of voluntarily taxing themselves, but such was not really the case. The Estimates, too, as they were submitted yearly, were unsafe guides as to the expenditure of the year; and the loans that had been contracted were based upon anything but a proper and sound footing. When those loans were contracted, if the Government meant to keep the country quiet, and meant to shew that they intended nothing but what was fair and reasonable, they should have said—"We hold the country responsible for the loans, but we will take care to apportion them in the several districts—the country will be benefited by them, but we do not wish to charge the people in the interior parts of the colony where no portion of them is spent, with even the interest on the loans." Now, was it not a shame that the people residing at the Gulf of Carpentaria should have to pay the same amount of customs, in order to meet the interest on expenditure for works in the south, as the people residing on the spot where the money was spent, and who reaped all the advantage of the loans? He could not believe that such was the original intention. He could not believe that any statesman would have planned a system that would produce such results. The northern members had taken the Estimates for 1867 and 1868, had tried to analyse them, and had published their classification of the proposed expenditure for 1867 in one of the Brisbane newspapers of the 23rd of September last. They did not pretend that such classification was word for word and line for line correct, but they had endeavored to make it as correct as possible, and it was such as no reasonable man could object to. Those gentlemen by whom it was drawn up had separated the different loans that had been contracted for the general expenditure of the colony—such as for Government House, telegraphs, lighthouses, &c.; and they had classed those as loans generally to be borne by the whole colony; and had placed the interest upon them year by year against the general revenue, and made it a first charge on that revenue. Then, they had taken the immigration loan, and made it a local charge by estimating the responsibility in proportion to what they presumed to be the present ratio of the inhabitants of the colony. Now, he hoped the honorable member for West

Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, would bear that in mind when he came to speak on the subject. That honorable member thought it was not right to claim for the north 34,000 as its proportion of the inhabitants of the colony. Well, he would take that estimate as excessive; but in apportioning the loan, it was done according to that number. If the population was less, the north would have to pay less. Dividing that loan according to population, and taking all the other loans—for the southern railways, for waterworks, harbors, and rivers—and putting those loans for public works in the south on one sheet, and those for public works in the north on another sheet, they found that there was a total expenditure in the north of £540,200, involving £34,864 for interest annually; and an expenditure in the south of £2,723,986, involving an annual interest to the amount of £78,982. Now, that was the result of their analysis of the loans; and carrying the analysis out on the Estimates for 1867, and separating the different local works, and putting them under another page, they found that, in the Estimates for 1867, it was proposed to expend £157,000 in the southern districts of the colony, and £71,000 in the northern districts. But, looking precisely at the amounts of money that ought to be appropriated to local purposes in the north and in the south, they found that in the north the local revenue, or the amount that ought to be available for local works, was £164,000—that was, there would be a surplus of £54,000 for the north; while, by the same mode of calculation, there would be a deficiency in the south of £2,000. Now, since those calculations were made, supplementary estimates, to the tune of £82,000, had been laid on the table; and they found that, adding £55,000 to the previous deficiency in the south, there was a total deficiency of £108,000, whilst the northern surplus of £54,000 odd was reduced by £23,000, or to nearly £31,000. Now, here the north ought to have a clear balance of about £31,000 available for northern works and improvements; and, at the same time, the south, like a fast young man who had been over-running the constable, would have a deficiency of £108,000 during the past year. Then making an analysis of the Estimates for 1868, which the present Government had placed on the table, but which he supposed they had copied to a great extent from the Estimates of the late Ministry, the northern surplus of local revenue over local expenditure amounted to £60,000, and the southern deficiency to £65,000. He did not wish to thrust those Estimates down the throats of honorable members, but he wished them to take the Estimates and examine them for themselves, and see if the gentlemen who had drawn up the analysis had not fairly analysed the expenditure for the north and south, and placed the amounts fairly under the different heads. If there was any error,

it could only be a very trifling one. Now, with those facts before them, was it not reasonable for the people in the north to grumble; and had they not ample grounds for complaint? Those matters were coming before honorable members now for the first time; and he thought the Government had failed in their duty, in not placing those matters before the Legislature long ago, as they should have done. The next great right that was involved in the first resolution, was the right of representation. To his mind, that had always been a matter of very secondary importance, compared with the apportionment of taxation and expenditure. If honorable members did not make the amount of expenditure in the districts they represented so much a matter of scramble as they did, but dealt with it on some fundamental and equitable principle, as it was dealt with under imperial rule, the matter of having a member more or less would be of but little consequence. But when representatives came to the House charged by their constituencies to look well after their interests, and to get all they could for them, they took up a false position, and it was one that he would not consent to take up. He took it that he held a seat in that House as one of the representatives of the colony, charged with the duty of bringing before the Parliament the interests of a particular district; and he thought that in dealing with the Estimates honorable members should be guided by a desire to promote the interests of the country, as they might be developed in particular districts, and should not subject the distribution of the revenue to the decision of accidental or pre-concerted majorities. By the Registrar-General's returns it would be seen that the calculations he had referred to were not very far astray, for he observed in table B that the population of Rockhampton was set down at 6,000 odd, and all other districts at 27,000. Those two together made 33,000, which was very close on to 34,000. He thought that honorable members, in examining those tables, would see that the registration districts of Brisbane, Ipswich, Drayton and Toowoomba, Warwick, &c., included all the southern districts, and that the words "other districts" meant the northern districts. Now, in reference to the number of the people in the different places, it had been said that the north was over-represented—that such places as the Warrego, having only thirty-nine electors, and the Mitchell, with only two or three—

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: The Warrego and the Mitchell are not in the north.

MR. FITZGERALD: The way he proposed to estimate the population was to examine what amount of waste lands were taken up in those districts, and give three men to each block. According to his experience as a surveyor, and his knowledge of the country, he would calculate the population of a district in this way:—He would divide the revenue

derived from it by £12 10s., which would give the number of blocks in the district, and then, giving three men to each block, he would come very close to the number of the population. In that way he found that in the Warrego District, which yielded a revenue of £10,214, there were 810 blocks taken up, which gave 2,400 of a population. In the Burke District, which yielded a revenue of £4,350, there were 360 blocks taken up, which gave a population of 1,080; and in the Mitchell District, from which there was derived a revenue of £6,183, there were 500 blocks taken up, which gave a population of 1,500—though he believed it was very much more. The honorable member for Ipswich, the late Colonial Secretary, in addressing the electors of Ipswich, referred to the constituency of Clermont. The honorable gentleman, whose speech to his constituents during the late elections he read at Clermont, and was certainly very much amused with, was reported to have said—

"When we find that such a district as Clermont, with half-a-dozen electors, and the Mitchell, with, I presume, as many more, able to obtain the same weight as West Moreton, or the towns of Toowoomba and Warwick, it is not to be wondered that they, with others, are able to thwart and obstruct the principles upon which the whole of the Government ought to be conducted. I am not aware whether it is that some of those districts are unable to find people in them capable of representing their interests in the Legislative Assembly. I know not whether they do not thoroughly disregard the possession of the franchise, but true it is that some of those districts are represented by gentlemen who never saw their districts, which, I have no hesitation in saying, should have no representation at all. Why, in reality, they have nothing to represent."

That was the view taken by a southern member of one of the most important constituencies in the north. When he first saw that report, and read it, he was in the company of a great many gentlemen, every one of whom at once remarked that the gentleman who made such a statement must have known very little of Clermont at the time he made it. Now, the population of Clermont itself was 400, and more, including women and children; Copperfield, 600; on the gold fields, 700 Europeans exclusive of Chinese; and on stations 35; making altogether a population of upwards of 2,700. The reason, as he had ascertained, why the people at Copperfield and Clermont did not register themselves during the late registration was that they forgot all about it. But that district, though having such a large population—though producing large quantities of gold, and about 125 tons of copper per month, the late Colonial Secretary considered was undeserving of representation. As he had said before, important as representation might be, he did not believe it was so important as the establishment of some general principles by which right might be done to any district when the member was not

present. He now came to deal with the second resolution. He had referred to what was said by the late Colonial Secretary at Ipswich, when he spoke about some districts being unable to find people in them that were capable of representing their interests, and about the people having to elect as their representatives persons who had no connection with the district. Now, why was that the case? It was simply because the business of the country was conducted on such wrong principles that members were kept month after month by discussions and business relating to local southern affairs—when the business of the country might otherwise be disposed of in a few weeks. It was the great loss of time occasioned in that way that prevented constituencies in the north from getting local representatives. It was not possible to get a man possessing the confidence of the community to consent to sacrifice his own private business to look after the interests of the public. Such a thing was not to be expected. In the Kennedy District many were tried before he was, but no one would consent to come forward, otherwise he would not now have been in the House, because gentlemen better known than he was, and possessing the confidence of the people in a greater degree, would have been returned to represent the district. That was the reason why representation was not carried out in the way the honorable member for Ipswich seemed to wish it to be carried out. If only business that was generally understood were brought before the House, and that could be disposed of by the sacrifice of a month or five weeks, there would be no difficulty in getting local gentlemen of repute and ability to represent the northern constituencies. That was why he asked the House to pass the second resolution. He was sure that the practice of the Imperial Parliament would be found to be as he had described it—that the Imperial Parliament attended to imperial subjects, and did not interfere with local affairs. It was the guardian of the public rights, and so it stood aloof from local affairs, and it insured fair taxation to all under its rule. He now came to the third resolution. No one, he thought, would deny the proposition contained in that resolution. It was only fair to ask that every one in the colony should contribute an equitable share or quota of his earnings for what was for the general interest of all in the colony—but not beyond. If the people in the country districts wanted roads or bridges made, why ask the people in the towns, who had no concern in such works, to pay for them? Such a thing was not done in the home country. When roads or bridges were required in any district, then a charge was made for them on the property that would be improved by them, or the people who owned the property had to do without such improvements. If the Imperial Parliament were asked to vote £3,000,000, which

would be at the rate of two-thirds of a penny per annum to every individual of the population, for the purpose of carrying out improvements in a particular district in Scotland or England, the proposition would not be entertained, on the ground that Parliament had no right to deal with local improvements. Let them take, for example, the application that was made a few years ago to the Imperial Parliament for four or five thousand pounds for the rebuilding of Westminster Bridge. Every argument that could be advanced upon anything like public grounds was advanced in support of the application, but it was refused, because it was contrary to the principles of British legislation to tax the people of the whole kingdom for a local work, however important—even in the city of London, and in the neighborhood of the Houses of Parliament. Now, he maintained that the same principles should be carried out here. If hitherto they had followed blindly the example of New South Wales, they should retrace their steps. He had no doubt but the practice of New South Wales and Victoria would be quoted as affording examples of a different course from what he contended for. But it should be remembered that Victoria was a highly prosperous colony. It was only about one-eighth of the size of Queensland, and was only to be regarded, in comparison, as a province, of which Melbourne was the capital. All the trade of the colony was attracted to Melbourne as a great centre, and all the railways and other works had been projected and carried out mainly for the aggrandisement of Melbourne. But in Victoria, the large revenue that was obtained from the waste lands was applied to the extinction of the public debt. As to New South Wales, he thought that any one who would consider carefully the example of that colony would unhesitatingly declare that it was an example that ought not to be followed. They had followed the example of New South Wales too long already, and the sooner they ceased to do so the better. That colony was struggling under the burdens produced by bad legislation; and at the same time it held on to its waste lands, or only dribbled them away to people who made very little use of them. Was it a fact, that free selection had done great good in the colony? It had settled a large number of people in the country, but he believed, nevertheless, that it was a vicious system; and it was not a system that it would be desirable to introduce into this colony. It opened the land to occupation at a low rate, by people of small means, and who were not able to turn the lands to the best account. On the other hand it prevented people from getting on the lands who could improve them and turn them to the most useful purpose. The title, too, under free selection there was miserably bad. If a man spent a large sum of money on the land he had selected, owing to his not having a title, or not being able to get it, the money he had

spent was virtually locked up. But more than that, the system of free selection had annihilated the land fund, and the consequence was that the interest on the loans had to be defrayed out of the customs revenue. An example that had produced such a result was one which they ought not to follow. He hoped he had heard the last about New South Wales affording an example they ought to follow. Such a course was never followed at home. There the improvement of the property in any district was never made a charge upon the general revenue, but upon the property that was improved; and when the same rule could be applied here by the sale of waste lands, why should the incomes of the people be taxed in the way he referred to on the previous evening? An honorable member on that occasion took exception to his statement that every poor man on an average paid £3 10s. towards the general revenue; but any one who was at all in good circumstances as a working man, and who drank his grog or beer, and used tobacco; and his family, tea and sugar, and some little domestic comforts, would have to pay all that, or, at any rate, very little less. Now, if it was desired that the people in the colony should grow rich, the Legislature must take care not to establish a principle that would have the effect of stripping them of their earnings, and taxing their incomes to defray expenses incurred for improving the property of people in other parts of the colony. What was it that was the principal inducement for people to emigrate to colonies? What but the prospect of getting rid of heavy taxation? He did not agree in the opinion that was held by those who said they did not care about realizing a revenue from the land—that they would give away the land for nothing to people who would settle upon it and cultivate it. Get people on the land, said they, and a sufficient compensation for the price of the land would be obtained by customs duties. Now, he denied that that was a just view of the case. Working people coming out to the colony were entitled to certain considerations, because they paid their own passages, and so saved the Government the outlay of the money; but those who were large purchasers should be required to pay what was required for the improvement of the lands, and that to such an extent as would not make the improvements a burden on those who had no right to pay for them. When land was sold, the purchase money, as far as it was necessary, should be applied to the making of roads, to enable the purchaser to make valuable use of his land; and then, afterwards, the land should be taxed for the maintenance of the roads. In the same way, the cost of bringing immigrants to the colony should be defrayed out of the land fund. It should not be made a charge upon the incomes of the people, and especially upon the incomes of those, the price of whose labor would be

reduced by the introduction of immigrants. Those who wanted to get cheap agricultural servants had a right to pay for them. They had no right to ask the people of the towns to pay for them. The only proper way to do in respect of immigration, was to set aside a portion of the land revenue for immigration purposes. It was true that, in one instance, the British Parliament voted money out of the general revenue for public works; but that was during the Irish famine, about twenty years ago; and the money was then given as alms, and it was understood at the time the money was voted, that it was to be given as alms. But the people in this colony did not require to ask for alms. There was no reason why the north or the south should ask for alms, for the making of railways or any other purpose whatever. As to the fourth resolution, he might say that there was no disposition on the part of any portion of the people in the north to take the construction of the statute laws of the country out of the hands of the Parliament. All that they desired was the power to control and direct their own local affairs—amongst which were to be included roads and bridges, railways and immigration; because they wished to have it in their power to say how many and what class of immigrants were required. They did not want to have a general system of immigration by which the inmates of prisons and workhouses, and the off-scourings of the streets of large cities, would be emptied upon them. They wanted to have the power of managing their own measures for immigration, of appointing their own agent to select the particular class of immigrants required, and of dismissing him if he did not perform his duty faithfully. Then, again, as regarded local matters, he supposed it was no use insisting upon a thing that no person would deny—that the people in the north, being equal to the people in the rest of the colony, had no right to remit the conduct of those affairs which only concerned their own district, into the hands of others of the colonists claiming no dominion over them, and having no right to interfere in such matters, when they could be managed so much better by those who understood them, and who were living on the spot. Of course, if they received grants of money from others of their fellow-settlers—grants to which they themselves in no way contributed—they would acknowledge the right of those other colonists to interfere in the application of such money; but when the money was raised by themselves, and belonged to no one else, the people in the north had the best right to direct its expenditure. He next asked the attention of honorable members to the fifth resolution; and, in doing so, he would ask them to consider the relative position of the people in the colony. They all came out to Queensland free and equal in every respect; and, after having contributed through the customs to all expenses that

were of a general nature, and in the benefits arising from which all shared equally, to whom, he would ask, should the land revenue be fairly considered to belong? The only answer that could be given to that question was, that it should certainly belong to the districts producing it, and to no other. In this colony, they owed feudal rights to no one. They were not required to remit any portion of the land revenue to Her Majesty, for she had most generously relieved the colonists from all claims upon the revenues from the land. The revenues derived from the sale of lands should be received by the Government as trustees for the making of roads and bridges, railways, and other improvements that might be required in any district when the lands came to be occupied. If the persons occupying the lands could pay for the making of roads and bridges and railways in all the districts in which such works were required, it would not be necessary to ask them to pay for them. The lands belonged, in reality, to the persons who occupied them; and the reason they paid rents and purchase moneys for them was to prevent adventurers going upon the lands—men who would not make a profitable use of them. In fact, a rent or purchase money was only so much money paid to keep others off the land, and reserve it to the occupier or a freeholder. Well, the Government held the money that was so paid, but what did they do with it? People residing in other districts had no right to it. The inhabitants of towns contributed themselves their share to the general revenue, and they had their rates and other local charges for the improvements of the towns, and what could they have to do with the land revenue? What then was the Government to do with it? Certainly, expend it for the benefit of the people in the district from which it was obtained, in the making of roads, and the supplying of the labor necessary for the cultivation of the land, so that other persons might not be taxed for those purposes. He took it that that was a reasonable way of applying the moneys obtained from the sale of waste lands. The money was paid into the hands of the Government, to be expended for the benefit of those in the district. But it was altogether indefensible to say that the fellow-settlers of the purchasers of the land, and who resided in some other part of the colony, should be able to take that money and expend it for their purposes. Such a proposition could not be justified. The system propounded by Mr. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who was the great authority on colonization some time ago, was, that so much per acre should be charged for the lands, and that out of the purchase money fifty per cent. should be deducted for survey and management, and for roads and bridges, and the other fifty per cent. expended upon immigration, to provide labor for the improvement of the lands. That

policy was adopted by South Australia and New Zealand, and the people got on very well under it. That system had been the saving of New Zealand. If a Minister there were to get up in his place in Parliament and propose a measure that would touch the land fund, so as to throw it into the public chest, as was done with the land fund in this colony, he would not hold office five minutes afterwards; because politicians there had always observed a difference between money paid for lands, and money paid through the customs for general purposes. As to the sixth resolution, much of what he had to say in support of it he had already stated. If it was understood that the land fund belonged to the people who paid the money for the land, and that no person out of the district in which it was produced could claim any power of direction in its expenditure—except in so far as it might be required to meet the interest on loans for the district, and for which the Government was responsible—it followed as a consequence that the application of the money should be restricted to local improvements, and for local immigration purposes. If the colony were divided into provinces, which he hoped would be the case before long, and provincial councils established; and if those councils could shew that they could, from such sources, meet all the local expenditure, there should be no interference with them. He knew it might be dangerous to entrust local bodies with the legislation about waste lands; but it would be well to obtain suggestions from the provincial councils as to the land regulations for particular districts; and if those suggestions were reasonable, and did not interfere with the regulations of the Parliament, they might be entertained and carried into effect. But it would be of vital importance that the survey and management of the lands should be left in the hands of the persons residing in the different localities, for that would in a great measure involve the rate at which any district might be able to progress. If the people in any province had to wait for months and months for the confirmation of the commonest matters of business, the progress of the district would be very much impeded. A gentleman from New Zealand, with whom he was in conversation the other day, mentioned to him the case of the Middle Island, in which there were three sets of land regulations; and he instanced one set which yielded about a quarter of a million annually, and which was worked under local management. Now, he did not see why such a system should not work in this colony. If they had such a system, then the moment they got provincial action it would give new life blood to the colony; and honorable members would not in future have to deplore the financial condition of the colony, but would rather experience some difficulty in finding out how to dispose of their immense

revenues. He would not detain the House further, but would now simply conclude by moving the resolutions.

Mr. MILES seconded the motion.

Mr. DOUGLAS: Sir—I have risen with some reluctance to speak upon this question, which has been treated so ably and at such length this evening. The honorable member for Kennedy has, I am quite sure, satisfied the House upon many admirable general principles. I must confess I should have been pleased to have heard some expression of opinion from those honorable gentlemen who are entrusted with the Government of this country upon a subject which is calculated wholly to revolutionise our present practice. I presume the present holders of office have their ideas of what it is incumbent upon them to do, and what they think they are able to carry out; and after reading these resolutions have come to a conclusion in reference to them, and formed an opinion whether they are in accordance with their present principles, or with those they are likely to adopt; or, on the other hand, adverse to those principles, or whether they conceive it would be possible to carry them out. I confess that when these resolutions were first placed on the business paper, and when I perused them subsequently, I felt a sort of grim satisfaction that we were at last reverting to sound general principles, and that some honorable member had had the boldness to propound them. But, sir, the assertion of mere abstract principles in deliberative assemblies, however sound those principles may be, fall with dullness on the ear and fail to reach the consciences of honorable members. They prefer to deal with details, and though they are well satisfied at times to hear these principles enunciated and affirmed in the same way as other rights, such as the rights of man, are affirmed, those are only in moments of political rapture, such as but seldom affect mankind. Still, I do feel it very refreshing to hear an honorable member—and a new member who has taken such pains to address himself to the question—deviate from the ordinary custom of this House and treat us with an exposition of such wholesale and abstract principles as the honorable member for Kennedy has this evening asserted. It has been my fortune before now to treat upon this question, not exactly in the elaborate way in which that honorable member has dealt with it; but I have earnestly, and in the face of great odds, sought in this House to affirm the same principles, though unfortunately I have been unsuccessful in securing the support of honorable members—signally so in 1863, when I first entered this House, and when we deliberated upon a measure which has since materially influenced the destinies of this colony. I was then in a minority, though a small minority. I sought to oppose legislation which I believed at that time infringed upon the principles of true government. I was unsuccessful, and

I now see in the present state of the country some of the baneful effects resulting from a departure from those principles. The honorable member did me the honor to allude to me and my position, and he stated that if I had remained true to my principles I should now have been the leader of—I think he said—a powerful party. Sir, I hope I have never departed from my principles. I affirm that I have never done so, and no such charge can be brought against me. I have taken office when it was necessary to form a Government. I joined my honorable friend opposite, who is now at the head of the Government, when we were both agreed that a combination of parties was necessary to carry out the Government, and when we clearly foresaw the difficulties which must ensue from previous legislation. We united with the honorable gentleman who was the late Premier, in forming a Government which we believed was strong enough to meet the exigencies of the times—exigencies which were sufficient to embarrass almost any Government. I would refer honorable members who represent northern interests to the statements I made at that time in the public papers, when I deliberately and with foreknowledge joined the Government with my honorable friend, the member for Ipswich, Mr. Macalister, and my honorable friend the Colonial Treasurer. I wish simply to refer to the fact that I plainly foresaw what was about to follow, and that my object was to assist to tide over the difficulties which then threatened—difficulties which I trust are now to a great extent surmounted. During the short period of time that I have been a member of the Government—I think I first joined it in February, 1866—there were a succession of changes, a succession of Governments, caused, not so much by political variance in the House as by the exigencies of the times. But we have, I believe, seen the worst of our difficulties, and may look forward to a more settled state of things. Having, I say, overcome most of the difficulties entailed upon us in 1863—having succeeded in raising all the money necessary to meet our liabilities—at any rate, within a very small amount—if we undertake any new projects, we shall do so upon our own responsibility, and with a distinct knowledge of what has resulted from our previous extravagance. I can assure the honorable member for Kennedy, that if he has failed to recognise me as in any way entitled to direct him, I am quite prepared, when he points out sound principles, and when he is in a position to adapt those principles to practice, to follow him, if I see that by so doing I can in any way advance the general prosperity of the country. The honorable member has alluded generally to what he says has been a gross injustice, what is now a crying injustice—that the people of this country collectively should contribute so largely to the payment of existing liabilities

incurred upon unsound principles; and he quoted examples, or, as I think, failed to quote sufficient examples, to shew that we have departed from the principle which has been almost invariably adopted in other colonies. I say not that it is necessary for us to follow their example, but I affirm, in contradiction to what the honorable member has stated, that it has almost invariably been the practice of colonial Governments to raise loans for public purposes. The justification for such a course has been this, that the money borrowed is intended to be expended in improving the country and developing its resources, in making it more habitable, in affording the means of occupying the far distant interior, and in conducing to the settlement of a happy and prosperous community. To carry out these objects, we say—"We will borrow money and spend it on improvements. We have no navigable rivers; let us, therefore, construct a railway, and drive it from the head of navigation to the interior, and so make up for the deficiency of water carriage." This is a similar policy to that adopted in Victoria, in New Zealand, and, I may also add, in Canada. Here, it was believed we could spend this money for the advantage of the colony at large; and I recollect the arguments I made use of when that principle was propounded. It was said, "Spend the money for these works, which will benefit the southern portion of the colony; and you can have your share of the next loan for your particular districts." That was the policy which I had to anticipate. I knew that we should exceed our powers of borrowing; and that, after we had expended all the money we could raise by loan, we should leave the northern districts in the lurch, and have to say to the northern members, "We have exceeded our powers of borrowing; and though we should be very happy to spend money in your districts, we have not it to spend." That was the state of things I foresaw, and therein I saw that an injustice would be done to the constituency I then represented. I understood the honorable member for Kennedy to affirm that it is unwise for a colony to undertake any railways as a national undertaking; and that such a principle had not been adopted in the other colonies, with the exception of New South Wales.

MR. FITZGERALD: They are local railways.

MR. DOUGLAS: I can instance the case of New Zealand, where it has been carried out to a great extent. I affirm that the colonies have adopted that principle; and all I say is, that the honorable member did not go quite far enough. He stated that the people of this colony were contributing to the payment of £240,000, according to the present estimate, for the privilege of these railways, and the benefits derived from the large amount spent on immigration, and for other public purposes; and the honorable member went on

to say, that every man, woman, and child in the colony contributed towards this liability to the extent of £2 10s. per head. Well, admitting that there may be some truth in that, I must still maintain that no man need pay that sum unless he choose. Take the simple necessities of life which are taxed. Take tea and sugar, for instance—flour, happily, is not taxed—and the absolute necessities of life in the shape of clothing; and I ask does the seven and a half per cent. tax upon these articles amount to anything like £2 10s. per head? I affirm that it comes to very much less. Take the ordinary rations allowed to a working man, and, estimating that he would spend ten pounds in clothing, you will find that all he will contribute to the revenue in the shape of tariff and *ad valorem* duties will be £1 8s. 8d.—the rest of the contribution is for luxuries, such as tobacco and spirits. If a man choose to indulge in luxuries he must expect to pay for them, and, therefore, I say it is the rich and not the poor man who is most heavily taxed. The honorable member would have us to believe that the whole of this indirect revenue goes to meet the interest on our debt. Now, might he not have looked at it in a different light, and admitted that a considerable portion of our revenue is derived from land? And might he not also have admitted that, in theory as well as in practice, the land revenue goes to pay the interest on our indebtedness; that the great object of incurring this debt was avowedly to develop the resources of the country and facilitate settlement, and that, naturally enough, the proceeds derived from that source should go towards the liquidation of that debt? Let us look at the Estimates and see how far this portion of the revenue is intended to meet our liabilities. There is a sum of £132,000, over £50,000 of which is estimated as proceeds from the sale of lands. Well, I say that this sum could very easily be augmented by the further sale of land, and the whole revenue from this source be made to pay the interest upon our debt. Would it not have been fairer if the honorable member, when he came to deal with details, had admitted that here we really had the means of paying off our indebtedness; or, if we did not possess the amount wholly, we need have no difficulty in obtaining it from the sale of Crown lands. That would have been a more fair and equitable way of dealing with the subject. But, besides this, would it not have been better to have shewn us how we are to give effect to the principles he has laid down? I believe he has affirmed that he merely wishes to create a discussion upon them, and to feel the pulse of the House. He has intimated to us that he has framed a Provincial Councils Bill, which will give effect to his opinions upon the question; but I think it would have been better if he had enlightened us a little more with regard to details. I ask,

is it possible that any Ministry can undertake to carry out the principles he has propounded? Is the country at present prepared to submit to further taxation? Are we prepared to give up the whole of the land revenue for the purpose of establishing local provincial governments? Is it not our first duty to provide for and pay our liabilities? There is no distinction at present between north and south; at any rate, we have incurred liabilities for which we are all responsible, and if we cannot adopt those principles there will be no alternative but separation. I would, therefore, advise honorable members on the opposite side of the House to look this question fairly and fully in the face. I foresaw some years ago that this state of things was inevitable. I did not anticipate that this House would accept such principles of provincial government as would be acceptable to the north; and I still think it extremely improbable, unless honorable members are actuated by less selfish feelings, that such a measure can be passed in this House. I think, therefore, it would be far better for honorable members to make up their minds, although there may be a time of repentance in store for some of us, to agitate at once for separation. I think they would receive even the support of some of the southern members. I myself feel quite inclined to give that support. And although it may be necessary that a subdivision of this immense territory should take place, I think it should be carried out with a view to ultimate reunion. Let us provide for the local exigencies of Government now, and by-and-bye, when the several districts have satisfied their local peculiarities, and expended their share of public money in their districts, we shall find it necessary to revert to some general principles. I say that these districts, having wholesomely satisfied their provincialism, will then, with satisfaction to themselves, revert to those great principles of government, which it will be necessary to embody in some grand and general scheme of federation for the whole Australian colonies. What have we seen taking place in the British possessions in North America? Or, I may take a country still nearer, and point out New Zealand as an admirable example of local and provincial government successfully carried out. What is now the tendency of the Government in that country, but to revert to union, with a due regard to the preservation of local rights? That is what we want to obtain here, and it is what I hope to see. It may be that we may have to organise some northern federation, though I myself should prefer some general scheme which embraced the whole of the Australian colonies. Turning even to New South Wales, I do not know that there would be any fundamental objection to our reunion with the mother colony. That colony is a signal instance of the failure of government,

consequent upon its non-recognition of the very principles contained in the resolutions before the House. There are detached districts in that colony which derive no benefit from the Government, and I question whether they will ever do so as it is at present constituted. I will instance the Clarence and Richmond districts, which derive no benefit from the Government concentrated in Sydney; and there are many other outlying districts, such as Dulacca and Riverina, which it is impossible can be ultimately governed by the New South Government. When we take these instances, and endeavor to interpret them by some general principle, I think we may foresee the time when the boundaries of the whole of the local territories of Australia will be reconsidered and their boundaries adjusted with a view to satisfy the local claims and peculiarities of the different districts. Turning again to Canada, we find there communities which have been separated from one another, far more than we are from the northern settlements of Queensland. We find them meeting to discuss their differences and difficulties, and admitting the necessity of uniting for great and common purposes. We see their public men forgetting their personal hostility and antipathies, and joining in a common scheme of federation. Now, I trust honorable members will excuse me, if I make one or two quotations from the debates which have taken place in Canada on this scheme of federation, which happily has just been carried. I do so, because they appear to me to bear upon the question we are discussing, and should not be lost sight of, as they will shew what is now going on upon a grander scale in another country, and may be considered as examples for us. I find a quotation from the speech of Mr. Galt, who at that time held the office of Treasurer in the Canadian Parliament. He says—

"I now come, Mr. Speaker, to the consideration of the second, and perhaps I may say the third division of my subject also,—whether the material condition of those provinces is such as to make the union practicable, and whether the details of the measures proposed are equitable to each and to all."

Just as we have spent our money on public improvements—

"In considering this point, it is necessary for us first to review the liabilities of each province—the reasons why they were incurred, the objects which have been sought. In doing so the House will not fail to remark that the same policy has animated the Legislatures of all the provinces, or perhaps I should speak more exactly in saying those of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. The public debt of all those provinces has, with some slight exceptions, been incurred for public improvements intended to develop the resources of the country, to attract immigration and wealth to their respective shores, to cheapen the means whereby the products of their farms were to be taken to market, and to reduce the

cost of freight of articles which enter largely into the consumption of their inhabitants. Nor will any one fail to observe the intimate connection which these public works have with each other, a connection which singularly illustrates the national union which exists between these several provinces. If we consider the public improvements of Canada, her great canals intended to bring the trade of the vast countries bordering on the Lakes down to the Gulf of St. Lawrence; if we look at the railway system forced upon us in our competition with American channels of trade, stretching from the extreme west to the extreme east of the province; and if we then look at the public works that have been undertaken in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, we find that practically they form parts of one great whole."

That merely illustrates what has been the universal policy in all colonies entrusted with self-government. When they find they have the power of borrowing money, they exercise it, and spend the money upon what they conceive will benefit themselves. I will also quote a short extract from the speech of a very eminent man, whom I class with men of greater eminence in Great Britain—a man who, representing, I believe, strong democratic principles, maintains those principles with a feeling of perfect patriotism and fidelity to the monarchy of Great Britain. He is a most remarkable man in every respect. He has headed a great popular party in Canada, and has now shewn great moderation and self-sacrifice in giving up opinions which he has fought for, and which he only waived for a time, in order to promote the prosperity of the country. I quote from the speech of the Honorable Mr. Brown who was, at that time, President of the Federal Council of Canada—

"The local patronage will be under local control, and the wishes of the majority in each section will be carried out in all local matters."

That is exactly what we want, and what I hope we may arrive at, though I am quite sure I shall not see the day.

"We have complained that the land system is not according to the views of our western people; that free lands for actual settlers was the right policy for us—that the price of a piece of land squeezed out of an immigrant was no consideration in comparison with the settlement among us of a hardy and industrious family; and that the colonisation road system was far from satisfactory. Well, sir, this scheme remedies that. Each province is to have control of its own Crown lands, Crown timber, and Crown minerals, and will be free to take such steps for developing them as each deems best. We have complained that local works of various kinds—roads, bridges, and landing piers, courthouses, gaols, and other structures—have been erected in an inequitable and improvident manner. Well, sir, this scheme remedies that; all local works are to be constructed by the localities and defrayed from local funds. And so on, through the whole extensive details of internal local administration will this reform extend. The people of Upper Canada will have the entire control of the local matters,

and will no longer have to betake themselves to Quebec for leave to open a road, to select a country town, or to appoint a coroner."

Further on he says:—

"It sweeps away the boundary line between the provinces so far as regards matters common to the whole people—it places all on an equal level—and the members of the federal legislature will meet at last as citizens of a common country. The questions that used to excite the most hostile feelings among us have been taken away from the general legislature, and placed under the control of the local bodies. No man need be debarred from success in public life, because his views however popular in his own section are unpopular in the other."

Then, with reference to certain objections that had been made by another member, the speaker went on to say:—

"Does he fancy that our discords and discontent were not well known in Great Britain, and that the capitalist and the emigrant were not influenced by our distractions? Does he fancy that people abroad, as well as at home, did not perfectly understand that Upper Canada would not much longer submit to the injustice from which she suffered—and that until the future relations of the two sections were adjusted, no one could predict safely what our future position might be? But when the measure before us has been adopted—when justice has been done to both sections—when all are placed on an equal footing—when the sectional matters that rent us have been handed over to sectional control—when sectional expenditure shall be placed on sectional shoulders—will not a sense of security and stability be inspired which we never before enjoyed, and never could have enjoyed under existing circumstances."

* * * * *

"Our five per cent. debentures went down in the market so low as seventy-one, but they recovered from seventy-one to seventy-five, I think, upon the day the resolutions for confederation, which we are now discussing, reached London. Well, sir, the resolutions were published in the London papers, with eulogistic editorial articles, and the immediate effect of the scheme upon the public mind was such that our five per cents rose from seventy-five to ninety-two."

That is just what I hope my honorable friends will do, for I see clearly that it will be necessary. The feeling of the inhabitants of the north is so plainly opposed to the state of things at present existing that some change must of necessity take place, and the only question is, what will that change be. I shall await with great interest the Bill which the honorable member for Kennedy purposes to place before the House. I shall not form too hasty an opinion upon it. If it be possible to carry out some such principles as I have indicated, I believe it will be to the benefit of the country as a whole to attempt to give effect to them by legislation. I am not very sanguine that we shall be able to do so. But, if a scheme of that nature should be rejected, then I will promise the honorable member that he shall have my support, and that I will endeavor to assist him in obtaining a

recognition of the just claims of the north. And I shall have no fear to apply this principle to the district I represent. I feel that while I am bound to consult for the general good, I am bound to give effect to general sound principles. I am also bound to look carefully after the particular interests of my constituents. I am not afraid to accept the principles which the honorable member has set forth in his resolutions and apply them to my own district. I believe that all they require there is to be allowed to apply the proceeds of their land sales to those purposes which they think will most benefit themselves; and that is a principle upon which I believe I shall have the support of honorable members opposite. If the honorable member asks me whether I am going to vote for these resolutions, I will tell him plainly that I shall be happy to do so. If he tells me that my voting for them is likely to give any practical effect to them at present, then I think I may assure him he is expecting too much. But if, in addition to that, he embodies them in legislation, and can prove to me that they may be adopted without detriment to our present position, and without breaking faith with the public creditor, then I shall be only too happy to give him my support. I have, sir, faintly endeavored to illustrate and to recommend the principles which the honorable member has laid down. I have done so on various occasions before in this House, though unfortunately I have not been successful. I can only regret that at the time when success might have crowned my endeavors, I did not receive the support which is now accorded to northern representatives. I do not wish to look back with any bitterness to those times, but I say that, at that crisis, when it was possible to have put a check upon the false principles we adopted, I was deserted by some honorable members who now sit in this House, when their single votes would have affected the whole result. My honorable friend the member for Leichhardt, who now sits on the opposite side of the House, was, I know at that time, inflicted with a belief that it was then only possible to have one Government, and from a strong feeling that it was necessary to support that Government and any measures the Herbert Ministry might bring forward, he failed to give effect to the principles he is now anxious to see adopted. I do not know whether the honorable member then represented the Leichhardt District, or another honorable member of the same name—at any rate, the family interest was represented, and I believe that, if I had received his support and that of the gentlemen who then represented northern interests, and who now testified to the grievances of the north, the whole destinies of this country would have been changed. Do not, then, let me be again reproached with having deserted my principles. I have never done so. Whenever I have thought it incumbent upon me to con-

tribute the little that lay in my power towards the maintenance of good government I have done so, and I have never failed, that I am aware of, on every occasion to bear testimony to principle in legislation, and I have endeavored to as far as I could to put that principle into practice.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS said he could bear testimony to the truth of every word which had been uttered by the honorable member for Eastern Downs, and there was no doubt that if that honorable member's opinion had been taken, they would never have had a railway over the Main Range. No man had worked harder to put a stop to railways; he did not believe the honorable member even voted for the railway to the north; and he was also aware that the honorable member, when he (Mr. Fitzsimmons) was not in the House, had fought hard for provincial councils in the north. With regard to the resolutions under discussion, he found that they embodied the very system which he had advocated in that House for a long time, viz., that the works should be paid for by those whose properties were benefited by them. He did not mean public works which ought to be constructed at the expense of the public, but railways, which ought to be local works; and he maintained that the workmen and artisans of Brisbane ought not to be called upon to pay for the construction of a railway through the Darling Downs. He contended that the money which had been squandered in enhancing the value of property in that district ought not to be placed on the shoulders of the workmen of Brisbane or Rockhampton, for it was not likely that those people would derive any benefit from the Ipswich or Dalby Railways, and they ought not to bear any portion of the expense. Honorable members must agree with him, that it was neither honest or just. It had been stated in the House, some time ago, by a Minister of the Crown, that the profits from the railways would more than pay the interest of the money expended in their construction. But it now turned out that that honorable member had made a false calculation, if indeed he had ever made any calculation at all; for at that time, or indeed even now, there were no facts within the honorable member's reach on which he could have founded such a statement. It was an ascertained fact, that the traffic on the railway just now at work was not sufficient to pay for the oil for the engines; and it would be necessary to borrow more money to pay the interest of the money invested in it. The debt of the colony was so heavy that it would be impossible to pay the interest except by borrowing money, which they had done already. In consequence of the enormous debt, the railway scheme, and the mismanagement of late Governments, they had been forced into a degree of poverty from which it would take a great many years to recover. Honorable members would say that this was

a doleful picture of Queensland. It was so; but, nevertheless, a true one. Queensland, which had started into existence not eight years ago, without being a shilling in debt, was now crushed down by a heavy debt, heavier, he believed, than those of any other country in the world, in proportion to its population. With regard to the grievances of the north, it was not the first time he had brought them under the notice of the House. It was a well ascertained fact, that the more distant any district might be from the seat of Government, the more it was subject to neglect. That fact was in keeping with the history of all the colonies, as the honorable member for Eastern Downs had illustrated in his reference to the Clarence and Richmond districts in New South Wales. Honorable members must admit that the agitation carried on in Moreton Bay years ago for separation, was founded upon good ground, and that had arisen from the great injustice which the district had experienced from New South Wales. If honorable members would compare the position of Moreton Bay, at the time he referred to, with the position of the northern districts at the present moment; and also the treatment which Moreton Bay had received from New South Wales, with the disgraceful treatment which the northern districts received at the hands of the south since separation, they would easily come to a conclusion as to what justice they should afford to the northern districts. The position and the material resources of the northern districts were in no respect inferior to those of the southern districts. For three years petitions had been presented from the northern districts in favor of provincial councils, and he believed the honorable member for Eastern Downs gave them his active support. But notwithstanding, nothing better was allowed to them than a miserable nominee district board. It was then that the men of the north abandoned every hope of getting justice, and turned their attention to separation. Every honorable member would admit that the northern districts never had been adequately represented in the House. So far from the late Premier having had any intention to allow them increased representation, he had actually declared on the hustings that he should disfranchise one constituency in the north. The honorable member for Kennedy had appealed to honorable members, and he (Mr. Fitzsimmons) would also appeal to them, to support him in obtaining that justice which the north was entitled to, and which up to this moment had been refused. Failing to get redress, their only alternative would be to submit to misrule for awhile and continue their efforts for separation. They had tried all constitutional means of obtaining justice, and up to this moment had not obtained even the shadow of justice. He maintained that, as independent Englishmen, they were justified in standing up for their

rights. It would not be a transgression of the law if they even refused to pay any more taxes to the Government; or, if when an attempt to force them to pay was made they resisted the constituted authorities in defence of their own rights. He hoped that the present Government would at least do something to shew the country that they had a desire to do justice to the north—even if they could not pass a measure this session; and that they would not allow its wrongs to be perpetuated. If they did not do something, they would soon find some of the northern members on the Opposition benches.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Save us from our friends!

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had not intended to address the House until he heard the opinions of honorable members on the other side. He was sorry to find that one honorable member, not on that side, however, entertained opinions of such a peculiar nature that he had deemed it necessary to hold out a threat to the Government. Although somewhat overstrained in one or two trifling particulars—in which the honorable member for Kennedy was in error—he agreed fully with all that had been advanced by him in bringing before the House his resolutions: they were self-evident propositions. And, what was more, as regarded the great principle of dividing this colony into provinces, that was recognised by the Legislative Assembly four years ago; and, in fact, the principle of the Act passed at that time was similar to what the honorable member advanced in his resolutions. The preamble of the Provincial Councils Act was as follows:—

“Whereas it is expedient to provide for the expenditure within each district of the colony of so much of the revenue raised therein as may be available for the construction of public works and for other public purposes of a local character and generally to provide for the administration of local affairs by provincial councils,” &c.

Then the Act went on to shew how the revenue might be expended in that way, and how the councils were to be formed. The Act was defective in this particular;—instead of being elective, the councils were nominative. And, up to this time, of all the districts of the colony none had thought it desirable to avail themselves of the Act, except Clermont. As it so happened, he was in office at the time the Government nominated the council of that district, and the members one and all refused to act. He believed there had since been a sort of council got up, but not to the advantage of the district. The nominee principle was inoperative. But all that was required, was to amplify the Act and make the local government system more complete, and it would be wholly in accordance with the principle asserted in the resolutions. He was very glad to have noticed the sentiments which had been expressed by honorable members from the

north against separation; he considered it was the duty of the House and the Government to repress all tendencies to separation. It was a mistake of any Government to do anything to foster ill-feeling between the north and the south. The House should do nothing which would foster a desire for separation, or any feeling of discontent between the different parts of the colony which might lead to its division into two or three separate colonies. He was, therefore, very glad to see that northern members did not advocate separation, but expressed a readiness to be satisfied with any concessions to their demands by the House—if, indeed, they were to be considered as concessions. Separation would not be desirable, for many reasons. He might take the case of Moreton Bay, when united to the neighboring colony. The grievance here, or rather of the northern part of New South Wales, had been that all the money was spent in the southern part of the colony, and that none came up to the north. But the north of Queensland labored under an additional grievance, which Moreton Bay had escaped. The northern portion of New South Wales had not had to provide any extra taxation to cover works which were carried on in the south, and from which it derived little or no benefit. Supposing that separation were granted to-morrow, and the boundary line of a new colony were drawn south of Rockhampton, that town would become the capital, and would be situated in the extreme southern part of the new colony. Bowen would then be down on Rockhampton, and the state of things at present existing would be repeated. If Bowen was made the capital, then Burketown would be jealous. If they could keep the colony together, how much better! He quite agreed, that it was folly to expect all the little items of Government to be managed at a distance of 1,000 or 2,000 miles from the locality interested, and he thought they would be much better managed by local boards, or district or provincial councils. The honorable member for Kennedy appeared to argue that the north ought not to be called upon to pay its share of the interest of the money expended in this part of the colony. He (the Colonial Treasurer) wished to point out—and a reference to the votes and proceedings of past sessions would shew—that the Government had been supported in carrying their measures of expenditure for large public works by the then northern representatives. He had sat on the other side of the House, and he opposed all that expenditure; but the Government succeeded through the support of the members for the Leichhardt, Mr. Royds, for Clermont, and for Mitchell. It was the duty of the House and the Government to accord to the northern parts of the colony all the rights they ought to enjoy; but the same principle should be applied equally to the western and southern districts. If such a Bill as that

alluded to by the honorable member for the Kennedy were proposed, the whole colony would be divided into provinces. With care, a satisfactory measure should be framed—such as would make this a prosperous and happy community. He thought the grievances of the north had been somewhat over-estimated when they considered the relative position of Rockhampton, Bowen, and other northern towns, with that of Brisbane at the time of separation from New South Wales. The northern towns had flourished to a greater degree than they could have done had they been neglected to the extent that some honorable members said. Whilst sympathising with the wrongs of the north, he could not forget that other portions of the colony groaned under grievances as well—which districts, so far as the House were concerned, had been so overlooked that they might as well be blotted from the map of Queensland. He might instance the Wide Bay and Burnett Districts, which were intermediate, being unfortunately so situated that they belonged to neither north nor south. He considered that those districts had, to use the language of the northern members, been “utterly and completely ignored.” Yet, they had a splendid harbor, and a flourishing town, which the honorable member for Maryborough represented; but they were never mentioned in the House without evoking derision. It was only last night that one of the “southern cormorants” objected to £1,000 put down for roads there; when, at the same time, on the Estimates for 1868, half that sum was put down for roads in the immediate neighborhood of his own town. He would not dilate on the subject, because the time would come when they would assert their rights. On the part of the Government, he said he had no doubt if the question which had been brought forward was considered in a fair spirit, not only would northern, but other honorable members, be equally satisfied with the result.

Dr. O'DONERTY, as a new member, confessed that he thought the thanks of the House and the country were due to the honorable member for Kennedy for having brought forward the resolutions—not, however, that they contained anything new, or anything that every member in the House had not already well studied and understood. The resolutions contained within themselves a very excellent epitome of the principles upon which representative government should be carried on in a colony of this kind, and on that ground they deserved the most earnest attention of the House. There was no doubt that the northern portion of the colony had received less consideration from honorable members, during the last few sessions of Parliament, than they were entitled to. But, still, he thought the present subject, or what he might call northern grievances, could be carried a little too far. Although there was, unquestionably, an

amount of truth in the statements which had been put before the House, it should be recollected, as the honorable the Colonial Treasurer had said, that the very principle which the honorable member for Kennedy was seeking to establish in the resolutions before them had been already admitted; and that, as the honorable member for Eastern Downs and the Colonial Secretary had stated, those principles were absolutely not attended to, by refusal of the northern representatives not very long since. There was probably good reason for that at the time. It was perfectly clear to all who had been resident in the colony for a few years, that the importance which the northern districts had now attained to had been the growth of the last twelve months, in a great part. And he, as a southern member, was very far from being jealous of their prosperity: he heartily congratulated them upon it, and he complimented their representatives on the attention they had received in the House. He congratulated the honorable members for Kennedy, Rockhampton, and Clermont—

Mr. WALSH: And Maryborough.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: And Maryborough. He congratulated them on the attention they had received in the House—for they had occupied all the time since Parliament met. He should be one of the last to interfere in any way with any measures that might be brought forward to grant the fullest justice to those districts. A few words in justification of the course which had been adopted in the colony might be said. Everyone should recollect that the colony was only a few years old, and, as had often been boasted, it had come into existence full-fledged with representative institutions. It was the youngest colony in Her Majesty's realms that had received those great privileges of government. Many of the members of Parliament were but young to public life, and, as happened in private life, they had come into the possession of a very fine estate, without adequate knowledge how to administer it to the best advantage. It was not too much to say that they had mismanaged it. There were very few honorable members who were not prepared to admit that. Their fine estate had been mismanaged as a whole, though some portions of it had received careful attention—Ipswich, a good deal—and, in admitting that, he thought they admitted everything that was necessary for the case of the northern members. He held that it was unjust that the indignation of northern members should be centred on one individual, an honorable member of the House. Though new to Parliament, yet during his residence in the colony, for some years, he had paid considerable attention to the progress of public affairs, and he had no hesitation in stating his opinion—and he believed it to be the opinion of a very great majority of the colonists, and certainly of the constituencies—that the

blame, whatever it was, attachable to the Government of Queensland during the past four or five years, might very fairly be placed on the shoulders of almost every member of Parliament. No doubt, it would not suit the present position of parties in the House to admit that; but he thought they might congratulate themselves that, at all events, on the particular question embraced in the resolutions brought forward by the honorable member for Kennedy, there was no Opposition side in the House. They were all impressed with the importance of following out, as far as possible, the course recommended by the resolutions, which, as he had already stated, contained an excellent epitome of the true principles on which representative government should be carried out in Queensland.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he should not have said a word on this subject—it was too large, too sublime, for his practical knowledge—only that the honorable member who proposed the resolutions had referred to him particularly. No doubt, that was under the impression that he was to offer some very desperate opposition to those abstract principles which the resolutions expressed. He thought he had seen something like them before; and he was of opinion that they were not fit for discussion in the House, but rather for some debating class. He thought he might as well, at the outset, tell the honorable member for Kennedy that there was not one of his resolutions which he would not support—if that was any benefit to him; but, at the same time, he begged to inform him that he did not think his support, or that of the House, would be of much practical utility to him on the present occasion. He did not exactly see the use to which honorable members had put all the time they had spent together in the House. The country had certainly fallen into debt, and their business during the last three weeks had been to cry over that debt; but he had seen no honorable member put his shoulder to the wheel, to push the state coach ahead out of the rut. It was a very bad thing to attempt to put all the blame on the shoulders of one man. Though he might be the driver, what was he without the team? One man could not do much in the House, be he a minister, or otherwise; he must get the support of the majority. Honorable members, when they got up to address the House, should speak to principles—not of an individual. He would not only support the resolutions, but any Bill that should be brought in to make the abstract approach the practical; yet, he thought, with the honorable member for Eastern Downs, that at the present time it was out of the power of the House to give effect to the principles enunciated by the honorable member for the Kennedy. Again, though he was thus favorable to the affirmation of them, he was not so to wasting the time of the House debating them. A Provincial Councils Bill

could have been brought in at once, and all necessary debate on the principles of local self-government could have taken place on the second reading. However, he had no objection to the honorable member feeling his way; and, for a young member, he had handled his subject well, and had shewn that he was a man of ability. However, the arguments advanced exhibited ingenuity rather than ingenuousness. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) could not but admire how the honorable member peopled the north, having found three men for every block of land. No doubt, the land was there; but he doubted about the men. However, he could only take the honorable member's word for them, which would be easier than that he should go up to count them. He denied the honorable member's arbitrary right to divide this colony into two parts for his own purposes. He did not see why he should come down to the south, as a kind of Jeff. Davis of Queensland. Why did he not take his line of division in the other direction, and separate the colony into east and west? No doubt, all his able arguments would apply equally well; aye, even if he went in for a division of parishes. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) objected to the expression "northern local councils," which the honorable member for the Kennedy had introduced in debate, and to the exaltation of the north, which had been "the burden of his song." It had been denied that the north had had anything to do with the railways. At the time that the railway swindle was started in this colony, he lost his seat over it; but he saved his principle, which he had still. For the railways, the northern members had done the best bit of "log-rolling" that was ever known; and the north got a "patch" of railway—a drop in the bucket, when compared with the whole of the expenditure on railways—for having fallen into the trap. If they had been true to their own interests, and the interests of the colony, they would have saved Queensland, and there would have been no railway at all. In saying that, he did not mean to blame the present representatives of the north, who were men of just the stamp that, if they had been in the House at the right time, would never have given away; they were not only independent, but they had ability to hold their own. Additional representatives were claimed for the north, yet only the other night honorable members actually voted against a motion for increasing the representation, and refused it. It had been stated that an honorable member, who was the head of the late Government, threatened in a hustings speech to disfranchise a northern constituency. Now, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) did not care what reports had appeared in newspapers, he had been present and heard the speech that was objected to; and he denied that the honorable gentleman had said any such thing. What he had said was, that a member was given to a district that had no

population at the time, while other districts which had large populations had no representative; and that if he should continue in the Government he would alter such a state of things. What he understood from that speech was, that the honorable gentleman meant to make population the basis of representation. The district alluded to was Mitchell, which, when the Additional Members Act was passed, had only three or four settlers within its limits. However, at the first election no electors could be found; but it so happened, by good luck, that a new commissioner of Crown lands, with two orderlies, was present at the place of nomination, and one of the latter proposed a candidate, the other seconded; and so the first representative was declared to have been duly elected. At that very time, Dalby, with five hundred inhabitants, did not get a member. But the question was, not that Mitchell should be deprived of a representative, but that Dalby should get one. In reference to the quotation made by the honorable member for Kennedy of the statements of the Honorable Mr. Brown, of Canada; he contended that Oregon had been peopled and raised to the dignity of a state, with a population of 40,000, in three years, because of the wise laws of the United States, under which, not only the land was given away, but improvements were supplied by the Government to the farmers who settled there. For effecting improvements that farmers were expected to make, here, in six or twelve months, five years were allowed there; and then no confiscation. Let honorable members pursue the calculation, and they would find what a consumption of dutiable goods such a population had capacity for; and they must admit that the land of Oregon, though given away, was amply paid for by the contributions of the population to the general revenue. Would any honorable member tell him, after that, that it was bad policy to give away the land? In a country like this the land ought to be given away. While on this subject, he must express his wonder that the honorable member for Maryborough had withdrawn his motion for the classification of lands; and he assured him that if he should bring it forward for embodiment in the Land Bill he should have his support. It was a monstrous absurdity to say that all land was worth one pound an acre, no more and no less. There was land in the colony worth from one to four pounds an acre, and there was land not worth two-pence an acre. However, he had no intention of speaking on such aerial theoretical things as the resolutions before the House: they suited the honorable member for Eastern Downs, who was a man of theory. As there would be no difference of opinion about them, he hoped the honorable mover would be satisfied. The debating class in Ipswich was engaged in discussing the question—Whether minorities ought to

be represented? The honorable member for Kennedy had said that it was not right that the minority ought to be called on to pay a tax for the benefit of the majority. Well, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) supposed it was because this was a thoroughly English principle that the Parliament asserted it; for every day the majority decided questions brought before the House—so they decided upon everything they did, except the reading of prayers, which the Speaker had all to himself. They might come to one particular conclusion without difficulty—it was, that the sooner they got rid of the discussion of the aerial abstract questions they were now discussing the better, unless they wished to spend the summer where they were.

Mr. WALSH rose to move the adjournment of the House. The present debate was so important, that the House could not do justice to it without more time.

Mr. FRANCIS said, if it was thought necessary by any honorable member who came from the north, he should be glad, as one of the bigotted southern members, to minister in any humble way in his power to the gratification of the House, by contributing to the amusement of the evening in discussing those very harmless and very abstract, and, as the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, described them, aerial resolutions. He could not help thinking, at first sight, that this was not his first acquaintance with them. He had read them over and over again. The full discussion of the matters therein contained would occupy a considerable portion of the session, and demand at the hands of honorable members—if they would deserve the respect of the community—very careful consideration. He never yet met a man who was more thoroughly charged with what was called radicalism than himself; but even he could not subscribe to the resolutions. He was not prepared to say that he would give to every inhabitant of Queensland—black and white—nor to every woman in the colony, a vote;—but that was what the resolutions said:—

“That the inhabitants of every part of Queensland are fully entitled to claim and enjoy equal political rights and privileges.”

He was in the habit of interpreting words and language in their natural sense.

Mr. ROYDS and Mr. WALSH: Common-sense.

Mr. FRANCIS: He was delighted to find the extent of liberality manifested—especially on the other side of the House, where he should least have expected it. He hoped, should occasion arise for a motion for extending the franchise—and he should not regret to see it brought forward—that such a motion would receive support in such an unexpected quarter. At the same time, glad as he might feel in that anticipation, it was his duty in a conservative spirit at once to

protest that he was not prepared to vote for the first resolution. If honorable members told him that it was not intended in its natural sense, then it had better be withdrawn. It could be of no possible advantage to pass it, that he could see, unless they were prepared to carry it out. Passing on to the second resolution, he thought it was, possibly, far less open to objection than the first: that the House should hold up to themselves, as a model for their imitation in the good government of this colony, the proceedings of, and the principles adopted by, the Parliament of Great Britain, so—

“—that the Government of the country shall be carried on — upon well defined and easily understood fundamental principles, ensuring equal justice and fair taxation to all persons under its rule.”

He did not intend to go through the whole of the resolutions. He did not regret altogether that they had been brought forward, but he felt, as had been stated by the honorable member who last spoke, that it would have been far better, as involving a less waste of valuable time of the House, if some substantive practical outcome from the resolutions had been brought before them. They could have discussed the abstract principle equally well. He believed, as he had before stated, that it was a good principle that local expenditure should be as far as possible met by local revenues; and he should be delighted, hereafter, when he thought the proper opportunity had come for bringing forward such a proposal, to claim the support of honorable members who, he believed, were prepared to swallow the resolutions in their entirety. He should claim their support in the proposal, that those blessed railroads, which had brought the colony into so much trouble for the time being, should be paid for by the districts in which they were made. He thought it would be very easy to carry out that object. He was thoroughly in favor of the railway policy; he believed in that policy which had been advocated and carried out so far by the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Macalister. He had yet to learn that this country was brought into its present unhappy condition in consequence of that policy. This statement did not involve that he was prepared to sanction every part of the administration of that policy: that was a different question. At the same time, it had not been shewn to the House, in any respect that he could see, in what way that policy had been defective. It was all very well for honorable members to waste time, to bring charges against this or that man, without any evidence to support them. He only wished they would give the House an opportunity of investigating and deciding them, by coming forward in a straightforward and honorable way to substantiate their charges. He admitted that the administration of that policy had been

defective; but he utterly repudiated the suggestion of the honorable member who last spoke, that the best day's work for Queensland would be to shut up the railways altogether. It was a good policy to throw open the country by the railways; and he believed, also, in the policy that was shadowed forth in the resolutions, to make those districts pay through which the railway was carried. This was not the time, however, for him to state what way he thought that policy could be carried out. He might say, he was for throwing open the land to those who would turn it to the best use; not for throwing away the land; not for locking it up; but for giving it to the man who would bring it into a state of *bonâ fide* improvement by cultivation. To that extent he was prepared to support the resolutions, in their spirit or intention. His view was that the House were hardly prepared for these resolutions at present. Local administration was a good thing, but it was a question of time;—in the infancy of the colony, it was impossible to carry it out. The efforts of honorable members, he granted, should be in that direction. No one could abhor more than he did a system of bureaucratic centralised government. Let the people by all means govern themselves, and look after the expenditure of their own money, and do their own work; but, at the same time, he held that it was impossible that such a system of government could be carried out in a new country like this on a sudden. He was thankful, on the whole, that the honorable member had brought forward these resolutions. He did not think that it was altogether a waste of time to deal with abstract questions; and, beginning at the beginning of things, the House was too apt to deal with matters from a conventional point of view; but he was sorry the honorable member had not brought forward a practical measure, by which the grievances complained of in the north could be remedied. He wanted to shew to honorable members from the north that he was not one of those bigotted members that the honorable member for the Kennedy, the other night, described the southern members to be. He hoped the resolutions would receive as much attention as the House could find time to give them; but he hoped, for their own credit's sake, that the House would not pass them; and that the honorable member would find his purpose sufficiently answered by the discussion of them, and would consent to withdraw them.

Mr. MILES said he was rather surprised at the remarks that had fallen from the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Francis. That honorable member, he thought, stated to the House, in the outset of his address, that the resolutions were inopportune, and that the present was not the time to bring forward abstract questions. However, he was glad that the honorable member, towards the end of his speech, said he considered that,

on the whole, the time of the House had not been wasted by the discussion of the resolutions. He thought, if he was correct, that the honorable member for the Kennedy, who introduced the resolutions to the House, said that he only wanted at present an expression of opinion by the House on the principles involved in the resolutions; and that he would lay a Bill upon the table of the House towards the close of the session embodying those principles, if the resolutions should be approved of, so that honorable members would be able to deal with the question in a practical form next session. Now, he thought that that was a very proper course for the honorable member to adopt, because, if the resolutions should be defeated, there would be no use in introducing a Bill. He admitted that a great deal of time had been wasted in dealing with paltry questions, but this was not one of those; for this was a question that, if carried out, would greatly affect the well-being of the colony; and it was one which he thought could not be carried out a moment too soon. If the honorable member had proposed to introduce a Bill at once to carry the resolutions into effect he should not have felt inclined to support it this session, because he thought there were other matters more demanding immediate attention. He had read the resolutions, and he must say that he did not think it required any great amount of argument to convince honorable members that they were correct in spirit, and that the House should adopt them. He saw nothing in them to object to, and therefore he would support them with a great deal of pleasure. He believed it would have been well for the colony if they had been introduced and carried into effect at a much earlier period. However as such had not been the case, it was the bounden duty of the House now to have them put into a shape the country would benefit by. He did not see there was any great impracticability about embodying the resolutions in a Bill that could be adopted by the House. He was under the impression, when the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, was addressing the House, that the honorable member had come to the conclusion that the honorable member for the Kennedy was wanting to pass a measure for the north only. Now, if he understood the honorable member for the Kennedy correctly, he proposed to introduce a Bill that should apply to the whole colony. If that should not be the case he, for one, would oppose the measure. The opinion that the Bill would be for the north only was based upon the circumstance that the honorable member for the Kennedy had not in his speech referred to the grievances of the western district; but the western district was suffering as much as the northern; and he would ask the honorable member to inform the House distinctly, when he came to reply, if it was his intention that the Bill should

apply to all parts of the colony or to the north only. Unless he brought in a Bill for the whole colony he would not support it. Though he was elected by a constituency in the western district, he was there as one of the representatives for the whole colony, and he was bound to give his assistance, however humble it might be, to forward the interests of every and all districts throughout the colony. He would take that opportunity of mentioning a case of hardship that was to have been inflicted upon the district he had the honor to represent, by the late Government. That Government, in preparing the Estimates, struck off the salary for a judge for the western district of the colony. But while that was the case the salary for a metropolitan district judge was not struck out. Now, he asked if that would not have been oppression—if it would not have been a case of great hardship? In the capital there were two judges of the Supreme Court and a district judge, but because the inhabitants of the west were a long distance away from the seat of Government they were to be deprived of all law and justice. He thought that was a grievance he had a right to bring before the House. He was glad to see by the Estimates that had been laid upon the table that the salary for a western district judge had been restored. He could assure the Government that if that had not been done he should have given them every opposition in his power, for a grosser act of injustice could not have been perpetrated than to have deprived people, living seven or eight hundred miles away, of the means of obtaining justice. He would not take up the time of the House in discussing the resolutions, for he considered there was nothing in them that any honorable member could object to, and he would have great pleasure in supporting them.

Mr. ARCHER said that, in rising to address the House upon the resolutions before it, he had, in the first place, to thank honorable members for allowing the question to come on that night. Several honorable members had allowed motions on the paper in their names to be postponed, in order that the motion of the honorable member for the Kennedy might be brought on; and it was only due to those honorable members who had done so to thank them for the courtesy they had thus shewn to honorable members for the north. It had often been remarked that when a debate on Indian affairs occurred in the House of Commons, the House rapidly and considerably thinned. Such a circumstance was not very complimentary to Indian affairs; and it was equally uncomplimentary to the north to find, when a motion bearing upon the grievances of the north was brought forward, very few members remained in the House. Such conduct only shewed that while honorable members for the south were willing to act courteously towards honorable members for the north, they were

not willing to give any attention to them. He was sorry to see the House was so thin. It only shewed that, to honorable members for the south, the subject possessed no interest; and that the northern districts were regarded as outside provinces, and could not therefore have that attention bestowed upon their affairs that would be paid to matters affecting the capital. The honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Francis, had said that the resolutions were useless; but if they were useless, how did they come to require such an amount of quibbling as the honorable member resorted to for the purpose of proving they were useless. The honorable member, however, expressed a very different opinion afterwards, when he said that a question of this magnitude would require the greater part of a session for its proper discussion and consideration. Now, he would ask, how could questions that were considered useless also be of such magnitude that their discussion would occupy the greater part of a session? One of the quibbles to which the honorable member resorted was that of representing the resolutions as proposing the enfranchisement of blackfellows, gins, and picaninnies. Now, any one who knew anything about past legislation in Australia knew perfectly well that blackfellows, gins, and picaninnies had always been excluded from representation—that the aborigines could not appear in the witness box to give evidence, and they were without most of the rights claimed by British subjects. Such an objection being brought forward, satisfied him that the honorable member using it was wholly without any valid argument against the resolution. The Colonial Legislature was under the painful necessity of legislating for those who were of white parentage only, and honorable members knew, and very much regretted, that the laws they passed did not apply to the natives of the colony; for he was sure that every white man in the colony would be glad if the aboriginal inhabitants were able to participate in the advantages of British subjects. But they all knew that the thing was impossible. The same honorable member also said that the resolutions had come on at too late a period; and again that he did not think the discussion of them had been a waste of time. In that last opinion, he felt he could quite agree with the honorable member. If the resolutions had been introduced to the House, and had been intended to remain merely as resolutions, and never to have any other effect, their discussion would have been a waste of time. But the honorable member for the Kennedy had brought forward the resolutions in order that the House might confirm them, or the contrary; and if they were confirmed he would expect the House to take further action upon them. He did not think it was a waste of time to ask the House to concur in resolutions that carried with them such momentous principles as were embodied in the resolutions

now before the House. As to what fell from the honorable member for East Moreton, about the way the lands should be dealt with, he must confess that he could not understand him; but in the discussion on the Land Bill the honorable member might express himself a little more clearly—and in that hope he would wait till then, and see whether or not he could agree with him. There was one honorable member to whose speech he listened with great pleasure, because he enunciated some principles which, in his opinion, were of a kind that would be the salvation of Queensland, ultimately. Certainly, he did not admire the beginning of that honorable member's speech, when he spoke of the resolutions as being only fit to be brought before a debating club. It might be true that the question embodied in the resolutions was an abstract one; but if it were confirmed by the House, it would result in legislation that would be of the utmost benefit to the country. But, further, he maintained that when it was intended to ask the House to deal practically with momentous matters, to which little or no attention had been previously given by the House, it was only right and proper to bring forward such resolutions in the first place, in order to test the feeling of the House, and see whether it would be worth while, for the present, to ask the House to proceed further in the matter. He thought that, instead of the honorable member saying it was a loss of time to discuss the resolutions, he should have said that the House was under a debt of gratitude to the honorable member for the Kennedy for bringing them forward. It was also, he considered, a great mistake on the part of the honorable member to say that a great deal of the time of the House was occupied in the discussion of northern grievances. Now, when he assured honorable members that he had only once before addressed the House on northern grievances, and that in bringing forward the resolutions it was only the second time the honorable member for the Kennedy had addressed the House on the subject, he did not think it could reasonably be maintained that that was taking up a great deal of the time of the House in the discussion of northern grievances. He could not remember all the matters relating to the southern districts that had been brought before the House in the same time. There had been discussions on petitions about publicans' licenses, discussions about bridges over creeks he had never heard of before, and about cemeteries, and many other matters concerning the southern districts, and not a word of complaint was uttered about the time occupied with them; but the time required to deal with any matters connected with the north was spoken of as wasted. However, the northern members would take care to remove that opinion, should the resolutions be confirmed, as they would take care to bring in a Bill to give effect

to the principles contained in the resolutions. Something was said by the honorable member for West Moreton to the effect that it was not right to attack any one member of the House; because, however powerful he might be in the Government, he was only a single man, and could only exert the influence of a single man. Now, though he was not himself going to attack the honorable member for Ipswich, he must utterly dissent from the principle laid down by the honorable member for West Moreton. He considered that everything of the past that concerned the colony for good or for evil—every act of every Government that had ruled Queensland—was a fair subject of discussion in that House. If they neglected to draw lessons from the failures of previous Governments, the present Government might go wrong in the same direction. He never would consent to allow past mistakes to go unchallenged; and he would take every opportunity that presented itself of calling on the House to look to the past, to be guided by the lessons of experience it taught, and to take warning by any mistakes the House, or the gentleman who had led the House, had committed, so as to avoid falling into like mistakes again. He considered it was one of the first duties of the House to remember, that one man had led the House to commit errors, and that the House might be led into committing errors again by taking the word of one man. Honorable members, therefore, had a right to attack any man for leading the House into error; and so, while he would refrain, on the present occasion, from attacking an honorable member who was not present, he would maintain that it was the right and duty of every honorable member to refer to mistakes that had been committed in the past. There was another matter the honorable member for West Moreton touched upon—and the honorable member seemed to think that his remarks hit rather hard, too, when he referred to the redistribution of seats question. He was one of those who opposed the motion of the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba on that subject. But the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, said he was surprised to hear the honorable member for the Kennedy say he was favorably disposed towards such a measure, as he rather expected to find in him an opponent to it. He had reasons himself for not voting for the motion, which he believed would be satisfactory to the House and to the constituency he had the honor to represent in the House if he were to state them. The honorable member who brought forward the motion stated that there were excellent data on which to introduce a redistribution of seats Bill into the House; and he actually brought forward the old electoral rolls as the basis for a redistribution of seats. Now, he would ask, did the honorable member suppose that any one settled in the north, or any one

settled in the west, or in new pastoral or commercial places, would accept the electoral roll last made out as a basis for the redistribution of seats? He was not sure but a third of the people of Brisbane, and a third of the people of Ipswich, and one-half of the people of Drayton and Toowoomba, had left those towns since the old electoral rolls were made up, and had gone to the towns and the gold fields in the north. Therefore, he could not consent to the old electoral rolls being taken as the basis of a measure for a redistribution of seats. The basis that ought to be taken, was: either the amount of revenue derived through the customs or the population, as declared by a new census; or both together, which would be better still. Therefore, when the honorable member for West Moreton thought he was hitting so hard, he could only say that he felt his defence was particularly easy. There had been a good deal said in the course of the discussion, upon the fact that no complaints had been made by the honorable members for the western districts; and that the whole question about grievances seemed to be between the north and the south. Now, that was a thing that did not much astonish him. Till now the south had been in the habit of ruling the colony, and in the north there had sprung up a feeling of opposition to that. But if any one supposed that the honorable member for the Kennedy wanted to introduce a Bill founded on the resolutions, for the benefit of the Kennedy, or Rockhampton, or Burketown, or any other place in the north only, he was very much mistaken. Any one who knew what a Bill was, must know that the proposed measure must refer to the whole colony—to the south and west as well as the north. Any general Bill that was introduced must refer to the whole colony. The principles of the Bill would apply to every district in the colony, and every district would, under it, equally obtain the management of its own affairs, and would be protected from being taxed for improvements in other districts—for improvements in which it had not the slightest interest, and from which it would not receive the smallest benefit. It had been rightly stated by an honorable member, that if the northern members had formerly been true to themselves, the Railway Loan Bill would never have been passed. He believed the honorable member was quite correct in saying that. But while he admitted that much, he did not mean to cast a slur upon the northern members at not being true to their interests. Their doing as they did, he supposed, arose from their not being far-sighted enough. It was only given to one in a thousand to be far-sighted enough to see the consequences of such measures; and he blamed those only who, when they saw what the railway system was to lead to, did not take steps to check it at once; but he did not blame those who were first led into assisting in the railway schemes that were

projected by the Government. There was one honorable member in the House—the honorable member for the Eastern Downs—who at first made a grand stand against the railway system, and had he continued in the same course, he would have deserved the thanks of the whole colony. He defended manfully the rights of those who were his constituents at that time—the electors of Port Curtis. That honorable member, as he was able to judge by reading his speeches, for he was not himself a member of the House at the time, did all in his power to prevent the railway expenditure, but he succumbed at last; and he was afraid that log-rolling principles got the better of him also. At the first he did his duty as a man, and for the way he did it, he now took that opportunity of thanking him; and had the honorable member continued in the same line, it would have been his duty, as well as a pleasure to him, to have thanked him on the present occasion more heartily than he did. But he felt he could not much blame the former northern members, for they were led away by grand and eloquent speeches about the future of Queensland, the great resources of the colony, its brilliant prospects, and the ease with which a few millions could be paid off by the sale of the waste lands. Though he repudiated the idea that the north had had more than its share, he could not as he had said, very much blame the men who gave their support to the railway policy of the day, for they were led away by grand promises as to the future. The honorable member at the head of the Government had said that if separation took place, Rockhampton would be made the capital of the new colony, and would no doubt pursue the same course towards the rest of the colony that Brisbane was charged with having taken since Queensland was separated from New South Wales. That, from its being the seat of Government and of the courts of justice; from its being the place of residence of a large number of Government officers; from the presence during several months of the year of the members of Parliament, it would, from such causes and others, come to possess such an influence that it would over-rule the more thinly peopled parts of the colony, and appropriate to itself a large share of the resources of the colony for local improvements. Now, he could assure the honorable member that such a thing was not likely to happen. After the example afforded by Sydney and Brisbane, he did not think the people in the north would be likely to fall into such a mistake. But, more than that, in the separation scheme drawn up at Rockhampton, the inhabitants distinctly agreed not to request that Rockhampton should be the capital of the new colony, but that some out of the way place, where no extraneous or local influences could be brought to bear upon legislation, should be made the capital. Should the House decide

not to grant provincial councils, and should separation be the result, he would, though he would benefit probably by Rockhampton being the capital, do all in his power to prevent its being made the capital, and to have some out of the way place made the capital—some place that would not be able to coerce the rest of the colony by its large population, but which would be more likely to be coerced by the outlying districts. The honorable gentleman also referred to the fact that the northern members supported the southern railways; but that was an argument that was not of the slightest moment. The south wanted a railway, and the north supported it. Well, all that the northern members said now about that was—let the south pay for the railway in the south, and the people in the north would pay for the railway from Rockhampton to Westwood, although it was almost valueless as an improvement. They would not ask the people in the Kennedy District to pay for it, nor the people about Moreton Bay to pay for it. The railway had been thrust upon the district, and if provincial councils were granted the people would take the burden of paying for it. It was all rubbish to speak about honorable members for the north voting for the railways, as if that amounted to anything. It had been said that the whole of Queensland was pledged for the debts of New South Wales; but it was well known that that was only a fiction.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is liable.

Mr. ARCHER: It was very well known that the colony was in a sense liable; but let any one come and try to enforce the claim and the value of the liability would soon be seen. Not one man supposed that a single acre of land in Queensland would be sold to pay for the railways in New South Wales; and was it to be supposed that the northern colony, if separation took place, would pay for the southern railways? The north wholly denied their liability for the debts of the south, and all they asked was that the money obtained by the sale of lands, or as rent of lands, should be spent for the improvement of the lands in the district. The honorable member at the head of the Government also referred to the whole of New Zealand having to contribute to the cost of the war. He said that all the provinces in the colony had to contribute towards the payment of the war debt. Now did the honorable gentleman think that any one in the House was so utterly ignorant of the first principles of government as to suppose that a war debt, which was incurred for the safety of the whole country, was not properly a general burden to be borne by the whole of the people? Did the honorable member for the Kennedy say it was not? No. That honorable member in his speech, the other night, pointed out that the people in New Zealand were heavily taxed, but that it was mostly in consequence of the cost of the

war, which had to be borne by the whole colony. Yet the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government brought that forward as an argument why the whole colony of Queensland should pay for the railways in the south. For his own part, he must say that he could not see any relation between the two cases to justify the application of the argument. The honorable gentleman, in the course of his observations, also remarked that the Burnett District was not sufficiently represented. Well, the district had two members for itself; and the honorable member for Mayborough might be set down as a third; and, therefore, if the district was not properly represented, it was the fault of the members themselves, or of the constituency, and not the fault of the system of representation. The honorable member for the Eastern Downs had spoken in a way that had supported the northern members very much. Although at one time he had some idea of attacking the first part of his speech, he afterwards felt wholly unarmed by the exceedingly kind way in which the honorable member subsequently spoke upon the motion. He saw in the honorable member not an enemy, but one whose mind was so acute as to perceive little difficulties; and so he could not find in his mind to say a word against him, but, on the contrary, he had to thank the honorable member for the kind way in which he had dealt with the motion; and when the result of the motion, in the shape of a Bill, came before the House, he knew of no one who, more than the honorable member for the Eastern Downs, would give a thorough support to it. It had been said that the provincial councils had already been granted, and had proved ineffectual, because the people did not take an interest in them, and meet to transact their own affairs. Now, he thought that that ground of objection was very easily explained. He had heard of the Provincial Councils Act, which was passed in September, 1864, and if he were to read it through, honorable members would see why the people cast it aside. But he would not impose such an infliction upon honorable members, and would merely state the reason why the Bill was useless. In the first place, it was no more a Provincial Councils Bill—in the sense that a Provincial Councils Bill was wanted for the north, the south, and every other district of the colony—than, he was about to say, he was the Premier of the Ministry. But it was altogether unlike what was wanted. The Bill, in fact, provided for everything but what was wanted. What was wanted was a Bill giving power to the councils to deal with the local land revenue for the improvement of the districts from which that revenue was derived; but the Bill in existence gave the councils power only over everything that was of the most paltry character. And, could it be expected that any set of gentlemen would have anything to

do with a measure of the kind? It was a Bill that did not extend self-government in the smallest measure. He could mention instances of self-government that had eminently proved beneficial. There was the very town he came from, Rockhampton. The inhabitants of that town every year elected a mayor and aldermen who were qualified to sit and vote in that House as the representatives of any district. If that was the case, did honorable gentlemen suppose that the people would be less careful in the election of members of a provincial council? To quote the failure of the Provincial Councils Bill of 1864 as an argument why there should not be another Bill passed, was no argument at all, for the existing Bill was of no use as a Provincial Councils Bill. If the House would only for a moment consider the condition of the country towns, they could not hesitate to pass a Provincial Councils Bill. The country municipalities had not rushed into debt as Brisbane had done, but had gone gradually and steadily forward in the work of improvement. That fact was itself enough to shew that the people were able to exercise the powers that might be given to them under a Provincial Councils Bill, in a way that would be both beneficial and satisfactory. If the present discussion should prepare the House to receive a measure of the kind that would be introduced, should the motion be carried, the time of the House would be far from having been wasted.

Dr. CHALLINOR said that a very high authority had remarked that brevity was the soul of wit. It was equally true that conciseness gave terseness and vigor to the terms of a resolution. There could not be a doubt, that, with the exception of the first and last of the resolutions, the verbiage of the others would admit of a great pruning down, and after that had been done, two or three of them might be rolled into one, on the general principle that the greater contained the less. Besides that, some of the resolutions only set forth truisms which honorable members must be assumed to be acquainted with, and which, therefore, were not necessary to be made records of the House. The resolutions assumed not only that the southern members were bigoted, but that they were so ignorant of the first principles of constitutional government as to be unworthy of a seat in that House. Whatever might be the intentions of the honorable members advancing the resolutions, he must say, that if the opening remarks of the honorable mover did not contain a threat, they contained something very like one, for the honorable member stated what would be the result if the House refused to acknowledge the resolutions. The honorable mover had exhibited very bad taste—exceedingly bad taste—in doing so, because most persons would be inclined to interpret such remarks as a sort of threat. The honorable member for Rockhampton

had taken some exception to the remarks that were made by the honorable member for East Moreton, because he spoke of the resolutions as setting forth an abstract question, and that somewhat illogically. The honorable member for Rockhampton did not deny that the resolutions contained abstract questions, and he must admit that it was only right that every abstract question should be brought forward in a correct logical form. Now, the first resolution said that the inhabitants of every part of Queensland were fully entitled to claim and enjoy equal political rights and advantages, and if that applied to a district, it must apply to every inhabitant in that district—and he had yet to learn that women were not inhabitants, and that children were not inhabitants; and he had yet to learn that the aborigines were not inhabitants; and, what was still more, he had to learn that the aborigines were not British subjects. He maintained that the aborigines were British subjects, and that they had as great a claim as any one else in the colony to political rights and privileges. The only legal objection or disability under which they labored was that their evidence was not received, for if an aboriginal possessed the qualifications required by the Electoral Act he could not be refused a vote. And yet, while their evidence was not received, honorable members were advocates for putting weapons of destruction into their hands. Besides, the honorable member stated that there was no absolute necessity that the northern portions of the colony should agitate for separation. All that they asked for at the hands of the south was fair and equal justice. Well, he went further than that—if there was no necessity for separation, there was no necessity for provincial councils. For the honorable member for Kennedy had said something to this effect—that honest administration was better than mere adequate representation. He really thought that if the late Government had been thoroughly honest and just in their administration there would have been no occasion for the great complaints brought against them by the north and other parts. One of the resolutions might be perfectly correct as an abstract question, but it could not be carried out in its details, because if it were right that the revenue received in a particular district should be expended in that district, it was also right that the whole of the revenue collected in a particular town should be spent in that town; the same argument would apply to each street and each house, and, to carry it still further, it was also right that every person should have a personal benefit in that expenditure in proportion to the sum which he contributed to the revenue. That was all correct enough in theory, but impossible to put into practice. Then he had understood the honorable member to say that the majority had no right to tax the minority, but this was certainly

constitutional. Well, honorable members had also been told that the reason why the roll for Clermont was in its present defective state was that the people in that district had forgotten all about it. That would shew that they took very little interest in political transactions. The honorable member for Kennedy had also stated that under the Imperial Government all local improvements were paid for by taxation upon local properties. Now, he must deny the truth of that statement—utterly deny it. He might be mistaken, but he thought he was right in stating that the drainage of London was not solely a local charge upon the metropolis, but that it was in part a charge upon the general revenue. But, whether it were so or not, it was well known that certain concessions had been made with regard to telegraph companies, and that in some instances the Government had agreed to give a certain per centage upon a certain outlay, which was not for the direct benefit of the whole community. He would ask, on the same argument and principle which the honorable member for Kennedy had put forward, what direct advantage did the poor man gain from the outlay on electric telegraphs? He admitted that he derived an indirect benefit from it, because no country could prosper without every individual being benefited; but he maintained that that totally upset the argument of the honorable member, that the poor man should not be taxed for public improvements. The idea was absurd. The honorable member had also referred to Victoria as, as it were, a province, merely because of its extent. But, for the same reason, Great Britain might be called a province, and not a kingdom, because it was much smaller than some of its dependencies. The honorable member had admitted that the expense of some of the large public works in Melbourne had been borne by the whole colony, and yet they were not, in the sense he had spoken of, public works for the general benefit, except indirectly. He would refer again to the lighting rates at home and the county rates. They were local charges, and not charges upon the general revenue; but they bore unequally on the inhabitants. He recollected living in a place where the lighting rate was a charge upon all the inhabitants, and the county people objected to it, because they derived no direct benefit from it. So with county rates; many persons paid them who were not directly benefited by them. He maintained that the revenue from the sale of Crown lands was not a species of tax. He looked upon it as trust money; and it was the duty of a Government to carry out the purposes for which that fund was entrusted to them; and that was, to provide, as far as possible, for the general benefit of the whole community, and for each particular district, as far as it could be applied. But in colonies, and thinly popu-

lated colonies especially, the Government were compelled to do many things which would be perfectly inadmissible in Great Britain. The honorable member, for instance, had not attempted to deny the right of the Government to make a railway; and had affirmed that the district in which it was made should pay for it out of its own resources. But, in Great Britain, railways were left to private companies, which could not be done in a colony.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Why not?

Dr. CHALLINOR: Because, in that case, they would be left undone. Now, not only did the Imperial Government recognise the right of Colonial Governments to make railways out of the public funds, but Great Britain had positively become responsible for a railway in Canada—that was to say, responsible for the payment of the interest upon it. It was a railway for the benefit of the whole colony.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: It was constructed for military purposes.

Dr. CHALLINOR: Not purely for the conveyance of troops, though that might be one of its objects. It was intended for the commercial benefit of Canada, with the subsidiary object of aiding military movements. The honorable member for Kennedy had also stated that he did not believe in land being given away in anticipation of a revenue to be derived from its improvement, and the consumption of dutiable goods.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: And the introduction of capital and labor into the colony.

Dr. CHALLINOR: He would next refer to the period in the history of Queensland before Separation. Honorable members were all aware that there was a great rush to Canoona at one time, and that, whilst the finding of gold was very successful for a time, the rush was beyond the capabilities of the place, and the consequence was that the people were actually starving. Now, would honorable members say that the New South Wales Government were in that case to be guided by the receipt of customs duties in the place, and permit the people to starve rather than allow them to be a burden on the general resources of the colony? Yet the application must hold as good in one case as in the other. The honorable member for Eastern Downs had endeavored to excuse himself for having joined a coalition ministry on the ground of the necessity of the case. Now he (Dr. Challinor) had never admitted that as an excuse for a coalition ministry; because he affirmed, unhesitatingly, that if honorable members had made the same concessions for the public good on the floor of the House as private members, they would have effected as much good as by joining a ministry and sacrificing their principles. It had been argued that the funds would be better applied under local management. He doubted that. They had seen the working of municipalities, and he knew that in most cases it was easy to tell where an alderman

lived. And though, by provincial councils, the revenue derived in a district might be secured to that district, he doubted whether the local satisfaction was greater. With regard to his own town, he might say that although, even long before Separation, large sums of money were raised from the sale of land, very little in the shape of improvements had been done. He had been surprised to hear the honorable member for Kennedy make so much of the poor man being called upon to contribute towards the public works of the colony. It was a rule of the House not to impute motives, but it looked very much as if the honorable member had intended that remark to sway the public mind. The chief objections to provincial councils appeared to him that they would not be sufficiently responsible for the expenditure entrusted to them, and that the country was not ripe enough for the election of the members. He had no doubt, too, that the power they would be able to exercise would be abused. The honorable member for Rockhampton had remarked that "the burnt child dreads the fire." Now that had often influenced his votes before. He had never treated the requirements of the north with contempt; because he had a very lively sense of the injustice which Moreton Bay had received at the hands of New South Wales, and he had therefore always been anxious to concede to the northern districts their fair and just rights, and he could safely point to his votes in that House in proof that he had always supported the just claims of the north. It must also be remembered that the great growth of the northern districts had taken place since the passing of the Additional Members Bill, which he believed was in 1864. That must be taken into consideration in connection with the redistribution of seats. In point of fact, the north had grown out of their clothes; and, while he was quite prepared to provide them with another suit, he did not think it ought to be made too large—but large enough to allow them fair scope and room to grow in. He would not at present enter into the question of classification of lands. The honorable member for Rockhampton had stated that questions were brought before the House which they did not care to enter into, such as logging creeks and building bridges. But he would ask the honorable member what were the particular duties of provincial councils but logging creeks and building bridges; and, therefore, he thought it was the duty of the honorable member to pay attention to the votes which were asked for those works. That honorable member had also endeavored to get out of a dilemma in which he had been placed with regard to the redistribution of seats; he was not opposed to them, only as far as regarded the time and manner of establishing them. Now, one of the loudest complaints of the honorable member, when he came down from

Rockhampton, was that no allusion was made to that town in the Opening Speech; and because no reference was made to the wants of Rockhampton, he felt bound at once to take his seat on the Opposition benches. He had then endeavored to get out of the dilemma by stating that he objected to the proposition of the honorable member who brought forward a motion on the subject, to take the electoral roll as a basis of representation. Did any honorable member hear such a lame excuse? The motion recommended that the Government should bring in a Bill, and if the Government had stated their intention of taking the electoral roll as a basis, there might have been some force in the objection. But the fact that a private member had merely talked about what he thought should be the principles of such a Bill was no ground for the honorable member to object to a Bill being brought in by the Government. The honorable member then complained that members had voted sums of money beyond their means, and had blamed the Government for bringing forward measures involving such expenditure, because the House was influenced by their statements, and had further stated that not one person in a thousand could foresee the result. But if that were the case, he thought some portion of the blame might be taken off honorable members and off the late Colonial Secretary. He did not stand up to defend the late Government, because he believed that greater administrative integrity would have saved the country from very many evils from which it now suffered, and prevented many of the complaints which had been preferred by northern members; though he, for one, must say that he thought some of those honorable members, in viewing their grievances, had looked through the telescope in the ordinary way, and had exaggerated their complaints, while they had used the instrument reversely in reviewing their own share in the matter. He felt confident that if the same measure of justice were accorded to the Clarence and Richmond Districts by the New South Wales Government, as had been given to the north by us, they would have been very grateful. He thought the proposition of the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O'Sullivan, was a good one, that there should also be a line of division from east to west. He believed less money had been spent in the west than in the north, and that the expenditure on Port Denison had been greatly in excess of its claims upon the revenue. It was known that there were local jealousies even in the north, and there could be no doubt that there were certain ports in northern Queensland, who, if they had power, would abuse it to their own interests. The honorable member had also spoken of the municipality of Rockhampton, but he would ask the honorable member if that town represented the whole of northern

Queensland?—or whether he would stand sponsor for all the municipalities in the northern districts? He had no further remarks to offer on the resolutions before the House. Some of them, he thought, were correct in the abstract, though he did not think them logically correct as stated. But, while admitting them to be correct in substance, he should find a difficulty in voting for them as abstract questions, because he did not think they were brought before the House in the proper form for such questions. He was quite sure the House would be prompt to do justice to the north, and he could not see that the resolutions could be carried out practically without leading the House into an absurdity. For, as he had shewn, to carry out the principle they embodied, it would be necessary to spend before every man's door the money which he contributed towards improvements. He considered, therefore, that the resolutions were not capable of being reduced to practice, and he hoped the House would not come to a division upon them, as the object of the honorable member who had brought them forward had probably been obtained by the debate which had taken place.

Mr. WALSH said he must take that opportunity, in the name of the north, to say that he was not aware that the honorable member who had just sat down had ever accorded any justice to the north. He could not call to mind one instance in which that honorable member had seconded his endeavors to obtain a recognition of the claims of the northern districts. The honorable member, as he could prove by referring to the records of the House, had always denied that there was anything to rectify, anything to concede, anything to grant. He should be glad if he could recollect any instance in which the honorable member had benefited that portion of the colony by his vote. He felt it his duty to take up a little of the time of the House, although the debate was a protracted one, because he looked upon the motion as a necessary one, in connection with the past proceedings of the House. It would be remembered that he had been very active in the agitation for separation; but he had then foreseen and prophesied the state of things which had since come to pass—that although separation might be just, yet, as far as the north was concerned, the step would be, for a time at least, out of the frying pan into the fire. That was his feeling at the time, and he was glad to hear the honorable member for Eastern Downs admit that one of the early efforts he had made in that House was to advocate a general reunion of the interests of the colonists at large, and by that means to prevent the local government and local expenditure which he so clearly foresaw. The honorable member had said he had foreseen that all the money of the country would be spent upon railways, and the north would

be left in the lurch. He (Mr. Walsh) had never expected that such a mad railway scheme would be carried out; but he had foreseen that the capital, being in such an unsuitable place, no effort, no expense would be spared to keep it in that part of the colony. Almost as soon as he had taken his seat in the House, he had denounced that policy, and had introduced a motion on the subject of the claims of the central and northern districts. He had then endeavored to shew what the north was like, what its capital was, what were its resources and capabilities, and how it had suffered from its connection with the capital of the colony. He was sorry to say there was a great deal of truth in what had been said by the honorable member for Eastern Downs, that it was the northern members who deserted the north on that occasion; but he felt it his duty to state his opinion that, hostile as the south had been, it was more from the weakness and foolishness of its members that the north had suffered, than from any direct opposition to its claims from the southern portion of the colony. They might, by forming themselves into a compact body, have compelled the Government in power to recognise those claims; but it was the fatal influence which the polished head of the then Government exercised over northern members, which seduced them from their allegiance to their constituents, and not only ruined the chances of the north, but the real destinies of the colony. He was convinced that if the same concessions had been made to the north in 1860 as were now made, Queensland would not have had its present impoverished population; she would have had a hundred thousand inhabitants, and would have been, as she was destined to be, the fairest and most prosperous colony in the southern ocean. The real mistake made was to place the capital at the extreme end of the colony. It was that which had led to such pernicious legislation. He had felt it due to himself to refer to his former efforts on behalf of the north, and to point out that it was only during the present session that northern members had been true to themselves, or that there had been any real desire on the part of southern members to recognise that important portion of the colony as worthy of their attention and legislation. He was proud of the north as represented that evening. He thought the speech of the honorable member who had moved the resolutions one of the best he had listened to for some time, and he felt that the character of the House was considerably enhanced by the talent and the labor which they had bestowed upon the question they had brought forward. He was sorry that he could not vote for the resolutions as they stood. As far as they went he heartily agreed with them, but he thought that in their present form it would be impossible to give effect to them; and, if they were carried, it would be impossible for the

Government to go on with their proclaimed financial policy, and their Land Bill would have to be altered. The fifth resolution proposed that the revenue derived from the sale of Crown lands should be a local revenue, and that, of course, would interfere with the Land Bill introduced by the Government, in which it was proposed that the proceeds of land sales should go into the general revenue. He did not state his conviction with any idea of frustrating the good intentions of the honorable member for Kennedy, but for the purpose of shewing that he was determined, as an humble individual, that the Government should be compelled to adhere to and follow closely the resolutions of the House. It had been the practice, hitherto, of Governments to pay little attention to them. If the House passed the resolutions, and then allowed the Government to put the revenue from land into the general revenue, they would stultify themselves. He was particularly pleased when the honorable member for Rockhampton castigated one of the honorable members for East Moreton, Mr. Francis. The flippant way in which the last-named honorable member rose and endeavored to turn the important questions involved in the resolutions into ridicule was unbecoming to the House, as well as to his own position as a new member, with a very great deal of light. He (Mr. Walsh) was sorry the honorable member was not present, as it was his duty to be; but that was no reason why he should not say what he thought of his conduct. It was the practice of that honorable member to get up and invariably lecture the House, having seemingly constituted himself an oracle on what were the duties of honorable members. Having read the resolutions, he was surprised how any honorable member, especially one who attempted to school the House, could interpret any portion of them as alluding to the aboriginal blacks. But he was not surprised, considering the subject under consideration, that he now had to address "dummies"—that so many benches were vacant—on the Opposition side. Honorable members who had sat in the House two or three sessions knew that such was invariably the case whenever northern questions were introduced. He would inform those indefatigable members who now represented the north that they might look for the same whenever they claimed justice—the opposite benches would be deserted; or, if not, the statements of northern members would be met by derisive and insulting sounds. He had never introduced a northern subject, without having been laughed at, or jeered at, or abused. The first session he sat in the House, he was insulted. Two sessions ago, when he rose to attempt to deal with the very question now before them, he was met by the rudest, the most uncouth usage.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: The northern members were against you!

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MR. WALSH: They were under the tutelage of an honorable member now happily left the colony—beguiled by him—deceived by promises made to them—as they afterwards told him (Mr. Walsh). One of the honorable members, Mr. Fitzsimmons, was very near, now. Before the session was over they had confessed how they had been taken in by that wily gentleman to whom he referred.

MR. MILES called attention to the state of the House.

There not being a quorum, the bell was rung, and thereupon several honorable members re-entered the House, and formed a quorum.

MR. WALSH continued: In support of what he had stated, as to the treatment of northern questions and northern members by the House, he would quote from "Hansard." On the 28th June, 1865, when he was addressing the House on the "Claims of the Central and Northern Districts," the Speaker rose and said:—

"I must really call the attention of honorable members to the loud conversation which is being carried on in the House, and which renders it impossible for me to hear a word of what the honorable member is saying; and I must request honorable members, if they have occasion to converse with each other, to do so in a whisper, in accordance with the practice of Parliament. I will take the opportunity of reading the rule which is laid down upon this point."

And the Speaker read the rule. Had not the obstruction been very great, the Speaker would not have felt it his duty to administer such a long and severe castigation to honorable members. It had pained him (Mr. Walsh) that the excellent speech of the honorable member for Rockhampton, and the unusually able speech of the honorable and gallant member for Ipswich, Dr. Challinor, should have been received, as they had been by the House, with not half a dozen members present. Had they been discussing how to log the Leg of Mutton Waterhole, or some such matter, they would have received more attention, perhaps. On the occasion just referred to, he addressed the Speaker, after the House had been called to order, in these words:—

"I am not at all surprised, sir, that a motion of this kind should be met by such proceedings as you have very properly taken notice of. Too long have the northern districts of this colony been treated with this indifference."

The debate, this evening, was one of the best he ever heard in the Legislative Assembly; but he never heard one, the consequences of which were likely to be so great, listened to so listlessly, and with such empty benches. The northern members would take notice of that. In reference to certain remarks of the honorable member for Ipswich, Dr. Challinor, about Great Britain taking such a great interest in the Main Trunk Railway of Canada, he (Mr. Walsh) wished to point out

that that work was supported by the Imperial Government in a strategic point of view, to protect the British territory from a near and jealous neighbor. The Queensland railways could have no similar application; they were not for the benefit of the whole colony, but purely for local interests. The northern railway was given for the benefit of the south, and it should be called the southern railway. In the bargain that was made, it was the sop offered—

Dr. CHALLINOR: And taken.

Mr. WALSH: It was the sop offered and forced on the north for support for the south—it could not have been refused. The expense of the northern railway should be charged to the south; because, while it was of no benefit to the north, it had done a good deal of injury, for it enabled honorable members to say that the north had been bribed, and actually joined with the south. The north was any day ready to wash its hands of the whole affair. The construction of all the railways was a political crime, and an immense disgrace to the colony. Before he sat down, he must say that the facts and figures given by the honorable member for Kennedy deserved particular consideration. He believed they fell very far short of the actual facts existing; the population was underrated; the revenue and resources were understated; all, so as to be on the safe side, and to prevent misconception. Certainly, the honorable member's figures did not agree with his figures; and he thought the injustice that had been done to the north was much greater than had been stated by the mover of the resolutions. He hoped that the House, in reviewing the question, would believe that the honorable member had in no way enlarged the facts, and that he had been guided by the very best intentions in stating his case as fairly for the south as for the north.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he was sorry, at so late a period of the evening, to find himself necessitated to address the House on the resolutions. He did not intend to go into the argument of the general principles involved in the series as proposed, but he felt that, in justice to himself as a member of the Government, and as a member of the House, he should address himself to what was set forth in the fifth resolution. It would ill become him, having the opinions he held with reference to the principle therein enunciated, quietly to sit by, and by a vote one way or other, mislead the House. His impression, at the present moment, was that the fifth resolution had been somewhat hastily worded. He could not conceive that the honorable member who had moved the resolutions, or any other member who had supported them, had considered the grave question which that particular one involved. If the House affirmed the fifth resolution, it appeared to him that it would over-ride the 47th section of the Constitution Act. It

might not have been intended so to do, because he observed that the resolution was peculiarly worded:—

"That as money paid for rents, or purchase of waste lands, is in reality a form of land tax that occupiers or owners pay to supply funds for opening up the country by roads, bridges, railways, or other local improvements, as well as providing labor by immigration for working such lands, without imposing taxes for these purposes on those who have no right to bear them,—this House declares that land revenue should be classed as local revenue, to be expended for local improvements and immigration within those districts of the colony that produce it."

When the public debt was paid off, then, perhaps, the land revenue should be disposed of as local revenue. But, certainly, at the present time, he (the Attorney-General) could not agree that the revenue derived from Crown lands should be classed as local revenue. He found that the 47th section of the Constitution Act ran as follows:—

"All taxes imposts rates and duties and all territorial casual and other revenues of the Crown (including royalties) from whatever source arising within this colony and over which the present or future Legislature has or may have power of appropriation shall form one consolidated revenue fund to be appropriated for the public service of this colony in the manner and subject to the charges hereinafter mentioned."

Those charges were specified in some subsequent clauses of the Constitution Act; and there was one which provided specially that the consolidated revenue was to be charged with the payment of debentures previously issued and of interest payable on the same; in other words, that the payment of both principal and interest of outstanding debentures must be provided for out of the consolidated revenue. The position of Queensland was this:—A very heavy loan had been effected for public purposes; debentures had been issued to secure the public creditor for moneys advanced by him; the consolidated revenue of the colony was charged with the payment of the debentures and of the interest accruing on them. Although this was the case, it was well known, and had always been considered by the public creditor, that the land revenue was the primary fund looked to for taking up the debentures and paying the interest. Therefore, it appeared to him (the Attorney-General) that the proceeds derivable from the sale of Crown lands, the rents and assessments which flowed into the Treasury, formed a portion of the consolidated revenue fund which absolutely represented the primary security of the public creditor. He maintained that that portion of the consolidated revenue fund was territorial revenue, and could not be classed as local revenue, until the colony was in such a position, and the public creditor was in such a position, as they were not in at the present time;—when that happy period came, he should be happy to record his

vote that the territorial revenue should be classed as local revenue. In offering this opinion, he begged to say that it was his own—that he did not wish to influence honorable members in dealing with the resolutions. If the Government accorded their support to the resolutions as a whole, he hoped it would not be taken as if they had passed over such an important resolution as the fifth, or that by their vote they admitted what he could not admit. He spoke to guard the Government, and himself in particular, against being supposed to have assented to a principle which they could not assent to. It might be, however, when the honorable member for the Kennedy replied, that he would show that the intention of the fifth resolution was misunderstood by him (the Attorney-General); but he, and other honorable members who had spoken on the resolutions, would pardon him for drawing attention to it. There was a great deal in the resolutions; and the matter of them had been very ably treated by more experienced hands than his. He would not go into the general question, and, indeed, he would not have addressed the House at all, had it not been from a stern sense of duty which compelled him to inform honorable members on the one point to which he had spoken.

Mr. FITZGERALD, in reply, said he concurred in all that had fallen from the honorable and learned Attorney-General. It was never his intention—he never dreamt of such a thing—to remove the land revenue out of the control of the Parliament of the colony, or to render it irresponsible of the public debt of the colony. In order to prevent ambiguity, he would ask leave to insert in the fifth paragraph, between the words “that” and “land,” in the eighth line, the following words:—“As soon as circumstances, in the wisdom of this House, will admit”—which would remove objection, and the clause would merely declare the general principle. He would not occupy the time of the House at such a late hour with many remarks, except to notice one observation which the honorable member for Eastern Downs had made with regard to the collection of the money which was now derived from rents of Crown lands. £140,000 of that ought, in the first instance, to be taken away for the management of Crown lands and survey, and also for public works that were required, as in the Estimates of this year. In reference to the Canada railway, the British Government had only entered into that work to guarantee the interest on the amount which it was likely to cost; at the same time the British Government had perfect faith in the colony being able to pay the expenses. In the same way, if the Queensland Government saw fit to become guarantee for the construction of railways throughout the colony—which was half as large again as Canada—if the Parliament thought fit to guarantee any particular rail-

way, they had a perfect right to do so. Again, in the United States of America, the only local works in which the general Government interfered were those important for the defence of the States, which would be railways between the centre and the extremities of the Republic. With those exceptions, neither the British Government nor the United States Government had interfered with public works. With reference to what had fallen from the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. O’Sullivan, as to granting land to immigrants, if he (Mr. Fitzgerald) had not addressed himself clearly to the question in his opening speech, he had so often before addressed the public upon it, that no one would think it likely he had changed his views. The people who came to the colony at their own expense were entitled to a grant of land free. But those in the colony or coming from the neighboring colonies should pay a fair price for the land, to provide for public works to open the country, which should be done at their expense.

There being no objection to the proposed amendment of the fifth resolution, it was amended accordingly, and the resolutions were put and passed.