

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 28 JULY 1869**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 28 July, 1869.

Returns.—Ways and Means.

## RETURNS.

Upon the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly reading the usual report of orders for returns to be laid upon the table of the House, in accordance with motions made by honorable members,

Mr. WALSH said, he thought it was time to direct attention to the manner in which the Government were acting in regard to furnishing returns, inasmuch as one of the most important, namely, one connected with the railways, had not yet been furnished, although it had been asked for some weeks ago. He believed that the Government had no intention of giving it that session; and he felt bound to say that, although he was disappointed in not having yet obtained it, it was a course not altogether unexpected on his part. He considered it was his duty to call attention to what, to him, appeared negligence on the part of the Ministers, and he would now move the adjournment of the House in order to afford the Ministers an opportunity of laying the return upon the table. The order was made on 20th May, more than two months ago, and thus there had been plenty of time to furnish such a return.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the question was one which rested with the Audit Office; but he believed the return asked for by the honorable member was in course of preparation—at any rate, he would cause inquiries to be made respecting it. The clerks in that department were now engaged till midnight, and were paid for overtime, in order to make up the many returns asked for by honorable members; and, he had no doubt, that the one in question had demanded a great deal of time. He would, however, give the honorable member an answer on the following day.

Mr. WALSH said he was very much inclined to think that it was not owing to any delay in the Audit Office, but to some scheme of the Government, that the return had not been furnished, as also as regarded another which had been asked for. He did not like to hear the honorable the Treasurer endeavor to cast the blame on another department; and it was the bounden duty of the House, seeing that the Audit Office was such an important department, to defend it against similar attacks which were made from time to time upon it, and by no one more than by the honorable the Treasurer. With the leave of the House, he would withdraw his motion for adjournment.

## WAYS AND MEANS.

On the motion of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole for the further consideration of Ways and Means.

Mr. THORN said that, seeing no honorable member appeared inclined to address the committee, he rose for the purpose of doing so, as, during the financial statement made by the honorable the Treasurer on Wednesday last, he had taken copious notes of portions of it, to which he wished to refer. He would, first of all, congratulate the honorable gentleman on his conservative policy, as they had been told that the colony was safe for a very long time to come. He next stated that it was not the intention of the Government to go into the loan market, but he was afterwards obliged to somewhat modify that statement. The honorable the Treasurer, no doubt, saw looming in the distance the Additional Representation Bill, which proposed to give members to Rockhampton and East Moreton, and which, if carried in its present shape, would at once organize again the system of log-rolling—the North getting the line of railway from Westwood to the Range, and Brisbane, the line to Ipswich. He had no doubt the honorable member saw all that, and thus refrained from going into the loan market to borrow for railways. He had listened very carefully to the financial statement made by the honorable member, and had read that which had appeared in print; and he thought it was not altogether the same as the one he heard in that House. It certainly was long, but if it had been properly condensed, it could have been delivered in three-quarters of an hour. He noticed that when the honorable member commenced, he looked at the clock, and thinking it was necessary to deliver a long speech, to be a statesman, he had spun out his speech for three hours,—three-quarters of the first hour being occupied, by him, in repeating figures which he used in his financial statement in March or April last. He would shortly refer to the speech of the honorable the Treasurer. The honorable gentleman stated that in the year 1868 the total revenue actually received was £724,854, and that the estimated revenue for the present year was £786,300, being nearly £62,000 in excess of 1868. He would quote his own words—

“That the receipts for the first half of last year were £284,573, while the receipts for the first six months of the present year amounted to £321,000; the receipts for the first half of the present year, therefore, exceeded the receipts for the corresponding half-year of 1868 by £37,000. As he had only estimated the total receipts for the year at £62,000 in excess of what was actually received last year, and as the first six months had produced £37,000, which was considerably more than the half of £62,000 for the whole year, if the receipts for the latter half of the year were in proportion to those of the first half, it was quite clear that the estimated revenue would be exceeded.”

Now he (Mr. Thorn) scarcely thought that the revenue would be realised, as was anticipated by the honorable the Treasurer, although he had formed his estimate from

the first six months of the year 1868, and the honorable member had not stated his reasons for supposing it would be. He would not say that the honorable the Treasurer was ignorant of the cause; but he considered it was the honorable gentleman's duty to explain the reasons why the estimated revenue for the first six months had exceeded that of the first six months of last year. It appeared to be from three great causes which arose out of the Land Department, so, therefore, he could not blame the honorable the Treasurer, although the Land Department did not receive the credit due to it. It was never anticipated by the Treasurer when he made his statement in 1868, that such causes existed. The first was created by the illegal proclamation of the honorable the Secretary for Lands for the payments under the Act of 1868. He (Mr. Thorn) would not say that that proclamation was bad; because illegal, inasmuch as it had been the means of bringing in a large sum to the revenue, and doing no great injustice to the general public. Then, again, under the Leasing Act of 1866, the first payments were made in non-transferable land orders, and the subsequent payments in cash, of land selected since June 30, 1867, on January 1, 1869. The third reason for the increase in the revenue, alluded to by the honorable member, was the sixpenny leases under the Act of 1860, originally, but for which one and sixpence was now paid instead of sixpence. From those three items, eighty per cent. of the £37,000 in excess for the first six months of 1869, was owing. The honorable the Treasurer should have informed the committee of that, for he thought that the next six months would not realise his expectations until the gold fields went more ahead, and until the Government afforded more assistance to them. He thought that they were not disposed to encourage the gold fields, as he had observed many notices evidently emanating from the Government, which warned people not to go to them. He believed that Mr. Daintree, the Government geologist, whom he had not seen, had not in the least colored his report when he said that the Gilbert gold field would give employment to ten thousand men at the present time. Unless that took place, however, he very much questioned whether the honorable the Treasurer's expectations would be realised for the second half of the year. Then, again, he thought that the auction sales would not meet the estimated amount: but whose fault was that, he would ask, was it not the want of administrative ability on the part of the honorable the Minister for Lands?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The falling off in the price of lands was entirely owing to the cotton bonuses; and to nothing else.

Mr. THORN denied that that was the cause, as he thought that the cotton bonus would have had a contrary effect. It was the only means of good land being purchased. The best land was locked up, and the honor-

able the Minister for Lands had not acted with wisdom when he had not offered land that would be bought up by the people, if they had a chance; and he believed that the country would not be in its present state had good land been offered to the public in former years. Then, again, the rent from runs would also be less, and that was owing to the Government not accepting the amendment of the honorable member for Maranoa, when the Pastoral Leases Bill was under consideration, which gave the Government power to re-assess and replace the lessees, should either party feel themselves aggrieved. The consequence of that clause not passing would be the means, probably, of a large quantity of land on the confines of the settled districts being thrown up. Then, with regard to the outside districts, the squatters would only retain the water frontage blocks. The honorable the Treasurer thought that the back ones would realise more by auction, if pushed into the market: that, however, he (Mr. Thorn) denied would be the case; and, in proof, would point out to the honorable gentleman the large number of forfeited runs in New South Wales which were now open, and yet no one could be found to take them up. The honorable the Treasurer had stated that the estimated revenue for the present year showed a sum of £58,000 in excessive receipts, and in supplementary receipts £50,000, leaving £8,000 to the good; but lapsed votes would swell up that amount to £33,000. Now, he would like to know in what districts the lapsed votes would take place, and what members were doing their duty to their constituents in allowing such votes to lapse. He might state that he, for one, would not allow any to lapse in his own district; and he did not think that the honorable member for Maryborough would allow any in his district. He had noticed the sum of £500 on the Estimates, for the road to the Gympie gold fields; but the honorable the Treasurer had not stated on which road it was to be expended—whether between Maryborough and Gympie, or Brisbane and Gympie. He had no doubt, however, that the honorable member for Maryborough would attend to that. Then, again, the honorable member for Maryborough stated, on a previous night, that the money expended by the Government was meted out in accordance with the way a district was represented: he differed from that honorable member, and denied that such was the case in his district. He would also cite the case of the Kennedy district, where he found that a sum of £4,000 was to be expended, or more than double that in his own district. All he could say was, that he should not be a party to any votes for the Kennedy, save the amount required for making a road from Townsville to the Gilbert gold fields. Now, the Treasurer had stated, in winding up his statement of accounts for 1869, that it would be necessary to economise the expenditure, and to

keep it within the limits given to it by him; at the same time, the honorable gentleman had set the example of encouraging that expenditure by subsidising the steamer "Havilah," for the North. He had no doubt that that would have the effect of causing the Australian Steam Navigation Company to refuse to run their steamers unless they, likewise, received a subsidy; and the country would thus have to pay dearly for this indication of economy. He (Mr. Thorn) was no great friend of the company; but he thought it was very unfair, on the part of the Treasurer, to subsidise a boat, thinking it would benefit the country. Then, he found that the honorable member had also run a coach to the Logan, for the conveyance of the mails there. But how would the honorable member have acted, if he had gone to him and asked for a coach to the West Moreton agricultural reserve, which was as thickly populated as the Logan. Now, they knew that the coach would be expensive, and that the mail could be very well conveyed on horses; and he knew that he would be refused if he asked for a coach to the reserve he had mentioned. In regard to the expenditure on the Gympie road, he would like to know how much had been expended on that: would the Treasurer inform them?—was not that the main cause of the late Government being expelled from office? He thought that there should be a Committee of Standing Accounts—the same as in Victoria—to supervise the accounts of the different departments. That system had been found to work admirably in Victoria, and its object was to have a committee to check and supervise in those cases in which the Auditor-General and Inspector of Accounts had no control. There were many votes in this colony which rendered necessary such a system—that for education for instance, with which he believed the Auditor-General had nothing to do, nor did he think it was in the province of the Inspector. He noticed, according to the report of the Board of Education for the present year, that in all the districts of the colony, with the exception of Brisbane and Toowoomba, the inhabitants raised a large sum of money before they were assisted by the Government, in accordance with the Act. But, in North Brisbane, they had not raised one shilling, although it was a wealthy district, in fact, more so than any other. He thought that it was unjust for them to have the large schools they had without contributing towards their establishment in any degree. He found that the item put down for land given to them by the Government of New South Wales before Separation, was the only amount on which the Board of Education formed their basis for Government aid, and that was hardly just to other places. He had also noticed that, in answer to a question put by an honorable member, there were two schools at Toowoomba, towards one of which nothing had been subscribed, and he had no

doubt that the honorable the Minister for Public Lands had come down with a cheque for £50, in the other case, in order that it might appear that something had been subscribed. And this was in the face of the rule that unless the inhabitants subscribed one-third they would not receive the two-thirds from the Government endowment. He observed that in Rockhampton, in spite of what had been said about the neglect of that place by the Government, and notwithstanding their wealth, only one-eighth had been raised by private subscription. For these reasons he should be in favor of having a Standing Committee of that House, for the purpose of examining accounts. He would now allude to the Estimates for the present year, and, on looking at them, he found that the honorable the Treasurer had estimated a sum of £22,000 in excess of the Estimates for 1869, which he thought was moderate, and would be exceeded in the case of the Southern and Western Railway, to the extent of thirty or forty per cent. above the Treasurer's statement. He would, however, point out to the honorable the Minister for Works that, although the goods traffic had increased during the year, the passenger traffic had not, notwithstanding that there was an additional line. He thought that there must be something wrong, and which required to be remedied; and that, if the fares were reduced, the stumbling block would be removed. He would recommend that the tables of fares should be re-cast, as times would not allow persons to travel by the railway at the present high rates. As a precedent, he might refer to the Telegraph Department, the charges in which the Government had taken upon themselves to reduce, and that in opposition to the report of the Superintendent. He considered that in that instance they had acted unwisely, as, according to the report of the Superintendent, the line was almost entirely used by the mercantile community, and by the proprietors of newspapers. He thought, therefore, that the anticipated £12,000 from that source would hardly be realised. In addition to what he had mentioned, it was stated by the superintendent, that in proportion to the increase of business so would be the wear and tear on the lines, and that the rates now charged were lower than those in the other colonies. Under the circumstances, it was questionable whether they were not too low to meet the amount set down against that estimate. The honorable the Treasurer also stated that the customs receipts would exceed those of last year; and he (Mr. Thorn) agreed with him in saying that no matter what changes had taken place in the colony, the customs returns had always steadily increased. The Treasurer said he could set down for the year 1870, the same amount as for last year; but he (Mr. Thorn) thought if the honorable member set to work to stir up matters connected with the gold fields, and lent a helping hand to the mining interest, the amount

would be greater. He would shortly allude to transferable land orders. The honorable the Treasurer had put down the amount at £50,000; but he questioned very much whether that sum would be realised, as in the Act of 1868, it was stated that payment could be made either in cash or by land orders. Such being the case, he doubted whether cash payments could be enforced, and in such an important matter, the Government ought not override an Act of Parliament. With respect to non-transferable land orders, he found that the value of those afloat in the hands of the general public, and not in pawn to the Treasury, amounted to £22,000. In the district of West Moreton, he knew a great many farmers who had those land orders in their possession, some of whom made their eighty acre or one hundred acre selections under the Leasing Act of 1866, and who had had returned to them the balance of their land orders which were found to be useless, as the Government would not accept them for the second year's payment. Such a practice was only bringing people to the colony under false pretences, and, as such, was a matter which might receive the attention of the whole Cabinet, and not of one minister alone. He noticed, on turning to the item of railways, that the honorable the Treasurer had estimated the revenue from that source at £10,000 or £20,000 more than the previous year, and he had no doubt that that would be realised. He would now refer to the expenditure; the Treasurer had told them that in 1868, it was £504,000, and for 1869, it was estimated at £487,000, and alluded to the large amount required for public works. Now, he (Mr. Thorn) denied that the expenditure on that item had been excessive, and yet he only noticed a sum of £2,000 for a large district such as West Moreton.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You have your railway.

Mr. THORN: He was not talking about the railway, but about roads and other public works, and if the salaries of the officials in Brisbane were taken into consideration, they would be a good set off to the much vaunted railway expenditure. He was not aware what influence had been brought to bear upon the Government, that the Kennedy and East Moreton districts should be the only two which were at all cared for, and why the others should not have their fair share of the proposed expenditure. He next came to the Parliamentary Buildings, upon which item the honorable the Treasurer was rather obscure, so much so, that he (Mr. Thorn) was at a loss to see what the honorable member was aiming at. He saw it stated in the *Courier* newspaper—but that was different to what was stated in the House by the honorable member—that £30,000 had been borrowed and expended on those buildings, and that, likewise, £28,536 had been raised from the Parliamentary Building Fund, and the Government had likewise ex-

pendent £2,942 in excess of the amount raised. Yet, the Treasurer required a further sum of £5,552 to complete the buildings; and to make it better, he proposed to borrow a fresh loan for £37,000, which he wished to expend on other public works in Brisbane. Now, he (Mr. Thorn) would not object to those, if a portion was expended in the district he represented, and a more substantial gaol than the one they now had, was erected;—if the honorable member was willing to take £18,000 for the Brisbane Hospital, and give Ipswich £20,000 for a gaol, which it was intended by the New South Wales Government, should be erected there, and not in Brisbane. He recollected being present in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales eighteen years ago, when that question was raised, and there was a long discussion upon it, the motion only being carried by one vote. It was a most extraordinary thing in reference to that account, that the Treasurer had asked for a further sum for those buildings. On the day the financial statement was made, he had met a gentleman, in the Surveyor-General's office, who was inquiring when the Government intended to put up for sale the remainder of the Parliament Buildings allotments; and said he thought they should be submitted at once, as, if they were submitted at ten per cent. upset price less than on the last occasion, he was certain there would be found purchasers for fifty per cent. more than the amount required to complete the buildings. He (Mr. Thorn) could not understand why the Government should borrow money whilst they had that land, which people were anxious to have put in the market. He did not blame the Colonial Treasurer for that, as he had no doubt the honorable gentleman saw that the corporation of Brisbane had been rather harshly treated in regard to that land; and that might be the reason why he now asked for a loan, with the probable view of making a refund to them on a future occasion. He would now ask him to pay off the debt upon the building, with the land in the town, which was amply sufficient, as it would realise £12,000, and only £9,000 was wanted. The honorable the Treasurer had stated that the amount owing to the public out of the Savings Bank fund was £265,000, but only £250,000 was found to be there. Now, he would like the honorable gentleman to tell the House how much of that sum was lent on mortgage, and how much he had in debentures, as he believed nearly the whole amount was lent by way of mortgage. If that was so, the sooner the mortgages were realised, and the accounts brought to a close, the better; or else, wipe it off, at once, as a bad debt, so as to show their real indebtedness. He had also to bring the same charge against the Colonial Treasurer as that honorable gentleman had brought against the late Government, when he said that the late Government had been so soft as to lower the maximum

amount that could be deposited by any one person in the Savings Bank. He asked the Colonial Treasurer whether it was his intention to increase this amount. He himself had always been in favor of increasing that amount. In connection with these Savings Banks, he found the Government undertook life assurance and annuity business. This had been introduced by the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Herbert, who thought his measure would work wonderfully to the benefit of the colony. But it would appear, from Mr. Drew's report, that it was nothing more nor less than a farce. A person putting £200 in the Treasury would only get an annuity of £10. The same amount of money placed in debentures would yield £12, or placed in the Savings Bank it would yield £10. It was not surprising then, that nothing had been done with annuities. The same was the case with life assurances; only fifteen policies had been taken, and two of those had lapsed. When the Colonial Treasurer proposed to meet the Treasury Bills, he was of opinion that the £300,000 might readily be raised in the colony at six per cent., and he thought the present holders would take them. He was sorry that the Government should propose that the £150,000 should be borrowed outside the colony. Would it not be better to float that amount within the colony also? He denied that because Victoria was about to withdraw some of their debentures from the market, they should not therefore withdraw theirs. If the colony of Victoria could not succeed, Queensland should not go out of the way to go into the market. He hoped the policy spoken of by the Colonial Treasurer, of inducing settlement, so as to raise not only produce sufficient for home consumption but also for export, would guide the Government in their legislation. The cotton bonus would be a great inducement to settlement, and if it were thrown out, as amended in the other House, the Colonial Treasurer's hopes would not be realised about exports. They should not be out-liberalised in this matter by the Upper House; else it would be a disgrace to representative Government. Indeed, he would not be surprised to hear of the Moreton farmers coming down, with some Cromwell at their head, to drive the representatives out of the chamber altogether, leaving the nominee chamber extant alone. The Colonial Treasurer stated that he intended to tack on a proviso to the Appropriation Act, authorising the Government to spend less than voted. Why, that is carried out every day. There was a case in Ipswich of a salary of £200 voted on the Estimates, and only £180 was paid. How would the Minister for Works like ten per cent. knocked off his salary? He did hope the Treasurer would consider this, and deal justly with all, whether in a lower grade of the service or a higher. The Colonial Treasurer stated that the railways were no tax upon the country. That was a little piece of soft sawder. It

was insidious reasoning to say that the country received a *quid pro quo*; the money had to be borrowed, and the colony had to pay for it. When the Colonial Treasurer pointed to the local rates, and so on, in England, he forgot that the circumstances here were not analogous. It was not the fact that the customs here formed the only tax; he considered that all the railways and the waterworks in Brisbane were all the same, and a tax. The Brisbane Waterworks required supervision, and he thought that they ought to raise the rate 150 per cent. more, an increase of that amount would yield five per cent. interest. It was not too much to pay; at present the rates were disproportionately low in comparison with the benefits received by the inhabitants. With respect to the items, he found no alteration was proposed in the police estimates from what they were before. Now, the police, as a body, were paid far less than in any other of the colonies—at least, so far as the lower grades were concerned. At the same time, the expenditure under the head of police was far less than in the other colonies. This was a thing to be wondered at, when they considered the large territory and scattered population of this colony. The police were deserving of commendation for the way in which all thefts were detected and mail robberies put down. That was, no doubt, in some measure due to the commissioner; but he thought the sum paid to sergeants and sub-inspectors and the police, should be increased. He was aware that many of the police contemplated leaving the colony on account of the small pay which they received. That was a matter which the Colonial Treasurer ought to have looked into before submitting his budget to the House. He was glad that the honorable member for Maryborough had called attention to another point: he would like to know what was the cost of the dredges now lying idle. He questioned whether it would not be better at once to set them to work and prevent their more rapid decay; and he would be very glad when the return asked for by the honorable member for Maryborough, concerning them, were laid upon the table of the House. The Fitzroy required dredging, and a promise had been made that this should be done. The two dredges in the Brisbane, too, should be set to work, one above and the other below the town. Did the Colonial Treasurer intend to set them to work? He might contrast the treatment of Brisbane and Ipswich in the grants for the Schools of Art. The Colonial Treasurer had required clear proof that a hundred pounds had been raised in Ipswich before he would give the grant; but, according to the *Courier* of 10th July, he saw that the grant had been allowed when only £85 had been subscribed by the inhabitants. That did not look as it ought to do. Under the head of charitable allowances, he might state that some places were unduly favored. When the vote for

Ipswich hospital came on last time, because it happened at the time to be flush of cash, it was reduced; but Brisbane hospital escaped because it was not allowed to appear that it was flush of cash. More was allowed to Rockhampton hospital than to Ipswich, although West Moreton had an excess of population, and the patients at the hospital were more. Why then was Ipswich to be placed third and receive less than Rockhampton, for the hospital? Under the head of lands, he observed that all the most important commissioners, except one, were struck off. How could the Land Act be worked without commissioners? He believed that was the first step taken by the Government towards repealing the Land Act of 1868.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No.

MR. THORN: It struck him, at first, as the case. He trusted the Minister for Lands would see that commissioners were appointed in all the districts, as it was a *sine quâ non* for the effectual working of the Land Act. Under the head of "public works," he might observe, in connection with the railway, that if the staff had had the head quarters at Ipswich, there would, in all probability, have been no discharge of the railway official there. Had the commissioner or accountant been there, no such defalcation could have occurred there. On the whole, he looked upon the financial position of the colony as perfectly sound; and he congratulated the head of the Government for the conservative policy they intended to pursue. After the colony had had rest, the public works would be continued, and then an enormous revenue would be realised for their debentures. He was sorry to hear the fallacious arguments in vogue in favor of Brisbane works. He was not surprised that the papers there urged the people on to see that they were carried out, because the papers were Brisbane papers; nor that the people held public meetings in consequence. He had tabled a motion calling for a return of the produce which has left the railway station, Ipswich, for Toowoomba, Allora, and Dalby, since the opening of the line, and also for the produce from those places to Ipswich. This would show that the produce sent up was the greater. The committee might remember that the difference of freight in favor of the produce sent down was a great protection to the producer. He never yet knew of colonial produce being cheaper in Toowoomba than it could be bought at Ipswich. He would not say more on the present occasion, but would offer his opinions upon details at the proper time.

MR. PALMER said he was reluctantly brought upon his legs, and had no intention of saying much at the present time. He would have liked to have had more information from the Colonial Treasurer before passing even the first vote on the Estimates. He saw in the *Courier* what was supposed to be a revised speech of the Colonial Treasurer's, but he was informed that the Colonial Treasurer

never made such a speech at all. He was told that such was the case, but he did not know, as, unfortunately, he was not present at the time this financial statement was made. The Colonial Treasurer had made an extraordinary omission in the statement put before honorable members, but he did not suppose it was by intention. In that statement, all the deficiencies in the various loans were mentioned, yet he did not see any account of the profits on them. On the first loan issue there was a premium of £5,632 11s. 5d., and on the second £16,068 16s. 3d., making together a sum of £21,701 7s. 8d. That amount should be deducted from the deficiency on the loans, and yet no mention of that had been made in any way by the Colonial Treasurer. There had been no attempt to deceive the House, because the figures had been given before; but it was strange that no mention had been made anywhere in that statement yet. The committee were entitled, before this vote passed, to have an explanation on that point. As to criticising the financial statement, it would be a mere loss of time. The Colonial Treasurers made statements out of office which, when in, came to nothing. These financial statements were all the same. Whoever was in office, they would have the best face put on everything, and they would be told: if you do what is right, and behave well, and do not press the Government, you will be likely, if very lucky, to have a small surplus. The financial statements were invariably the same; they never realised them, and that was the worst part of it. Another thing was that the committee should have had the Supplementary Estimates for 1869 at the same time as the Estimates for next year. He might be told that these could not be furnished in full. That was unnecessary; they always had Supplementary Estimates, numbers 1, 2, and 3. The committee should have had them, as far as they go, and there could have been no difficulty in placing them on the table at the same time as the Estimates-in-chief. Again, there must be a salary for an Emigration Agent, or Agent-General for Immigration, on the Estimates, and that should have appeared. The Government knew the Immigration Bill had passed this House, and would pass the other, and why the salary had not been put in the Estimates he could not understand. There were numberless items besides, which would have to be provided, for which they knew there had been estimates. He would remind the Colonial Treasurer and the Premier of the distinct promise which had been given when the last Estimates were before the House—that they should know what they were paying for the establishment at Government House. He did not intend to clip down the salary, but he disliked allowances in every way. The Colonial Treasurer did promise to let the committee know the real amount required at Government House. That was not down in the Estimates, and he had a right to complain. The estimate for the Orphanage

was strange, £4,000 had been set down for 1868, and that sum had to be supplemented by £1,312; and yet only £4,000 was voted this time, when it was well known that the number of children was increasing. He held that the committee was entitled to have these Estimates as correct as possible. With reference to the railways, the Government, to show their economy, had put down for the maintenance of permanent way on the Southern and Western Railway, for 1869, £20,000, which was less than in 1868 by £6,956;—for 1870, the estimate was £25,905, which was only £5,905 more than was required in 1868. Now, they were entitled to have the Supplementary Estimates, to see what they were about. They should not let the Colonial Treasurer take credit for economy, when he knew that the sum asked for in the Estimates would not meet the requirements of the Government. He had told the Colonial Treasurer, at the time, that such was the case, and that it would be impossible for him to carry on the business of the country with the Estimates he framed. He should be glad to prevent business from going further, until the committee could get these Supplementary Estimates, as far as they could be had, because they should be upon the table at the same time as the Estimates-in-chief. He could dilate upon the injustice done to the northern interests, but custom had made him think it almost useless. In the Department of Public Works, alone, the expenditure in the southern division, upon the management of the railway, for the maintenance of the permanent way, roads and buildings, amounted to £95,820; while only £23,521 odd was put down for the North. That was out of all proportion below what the northern districts were entitled to, when they contributed one-third to the revenue. But it was perfectly useless to object, in the present situation of the House. It was monstrous that they should have this expenditure in one district of the colony, while the other was almost universally neglected. The only item of increase for the North, was in the road votes, and that was not at all equal to the requirements of the case. He would be very much inclined to have the Estimates reduced *pro rata*, as he thought it would be very much better to allow the Government to take so much per cent. less through the Estimates: it would be very much better than wasting time, paper, and gaslight, in debates over bridges, roads, and lockups. He was unable, through illness, to deal fully with the Estimates;—indeed, he thought the northern members might just as well walk out of the House in a body, for any good that they might do for their constituents: their vocation was gone, and nothing was attended to. He had serious intentions of telling his constituents that he could do nothing for them, and, when they had absolutely no representation at all, it was a perfect farce attempting it. Before the Ministry came into office, their apparent



object—their one cry—was the redistribution of seats. After all, there had been no attempt of the sort. As for the Additional Members Bill, it was a humbugging Bill;—it proposed to divide a district in the South for redistribution; the North had no chance whatever of getting representation, or that their complaints should be attended to in the House. So much was this the case, that he considered the members for the North would be justified in leaving the House in a body.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was happy to give the information why the money realised on the two first loans, by way of premium, had not been mentioned in the financial statement. It would be seen, on reference to the expenditure during the year 1865, that the £21,664 was received, and passed at once to the credit of the miscellaneous receipts.

Mr. PALMER said that if this were the proper way to dispose of a surplus, the proper way to dispose of a deficiency was to meet it out of the revenue.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, in reference to the remark made about the sum placed under the head of orphan schools, that there would be another sum placed upon the Supplementary Estimates this year, he might observe that the Government had discovered that the orphans of both the Diamantina and the St. Vincent schools could be maintained for a less sum. They had agreed that ninepence, instead of one shilling, per head, per day, should be granted, and that accounted for the difference.

Mr. WALSH said the Colonial Treasurer would be able to say whether the Government proposed to do justice to the North, in the way of expenditure, in the Supplementary Estimates. The members of the well-robbed North had a right to know this. He asked distinctly whether the Government proposed, in their Supplementary Estimates, to do justice to the North? He had as much right to put that question as any other; and, as the Colonial Secretary did not seem to hear, he repeated the question.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that if by justice to the North, the honorable member for Maryborough meant whether the Government could satisfy his expectations, he was afraid they would fail.

Mr. WALSH said he expected that answer. It was a flippant answer, unbecoming to the Premier, and the people whom he represented; a people who were shamefully robbed. What had he ever demanded for the North, which might be termed unjust? Why, then, this ridicule from the Premier? It was, merely, that attention might be diverted from a subject which would be forced upon them, to do justice to the North. The honorable Premier might humbug his constituents—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL rose to order.

The CHAIRMAN ruled that the language was unparliamentary.

Mr. WALSH said the Premier might satisfy his constituents by his conduct; but he

pitied the poor fools. The Premier might attract around him, here, a lot of misguided members of the people to whom they fancy they are doing justice, and giving satisfaction; but that which would gratify the South would not gratify the North. The Premier would not crush the voice of the North, and in the name of the North, he would not submit to answers quite unbecoming to the Premier to utter, and for honorable members to receive.

Mr. FRASER said the financial position seemed as if it were becoming a hopeless question. He should certainly have liked to have heard the opinions of some older and more competent person on this occasion. He was very sorry that the Premier had not been able to go more fully into the matter. There was only one fault which had to be found with the Estimates, and that was evidence of retrenchment. At the risk of this observation being considered threadbare and worn, he really must repeat that it seemed to him as if the business of retrenchment had become a hopeless undertaking in the hands of any Treasurer. After the failure of the present Colonial Treasurer, he did not know where they were to look for any to undertake it more successfully. It appeared to him that the expenditure of the colony had been exceeding the income, year by year, by a considerable amount. So far as the statement of the Colonial Treasurer went, the revenue answered anticipation, but they had not the Supplementary Estimates before them. Therefore they were, in a great measure, in the dark in the matter. With respect to the manner in which the Colonial Treasurer proposed to deal with these deficiencies, by debentures, he would remark that, from the present aspect of affairs, the same process would have to be repeated in two or three years. It would be a wise policy to borrow the money for a long time. He felt that, as a representative of Brisbane, he too had cause of complaint against the Government, and that the disappointment was not all in the North. Whatever had been granted to the southern part of the colony, those in Brisbane, at all events, were suffering more from the taxation of these railways, and deriving less benefit from them, than any other part of the colony. In the Colonial Treasurer's speech, they had had some very good advice given them, to rest and be cautious, as the colony showed a debt of four millions. Now he held that the way to recover was not to pause and rest. The part of prudence would be to take some action, and not to take rest. On the question of the southern railways, it was admitted on every hand that to extend these railways to Brisbane was certainly one of the most efficient steps to make what was already constructed, pay. No honorable member would question that the part to be completed would amply pay. The railway would settle a community, and create traffic. Between Ipswich and Brisbane there was, for the extent of country, the largest population, with the exception of

the gold fields, of any district in the colony. He desired to remind the Colonial Treasurer and the Premier of their promises made before their constituents. What the Colonial Treasurer said in his address to the electors of South Brisbane was to this effect—

"It is advisable for financial reasons, that the railway should be completed to Warwick and to Brisbane. This completion of the railway system will involve a further expenditure; but it will effect a saving to the revenue. The increase of traffic from the extension to the southern boundary of the colony, and to the populous district around here, will add to the receipts over the whole line more than the amount of the interest on the cost of completing the works, and thus assist in paying some portion of the interest which is now provided for out of the revenue."

If that were the case, upon what ground of consistency could the Colonial Treasurer counsel them to pause and to rest. The proper course would be to come forward for a loan, and complete the line at once. The honorable gentleman at the head of the Government was also pledged to the railway. The authority was one often called in question, but there it was in "Hansard."

The CHAIRMAN said the honorable member could not quote the "Hansard" of the present session.

Mr. FRASER: At all events, what the Premier had said was to the effect that the railway ought to be completed upon the very same principle as that laid down by the Colonial Treasurer. He believed according to the views of the honorable member for Maryborough, that the Premier would prefer to remain in office to fulfilling the promise made to his constituents. This part of the community had good cause to complain of the manner in which the Brisbane bridge and railway had been treated by the Government. But, in the interests of the colony, the Government would be fully justified in completing these works. He was very much afraid that it would be utterly impossible, according to the present arrangement, for any Treasurer in that House to bring the revenue within the expenditure. This was due, in a great measure, to the extent of their territory, and the scattered population. He should not be surprised at a cry for separation arising in the South, and the sooner separation took place, the better it would be. He had been very pleased to hear what had been stated by the honorable member for Port Curtis, in respect to the orphanage estimate. A large amount of work, and a large expenditure of money, had taken place in connection with the orphan schools, for which no contract had been taken, and of which the public had no account. This had been done by one man, and it was not fair to the colony. He hoped the Government would bear that in mind for the future. The honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thorn, complained of the meagre allowance for roads in the district he represented. The sum was the respectable

amount of £2,200, and was nearly quite as much as the sum allowed for East Moreton, which is a much more extensive district. The honorable members for Ipswich and West Moreton never allowed the interests of their constituents to be overlooked; but, so long as requests were brought forward by each member, for grants, it would be utterly impossible for any Government to pursue a course of retrenchment. He had himself avoided preferring such claims, and he should continue to do so. At the same time, he should be prepared to procure for the district he represented all possible advantages, consistently with their not being special.

Mr. ARCHER said he did not intend by any means to make a long speech on the present occasion, or to analyse the Estimates that had been laid before the House. He looked upon it that any attempt to analyse the Estimates would be an altogether useless process, especially after the discussion that took place a few nights ago, on the motion of the honorable member for Maryborough; and also after the very exhaustive speech the House had just listened to, by the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thorn—a speech that had struck the Ministry so completely dumb that not one occupant of the Treasury benches had since risen to address the House. He intended, however, to say a few words on the question before the House; and in the first place, he wished to state what part of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer's speech he approved of. Now, he must give the honorable gentleman credit for having expressed himself the other evening in a way that afforded him the satisfaction of understanding all that he (the Colonial Treasurer) intended to state for the information of the House. What the honorable gentleman did say, he said in such a clear and intelligible manner as to enable all who heard him to understand fully the present financial position of the colony. He would say this much more, that the way in which he proposed to meet a portion of the liabilities of the country, by the issue of Treasury bills, met with his entire approbation. Now, not only did he admire the manner in which the honorable gentleman placed his statement before the House, enabling honorable members to see the financial position of the colony; but he also admired the honorable gentleman for the good advice he gave to the southern portion of the country. The honorable gentleman had stated that it was not the intention of the Ministry to ask for any Loan Bill this session, for the purpose of carrying out large local works. He admired the honorable gentleman all the more for doing so because he was certain that it would not find favor in the eyes of his constituents. But he would have admired him still more, if it had not been for what he believed to be the reason why he had come to that conclusion. He remembered distinctly that, in the address delivered by His Excellency at the opening

of the session, it was stated that the desirableness of completing economical and reproductive works would be recommended to the consideration of the House. Of course, honorable members understood that to refer to the completion of the railway from Brisbane to Ipswich, and also the completion of the Brisbane Bridge. That was the idea, it was believed, that was shadowed forth in His Excellency's opening speech; and he now believed that the reason that idea had not been given effect to by the Government bringing forward a measure for the purpose of carrying it out, was, that the Government had, in fact, been frightened out of it by the evidence afforded in the speeches of honorable members, in the course of a previous debate, of the determined resistance that would be offered to any such propositions. Had the honorable gentleman, on his own unbiassed motion, arrived at the conclusion that he had come to—or which, at all events, he stated he had come to—as to the way in which they must endeavor to provide for the enormous debt of the colony, or he should rather say, the deficit, as between current revenue and current expenditure, he would have given him more credit than he was even now disposed to give him. Now, the reason why the Ministry had arrived at the conclusion they had come to was, he believed, that they had felt they would not be able to force a measure of the kind he alluded to through the House. He remembered that the honorable the Premier called him very strongly to task for saying that he would resist a Loan Bill for any purpose of the kind as long as his physical energies would enable him to do so. Though he felt the remarks of the honorable gentleman, at the time, as somewhat severe, he must say that now he did not regret having used the expressions that called forth that censure, for he believed that it was on account of what he and other honorable members said on that occasion, that the Ministry had been prevented from bringing in such measures. Seeing that, and seeing that a few earnest men could, in committee, prevent any measure of the kind being passed into law, the Ministry had very wisely come to the conclusion that discretion was the better part of valor, and, consequently, had retreated from the field. He had stated that he did not intend to analyse the Estimates; and he must say that he fully concurred in the opinion expressed by the honorable member for Port Curtis, when he said that it would be a hopeless task to do so; because, whatever might be said with regard to the state of accounts between the northern and the southern portion of the colony fell upon dead ears, and was paid no attention to. But what had been the effect of the wise admission of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer—that he was not to ask for a new loan this session for public works? Immediately it became known that

the Government were not to do so, societies sprang up on all sides in Brisbane, and other towns likely to be benefited by the carrying out of certain public works, for the purpose of taking steps to coerce the Government, if necessary, to carry out those public works. Now he was quite open to take a bet, that if those societies were to meet every day, and the members of them to speak from sunrise to sundown, not one would ever speak of injustice having been done to the North; or say that the railway from Rockhampton to Westwood should be extended so much farther into the interior as would make it remunerative and advantageous to the settlers in that quarter, before the line in the South was completed from Ipswich to Brisbane. Those societies would do nothing of the sort. But as soon as it was announced that the Government did not intend to do anything for the completion of certain public works in the South, every community in the South was up in arms against the Government. There was one remark that fell from the honorable member for North Brisbane, Mr. Fraser, that very much astonished him. That honorable member stated that a new country could not afford to rest. Well, that was one of the most extraordinary things he ever heard. At all events, it was an observation that was not in accordance with physical laws. Every one knew, for instance, that children rested a great deal, and they might so far take a hint from nature; and he was sure they would find that it was well for a young country to be allowed to rest for a while. The colony was in such a position as he alluded to, and being a young colony, was not able to expend a great amount of strength, without resorting to some means of resuscitation. But, some honorable members seemed to think that it should be all work and no rest, and that was an idea he could not agree with at all. The honorable member was wrong also, he thought, in finding fault with the honorable the Premier and the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, for not keeping the promise made in the Governor's opening speech, to the effect that certain works of a reproductive and economical character would be proceeded with. Instead of finding fault with them for that, he ought to have praised them for having sufficient wisdom and courage to change their opinions when they found that it would not be advisable to carry them out. He did not, for his part, see that there was any great wisdom in sticking to an opinion. Indeed, he considered it was anything but wisdom to hold on to an opinion when circumstances showed that it would be inadvisable to act upon that opinion; although he must say that he did not admire the wiliness of the serpent that was sometimes exhibited by some gentlemen in changing their opinions when it was not convenient for their own purposes to carry them into effect. However, he thought the Government had done well in taking a hint from the

times, and refraining from further expenditure upon local public works, at present. Having stated that it was not his intention to analyse the Estimates, and, as the debate was one on supply, and he could, therefore, allude to anything whatever, he would take advantage of the opportunity to refer to what fell from the honorable the Premier and the honorable the Treasurer, in the course of the debate on the resolutions relative to local government. It was stated, in the course of the debate, that if the resolutions were carried, two-fifths of the revenue would be expended for certain purposes—that was, for police and public works, exclusive of railways.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER:** Not two-fifths of the revenue, but two-fifths of the excess over what was required for the purposes of general government.

**MR. ARCHER:** What the honorable gentleman said was, that two-fifths of £277,000—less £17,000, the amount required for the different branches of the civil service, would be handed over to the various local governments for expenditure. Now, that was not what was wanted by the advocates of local government. What they wanted was, that they should get, besides their share of the £277,000, such portion of the revenue as remained after paying their proportion of the general expenditure. The proposition of the Government would not at all meet the case. What the people of the North complained of was, that they were taxed for certain expenditure, and got no return for such taxation. But if he was surprised at the statement of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, he was utterly taken aback by the attack that was made upon himself by the honorable the Premier. That honorable gentleman accused him of not having sufficiently studied the question; but in saying that, and in the way he put the question, more complete ignorance was never displayed. The honorable gentleman did not, himself, think of the two-fifths expenditure, but took the hint about it from the honorable the Colonial Treasurer; and took it up wrongly, for he spoke as if the two-fifths the Treasurer had spoken about was to go to the North. He forgot that the two-fifths included the whole of the civil service expenditure, and that only a proportion of the remainder would go to the North. The honorable gentleman stated that the two-fifths referred to would be expended in the North; but that every honorable member knew would not be the case, and for his own part, he was fully satisfied that the whole of it would be expended in the South. It was not the people in the North that did not understand the question, for they understood it thoroughly; and if the honorable the Premier had studied the question sufficiently, he would not have spoken as he did the other evening. There was a question put to the Colonial Treasurer that afternoon, by the honorable member for

Maryborough, in which he also felt much interested, and which he would have liked to have heard more fully answered. He would like very much to know if the Supplementary Estimates were to contain a sum for the purpose of remedying the great injustice that was being done to the people of Rockhampton by not deepening the Fitzroy River. He had brought the subject before the House over and over again; but the Government never paid any attention to it, and he was exceedingly sorry that the Colonial Treasurer had not informed the House that some such thing was to be done; but he hoped the honorable gentleman would yet inform him that there was a sum to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for the purpose. There were other things he would like to see provided for on the Estimates; but the work he now referred to, the deepening of the Fitzroy River was one of the most urgent necessity, and was of such vital importance to the town he had the honor to represent, that he did not see how it could continue much longer in existence, unless something of the kind was done. He was quite well aware that there had been some talk about getting a steamer, and plant, and dredges, ready for the deepening of the river, but, from the slow way in which that was being attended to, he saw clearly that there was no great wish on the part of the Government to carry it out; but he hoped he would obtain a satisfactory assurance that the work would be carried out. He would now like to say a few words about the Treasury bills which the honorable the Colonial Treasurer wished to get authority to issue. He had no doubt that, considering the present state of the money market, what the honorable gentleman said was correct—that was, that the bills would be taken up at six per cent. by those who now held Treasury bills at ten per cent., and that, in fact, the new issue would be, as it were, taken in exchange for the others. But he would even go further, and say, that he believed they would be taken up at five per cent. His reason for believing that was this: though interest on borrowed money here was exceedingly high, the interest paid by the banks in Sydney and Melbourne, on deposits, was only three and a-half or four per cent., and, therefore, he was satisfied that one per cent. more on short-dated Treasury bills would ensure their being speedily taken up. By far the greater portion of the bills that were issued two or three years ago, were held by people in Victoria, and New South Wales. There were comparatively few held in Queensland. Were it not for the favorable terms offered by the Savings Bank here, he had not the slightest doubt that the whole of them would be taken up at five per cent. Of course, it was not at all likely that people who had money in the Savings Bank, on which they received the high rate of five per cent., and which they could withdraw at call, would invest their

money in Treasury bills bearing the same rate of interest. He did not think it was a wise, or a proper thing, on the part of the Government, to issue bills on such high terms as induced people to invest their money in that way instead of investing it in legitimate trade. If the money deposited in the Savings Bank was required to remain there for one or two years, a great many people who now deposited their money there, would invest it in some remunerative trade; but, as they obtained five per cent. for their deposits, and could withdraw their money at call, they preferred placing it in the Savings Bank. Now, that was a matter which the House would yet have to consider, because the effect of such favorable terms was, that it forced people in business to pay a higher rate of interest for money than they would otherwise have to do. He disagreed entirely with those who proposed that the debentures to be issued should be placed on the colonial market, because that would absorb the money that was in the country and divert it from business purposes; but to introduce the matter, say of £150,000, of foreign capital, for the completion of works that had been contracted for, would leave the money that was in the colony available for the general business of the people of the colony. He therefore held, that it was better to go home for what money the Government required than to absorb any little amount of money that was in the market here. Consequently he agreed with the honorable the Colonial Treasurer on that point, and altogether disagreed with those who advised that the deposits in the Savings Bank should be made use of. It would not be safe to make use of that money, because it could be called for at any time; and, besides, they could not afford to pay the same amount of interest for money that could be withdrawn at call as they could upon Treasury bills that were drawn at three or four years. Now, he thought it was a question they would yet have to consider whether the Savings Bank, on account of the high rate of interest given for deposits, did not come into competition with the general business of the colony, by attracting the money out of the ordinary channels of business. As he had said, he did not intend to analyse the Estimates; but he saw that it was determined not to give the North justice, and the people of the North felt that they were paying enormous sums to enrich the South. From Maryborough to Burketown the people were taxed for purposes from which they derived no benefit whatever; and until that state of things was rectified, he saw no use whatever in finding fault with the Estimates. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer had urged upon honorable members not to increase the expenditure by calling for sums to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates, and to assist them in keeping down the expenditure in that way. Now, he had no doubt that honorable

members would very gladly do so if it were seen that the Government would undertake to supply what were the absolute necessities of the various parts of the country. Honorable members would force for sums if they saw that such was the case; but the Government might depend upon it, that till they attended to the pressing wants of any district, expenditure would be forced upon them. He admitted that it was one of the lowest duties of a representative to get money spent in his district; but while the wants of a district were neglected, honorable members would not be just to their constituents, if they were to give in to the appeal made by the Colonial Treasurer, not to bring forward motions for local works, or otherwise secure a fair division of the revenue. He remembered that, some few months ago, there used to be more full statements in the *Gazette*, than there were now, respecting the revenue derived from the different parts of the colony. Those statements had disappeared now altogether. He remembered seeing quarterly statements of the revenue derived from Maryborough, Rockhampton, Bowen, and other places; but, as he had just said, they had now disappeared. The publication of those statements was commenced by Sir Robert Mackenzie, when that gentleman was Premier and Treasurer, and it was done at the request of himself and Mr. Fitzgerald. Of course, the discontinuance of the publication of such statements might be from a desire to conceal the real state of matters from the eyes of the people. He felt that, as the honorable member for Port Curtis had said, it would be quite useless to attempt to deal with the Estimates, so far as obtaining justice to the North was concerned. There were two northern members not present. There was the honorable member for Clermont—he was absent; and the electors of the Kennedy had virtually disfranchised themselves by electing, in the room of their late representative, a gentleman who could not take his seat in the House; but though they were all present, it would be impossible for them to get justice done to the North, and he did not believe that justice would be done till there were distinct statements of account, showing the revenue and expenditure in the different districts. The honorable the Treasurer had told the House of three things which he said could not be regarded as taxation. He said that the £100,000 for railways was not taxation—that the money derived from the sale of lands was not taxation, and that the receipts for leased lands could not be regarded as taxation. Well, admitted that such was the case in one respect, he maintained that as regarded the northern portions of the colony, the £100,000 for railways was a tax. That £100,000 was paid, not by the South but by the whole colony, while the South alone derived the benefit. They were told that an equal amount was saved in the lowness of carriage and travelling fares; but that was no com-

solation to the people of the North, who derived none of the benefits whatever from the expenditure of the money. So it was also with respect to the sale of lands. The revenue derived from that source was not spent in the district where it was obtained, as a fair proportion of it ought to be, for the benefit of those who purchased the land. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer also made a distinction between taxation and local rating, and stated that if the local rating in England were added to the revenue, it would be found that the taxation in England was much heavier than the taxation here. But the honorable gentleman in dealing with the question in that way, ought to have stated also that the rates in England were expended in the districts where they were raised. It was altogether a fallacy, therefore, on the part of the honorable gentleman to say that the people here were not so highly taxed as the people in England. Now, he maintained that the taxation here was higher than the taxation and local rating in England combined; and what he complained of was, that the revenue was not expended where it was raised—that was the balance remaining after the proportion required for the purposes of general government. As to assisting the Government in keeping down expenditure, he would be happy to assist them in keeping down what might appear to him to be useless expenditure; and he was glad to hear the honorable the Colonial Treasurer say that the Government would not expend any large sum in the carrying out of what were called economical and reproductive works. He was glad to hear that statement; but there was one thing they could do, and that was—to be just; and, unless he found the Government doing justice to certain districts of the colony, he would do all in his power to have it done, and he hoped that honorable members would assist him when he brought a just case before the House.

Mr. BELL said he thought it was evident from the complexion the debate had taken, and which it now bore, that there was no prospect of a motion of a formal character which the Government need very much fear. He thought, when he listened to the progress of the debate, and found that the leaders on the Opposition side of the House had not attempted to bring forward any such formal motion as he had alluded to, that the debate was of such a character as would induce honorable members to believe that it would be a short, if not a useful one. Now, he might at once say that, whether a formal motion was put or not at a later stage of the debate, his present feeling in regard to the subject of the debate was not to give any formal opposition to the Treasurer's statement, as it was now before the House. Of course, he would be open to be convinced so as to change that opinion, by what might fall from honorable members at a later stage of

the debate. He might hear from the honorable member for Maryborough, for instance, very cogent reasons why there should be a formal motion, and the arguments of that honorable member would have more weight with him if they should be such as would induce him to alter his opinion. He might have allowed the debate to pass without comment, if there had not been a few subjects respecting which he desired to express his opinion. The first that occurred to him was the great one that had been frequently and strongly brought before the House since the present Government had been in office, and which he believed was the one on account of which the Government received strong support from members of the House, and a great portion of the people outside when they desired to see the present Ministry take office. He referred to the declarations that had been made to the effect that the policy of the present Ministry would be one of retrenchment and economy. Now, he thought there was no honorable member of the House who would feel himself at liberty to speak more freely on that subject than he did. Not that he ever had credit for retrenchment, but because he felt that he had had unjust attacks made upon him of a desire to increase Government expenditure. Now, it was with no desire or hope that unusual exertions to economise would take place, that he desired to see the present Ministry take office. He felt that so far as the professions that were made went, the end would be about the same as he had witnessed with respect to previous professions—and professions were always very abundant on the advent of a new Government. Now he did not expect from the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government the evidence of any greater ability to do that which those who preceded him had attempted to do. Then, as to his honorable friend the Minister for Works, he might have strong abilities for retrenchment and economy, but still, he had no faith that such abilities, if they existed, would be exercised by the honorable member. Well, he had some knowledge officially and otherwise of the honorable the Treasurer; and he felt with regard to any desire on his part to economise or retrench, that it was altogether hopeless to see it exercised. Then there was the honorable the Minister for Lands. He must admit that there was not one honorable member from whom there was expected more economy and retrenchment than from him; and he might remind the honorable member of many occasions on which he said, outside and inside the House, that he (Mr. Bell) was himself greatly to blame for much of the expenditure of the country; and that he was, without exception, the least useful member of the Government, on account of his extravagant habits. Now he would ask the honorable gentleman what he had done in the way of retrenchment since he entered the Government? He

remembered the many occasions on which economy was preached by the honorable member for several years past; he remembered the many small salaries the honorable member had been successful in cutting down; and also his great belief in his own powers to retrench when he took office. But since he took office what had he done in that way? He was not aware that the honorable gentleman had done anything whatever; but he would say this, that he did not expect more from him than from the other members of the Government. He expected that all the retrenchment that would take place would add but very little to the credit balance of the colony's finances. But, perhaps, the honorable the Minister for Lands still hoped to do something. Still, up to the present time, he had not given any indication of doing much. In regard to the position in which the Government stood on the subject of economy and retrenchment, he was not in any way surprised or disappointed with the result of their labors in that direction. It was not his intention to endeavor to discover any discrepancy in the figures that had been presented to the House by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, because he believed that from the sources from which they had come they had been carefully compiled, and had been faithfully put before the House. As to the Estimates for 1870, it was almost useless to quarrel with them. The estimated revenue might be in excess, or might be under the amount that would be realised. But, he would ask, what was the value of the opinion expressed from the Treasury benches, or from the Opposition benches as to the amount that would be realised? It was as much by accident as otherwise, if it was found that Treasurers came close in their calculations to the amounts that were realised; but, in a country subject to such fluctuations as this colony was, how could it be expected that any one could come to an accurate conclusion as to the financial results of 1870. When he recollected the statements that were made in 1866 and 1867, as to the hopelessness of ever again seeing the debentures of the colony at par in the English money market, or that their customs revenue would increase, or that they would ever obtain a decent return from their railways—when he recollected that such were the opinions generally expressed by honorable members, and throughout the whole colony, and that those who differed from those opinions were cried down as unwise, he could come to no other conclusion than that speculations of the kind were altogether useless in a debate on the budget. But there were one or two words he desired to say on the policy which the honorable the Colonial Treasurer had set forth in his speech. The honorable gentleman told the House that by waiting, and by retrenchment—according to the honorable member's views of retrenchment—they would secure a surplus by the end of 1870, and that they would be in so

improved a position that they would be able hereafter to go into expenditure for public works. But he had failed to discover that any reason had been given, why public works, if necessary, should not be gone into now. He freely admitted that he had not heard any arguments advanced why public works should be gone into; but at the same time he had not discovered from the Treasurer's statement any sufficient reason, on financial grounds, for refusing such unusual expenditure as might be asked for by honorable members at the present time. His reason for coming to that conclusion was that, after all, the amounts would have to be expended some time or other, and that the difference as between an economical Government and an extravagant Government would make up in two years the amounts that would be required for railways and other public works. If the honorable the Colonial Treasurer had said that he intended to come down with some new scheme by which the energies of the colony would be directed in a new channel, and the exports of the colony increased, while their imports would diminish, there would have been a question before the House that would have admitted of debate. If the honorable gentleman had told the House that in his desire to see new industries created, and additional articles of export produced, he would next session come down with some new measure to promote such ends, there would have been ground to hope for some benefit from the present Ministry; but he must say that he did not see that there was any difference whatever between the statement of the present Colonial Treasurer, and similar statements made by previous Treasurers. There was no promised change of policy; and no attempt to change the ideas of those who lived on the Government expenditure in the colony; but he hoped it was not too late to expect from the Treasurer some indication of the design of the Government to endeavor to bring about a new state of feeling in the community—a feeling of less dependence on the Government, by directing and encouraging the people to the pursuit of new industries. The honorable gentleman, in the course of his speech, alluded to what seemed to be the policy of the Government: the only thing in the speech that could be called a policy, and that was where he dealt with the question of a further issue of Treasury bills. He thought, when listening to the Colonial Treasurer, that the honorable gentleman was about to give the House a new means of managing the indebtedness of Queensland both in the colony and in Europe. But, when the honorable gentleman had told the way in which he intended to deal with those two important points, he (Mr. Bell) admitted that he found himself in opposition to his views. The honorable gentleman omitted to tell the House, when he referred to the Treasury bills which were now afloat, that the conditions on which the Act authorising their issue

had been passed by Parliament were never fulfilled by any Government of this country. It might be in the recollection of honorable members that the Treasury bills were not given as a fund to be used by the Government in addition to the general loan fund of this country: they were given for the purpose of raising an amount which was then required in anticipation of the sale of debentures on that date.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER:** That was what he had said.

**MR. BELL:** He had not heard any allusion to that by the Treasurer of the day, nor by any Treasurer. He thought if that had not escaped the honorable gentleman's knowledge, at all events, he might have forgotten to mention it. There must have been some inconsistency in the ideas of the honorable member, if he did recollect it, when he delivered his speech; because, the position the honorable member took up, was, that before the colony could go openly and honestly into the London market to raise another loan, or before the Government could stand well on the stock exchange, the revenue must be in excess of the expenditure; and that they must not send to that market to raise money by debentures to make up deficits occasioned by previous extravagance—meaning thereby, that if such was done, Queensland would be held to be in an insolvent position. It had been said that the present Government would call a spade a spade; but, nevertheless, it did not come clearly to his mind that the consistency of the Treasurer was distinct, because the honorable gentleman had told the House that the brokers of the stock exchange would not become aware of the new bills issued in the colonies, and would thereby be more likely to subscribe for the loan, at home. Operating in that way might be called a fraud; and he did not expect to hear such a proposal from the honorable gentleman. They had before disagreed on the subject. The honorable member asked for authority to issue debentures under a new Loan Act, to make up losses on previous loans—under previous Loan Acts. That should be candidly represented. It was a deficiency, however it was to be made up hereafter. It did not matter to the London brokers whether that deficiency arose from the want of judicious management in the previous sale of debentures in England or from the extravagance of the public service in the colony. He (Mr. Bell) could not understand the necessity of asking for a new loan to make up the losses or deficit of previous loans. He was always of opinion that the Loan Acts authorised the Treasurer to raise a certain sum of money, and enabled him to continue issuing debentures until he raised the amount authorised—not that another Loan Act was required to make up the difference between the debentures issued and the amount raised. The Treasurer was in a false position before the House; though, perhaps, he had come before them with the

best intentions, he was in an inconsistent and unbusiness-like position. Why should the Government go into the colonial market to borrow money to make up deficits, rather than to the home market? Would any one tell him (Mr. Bell) that the money lenders in England who cared for Queensland would care whether the colony wanted £400,000 or £500,000 more or less to enable her to creep up to that position which every one was anxious she should attain? or, that they would refuse to lend the money for the purpose required? But, if it were heard in London that the Government went to the neighboring colonies surreptitiously, and with a view to deceive—

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER:** No.

**MR. BELL:** Then, he did not understand the decision of the honorable the Treasurer. He thought it would be more judicious, better in every way, to go to the home market for all that was required to cover the indebtedness of the colony. He would now refer to the two speeches which the House had just heard, and in the absence of which the debate might well have terminated;—one, by the honorable member for Rockhampton was on the injustice done to the North, the other by the honorable member for Brisbane, Mr. Fraser, was on the Brisbane and Ipswich Railway for the South. The honorable member for Rockhampton appeared to think that from the meetings now being held in favor of the railway, the Government would be rushed into expense—and he hoped the North would not be forgotten; but surely he would not allow his sense of consistency to be violated even for the interests of his constituents. The railway having been referred to, he (Mr. Bell) desired to give his opinion upon it, and he might as well avail himself of the opportunity now presented, to do so. He would not go over the ground already traversed by the honorable the Treasurer. If it was desirable that the line should be made, the sooner the work was entered upon the better, if the money could be obtained to do it. His position with regard to the line was this—first of all, he represented a constituency that was anxious to see the railway completed; and his own convenience would be met by it. When he advocated the railway to Dalby from Ipswich, he did so on the principle that the railway should begin from the head of navigation. He did not say that, because he held that position then, he should hold it now, if sufficient grounds were before him to make him alter his opinion. But he regarded the question as resolving itself into this, absolutely—Whether it was a necessary work or not? He admitted that it was a work of convenience; and, on that ground, there was no honorable member who would rather vote for it, to-morrow, than himself, because he believed it would be a convenience to most people, but it was not an absolute necessity. He could not see the necessity for the work. It might be of advantage to the city of Brisbane; but he thought the line of country the railway



would run through, and the terminus, which it might be supposed to improve, would not be much improved by it. Therefore, he looked upon the Brisbane and Ipswich railway as a question of time only. If, to-morrow, the population of the country was such and the public finances were such as would justify the work being entered upon, he should support it; and he was prepared to vote for it when the time came that the colony could afford it. He thought it was unnecessarily soon to strain a point to go in for a work of mere convenience only.

Mr. WALSH said he had listened with pleasure to the last few remarks of the honorable member for Northern Downs, who had the candor to enunciate opinions that did him credit. If the honorable member consulted his personal convenience and his own pecuniary interests he would support the railway between Brisbane and Ipswich; but, as it was not a work of necessity, but only of convenience, he would not support it. There was no question before the House so often or that was so harrowing or irritating to the colony as that infernal question of the railway. It seemed to be a panacea for every present evil. Brisbane, and all around it, and Warwick, too—the southern portion of the colony—seemed to think that there was nothing else to be thought of; that members were born for nothing else than to come to the House to decide upon the construction of railways;—the very air was pestilential with the question of railways. He (Mr. Walsh) hoped that the course of the honorable member would be a warning to those who went in for the railway, of what they had to expect. Now he should say a few words on the budget of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer. He agreed with a great deal that had been said by the honorable member for Northern Downs, and especially that the budget was like all other budgets—it was a falsification of the financial position of the colony—which he had had the pain or the pleasure of listening to in the House. But there was something peculiar about the present one; and he regretted that there was not the humor nor the ability in the chamber which might be brought to deal properly with it; for it should have met an amount of criticism that none other ever so much called for. It was what he might call a doubly-distilled speech. He was not present last Wednesday evening to hear it; and he might state the reason why:—He considered that he had been most ungenerously treated, and he had thought it his duty to walk out of the chamber that evening. He had felt it was too much to expect, at nine o'clock in the evening, when the Treasurer was not very well, that the honorable gentleman should make a speech which extended to three hours; and, in that disposition which he sometimes got credit for, he suggested to the honorable member that he should defer his budget till the next day.

The honorable gentleman requested him to make his suggestion to the House; and he had no sooner made the suggestion, in the innocence of his heart, than the Treasurer walked out of the House, while the honorable the Premier, and the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Jordan—the fifth wheel of the Ministerial coach—jumped up and objected. Under the circumstances, it was unfair to call upon the Treasurer to make his financial statement, that evening. Believing that it would be a failure, he (Mr. Walsh) left the House; and, now, he believed the speech was a failure. The newspaper report which went before the public, after two days' delay, was not at all, he was well advised, like the speech that was delivered in the House; but he could not but admire the skill with which the publication was delayed. If he should read the report, he presumed the honorable the Attorney-General would not get up and raise a point of order, that he was reading the Treasurer's speech. It appeared that the Government were utterly unable to get up and defend that speech. He durst say they were showing that reticence which indicated that there was a little conscientiousness still existing on the Treasury benches. The Minister for Lands formerly said that he would not support any Government or ever submit to any budget that did not show a very strong tendency towards economy. He could not point out any economy in the speech of his colleague. The budget was in the usual hackneyed style; it was but one of those speeches which aspiring Treasurers who promised so much, when out of office, usually made. He (Mr. Walsh) was surprised that a gentleman who so often spoke of the necessity for retrenchment and indicated a desire for economy, had so failed. He was sorry that the honorable member for the Northern Downs, who had himself been in the position of Treasurer, had not spoken at greater length on the budget speech. There were, in his estimation, so many fallacies in the doubly-distilled speech—though he ought not to say it was a speech—before him in the newspaper, that it would take up too much time to give his reasons to prove them, and to show how utterly illogical and inconsistent the Treasurer was; but he should touch upon one or two of them. The first he might allude to was that of immigration. The honorable gentleman had not taken credit for a heavy increase of customs revenue in 1870, probably because the stream of immigration would not have set in; but he anticipated that when immigrants began to come, in large numbers, so soon would there be a wonderful increase of revenue. What was it that had placed the colony in its present impoverished position? What was it that had led to the borrowing of money—to the large interest which the colonists had to pay? Immigration, for which loans had been raised. What had so burdened the colony, but the fact that money had been borrowed for, and

shamefully squandered on immigration? Did the honorable the Treasurer say, that if the colony squandered hundreds of thousands again on immigration, the colony would be better? That was a prime cause of the incubus of debt which would oppress the colony for years. How the honorable gentleman could talk of immigration increasing the revenue, was a marvel. Immigrants were never introduced here that did not cost the colony something like £20 per man. In a former debate, he (Mr. Walsh) thought he had showed that the cost was £25 a man; and that, taking into account the manner in which the immigrants went away from the colony soon after arrival, the cost was nearer £30.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No.

Mr. WALSH: The future must be judged by the past. All the other colonies were so alive to the position, that they looked forward, under such an arrangement as was now proposed here, to relieve Queensland of the immigrants for whom this colony would pay £20 a man. What else had the House got from the precious Colonial Treasurer, who was always harping upon the want of economy in every previous Government? There was no economy in his financial scheme, either in the reduction of appointments or expenditure of public money. The Government were increasing the expenditure of the country. The Treasurer had promised that during 1870, there would probably be £70,000 surplus of revenue; but upon what grounds he arrived at that conclusion, nothing that he put forth showed, and nothing in his figures would convince any man that he was right. There never was a surplus of revenue, yet, in any one year; and why should the Treasurer now come forward with a promise to his misguided believers in the House that there would be a surplus next year? If the honorable gentleman had shown his Supplementary Estimates—if he was honest with the House, he would have done so—of moneys paid and due, the Government would see that there was very little chance of a surplus. The Treasurer wanted the House to believe that £70,000 extra revenue over expenditure would be realised in 1870, and he did that in the face of a falling customs revenue, which he knew and was not candid enough to explain; or, if he did not know, he ought to know. At this time, the customs revenue showed a determination to decrease rather than to increase. Again, was not the land revenue falling off; and did it not threaten to fall off in a greater degree? The amount the Treasurer estimated, with the knowledge he must possess, showed that clearly enough to the House. It was known that there was a probability, on the 30th September next, of an enormous falling off in the sums paid for rents and assessments; and, could the Treasurer, with any justice to the future, bring forward even his statement? But it was the thing he (Mr. Walsh) always found in those who

were so loud in opposition—an ability to increase the expenditure but not the revenue. From all that was said by the honorable gentleman and his colleagues, before they came into office, one would have thought that they possessed the merit of being able, and the determination, to benefit the people to some extent. If they had either, one of their first measures would have been to bring in a Bill for the better representation of the people, so that by the people's representatives being in the House, the Government might be able to push forward other measures for the advancement of the colony which they so freely charged the late Government with shirking, and which they had promised. Had the present Government done anything to reduce the grinding taxation which existed? Was the country never to have a Government who would reduce the burdens of the people? The House had, some time back, been promised by those very gentlemen that the *ad valorem* and the stamp duties were to be reduced; they had been told in repeated speeches that the system of representation was unfair;—yet, what had the Government done? He had expected, when they unravelled their scheme for 1870, that something would be done. They had said—wait till the Estimates came before the House; and there they were! There was the usual humbugging—the deceiving of the people by making promises, not with the purpose of carrying them out, but for the purpose of making their seats on the Treasury benches secure. Was the colony never to see a set of men on those benches who, for their £1,000 a year, each, would set about the business of the country, and perform it honestly, for the people? There were not more than a hundred thousand people in the colony, and a large number of them were actual dependents upon the rest of the population—an unnatural proportion;—and, was it to be always the case, in the Assembly, that no one would get up and protest against the state of things which made the people pay at the rate of £8 a head, for every man, woman, and child, to support the Government—a state of things unparalleled throughout the globe. The argument used on behalf of the Government, that the ways and means did not show the taxation of Great Britain, was well met by the honorable member for Rockhampton. It was notorious that the people of Great Britain had not to pay one-fourth of what the people of Queensland paid. Something should be done to prevent the colony going to ruin beyond redemption. The House, he demanded, should insist upon getting a Government that would reduce the taxation to £3 or £4 a head of the population, and carry on the affairs of the colony with economy and efficiency;—not, as proposed by the Colonial Treasurer, to bring paupers out from the mother-country at a cost of £20 a head; but, by an honest way of making the expenditure not exceed what the people could afford to

pay. The Treasurer had remarked that it was gratifying to find that the earnings of the railways of the colony would be about £30,000 over expenses. If it were a total loss that he had stated, it would be much more gratifying; for, surely, the earnings would be nothing of the kind. If the railway business were viewed in the same way as the honorable gentleman, or any other man, viewed his own private business—if the capital sunk were taken into account, and the interest paid upon it—there would be found a dead loss upon the railways of £100,000. That was what the colony had to pay for keeping the railways up. The indebtedness of the colony was being added to; yet the earnings of the railways were held out as a bait for continuing them. He (Mr. Walsh) never yet heard that there was any interest to be paid on the railway loan. Why could the House not get one frank Treasurer who would tell them what it was. The House were always told that the railways were running at a gain—that they were working to advantage—that the working expenses did not equal the income. It required a member on the Opposition side of the House to call attention to the large charge the railways were upon the consolidated revenue. This led him to that portion of the honorable the Treasurer's statement where, in speaking of the deficit that was to be met, of £349,309, the honorable gentleman included £112,526 for interest. Now, if honorable members had to swallow that unpalatable dose—they had a deficit of £47,514 for 1865, £118,245 for 1866, £55,715 for 1867, and £15,272 for the year 1868, for over-expenditure, in addition to that amount of interest to make up—it was well for them; to his mind, it might have been met in some way by the Government, but the House had received no sufficient explanation of where the money was to come from to meet it. As he made it out, they had to make up a sum of £112,563 to meet the interest which the ordinary revenue would not allow the Government to pay in 1869. After that, were the House to permit the present Government to carry on such a management of the finances any longer? The colony could not pay the interest accruing on the loan. The Treasurer did tell the House so. Then, why did he not act with a little more candor, and tell how much interest had been paid, so far, out of the loans already raised? If he had done that, he would have made a clean breast of it. But that would not have answered the purpose of the Government, because it would create more disgust than was now felt by honorable members. The extravagant scheme which had been set forth for meeting the Treasury bills, and which had been exposed by the honorable member for Northern Downs, would not bear reflection, for one moment, in the mind of any honest man, or any mercantile man. Was it to be put forward, that the people of this country could only raise money in England

by humbugging the public? Was the extravagance of the Government to be kept from the knowledge of the capitalist, at home, by asking for a loan of £300,000 or £400,000 in the colony? Was that the way Queensland would find favor or credit with either European or colonial capitalists? The honorable the Colonial Treasurer was so frightened that it would never do to let the people at home see that the colony had to pay £349,309 for over-expenditure out of borrowed money, that, to keep the position of the colony from the knowledge of those on change, only the people of Melbourne and Sydney should know! From the latter, he would borrow the money necessary to cover that large sum of over-expenditure. However, if he acted in that way, the people at home would be so disgusted—their suspicions would be aroused—that he would find it difficult to get rid of debentures at a good price. He should know that such dodges would not enable him to raise money at home. There were gentlemen here, in Brisbane, and in the other colonies, who were watching the footsteps of the Government, and who would take care to report at home should the honorable the Treasurer attempt to carry out any such dodges as he had proposed. He (Mr. Walsh) assured the Government that such was the case, and he protested against any attempt to carry out that proposal. If the colony had fallen into debt, and had acted foolishly, they ought not to be ashamed to say so—to say how and why it was; but the Government must not go and deceive the public creditor. He protested against such a crooked policy—he would use stronger language, if he might. If they could not meet the obligations of the colony, they should make a clean breast of it. The world was sharp enough to know what was doing. All the efforts of a wily Government, or a smart Treasurer, would not deceive the world long on a financial subject. He was very glad to find that the Government had come to the conclusion that something must be done to secure the Savings Bank deposits. For two or three years, he had been endeavoring to force the necessity of it upon the Government, in justice to the people of the colony, by alluding to the subject in the House. So far, he could agree with the Treasurer. Now, that the subject had been brought so prominently before the eyes of honorable members, he trusted it would not be lost sight of. The Government scheme was, to deposit debentures as security for the funds. They were good security, provided they were taken from the control of the Government—they must be placed beyond the manipulation of the Government. He (Mr. Walsh) proposed that they should be placed in the hands of trustees; and, judging of future Governments by the past—he saw no improvement and no reason to look for amendment—the Savings Bank deposits had been absorbed—

used without any authority from the depositors or the House—and honorable members had been deceived, and the people had no hold on those deposits;—he might be allowed to suggest the names of three gentlemen in the colony who, in the position of trustees, would give satisfaction to the public creditor—the President of the Legislative Council, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and the Auditor-General. They should be trustees for all time; and, if there was any advantage in the people placing their money in the Savings Bank, that advantage might be seen from his suggestion being carried out. He would now turn his attention to that extraordinary suggestion of the Colonial Treasurer, in which the public credit would be preserved by borrowing to cover the over-expenditure; and he could not help reading from the published report of the honorable gentleman's speech:—

"The over-expenditure in the revenue, on the first of the present year, was £349,309, and the loss and charges on debentures was nearly £210,000, and to this should be added £147,006, expenditure in excess of Loan Acts, and on account of the Parliamentary Buildings, making a total of £706,292, which would stand as over-expenditure. These items had been provided for by extraneous temporary resources, £438,682 from Treasury bills, and £250,768 from Savings Bank collections. The liabilities to the Savings Bank would have to be covered."

That was good.

"The manner in which it was proposed to deal with the loss and charges on debentures, and the excess in railways and public works, which was authorised in Estimates, but not included in Loan Bills, was, to put the total into a new Loan Bill, and borrow on long-dated debentures. They were, however, by no means in the same position to deal with the £349,309 of over-expenditure on the general revenue account. They had, in five years, spent nearly £350,000 in excess of the revenue, and it was next to impossible to raise that item by long-dated debentures."

Now, he (Mr. Walsh) took it that the honorable gentleman did not show the committee that it was impossible to raise that amount on long-dated debentures. He maintained that a debt was a debt; and so long as they were not ashamed of it, and could show the public creditor that the colony could pay it when necessary—whether it was for making useless railways, or anything else—money could be got if it were required. The Treasurer further said—

"It would be utterly destructive to the public credit to make a proposition of the kind. He thought that, with debentures in the hands of the public to the extent of £3,000,000, extreme care was necessary to uphold the public credit, and nothing could be more obnoxious than to propose to borrow money to make up for excess of current expenditure. He maintained that, if they had been unfortunately extravagant heretofore, it was now absolutely necessary that corresponding retrenchment should be made"—

Well, his (Mr. Walsh's) only astonishment was, that the honorable gentleman should make such a speech, because the committee had no proof before them that there was any retrenchment whatever. If there was to be a surplus of £70,000, next year, why did not the honorable gentleman propose to reduce the taxation of the people to that extent? Why not reduce the *ad valorem* duties to five per cent.? Why not reduce the stamp duties—that obnoxious form of taxation? If the honorable gentleman thought that there would be £70,000 of a surplus, he would gladly gain the renown of being the first Colonial Treasurer in Queensland who actually reduced the taxation of the people. The honorable gentleman went on—

"They should endeavor to expend on current account only what the revenue and the rising prosperity of the colony would permit. The sum should be paid out of the public revenue if they wished to maintain a character for honesty. He proposed that the sum in question should be dealt with in this manner: They should take authority to issue, on an early date, Treasury bills for the amount, such bills to be dated at two, three, and four years from the 1st of January."

Why, a few lines above, the honorable gentleman told the committee that it would only do to borrow money for over-expenditure on public works in excess of the loans; and now, he proposed this stupid scheme. Would the money raised by Treasury bills in the colonies be a different color from that raised by debentures at home? Would the former have any particular charm over the latter? What absurdity it was for a Treasurer to come before the committee to say it would never do to raise money by debentures to pay the existing deficit from expenditure over current revenue, and then to propound his scheme of Treasury bills for that purpose! What would be the result, if his scheme were carried out? Every year, the Treasury bills would have to be renewed. He (Mr. Walsh) saw nothing of a sinking fund to meet them; no retrenchment. The scheme would cost £30,000 to float it; yet the Treasurer coolly proposed to put the colony to that expense and to that pressure. If the money could be borrowed, why do that? Why not borrow for the regular time, for twenty-one years? Would it not be wiser to consolidate all the public debts, and by one Loan Act raise the amount required in the same way, at the same expense, for the same period? It appeared to him (Mr. Walsh) that the Colonial Treasurer would like to have the issuing of £300,000 Treasury bills, as a nice little business during the recess, to accept or reject offers made for them—for there would, no doubt, be enough; otherwise, he could not tell what induced him to propound such a scheme. For the sake of the colony's credit, £700,000 must be raised, the amount of debt that had been distinctly incurred foolishly or extravagantly. He strongly objected to the issue of those

Treasury bills, and he maintained that the Government were only deceiving themselves and the country in endeavoring to meet their liabilities by raising money in two different ways—the one loan acting against the other. The Colonial Treasurer had entreated honorable members to assist the Government in defeating attempts at log-rolling; but as, in making up their Estimates, they had not consulted honorable members—especially the representatives of northern constituencies—as to the expenditure necessary in their several districts, those members were obliged to adopt the only means at their disposal to obtain the sums which they were fairly entitled to. He asked if it was more than should be expected from any Government—that they should call upon the representatives of the people to state the local wants of the districts they represented. But that was what the Government studiously avoided, especially in reference to northern districts; yet the Colonial Treasurer came down to the House, and implored honorable members to assist the Government in preventing anything like log-rolling, or pressure brought against the Government to increase the expenditure. He affirmed that the Estimates indicated a systematic attempt to rob the North. None of the northern members had been consulted, their wants were discarded, and, in fact, the Estimates represented robbery in the North, and extravagance in the South—he could find no other terms to apply to them. Were the Government justified in spending, in the South, nine-tenths of the revenue gathered throughout the whole colony? Where was the justice of spending £100,000 on southern railways, and denying to the North a supply of water, the want of which impeded the traffic on the main line of road in the district? He found that the Colonial Treasurer had taken no steps to carry out retrenchment in that unfortunate branch of the public service, the Treasury Notes Department. The honorable member was aware that its establishment had been of no benefit whatever, and that it had even led to crime recent discoveries had shown;—he was aware it was a losing concern, for he had joined other honorable members of that House in protesting against it; yet, now that he sat on the Treasury benches, the honorable member seemed entirely oblivious of his former promises of retrenchment. He asked the Government whether the Treasury Notes Department had not cost the country more than it had ever returned; and he should like to know from the Colonial Treasurer, whether he had propounded any scheme to do away with that department. The retrenchment of the honorable member, he feared, consisted only in hollow professions which were never to be carried out. The House had a right to information in reference to that department; if the Government were carrying on a semi-banking estab-

lishment, he maintained that it was the duty of the Colonial Treasurer to inform the House what it cost the country to work that establishment, and the statement of the honorable member was incomplete without that information. Honorable members had been told by the Premier to “rest and be thankful,” and the Colonial Treasurer now advised them to rest and be cautious; but after the greater portion of the revenue of the country had been expended in railways and bridges in the South, and the claims of northern members had been entirely ignored, that advice came with a very bad grace from the honorable member. He thought it his duty to call the attention of the committee to the objection taken by the Auditor-General to the way in which the Government had made up their Estimates. Honorable members would find that the Colonial Treasurer, for some reason or other, had kept open the expenses of the colony for the year 1868, up to the month of May, 1869, but had carefully shut up the ledger which showed the income for the first part of 1869, so that the expenditure for 1868 extended over a longer period than the income for that year. He was glad to see that the Auditor-General had made it his business to warn the chamber of the system which the Government had adopted. He would read that portion of the report—

“I feel, however, bound to observe that I doubt whether it is strictly permissible, worded as the Appropriation Acts now are, to make sums of money voted by Parliament, and described in the Appropriation Acts as being so voted for the services of one particular year, available by Executive minute for the services of another year: I, therefore, beg most respectfully to observe that if Parliament sees no objection to this annual transfer of funds, the wording of the Appropriation Acts might easily be so altered as to remove all doubts as to its legality. The total expenditure on account of the year 1868, chargeable to the consolidated revenue, is £770,537 18s. 7d; of this sum £718,613 1s. 2d. was paid in the year 1868, and £51,924 17s. 5d. in the year 1869. Simply to compare the total receipts and expenditure, as given in the accompanying statements, would be incorrect, inasmuch as the revenue ledger was closed on the 31st December, 1868, whilst the expenditure ledger was kept open until the 21st of May, 1869; and, moreover, until the revenue received on account of the passed year be distinguished from that received on account of the current year, no absolutely correct comparison can ever be made.”

That was an unbusiness-like proceeding, which no honorable member would adopt in connection with his private accounts, and it appeared to him very much like an attempt to hoodwink the House, which was unworthy of a Colonial Treasurer. There was another matter in connection with the Auditor-General's report, which he thought the House should seriously consider, and that was the practice which the Government had adopted, of making use of lapsed votes—

“On the 19th of May, 1869, an Executive

minute was passed ordering the expenditure accounts of the year 1868 to be closed, and finally lapsing or making available for the present year the various sums which remained to the credit of many of the items of expenditure. The total amount thus lapsed was £34,638 4s. 2d., and the total amount carried on for the service of the present year was £26,253 5s."

He maintained that was unfair. The money that was voted, say for 1868, should be spent in that year, or else treated as a lapsed vote, and it was well known, that more than once, Executive minutes had been passed to the effect that they should be so treated. But here was a Government who, after the year for which certain sums had been voted had expired, and the votes had lapsed, revived them and made use of them although there was no vote to represent them. The Auditor-General stated in his report, that he doubted whether this practice was strictly permissible, and he (Mr. Walsh) thought it was the duty of the House to check the Government, because he considered it an infringement of the Appropriation Act, which was an important Act of Parliament, and any departure from it might lead to serious results. He could not help feeling that he should have been much more satisfied if the Supplementary Estimates had been submitted to the House. Notwithstanding all the promises of economy which the Government had made, no retrenchment was shown in the Estimates-in-chief, and he feared, from the way in which the Supplementary Estimates were kept back, they would sadly disagree with the budget speech made by the Colonial Treasurer a few months ago. He considered that so long as the House sanctioned the introduction of these Supplementary Estimates for anticipated expenditure, of which the Government must have been aware, so long would they encourage the Government to bring up Estimates-in-chief which were not intended to represent the probable expenditure for the year. Why should they not at once give the Government to understand that they would not continue year after year to receive Supplementary Estimates for expenditure which must be foreseen, and of which the House ought to be advised when the Estimates-in-chief were brought up. He objected to Estimates which did not contain the salary for an Agent-General for Immigration, and he affirmed that the House had been grossly deceived on that point. He did not believe that salary would ever appear on the Supplementary Estimates, for he had been told that the Government had some £10,000 in hand from lapsed votes, which they had no right whatever to use, and that they intended to defray the first year's expenses of the Agent-General out of that sum. He hoped the Government would show the House that they had no such intention, but that they intended to place the salary on the Estimates, and give the House an opportunity of canvassing the merits and discussing the appoint-

ment of the Agent-General for Immigration. The name of the gentleman had been kept from the House, and he could not change his opinion that the House had been grossly deceived in connection with this appointment. If he thought he should be sufficiently supported, he should certainly object to any further consideration of the Estimates, until it was known, at any rate, that there was to be an immigration agent, and should refuse to grant the Government any money for the year 1870, until they had brought in a Bill to provide additional representation. He must say there was but little disposition, either in or outside the House, to keep the Ministry to their promises, and the member for Maryborough was left nearly alone to do what he could in keeping them up to their duty. He must again refer to the manifestly unfair apportionment of the expenditure. Nothing was to be spent in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts, except for police, and for collecting the revenue, and some few hundred pounds for other purposes; and he could only say he hoped the time would come when the people of Wide Bay would be strong enough to mete better justice to the South than the South was now according to them. For the reasons he had given, he protested against going on with the Estimates, at present, and he could see no reason for bringing them on, as the Government seemed desirous of doing, unless they wished to bring the session to a close before the people of the South arrived at the same conclusion which the North had been forced to come to—that the promises made by the Government were only made to be broken. The people of East and West Moreton, he maintained, would not have trusted the Government with power for one week, had they not relied upon them to introduce a measure of additional representation; and for his part, he could not see what necessity there was to pass the Estimates until the Government had been compelled to carry into effect the pledges they had made in the House, on the hustings, and at public meetings.

MR. FORBES said, as a representative of the people, he felt bound to express his views on the important question for legislation before the House. He observed with much grief the political apathy which obtained among the people of the colony. He could not define the cause of that apathy, unless it arose from the fact that the people believed themselves to be unfairly represented. He did not sympathise with them in that feeling, for he observed that the whole legislation of the country rested with a few individuals, who took care to strengthen their position by every means in their power. It was only those who were sitting on the Treasury benches, and those who expected to sit on those benches, who appeared to have any weight. They had the press, or a great portion of it, at their disposal, and the reporters listened to everything which affected them;

but they did not nevertheless fully represent the political interests of the colony, and that he considered a great evil, and one of the chief causes of the depressed state of the country. In the early days of the colony, when it was not necessary to employ so much ingenuity in explaining a budget or a policy, on occasions like the present, a far wider interest was shown in the discussion of this question than he had seen any indication of on the present occasion. While he looked upon the statement of the Colonial Treasurer as very much like all other financial statements, he must say he thought it a clearer statement than any which had yet been made in that House. The Colonial Treasurer had not gone a roundabout way to set his figures before the country; he had started by showing a deficit, and had also shown fairly and honestly, he thought, how that deficit had accrued. But he thought, when the honorable member's speech came to be analysed, it would be found that it was not the speech of the Colonial Treasurer alone, but that it had received additions from several quarters. He recollected that in 1866, when the great depression commenced, the Government then in power submitted their policy to the House, and it was rejected. The Government who succeeded then had a new Treasurer, with a new policy—the most incapable Treasurer who ever took office in this colony. The policy of that gentleman was similar to that of the present Treasurer, who had certainly shown himself much more fitted to deal with the finances of the country. The honorable member had not, however, shown the House how he intended to carry out his policy, except that he had explained the way in which he intended to raise money. He did not think, either, that the honorable member had taken sufficiently energetic steps to carry out his views of retrenchment. He had read in the last number of the *Spectator*, a short article, in which a similar state of things existed in another colony—in the colony of Jamaica—which existed here. Sir James Grant had then succeeded the former Governor—

“The island was then in a state of chronic insolvency, the revenue being always short of the outlay by from £20,000 to £60,000—or say one-sixth—and the debt increasing every year till it amounted to rather more than two years' income; and, as he says, additional interest could hardly be provided. Such a state of affairs was intolerable to a man bred to distrust the elasticity of state resources, so he began by stopping all loans on any pretence whatever.”

He should be glad to see the Treasurer of this colony follow that example, and endeavor to achieve similar results.

“Public works were good, but solvency was better; and while works could wait, the public creditor could not. Then reductions were made, partly by the abolition of constitutional offices, partly by suppressing clerical establishments, and partly by stopping grants to local funds to the

extent of £46,000 a year. The duty on rum consumed in the island was raised from 2s. 9d. a gallon to 5s.; a land tax was imposed of one penny an acre—which, one perceives, establishes the Julian principle that the State ought to have part of the rent; and a tax on trade licenses, also Indian; and presto! ‘the revenue and expenditure of the colony have been brought to an equilibrium,’ while the budget of 1867–1868 shows a small surplus—the first known for years in the colony.”

In the short space of two years, there was such a change in the affairs of the island that the revenue showed a surplus over the expenditure, and this was effected by adopting a course which was perhaps unpopular at first, though, before a year had elapsed, the people were quite satisfied with it. He should like to hear the Colonial Treasurer declare a similar policy, instead of getting up and saying, as all previous Treasurers had said, that the policy of the Government was one of retrenchment. Instead of saying that, he thought the honorable members should take some vigorous steps, such as he (Mr. Forbes) had indicated. But nothing of that sort appeared in the speech of the honorable Treasurer, and he could not wonder that the House was dissatisfied with it, inasmuch as it did not show how the retrenchment was to be carried out. The honorable gentleman's figures were, no doubt, very clear; and he had pointed to the probability that in two or three years there would be a surplus revenue; but he did not appear to have taken any definite steps to insure that state of things. There was another point on which he differed from the honorable member, and that was the revenue expected from the lands of the colony in the shape of rents. He thought the honorable member had not made sufficient allowance for the country which would be abandoned, for he felt sure that a great portion of the holders of the more distant runs would give them up. He also differed from the honorable member in the opinion that the revenue would be increased by the operation of the Land Act. The honorable member had also stated that he expected a large increase of revenue from the railways. Perhaps he was right; but there was no doubt that the railways had hitherto been a great loss to the country, inasmuch as they were undertaken as a great public work, and only one portion of the colony benefited by them. But the ruling power was in that part of the colony, and that part of the colony alone reaped any advantage from these railways. He hoped the House would take a wider view than they had previously taken, and decline for the present any additional expenditure for railway extension, for he thought it had been carried quite far enough east and west, at any rate for some years, until the circumstances of the colony were equal to a further outlay for this purpose. He should look at a further extension in the North with more favor than he should in the South, because

of the great mineral wealth which existed there, and the number of towns which were springing up there. It had been urged that, as member for West Moreton, he had opposed the completion of the Southern and Western Railway to Brisbane. That he denied; the only objection he had to it was that the colony was not yet in a position to pay for it. He blamed the honorable Treasurer for being too liberal with his Estimates, and he would further ask the honorable member if he could show him any authority on political economy who advocated a fresh loan as a means of getting out of debt. The honorable member showed in his speech that the sinking fund had been made away with, somehow or other; at any rate, he had not fully explained what had become of it. Formerly the Government used to pay their debts as they were incurred, and it was not until the session of 1861 that such a fund became necessary. He hoped that, in granting a further loan, the House would take care that a clause was inserted similar to the one in the Loan Act of 1861 to provide a sinking fund. He was aware that some honorable members would say that was not good policy; but on that point he did not agree with them. He thought the Colonial Treasurer had overstepped the mark in his estimate of the revenue from customs duties. It was generally believed that there was a large amount of illicit distillation carried on in this colony, which must be taken into consideration as materially affecting the revenue, and he thought the honorable member, in estimating the amount of receipts from customs duties, in excess of expenditure for 1869, unless some alteration were made in the tariff, would find himself greatly mistaken. He did not think either that the honorable member had sufficiently considered the changes brought about by the general insolvency of the colony. He thought it would be wise for the honorable gentleman to test the feeling of the House upon the question of retrenchment, so as to see whether it would not be possible by a bolder stroke than he appeared to contemplate—by a fixed tariff, the addition of the *ad valorem* duty, and some direct tax, to bring the revenue up to the required amount. He did not think the colonists would object to be directly taxed for this purpose, because if an impetus were given to the various industries in the country the whole community would be benefited. In extreme cases, extreme measures were found necessary. There was also another question to be considered—Whether it would be desirable to realise the whole of the proposed loan, or to raise a portion of the debentures in the colonies, and place the remainder in the English market? Some honorable members, the honorable member for Rockhampton, among others, had alluded to the Treasury bills having been taken up, at present, at six per cent. He would like to know whether he intended to issue them with the view of redeeming

them, or of repaying them by savings from the general revenue, or of treating them in the same way as the other debentures. If that was the case, and they were to be payable in three years, it would be better to issue Treasury bills within the colonies than to send them home. A great deal had been said about local revenue being applied to local expenditure, and, therefore, it was not necessary for him to say much on that point. He thought, however, that that could not be done always, as if it was, they would be eventually without any Government, and every little place would be able to act for itself. Such had been the case in New Zealand, and it was said that such a system was obnoxious to the people there. The honorable member for the Northern Downs had given a most deplorable description of the state of the colony in 1866; but a comparison between that year and the present time must convince honorable members of the powers of elasticity of the colony, and that it was possible, within a few years, for a careful Government, and with a moderate amount of legislation, to relieve the colony from its difficulties. He found out, also, that in proportion to its resources, so was the time short which it was allowed to relieve itself, and he did not believe there was any time like the present. "Old things can pass away, and all things can become new"—and he trusted that all things would be happier in the colony. He hoped that the Estimates would not be increased; and whilst on the subject, he would observe that he had never been able to understand why, with the introduction of the Estimates-in-chief, the Supplementary Estimates should not be brought forward also, so that honorable members could see how matters stood. If that was done, it would show that the Treasurer of the day was anxious to lay his affairs before the House in a manner to show what he wished to get—what his powers were—and what were the prospects of the country. He could not see why that should not be done, and that there should be only one Supplementary Estimate instead of two or three; or even, as had happened once, eight or nine in the one session. That should be avoided, as it had a tendency to cause suspicion of the Government, or, at any rate, of the Treasurer; he, therefore, hoped the honorable the Treasurer would bring forward one Supplementary Estimate only—one which would include everything. He, moreover, hoped that, looking at the financial position of the colony, and to its resources, honorable members would refrain from asking for sums of money, and show a willingness to put up with some little inconvenience in order to avoid causing the Treasurer to come down at the end of the year with Supplementary Estimates, and thus add to his present estimate of expenditure instead of reducing it.

Mr. S. HODGSON rose for the purpose of making a few observations upon the financia 1



statement made by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer, last Wednesday, and, in doing so, he would congratulate the honorable gentleman on the skill he had then displayed in placing his figures before the committee. He thought that some credit was due to a Treasurer, who, when he showed that the total liabilities of the colony requiring to be provided for amounted to £100,000, only £150,000 loan would be required to be placed in the market, for sale. He hoped that the debentures required as security for the Savings Bank deposits and trust funds, would be deposited in the hands of trustees. He did not believe in any Ministry being allowed to keep them on hand; they were like other mortals, and it was as well to put temptation out of their way. Nearly every honorable member who had spoken on the financial statement had objected to negotiating the Treasury bills in the colonial market. He thought it would be much better to raise all requisite funds in England. Negotiating Treasury bills in the colonies would have the effect of causing a pressure on the banks, and through them, on their constituents? He thought the present system of showing three different balances for one year's transactions was neither right nor proper. The Treasurer's books were closed on the 31st December, 1868, and the Auditor-General's on the 21st May. The Colonial Treasurer now started with the balance on the 1st January, which included interest on debentures payable on that date. With regard to the loss for charges on sale of debentures, &c., he did not think that sufficient attention had been paid to the statement of the honorable member for Port Curtis, when he drew attention to the £21,000 surplus on the two first loans. That sum had been actually made away with; it had been used some years ago as part of the revenue of the colony. He thought it was an imposition. There was another sum of £38,000 for money voted out of the loan fund for sundry works, and which was not made use of. Now, he did not see why those votes should not lapse; the money was not required. Among the items were—post office, Brisbane, erection of a lighthouse at Sandy Cape, and a post office and telegraph station at Toowoomba, &c. All those buildings had been finished and paid for. With regard to the sum of £350,000 for Treasury bills, no mention was made of the £138,000 which would be due at the end of next year. He thought that when they were providing for part of the money, they should not lose sight of that £138,000, or otherwise the Treasurer would be coming down for a fresh loan to meet that amount. It seemed ridiculous that the honorable gentleman should propose to renew the Treasury bills in the colonies at such short dates; the commission thereon would amount to a very large sum. With regard to the estimated revenue for 1870, the honorable the Treasurer was generally right in the total; but he always

under-estimated the expenditure. In his estimate of the revenue of last year, he made a great mistake, namely, the revenue to be derived from the sale of land. There, there was a miscalculation of £20,000, and he thought there would be a similar mistake in the estimated revenue to be derived from railways for 1870. It seemed rather strange that not four months since the honorable the Treasurer said that at the end of this year there would be a surplus of £30,000, and now he told them he could not calculate upon any surplus. If the honorable gentleman altered his mind in four months, what could be expected but that at the end of 1869 there would be a deficiency of £20,000. He would like to have heard the Treasurer refer to a matter brought forward by the honorable member for East Moreton some months ago, namely, the reduction of publicans' licenses in the country districts; it would have been a very popular proposition, and he believed it would cause an increase in the revenue rather than a decrease. His attention had been called to the very large amount required by the economical Minister for Lands for the collection of rents. He failed to see how 16½ per cent. of the land revenue was required for collection of rent, and considered such a rate perfectly absurd; in fact, he was sure that many persons could be found who would be glad to collect the same for the honorable gentleman at 2½ per cent. Then, again, there was an expenditure, over revenue, amounting to £35,000, in the Post Office and Telegraph departments, besides £6,000 interest on money borrowed from the loan fund for buildings and other purposes. He did not believe in putting the revenue derived from the Post Office and Telegraph on the Estimates at all, as they had nothing to do with the consolidated revenue. A great show had been made of the revenue derived from the railways, by the honorable the Treasurer, who quoted the returns for the last three years, and laid great stress upon the advantage of the new extension to Dalby and Allora. He (Mr. Hodgson) thought that on estimating the expenditure on those railways, the honorable the Treasurer had lost sight of the fact that the maintenance of the permanent way of those two lines would have to be charged against the coming year's revenue, and not against construction, as at present.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No, no.

Mr. S. HODGSON thought that with regard to the economy with which the honorable the Treasurer was determined to astonish them, it was rather surprising, after warning honorable members that they must not ask for money for their local wants, that he should wind up by telling them that a railway was required between Brisbane and Ipswich. This, too, in the face of the fact that in the agricultural districts there was hardly a penny spent upon the roads. They were now

told that they would require £300,000 for a new railway between Brisbane and Ipswich, which would entail £18,000 interest, and each woman and child in the colony would be taxed six shillings a head to pay for it. If it was of any great benefit to the welfare of the country, he would not object to such a work; but he did not think it would be, and railway expenditure at the present time would greatly injure the credit of the colony in the home money market.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said that as many honorable members wished to address the committee, he would now move that the chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again on the following day.

The question was put, and the committee divided:—

Ayes, 5.	Noes, 14.
Mr. Walsh	Mr. Thorn
„ Edmondstone	„ Royds
Dr. O'Doherty	„ Stephens
Mr. Fraser	„ Murphy
„ Francis.	„ Forbes
	„ Macalister
	„ Lilley
	„ A. Hodgson
	„ Miles
	„ Taylor
	„ Archer
	„ S. Hodgson
	„ Bell
	„ Williams.

Further motions to report progress and ask leave to resume the sitting of the committee on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, were proposed and discussed at length, the committee twice dividing and negativing them. Ultimately, after midnight, attention was called to the state of the House;

The Chairman reported that there was not a quorum present in the committee;

The House was counted, and there not being sixteen members present, exclusive of the Speaker, was adjourned by him until three o'clock p.m., Thursday, 29th instant.