

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 27 AUGUST 1869**

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chamber, a piece of work in which his colleagues had a share, as a fraud and a swindle.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL rose to order. The honorable member was not in order when he questioned the proceedings of the other House, and referred to what was said there.

The SPEAKER: I do not think we can, in any way, refer to the debate in the other House.

Mr. WALSH then moved the adjournment of the House. A report was abroad that one of the Ministers, perceiving that certain proceedings in the Assembly, which were accepted by the Government and furthered by them, were neither more nor less than a fraud and a swindle. He was acting upon what had been reported in the paper; and, he believed, the report in that paper was milk and water, to the language which had been actually used. He thought the country had a right to know whether a measure, which the Government had assisted in passing through the Assembly, was to be denounced as a swindle and a fraud; or, whether it was decent that a Government should exist, so divided, that one of its members could denominate the action of the rest, as a fraud and a swindle. Only yesterday, the honorable Premier had said he did not care for the opinion of the Minister for Public Lands. The country could not place any confidence in a Ministry, when such things took place. He moved the adjournment of the House, to know what was the position of this apparently happy family. It was not a matter to be laughed at. For his own part, he should not make it a joke, if he were told that he had perpetrated a fraud and a swindle, and would not consent to appear, till he had set himself right with the country.

Mr. FRANCIS said he thought this was rather a waste of time. What did it amount to? That each one of the happy family had his own opinion, and that different shades of political belief were duly represented in the Cabinet. In that view of the case, all the interests of the country were thus represented. He did not think it desirable the Cabinet should be all of one mind. There should be freedom of thought and action. "We agree to differ" was the Englishman's right and privilege, and the Cabinet had shown that most unmistakably. He suspected that, in another place, they had an indication which was very gratifying, of the honesty of the Postmaster-General, and that he would be no party to a fraud and a swindle. It was very refreshing to those outside that this queer Bill, of which the reputed father was the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thorn, but which had been made into something by the Minister for Lands, should be thus denounced. It was supposed to put an end to the complaints of a highly respectable and influential class of colonists, whose little game was found out. It was quite natural that a representative of the Go-

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 27 August, 1869.

[FIRST SITTING.]

Adjournment. — Adjournment — Personal Explanation. — Manufacturing Industries Bill. — Penal Establishment, St. Helena. — Police Force — Report of Committee. — Export of Meat. — Land Tax. — Constitution Act of 1867 Amendment Bill.

### ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. WALSH said he desired to call the attention of the Government, the House, and the country, to a peculiar circumstance which had occurred yesterday evening in another place. He had been credibly informed, and read in the morning's paper, that a Minister of the Crown had denounced in another

vernment should find some difficulty in playing his part. Honorable members knew all about this thing; people outside did not. The Government stood in need of rest, that they might, during the recess, school each other in the better playing of each man his part. Individually, they had a duty to perform, as men representing the people, and also as members of a company. He was vividly reminded of what had been said in the House by the ex-Attorney-General: "I am an actor; we are all actors," and so forth. Each man required to learn his part. He did not think Mr. Douglas had learnt his, yet. That was his great recommendation. He did not think the Ministry could last much longer, and it was no use wasting the time of the House about the business.

Mr. HALY suspected the Government could not answer this charge. It was a very serious thing—"fraud and swindle." He would not consent to anything that was a fraud and swindle. It placed the Government in a very false position, and he would be very glad to have the sense of the House upon it. Ministers, in particular, ought to be more cautious than others as to what they said.

Mr. WALSH said that irrespective of the sad spectacle which the Ministry presented, the rumor about the town now was, that the Postmaster-General was to go home as Agent-General for Immigration. How could he, as agent, induce people to come to their shores when they would have to associate with free selectors, and others, who had committed frauds and swindles. He would prevent a virtuous population from coming to adorn the colony. The matter seemed to be considered as a joke by the Government, and parliamentary government was nothing more nor less than a joke under the present regime. He would withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### ADJOURNMENT—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. JORDAN said he regretted having to occupy the time of the House, but he thought it due to himself to call attention to some remarks made by the honorable member for Maryborough. That honorable member had said that the pamphlets he held in his hand were a tissue of falsehood.

Mr. THOMPSON rose to ask whether it was in order to refer to a previous debate. He understood that objection must be taken to a statement at the time it was made.

Mr. JORDAN said it was a matter of personal explanation, as he was the reputed author of that pamphlet, and he desired to explain, in consequence of remarks made by the honorable member for Maryborough. The honorable member referred especially to what was therein contained concerning the capabilities of the Darling Downs for wheat-growing, which he attempted to turn into ridicule and falsehood. Evidence was taken in 1860 as to the culture of wheat on the

Darling Downs. Mr. Evans, clerk of petty sessions at Warwick, was examined—

"Do you think wheat can be grown profitably in your neighborhood? With reference to the culture of wheat in the neighborhood of Warwick, I am of opinion that it can be engaged in successfully. The climate is admirably adapted to the growth of this cereal, and it is altogether exempt from the diseases which are prevalent elsewhere, such as smut, blight, and rust."

That was one of the statements in the pamphlet which the honorable member for Maryborough took special exception to. It was since the pamphlet was written that these diseases had appeared.

"7. To what extent, do you think, wheat could be grown in the neighborhood of Warwick? I can assign no limit.

"8. Is there a large extent of soil adapted to its culture? I am not prepared to say what extent of available country there is, but I think there are hundreds of thousands of acres.

"9. Then, it is not confined to the alluvial soil on the banks of the rivers? No; I can imagine it could be grown, to a certain distance, within the influence of the Main Range.

"14. How long have you grown wheat? For seven years: I have given it a fair trial. My first crop was maize, and it was a failure; I then substituted wheat, which I found to answer very well.

"15. You find wheat a comparatively sure crop? I do; and, as an agricultural speculation, I should be disposed to enter into it. Even supposing I had a bad season, I should be inclined to recommence the same work the following year, with the anticipation of succeeding. I may mention that scores of men—small farmers—confine their agriculture entirely to the growth of maize and potatoes, which will naturally decrease in value and become less profitable.

"22. Have you made any calculation as to the average profit per acre during the last seven years? It is extremely difficult to say: I should say, not less than twenty bushels;—but I am satisfied that, in a few particular instances, the yield has been as high as thirty-five."

That evidence justified the statements in the pamphlet. Before he left as agent for emigration he visited the Downs and the farms, and was told that the wheat he then saw would yield forty bushels to the acre, and, in one instance, as much as fifty.

"25. You have stated that you derived a profit of 8s. per bushel? Yes, taking £30 as the price of flour per ton."

That was one thing the honorable member for Maryborough attempted to throw contempt upon.

"23. Do you think that if the population were to be greatly increased, and the cultivation of wheat on a larger scale rendered necessary, the price would be increased? There is always the protective duty of £7 a ton.

"91. Do you think that parties who worked their own farms and were simply agriculturists, would make them pay? They would become affluent. Men that I have taken out of the

barracks are now independent, and have farms of their own.

"97. Do you think the lands alongside of the river and watercourses, not so well adapted for agricultural pursuits, as the country which is under the influence of the Main Range? The lands which I referred to, as being the most advantageous for agricultural pursuits, are those which are actually on the watercourses, but still within fifteen miles of the Main Range. I do not think those extensive plains are at all adapted for cultivation."

When they spoke of the Downs being adapted to agriculture, it was confined to the land within the influence of the Main Range—

The SPEAKER: This is more than a personal explanation.

Mr. JORDAN: He was putting himself right. He was showing that no false statements were made in that pamphlet, although Sir George Bowen did put in some ornamentation, which he regretted. As well as a personal explanation, he wished to prove that there were no falsehoods in the pamphlets.

"108. What do you mean by the influence of the Main Range? Do you refer to the elevation or the shelter of the Main Range? No, to the moisture. The showers are more frequent, and the temperature much cooler.

"109. The reduced temperature from the elevation of the country and the frequency of showers, as well as the shelter from westerly winds? Yes, the tributaries of the rivers are all of a wandering character, and it is upon these little watercourses, I think, a population will be settled. The land is of a first rate quality; and there is a plentiful supply of water, and a great protection from westerly winds."

The honorable member for Maryborough, asserted it was wrongly stated the water was always flowing. These were the watercourses referred to as frequent and well supplied with water. It was most unfair of the honorable gentleman, and unparliamentary to get a document like that, and picking out certain portions, to say the pamphlet contained a tissue of falsehoods. They were now in possession of facts subsequent to the date of that pamphlet, which corrected the statements there made. It went back nine or ten years ago. Even if existing facts did not agree with the statements then made, they were not, therefore, false at the time. Then, again, the honorable member objected to the statement made of the prospect of having twenty feet of water on the bar of the Brisbane; although they had not twenty feet, they had succeeded in putting eighteen feet on the bar. But, he would not follow the honorable member in all his quotations and remarks upon the pamphlet, and his attempt to prove it a tissue of falsehoods, as he had based his statement mainly upon the wheat-growing capabilities of the Downs.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member must end with a motion.

Mr. JORDAN: He had been told not to do so. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. THOMPSON said he wished to understand a point of order. It appeared to him that if an honorable member could refer to a speech upon a debate which was ended by moving an adjournment, that they had better alter their standing orders at once, else it would re-open debates, and the result would be this, that anybody who had no right to reply, would move the adjournment of the House, and there would be no end to it.

The SPEAKER; It was only allowable in a personal explanation.

Mr. WALSH said the pamphlet had been referred to by the honorable member, to prove the case of an applicant for a land order. Was he to be told that he was not to refer to documents, because it was near the end of the session? The honorable member should have produced these pamphlets long ago, and showed a want of candor in not having produced them before. He had often heard of exaggerated statements made to induce immigrants to come here, but he had not known they were published—

Mr. JORDAN would ask whether the question could be debated. The standing order said—

"By the indulgence of the House, a member may explain matters of a personal nature although, there be no question before the House; but such matters may not be debated."

The SPEAKER said he did not see that the honorable member ought not.

Mr. WALSH stated the pamphlet was written only five years ago, in 1864, by the authority of the Queensland Government, by Henry Jordan, 1864, and, in 1868, in the name of the Government. That pamphlet bore out, by its description of the streams, and supply of water all the year round, the statements he had given of the honorable member for East Moreton (Mr. Jordan's) description of the country. No matter by whom those statements were written, it was a fact that they deluded people to come here. The description of the supply of grass all the year round was hardly borne out by the fact that a short time ago the House had been called upon to pass a Pastoral Relief Bill in consequence of the want of feed.

An HONORABLE MEMBER: Not on the Darling Downs.

Mr. WALSH: Yes, all over the colony. It was only yesterday that the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Jordan, was asking the House to furnish a supply of water to his constituents; and those were the very people to whom he read these statements concerning the innumerable streams which afforded a constant supply of fresh water.

Mr. JORDAN: The description in the pamphlet only referred to certain portions of the Darling Downs.

Mr. WALSH: No doubt the description of

beautiful scenery drew people to the colony. The description of the admirable climate, given in the pamphlet, which spoke of the comparative immunity from endemic diseases, was contrary to fact. The colony was notorious for intermittent fevers, and all fevers. He had seen poor men, suffering from them, brought in drays to the towns. Such statements as were made of the climate, in the pamphlet, ought not to be made. It said that the diseases incidental to youth were very mild in their character here. He did not know what that meant, and had no experience of such diseases. It said that in cases of consumption the climate afforded great relief. He believed that was true; but he found fault with that statement because there could be no doubt the honorable member for East Moreton had sent out to the colony a great number of consumptive persons. The impression he himself had was, that people went home for health, and to get a good store of it. But the climate was described as having a wonderful effect in prolonging life, people of a hundred years old being not unfrequently met with, and retaining a vast amount of strength. Goodness gracious! He did think the honorable gentleman had not written these statements in the paragraph, but that most of them must have been put in by a greater person than he was. He believed, too, that Adams was one of the many who had been misguided by such statements to come into the colony.

Mr. FRANCIS said he was quite certain that no one who knew his honorable colleague even casually, would for one moment suppose him capable of speaking false. He believed that every sentence in his pamphlet was strictly true; but it was not the whole truth. No man in this world could speak the whole truth on every question. The truth shaped itself differently to different minds. If the honorable member for East Moreton, and the honorable member for Maryborough, had both gone home to describe the colony, the people in England would then have had both sides of the question. The possibilities given in the pamphlet were strictly true; but the actual facts, and how far these had been realised, needed also to be taken into account. He thought his honorable colleague was a little too touchy about those persons who took opposite views to him. No man with a grain of sense, would suppose his honorable colleague capable of saying what he did not believe. The honorable member's intelligence and industry would make him acquainted to the best of his ability with the truth. The whole truth he could not give; neither could the honorable member for Maryborough, whose view of the whole truth did not agree with his honorable colleague's. He was not sorry that such discussions should arise; they did no harm.

Mr. GROOM said there was no doubt that the descriptions given in the pamphlet were strictly true. The honorable member for

East Moreton, Mr. JORDAN, visited the Darling Downs, or, rather, certain portions of them, and, no doubt, observed what was described therein. Unquestionably, events were now taking place on the Downs which established the truth of those assertions. To his own knowledge, between two and three thousand fruit trees had been planted there this season; and more would have been planted if they could have been had. If the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. JORDAN, had visited the Darling Downs a second time, on his return to the colony previously, he would have had to modify his statements, for this reason: the agricultural reserves there had been selected in the worst possible places. The Drayton and Toowoomba agricultural reserve was twenty miles from Toowoomba, was without water, and never would have a supply. Mr. Adams was one of the victims who had been driven to select upon that reserve—where it cost twenty pounds an acre to clear the land of timber,—where the only water to be had was at a distance, and that was brackish. If the honorable member had visited the Downs before his return to England the second time, he could not have said that the best lands of the colony had been reserved for agriculture. In 1862, they had had to pass an agricultural relief Bill, owing to the arduous conditions which had been imposed. The descriptions could do no harm if they sent an agent-general for emigration to England again, and showed the British public that the Government were prepared to remedy the errors of the past.

Mr. JORDAN, in reply, said that he had had no wish to waste time, but had spoken not for his own sake only, but for the honor of the House also. This was not the first time that the honorable member for Maryborough had accused him of false statements.

Mr. WALSH: I said, distinctly, that I believed the honorable gentleman was not the author of the pamphlet.

Mr. JORDAN: If there was one word more odious to him than another, it was the word "falsehood." He claimed to be an honest man, and whatever he had stated to be true. Although the pamphlet did not appear as it had left his hands, his lectures (and he believed he had addressed more persons in Great Britain than any other individual) were the chief guide. In every instance, the honesty of the lecturer was noticed by the press, because he had given the brighter and the darker side of the picture. One great object in his lecturing, and continuing to lecture for seven years in the United Kingdom was, to prevent a large number of persons who would otherwise have left for the colony with the stream, imagining a great deal which they would not realize. He always said that there were only two or three classes wanted—chiefly the real farmer, who was not afraid to encounter the difficulties he must expect as a pioneer. He also mentioned the great changes in the seasons,

and the losses they might thus anticipate. Thousands had been deterred from coming to the colony through his lectures, as he told them exactly what the colony was. He did not complain only that the honorable member for Maryborough had twice accused him of uttering falsehoods, but the honorable member had twice misquoted him.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member for Maryborough had stated that he never accused the honorable member of falsehood.

Mr. JORDAN: The honorable member had once read a portion from one of his letters, leaving off in the middle of a sentence, and thus conveying a wrong impression. The honorable member had now read part of the pamphlet, and he (Mr. Jordan) asked him to look at the bottom of the page, but he would not do so. That letter, which was quoted, was from Dr. Hobbs, who had furnished him at his request, with his written opinion of the climate. Having been many years in the colony, and being the Health Officer, he was the best authority on the subject. His words were given in inverted commas, the note reads—Letter from Dr. Hobbs, Health Officer of the colony of Queensland. He (Mr. Jordan) had returned to the colony himself, and intended to invest all he possessed in agriculture. He believed what he had told to 36,000 people in England, and although he had always said that farming in Queensland was hazardous, yet he had sufficient confidence in agriculture to invest his all in it. The honorable member said that he had returned because he was getting old, and the climate was favorable to him.

Mr. WALSH: I never said that.

Mr. JORDAN: He thought the honorable member assigned that as the cause of his coming back to the colony. The foot-note also showed that some of the words quoted by the honorable member were not his, but were quoted from a lecture by Dr. Barton; and he quoted that lecture as delivered; but the honorable member for Maryborough forgot to mention that it was a quotation. The honorable member had not dealt as fairly with him as he (Mr. Jordan) had with the honorable member. He knew he had been his enemy for years—why, he could not say. He had made repeated attacks upon him, ever endeavoring to prove something against him, without the slightest foundation. The honorable member's speech on one of his (Mr. Jordan's) letters detailing some improved shipping arrangements, had reminded him of that funny character, Serjeant Buzfuz, who proved from a harmless note about "chops and tomata sauce" that a very innocent character was the greatest scoundrel in the world. Now why did his honorable friend, for he would still call him that as he was not going to quarrel with him—

Mr. WALSH rose and said that he must protest against the remarks of the honorable member. He had already explained that the Government were responsible for the

pamphlet; and for making statements, true or untrue, which appeared in that pamphlet.

Mr. JORDAN would accept the explanation; and trusted the honorable member would not continue to attack him. He had suffered enough—a kind of moral martyrdom—for seven years, and when he returned to the colony he had been acquitted by that House and by the public of the charges made against him. He would accept the explanation of the honorable member, and trusted that honorable gentleman would not accuse him of falsehood any more.

Mr. WALSH: Mr. Speaker, I must again repeat that I have not accused the honorable member of falsehood.

The motion was then withdrawn.

#### MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES BILL.

Mr. GROOM, in moving the second reading of the above Bill, stated that it would be within the recollection of honorable members that when certain resolutions were sent to another House, it was a wish generally expressed that the purport of them should be embodied in a Bill. He had searched the statutes of the Victorian House of Assembly, especially the consolidated edition, but he was unable to find the one he wished to find, and he thus had been thrown upon his own resources, and had endeavored to embody in a Bill what he understood to be the wishes of many honorable members, namely, to prevent machinery being imported from other colonies and erected in Queensland, merely for the purpose of obtaining a bonus. Clause one, he thought, would provide against that. It read—

"It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council on the establishment of a woollen cloth manufactory the buildings and plant of which shall be of the value of two thousand pounds and that shall manufacture within the limits of the colony woollen goods from wool grown in the colony of the marketable value of two thousand pounds to authorise the Colonial Treasurer to issue to the manufacturer of such woollen goods the sum of one thousand pounds to be charged to the consolidated revenue of the colony."

He had used the words "woollen goods," in preference to cloth, as he thought that a manufacturer should not be restricted to any particular class of goods. In the second clause, honorable members would notice that he had stated that—

"on the establishment of a cotton cloth manufactory the plant and buildings of which shall be of the value of three thousand pounds and that shall manufacture within the limits of the colony cotton goods from cotton grown in the colony to the marketable value of fifteen hundred pounds to authorise the Colonial Treasurer to issue to the manufacturer of such cotton goods the sum of one thousand pounds to be charged to the consolidated revenue of the colony."

He had made that distinction, as the cost of the plant for manufacturing cotton was far more expensive than that for woollen goods.

Of course, honorable members could alter the amounts, as they deemed fit. Then, as regarded the third clause, that a grant of one thousand acres of acres should be given when the first manufactories had been working for two years—that was in accordance with the expressed wishes of many honorable members he had consulted on the subject. He had not limited the applicants to any particular class of ground. Then, again, as to the marketable value of the goods, and he might say that it had been recommended that the collector or sub-collector of customs would be the best judge. He was of that opinion, for he understood that, since the *ad valorem* duties had been in force, large quantities of cotton and woollen goods had been passed through the customs, and in the event of the officers being at a loss to determine the value of them, they called upon some well-known gentleman in the trade to decide, and that was a great assistance to the department. He believed that there were many persons in Victoria who would take advantage of the Bill now before the House; and he was only sorry that time would not allow of a more extended scheme being brought forward, so that other manufactures could have been included. Still, however, the present Bill would be a commencement in the right direction, and, in the following session, they could introduce a more elaborate scheme. He had no doubt that honorable members who read the newspapers observed the progress which was made with manufactures in the neighboring colonies. [*The honorable member then quoted from reports in various journals, in support of his argument, that legislation had been of most valuable assistance to the development of industries.*] They must not forget that it was mentioned by the honorable the Premier, on a former occasion, that manufactures formed the only channel by which employment could be found for the native youth; and, whilst on that subject, he might mention that he had seen, in the Melbourne *Argus*, mention made of a lad in the employment of Messrs. Alcock and Co., the billiard table manufacturers, who had invented a new veneering machine, which was pronounced to be superior to anything in England. A patent, for it, was taken out by Messrs. Alcock, on behalf of the lad; but, had there not been any encouragement of that kind, the boy's talents would have been diverted into a different and perhaps worse direction.

The question, that the Bill be read a second time, was then put and carried.

#### PENAL ESTABLISHMENT, ST. HELENA.

Mr. RAMSAY said that, on behalf of the honorable member for Port Curtis, who was the chairman of the select committee appointed to inquire into the management of the Penal Establishment of St. Helena, he begged to move the adoption of the report. He did not anticipate any opposition to the

motion, as the inquiry had, in every way, been satisfactory to the committee; and, as the report was based upon the evidence, and fairly deduced from it. The opinion of the committee was that the establishment at St. Helena had been well and carefully managed. The report was a short one, and he would not require to make many remarks upon it. The first clause of the report was as follows:—

“Your committee having visited the island, and taken evidence, are of opinion that the return from the Auditor-General, of expenditure in connection with the settlement at St. Helena, is generally correct; but that, in estimating the cost of the present establishment, a large portion of the sum of £2,187 13s 9d., previously spent near the landing place, to fit the island for a quarantine station, may be deducted, as all the buildings had to be removed, and the cost of removal was nearly as much as that of new buildings.”

The House was, no doubt, aware that it was not originally intended that St. Helena should be occupied as a penal establishment, but as a quarantine station, and the sum mentioned in this clause was expended in the erection of buildings for quarantine purposes. Now, the buildings put up for that purpose were not suited to the purposes of a penal establishment, and it cost about as much to remove them as to construct them; and, therefore, they must deduct that sum, as not being any part of the cost incurred in fitting up the place as a penal establishment. The second clause of the report referred to the state of the buildings, and the security of the island. It said—

“The buildings and stockade fence now on the island, which are constructed chiefly of hardwood, appear to be well put up, and likely to last for a number of years; and when the new building, now nearly completed, is finished, it will be the strongest prison in the colony. The cost of the establishment hitherto, does not appear to your committee a fair standard to judge by, as the whole of the necessary buildings have been erected, and the outlay for materials is included in the return.”

It might appear strange to hear it said that wooden buildings could possibly form a strong prison; but there were circumstances that justified the expression. The buildings, in the first place, were well and strongly built—so much so, that it would be very difficult indeed for any one to escape from them. Then, again, the fact of their being situated on an island, rendered it almost hopeless for any one to attempt to escape from them, except by overpowering the guard, and seizing the boats. But there was the existence of a very efficient police around the island, in the shape of sharks, which rendered it next to impossible for any one to escape from the island to the mainland by swimming. Several prisoners, it appeared, had attempted to escape in that way; but when they saw the immense number of sharks that were swimming about, they were glad to return, with all haste, to the

island. Then, again, the island was eminently adapted as a penal settlement, from the fact that it was within easy reach of the water police station, at the mouth of the river; and the gun on the island, when fired, could always be heard by the water police, on shore. If the island were occupied entirely by long-sentenced men, there might be some necessity for a strong guard being placed upon it; but that necessity was avoided by there being always a large proportion of short-sentenced men upon the island, whose interests were, of course, wholly opposed to those of the long-sentenced men. The long-sentenced men, had everything to gain by any attempt to escape; whereas the short-sentenced men had everything to lose, and nothing to gain, in the event of any attempt at escape being unsuccessful. The superintendent, therefore, recommended that there should always be a large proportion of short-sentenced men kept on the island; because they would not only be likely to aid the warders, in the case of any attempted outbreak, and thus keep down the expense of the establishment, but would also be likely to make known any plot amongst the long-sentenced men that might come to their knowledge. He would, therefore, ask the particular attention of the Colonial Secretary to that recommendation of the superintendent of the island. The third and fourth clauses of the report were as follow:—

“The charges brought by the ex-warder Caddle, and referred to your committee for investigation, are, in their opinion, not only frivolous, but untrue in almost every particular. Your committee have every reason to be satisfied with the management.

“With the industries now established on the island, and its peculiar adaptability for the growth of sugar, your committee believe that, at no distant date, the establishment will be nearly, if not quite, self-supporting. As a penal establishment, suitable for the punishment and reform of criminals, they believe it has, so far, answered its purpose.”

The first portion of the third clause of the report referred to the charges brought by ex-warder Caddle against the superintendent, and those the committee considered to be not only frivolous, but also untrue in almost every particular. For instance, the boxes he spoke of the carpenter making, were made after time; but they were applied to the purposes of the establishment. The honorable member for Maryborough had drawn his attention to what might be considered an omission in the evidence, and it was this:—The witness Caddle was told that it would not be necessary for him to go into the complaints he had made, as the committee were fully acquainted with them. In order to make the evidence complete, those complaints ought to have been published here; but he did not notice that omission till the honorable member for Maryborough called his attention to it. That the committee, how-

ever, were satisfied with the management of the island would, he hoped, be satisfactory to the House. In the opinion, that the establishment seemed to be well and carefully got up, the committee were unanimous. With regard to the use to which the island was put, and the expense that was incurred, it might be too sanguine a view to suppose that the island would be made self-supporting, but still there was the prospect of its being made remunerative to a very great extent. On that head, he would call the attention of honorable members to Mr. McDonald's evidence,—questions fifty-seven to sixty-two, at page ten. Now, Mr. McDonald was there asked—

“What are you cultivating principally on the island? Sugar principally.

“How many acres have you under cultivation? There are about twenty-six acres planted.

“How much do you expect to crush this year? About twenty acres.

“Have you any idea what the produce is likely to be? From the opinion of very good judges who have been to the island I am led to believe the yield will be about two tons to the acre. We have about 300 acres cleared of mangrove scrub, and about 100 acres of dense scrub.

“What is the total extent of the island? Very nearly 500 acres, including the mangroves.

“What is the available extent of arable land? Very nearly 200 acres; but all the ground could be reclaimed, including the mangrove swamps.”

Then at page thirty-four, Mr. McDonald said, on the same subject, in answer to question forty-one—

“I intend to put in 100 acres of crop, as soon as possible.”

It was sugar-cane that was here referred to. Now, if those answers were correct, a large sum of money would be obtained from the cultivation of sugar alone upon the island. It had been represented to him, that the nature of the land was such that it would soon wear out. That would, of course, be a great disadvantage; but he thought that some means might be taken to maintain the land, by supplies of manure; for if the land was not allowed to get into too low a condition, the establishment, he was satisfied would be an economical one. Clause five of the report referred to the delivery of stores, and upon that point he would like to say something. It appeared that there had been great mismanagement in that respect—not on the island, but on shore, here. He believed the attention of the Colonial Secretary had been called to the matter lately and that something had been done in the way of correcting it. If honorable members would look at question twenty-two, page nine, Mr. McDonald's evidence, they would see that there was a state of things in existence that ought not to have been allowed. But he would first refer to the latter part of question twelve, on page eight, where Mr. McDonald said—

“I now hand in a list of stores received from

Messrs. E. and J. Young, for 1868 [*vide Appendix C.*] for which we have the contractor's price; and comparing the charge in the return, with our books, I find there is an overcharge of £111 3s. 7½d.

"Your books show the actual receipts? Yes."

Now, he came to question twenty-two—

"By the Hon. A. Hodgson: Do the way-bills generally tally with the quantities received? They do not, sir; sometimes, for instance, we send in for 50 lbs. of tea, and they send out a chest which contains only 45 lbs. We find short weight in many other things;—in fact, it has occurred a great many times; that is why I always wanted to get the contractors' vouchers sent down, to compare with our books, monthly. I have applied three different times for them.

"Do you report these deficiencies? I do. I make the corrections on the way-bill and return it. The contractors' vouchers ought to be checked by these way-bills. I do not know whether they are or not.

"Have you recently reported deficiencies of this sort? Yes; I make the corrections on every way-bill. For instance, the way-bill sent down this week is corrected and returned next week.

"Was there any mistake in the way-bill sent down last week? Yes; we received sixty sheep and I found only thirty marked in the way-bill—of course I corrected the mistake. Very often when we send our orders the contractors have not some of the articles by them, and they have to send to Sydney for them; our books show the dates when the goods are received.

"What sort of articles? Such things as iron piping, manufactured iron, and things of that sort. For instance, the wire netting which we have for ward B, we had to wait six months for.

"By the Chairman: How many prisoners have you had, on an average, on the island? Over a hundred.

"Have you made any calculation as to the cost of the establishment, to the country, for each prisoner? No, sir, I could not do so, for this reason: I never knew what anything cost until I received this return from you. That is what I have always been trying to get.

"Can you furnish that information to the committee? I can if the vouchers are forwarded to me [*vide Appendix E.*] When I had charge of the prison hulk 'Proserpine,' there never was a shilling wrong but I corrected it; but then the vouchers were always sent me. There were sometimes great mistakes."

He next wished to draw attention to the Colonial Storekeeper's evidence on that point. At question five, page thirty-five, Mr. Bond was asked—

"Do you receive a receipt from St. Helena for these articles? Yes.

"Invariably? Yes.

"Signed by whom? Generally, Mr. McDonald; sometimes by Mr. Hamilton, the chief warder.

"Have these receipts always corresponded with the way-bills you have sent down? No, in some instances they have not.

"When they did not correspond what action did you take? The book which the storeman keeps is referred to, to see that the proper weights were

sent down, and if that is found not to be the case, the contractors are informed of it, and told to supply the deficiency. If the proper weights have passed through the store, no notice is taken of it."

Honorable members would see from those questions, that the practice had been, that, if the colonial storekeeper sent down a certain quantity of goods, and they did not reach the island, no notice was taken of the matter. Speculation might take place to any extent, but no notice was taken of it. Then, in answer to question ten, and the three following questions, Mr. Bond said—

"Have there been any instances where the contractors did make up short weights? There have been a few occasionally, but it has been very seldom.

"What contractor has done so? Messrs E. and J. Young have done so.

"Were the discrepancies between the way-bills and the receipts at St. Helena numerous? No.

"Did you report the discrepancies which occurred to the Colonial Secretary? No, sir; not if the goods left the stores correctly. I was acting as agent between the two parties."

That was a most remarkable piece of evidence. The storekeeper acted as agent between the parties, and if anything went astray, he put the blame upon nobody. Now if the goods were supplied direct from the contractor, either he, or the boat, or the island, would have to account for any deficiency; but hitherto the Colonial Storekeeper had acted as agent between the parties, and when there was any deficiency no notice was taken of it. He hoped the honorable the Colonial Secretary would give his attention to that circumstance, for it exhibited a condition of things one could hardly believe to have been in existence. The only other matter he would refer to, was with respect to the rations. Some medical gentlemen were of opinion that the men were over-fed; but it should not be forgotten that the men wrought hard, and in the open air, and, therefore, were not like men who were confined in gaol. They did a great deal of hard work, and it would be a very wrong thing to give them any cause for dissatisfaction because of the quantity of rations supplied to them. He thought, however, that seconds flour might be supplied to them instead of first flour, for it was equally wholesome, and the men would be as well nourished by it as by first flour.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he agreed with all the remarks that had been made by the honorable member for the Western Downs; but there was one remark the honorable member had omitted to make, and that was, that the committee were unanimous on every point throughout the whole of the inquiry. They worked together with the utmost unanimity; and the report was adopted unanimously. During the whole of the time the evidence was being taken he never heard a single unpleasant word

uttered. With regard to what had fallen from his honorable friend as to the way in which the stores had been sent to St. Helena, he was happy to be able to inform the House that that very bad system had been rectified. The stores for St. Helena now no longer passed through the Colonial Storekeeper's Department, but were put on board the "Kate," steamer, by the contractor. The captain gave his receipt for the goods, and he handed them to the superintendent of the island, Mr. McDonald. On his own part he had ceased to certify to the vouchers till the superintendent of the island had certified to the accuracy of the way-bill. As to the supplies of meat, it had not been thought necessary to weigh it before it was put on board, and the consequence was that it was frequently found to be deficient on delivery at the island; but he believed that much of it had been used on board the vessel. With respect to the suggestion about substituting seconds flour, he might say that he had anticipated it, and seconds flour had been commenced to be supplied to the prisoners last week. He agreed with the honorable member for the Western Downs that it would not be advisable to interfere with the food of the men as regarded quantity. The men had to do a great deal of hard work out of doors, and, consequently, they had good appetites; and he must say that the men worked very well. Dr. Hobbs did not think that the quantity of food supplied to them was too much; and when the scale was compared with the one at the gaol, it was found that there was very little difference. Then they had an excellent man as superintendent of the island. He was very much surprised to hear the chairman of the committee state that a very serious charge had been brought against the superintendent by the honorable member for Maryborough. The charge was that the superintendent had taken a boat from the island with a crew of prisoners to Cleveland, where the prisoners were allowed to go ashore and to bring grog away with them. The chairman informed him (the Colonial Secretary) that it would be necessary to summon Mr. McDonald to give evidence upon the point before the committee, and that he would ask the honorable member for Maryborough to attend the committee, and give evidence also about the charge. Well, Mr. McDonald was summoned, and he gave evidence upon the point, which would be found at page thirty-three, as follows:—

"Were you ever at Cleveland with a boat's crew of prisoners? Never in my life.

"Are you aware of a boat's crew of prisoners having, at any time, been to Cleveland since you had charge of the island? No.

"Are you aware that it has ever been done? I am aware that a boat's crew went there before I took charge.

"Under what circumstances? At that time prisoners were confined on board the hulk 'Proserpine,' and there were a great many sailors among them."

Mr. McDonald then went on to say that he had been examined upon the point before a select committee, and that his evidence would be found in the "Votes and Proceedings" for 1866; and if honorable members would examine the evidence, they would find that there was not a word of truth in the charges. Then, at question twenty-four, page thirty-three, Mr. McDonald was further interrogated as follows:—

"Have any applications been made to you by any parties for the loan of your boat or boats? Not since I have been on the island; when I was on the hulk, applications were frequently made.

"By whom? By Mr. McDonald, who was custom house officer at Lytton.

"Did you allow him to take your boats? I had orders from the visiting justice, Mr. Thornton, who was water police magistrate, to give Mr. McDonald every assistance in performing his official duties, but not to lend the boats for any private purpose. I did refuse a boat on one occasion, for a pleasure party, as I heard afterwards."

The fact was, that Mr. McDonald, superintendent, refused to lend a boat to Mr. McDonald, of the water police force, to go on an oyster-fishing expedition—and he believed the honorable member for Maryborough was one of the party. The chairman of the committee, Mr. Palmer, when he heard the refutation of the charge, manifested his disgust at the nature of it by the way in which he threw upon the table a book that he held in his hand. As to the island being made self-supporting, he believed it might be so; for he believed that, within three years, as much sugar would be grown upon the island as would pay for the expenses of the prisoners. At the present time, the maize-meal supplied to the prisoners at the gaol was wholly the produce of St. Helena. As to the warders, he might state, that it was in evidence, that the warders employed on the island were preferable to the military guard that was previously stationed there. As to the dismissal of ex-warder Caddle, it was found that there was scarcely any foundation for the petition that had been presented from him to the House. It was certainly proved that a warder of the name of Dowd had received a cabbage-tree hat from one of the prisoners; and he had since been dismissed, on the recommendation of the superintendent. He thought honorable members would admit that the report spoke for itself, and that the House would have every reason to be satisfied with the inquiry made by the committee. The Government had received a great amount of information on the subject that they could scarcely have obtained otherwise than through the channel of a select committee.

The House adjourned till three o'clock on Friday.

[SECOND SITTING.]

Mr. WALSH said he had been in hope that some other honorable members would have addressed themselves to this question before

he replied to the attack made upon him in connection with this report; but, as they had not done so, he supposed it was his duty to offer himself as a target to everyone who wished to direct a shaft at him. He regretted, very much, that the honorable member who was chairman of this committee was not present, because, as he had occasion to take exception, not only to the report, but to the manner in which the evidence had been taken, he would sooner have done so in that honorable member's presence. The honorable member who had brought up this report had put the matter fairly before the House, and his manner of doing so must have commended itself to the House. He thought it was a great pity that the Colonial Secretary had not followed his example. He was surprised that that honorable gentleman should have made such an unprovoked attack upon him, and he could not see why his name should have been introduced into the matter at all. He had been a most unwilling participator in the charges—if there were any charges—against the superintendent at St. Helena. An utter stranger had come to him, as a member of the House, and made certain statements, having reference to the institution at St. Helena. A honorable member, Mr. Palmer, had at that time asked for a select committee to report upon the management of the island—whether he had asked for the committee, knowing that these charges had been made or not, he could not say—and he (Mr. Walsh) had simply done his duty as a member of the House in handing over the statements or charges, put into his hands by an utter stranger, to the chairman of that committee. That was all he knew of the management of St. Helena. He might have had suspicions previously; but, if so, they were not of such a nature as to lead him to believe that an inquiry was necessary. On the whole, he did not hesitate to say that the island had been well managed. There were evils connected with it which the report would not remedy; but he disclaimed, at the outset, all feeling in the matter; and, with regard to the charge made by the Colonial Secretary, that he had been prompted by animosity, because a boat had been refused by Mr. McDonald, at Lytton, for a pleasure party, in which he (Mr. Walsh) was to join, he had only to say that, although it might be literally true that a boat had been asked for such a purpose and refused, this was the first time he had heard anything about it. Therefore, he repeated, he disclaimed, at the outset, all personal feeling in connection with the management of the institution. These charges were put into his hands by an utter stranger; and, no matter who they affected, he should always consider it his duty to refer all documents containing such statements either to the Parliament or the Government. It appeared to him that one very grave charge had been made; and, as the name of the officer in charge at Lytton had been mentioned, he would state that

he believed that officer was incapable of doing a dishonorable action, and had no occasion to be ashamed of any part he had taken in the matter. He had frequently been out with that gentleman, in the bay, visiting the shipping: and, on one occasion, he had seen a police boat—a hulk boat—approaching the Cleveland jetty with prisoners in it, and the boatman exclaimed “there is Mr. McDonald's boat, how came it here?” Afterwards he saw one of the prisoners leave the boat and walk up towards the town. He took care to mention the fact to the Government, that the matter might be investigated; and, he believed, the warder in charge was either discharged or reprimanded. The boat was under Mr. McDonald's charge, although he was not in it, and he had reason to believe that the boat had been there before, and that Mr. McDonald did not object to it. Those were the facts connected with that part of the question. Then, with regard to the way in which the evidence had been taken, he did not think Caddle had been properly treated. Caddle had been dismissed; and here he would observe that the evidence of dismissed servants should not be considered as absolutely of no value. Although the evidence of such persons might be given out of spite, and because they were exasperated at being dismissed, it might elicit facts which required investigation. This man, Caddle, was dismissed, and he brought certain charges against the superintendent and officers of the penal establishment at St. Helena, which the select committee, to whom they were referred, characterised as “not only frivolous, but untrue in almost every particular.” Now what did Caddle state when he was examined—

“By the Chairman: I believe you were warder at St. Helena for a while? Yes, sir.

“And you were dismissed? Yes.”

That question placed him in an improper position as a witness.

“I do not want you to reiterate the complaints you have already made in writing, as they are before the committee, but we can receive any evidence you may have to give in corroboration of those complaints.”—

That appeared to him to be manifestly unfair to Caddle, because he was clearly told that the committee did not want to know anything about it. Well, Caddle came to him and said “I am sorry you were not on the committee, because I have been roughly and harshly treated; I was not allowed to give evidence, and I am afraid I have offended some member of the committee.” He only mentioned this to show the manner in which the evidence had been taken. What were the complaints? unfortunately they had been handed over to the chairman of the committee, and they were not before the House. One of them, at any rate, was, that when he, Caddle, as warder, had charge of the prisoners, he saw one of them making boots in his cell at night, which was contrary to the regulations, and he thought ought not

to be allowed. That was one of his complaints, and the evidence showed that the facts occurred. It was true that the visiting justice had given this particular prisoner permission to make boots at night, but Caddle was not aware of that when he complained to the chief warden. If honorable members would turn to page twenty-four in the evidence, they would find that this charge was not untrue, though it might be considered frivolous,—still, it was undoubtedly an infraction of prison discipline. It would be found in page twenty-four of the evidence, that one of the warders, William Wallace, was examined, and he stated that boots were frequently made, and he had “seen the uppers go in for closing.” Another charge was, that the paid carpenters had made chests which were subsequently used for private purposes by the inspector and chief warden. That charge was also true. There were certain extenuating circumstances connected with it, still it was true that these boxes had been made by paid servants. Honorable members would observe in the same page—page twenty-four—the evidence of William Colvan—

“Have you seen any furniture made here by carpenters for the superintendent or chief warden? I have seen boxes made by the carpenter.

“At what time were they made by the carpenter? On Saturday afternoons and the Queen’s birthday, which was a holiday.”

He did not for a moment say that some of those charges might not be proved to be frivolous, or that some good reasons might not be advanced against them; but he denied the right of the committee or the House to ignore them altogether, or consider them untrue. One of the witnesses, John Simpson, the carpenter who made the boxes, gave evidence to that effect, as honorable members would observe in page thirty-two. Then the inspector himself, after having been informed by the chairman that this charge had been made, also stated in page thirteen—

“I now produce the chests in question. One of them contains all the prisoners’ warrants received in the island; I bought a good lock for it myself, and it is used in the Government service; and the other is used for holding the rings and watches, and other valuables belonging to the prisoners, and taken from them when they arrive on the island; it is made of cedar, my own property.”

That was at once an admission that the charge was not untrue; and, without saying that the evidence was not correct, he must say there appeared a ray of improbability in the fact of the superintendent finding, at his own cost, the cedar, and the locks and hinges for chests made for the Government service; and it was not likely that ignorant men like Caddle would attribute such liberality to the superintendent or chief warden. Besides Caddle, it appeared, on looking into one of the chests, had seen clothes in it, which, of

course, made him conclude they were used for private purposes. Another charge was against the chief warden, Hamilton, who, in his opinion, was an excellent officer, and the life and soul of the establishment. There was nothing in the charge, but he referred to it to show that, any rate, it was not untrue. Caddle stated that he had seen the chief warden taking his meals, and being on familiar terms with a prisoner. In page thirty-two, one of the witnesses, Simpson, was asked—

“Did you ever see the chief warden sitting down at a table and having his meals with a prisoner? Yes.

“Frequently? Yes.

“Who was the prisoner? Jones, who was clerk in the office.

“You have frequently seen him sitting down with the chief warden? Yes.

“And eating with him? Yes.

“On terms of apparent equality? Just so.

“Have you heard the chief warden, at times, joking, and making himself familiar with the prisoners? Yes, I have.

“Was he in the habit of doing so? Yes.

“When did you leave the island? On 31st May last.

“Did you leave on account of any quarrel with the superintendent or warders? No; I always endeavored to give the greatest satisfaction.

“Why did you leave? I have not the slightest knowledge. I tried to find out, and I wrote a letter to the Colonial Secretary on the subject.”

Caddle’s statement, therefore, was not contradicted on any of these points; and it did appear strange to him that the committee should have reported so strongly against that man. Then Caddle made another charge that the prisoners made hats, and that the warders trafficked in them and sent them up to Brisbane, where they frequently got £2 apiece for them. This charge was also borne out by the evidence of a witness, Thomas McIntyre—

“By the Chairman: How long have you been at St. Helena? Since the 15th March last.

“Did any of the warders ever offer to sell you a cabbage-tree hat? Yes.

“Who was it? Warden Dowd.

“Did you buy it? No; I was going to buy it, only I was told by another warden that if I did I should be in danger of losing my situation.

“Who was the other warden? Caddle.

“Do you know where this hat was made? Dowd told me a prisoner made it; he had cabbage-tree in his house, and I asked if I could get a hat made.

“Do you know what became of the hat? No; he said he could have got £2 for it in town, only for a discharged prisoner, O’Donnell, who reported it.”

He thought he had said enough to show that the charges preferred by Caddle, though they might be considered frivolous, were not untrue. He did not hesitate to say that the head and front of that person’s complaint was one with which he did not at all sympathise—because he did not believe the Government

carried out any such system—it was that if the warders were Irish they could not give satisfaction. He did not say that was true; but Caddle stated that the inspector was getting rid of the Irish warders as fast as he could, and he had mentioned several names to him of men that had been discharged. If honorable members would turn to page 13, they would find the following question (No. 135), put by the Colonial Secretary to Mr. McDonald: “How is O’Brien going on?” Answer: “I have nothing against him yet,” &c. O’Brien was removed from Maryborough, where he was acting police sergeant, and where he gave universal satisfaction—in fact he was dismissed for some trifling offence, trifling compared with offences committed by persons who still remained in the service—and afterwards sent down by the Colonial Secretary to St. Helena. Well, it was certainly an extraordinary question for the Colonial Secretary to ask—“How is O’Brien going on?” “I have nothing against him, yet.” Certainly the question and answer were very suggestive. What necessity was there to put such a question, unless there had been some pre-conceived determination formed by the superintendent to get rid of him? He could easily understand that O’Brien would not long remain at St. Helena, unless some very different system were adopted with the warders of that establishment. He would not say much about the charge against the inspector for being absent from the island; but he believed that the four prisoners who attempted to escape intended to have captured the boat, but it was away too long for their purpose, and they concealed themselves in the scrub on the island. He would next call attention to a letter, which he had since received from an utter stranger; it was dated from Gympie, in which the writer, who had been a warder at St. Helena, stated that the prison labor on the island was confined to the making of shoes for the superintendent and his family, and the warders; and that he, the writer, had been, in July, 1868, the means of having an investigation into certain charges brought against Hamilton, the chief warder. He confessed that he had not even answered this letter, for he had been too much disgusted with the way the inquiry had been conducted; but that was not the only letter he had received; other complaints had been made to him besides the complaints of these two warders. He believed he had said enough to prove his case, and to show that Caddle has not been fairly treated. He thought that part of the report which affirmed that the charges brought by this man were “not only frivolous, but untrue in almost every particular,” ought to be struck out; but, in the absence of the chairman of the committee, he should not make any motion to that effect. He would say a few words in reference to the management of the establishment. The honorable member who moved the adoption of the report

had said a great deal about the island becoming self-supporting, and no doubt if the cultivation of sugar were carried on there, it might become so. But, in his opinion, it would be very unwise to cultivate sugar there to any extent. The scrub had been cut down, not for purposes of cultivation so much as to prevent the prisoners from concealing themselves in it; but, if the island were turned into a large sugar plantation, the cane would offer far greater facilities for concealment, and there would be as much difficulty in finding an escaped prisoner as there was in capturing a slave who took refuge in the swamps in America. He did not think, either, that it was at all necessary to make the island reproductive in that way, for he considered the first duty of the Government was towards the prisoners. Their duty was to punish them, in the first place, for the crimes they had committed; and, in the next place, to try and reform them; and he was afraid that, neither at St. Helena, nor at the gaol in Brisbane, was any reformatory process going on, or any scholastic or improving discipline for the benefit of the prisoners. In the gaol, he believed that the Government were teaching the prisoners, trades, which was certainly a step in the right direction, because there were young men of good education there, who would otherwise, when they were turned out, have no means of getting a living. Great stress had also been laid upon the amount of work done at St. Helena, the number of buildings put up, and the cleanliness and order which prevailed there. He thought too much stress had been laid upon these points. If a quantity of work had been done, there had been a large amount of labor available for it, and if the place had been kept clean, and in good order, it was the duty of the officials to keep it so. He was sorry to observe that some discrepancies had occurred—that some slovenliness had been shown to have existed in connection with the supplies sent to the island, because he had a high opinion of the officer who had the charge of the stores, and he hoped the commission which was now sitting would clear up the matter satisfactorily. He thought, however, some share of the blame ought to rest with that gentleman’s superior officer, the Colonial Secretary. There was another point he wished to refer to, and that was the divided responsibility in the management of the two penal institutions. It appeared that the establishment at St. Helena was under the Colonial Secretary, while the Sheriff had the entire control of the prisoners at the gaol.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: All the prisoners were under the Colonial Secretary.

Mr. WALSH: Well, the Sheriff was charged, by the law, with the custody of all the prisoners in the colony, and was prevented from going to St. Helena, where, in fact, he had no power whatever; and, therefore, he repeated, there was a divided responsibility

in connection with these prisons, which could not work well. There was no unity in the system. One of the charges brought against the ex-warder, Caddle, was, that he was a discharged servant. Mr. McDonald, it appeared, discovered that he had been dismissed by his former employers. Now, he had documents in his hand to show that there was no ground to infer that this man's conduct had not given the fullest satisfaction. [*The honorable member read several testimonials to the good conduct of Caddle, from his previous employers in South Australia.*] He referred to them to show that the imputations that Caddle was not a respectable character, were unfounded; and he repeated that there was nothing in the evidence to show that the charges he had made were frivolous and untrue. He regretted to be obliged to express this opinion of a report brought up by his honorable friend the member for Port Curtis, and he threw back with contempt the insinuation made by the Colonial Secretary, that he was capable of encouraging in any way a public servant to disgrace himself by absenting himself from his duty, or doing anything which it was not his duty to do. He thought he had been long enough in the colony to say that, with every confidence that he was believed; and he said again that he could not conceive that there was any necessity to introduce his name at all in connection with this subject. He only hoped the management of the penal establishment at St. Helena would turn out as well as the committee seemed to anticipate. He had no doubt the inquiry would be productive of good, but whether it would have a lasting effect, was doubtful. He must, however, express his opinion that the class of men employed as governors of the gaols of the colony were not the sort of men for that duty, and he did not think sufficient attention was paid to that most important question—the reform of the prisoners.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY rose to make a short explanation. He thought it was manifestly unfair on the part of the honorable member who had just sat down to insinuate that he had attempted to introduce anything like a sectarian feeling into the proceedings of the committee. The honorable member had referred to page thirteen, question 135, in the evidence taken before the committee, where he had asked the superintendent "How is O'Brien going on?" That was really the most natural question he could have put, and no one was better aware of that than the honorable member for Maryborough. O'Brien had been dismissed from his post in Maryborough on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police. Subsequently, he (the Colonial Secretary) received two petitions signed by the magistrates and most respectable persons in Maryborough, complaining that an injustice had been done to O'Brien. He had carefully investigated the matter, and on the strength of these representations he had sent a tele-

gram to the superintendent at St. Helena to take on O'Brien as a warder. Being afterwards on the island taking evidence with the members of the committee, he had very naturally put the question referred to, without the slightest idea whether the man was an Irishman, a Scotchman, or an Englishman; and he would take the opportunity of stating that no one was a greater admirer of the Irish character than the honorable member who was now addressing the House.

Mr. ARCHER said the honorable member for Maryborough had commenced his speech by expressing his regret that he had risen so early in the debate, as he expected to be made a target of by other honorable members who spoke after him. He did not get up to direct a shaft at the honorable member, although he thought that honorable member had fallen into one or two errors in discussing this subject. Of course, every honorable member was entitled to his own opinion, no matter how it differed from that of other honorable members. He must, however, say that while he was a great admirer of the character of the honorable member for Maryborough, he could not shut his eyes to one great fault which he possessed—intense suspiciousness. He believed that if the honorable member had seen Mr. McDonald pulling anyone else, but himself, about the Bay, he would have considered it a crime of the highest magnitude. It was the misfortune of the honorable member that, although he could see very clearly into the motives and actions of those with whom he was intimate, and in whose honor he had confidence, he invariably put the blackest construction upon the acts of those with whom he was not acquainted. With regard to the rejoinder of the Colonial Secretary, it appeared that the honorable member for Maryborough had charged the superintendent of St. Helena with going in a boat to Cleveland, which turned out to be a mistake. That mistake had been pointed out to him a couple of years ago, by a select committee, and the honorable member had forgotten that also. But, after all, it was a simple mistake. He must, however, say with regard to the charges preferred by Caddle, and the other matters touched upon, that the honorable member had put the worst possible construction upon them. While the honorable member admitted that he, himself, had been with Government officers in Government boats—and he (Mr. Archer) did not for a moment say there was any harm in that—yet he considered similar acts on the part of other persons highly reprehensible. The honorable member seemed to be impressed with evil opinions of people he did not know, and that was a great misfortune. Now, he had read the report in question, and he had visited the island on several occasions, and had formed his own opinion upon the conduct of the institution as well as upon other subjects not treated by the com-

mittee—in reference to the capacity of the island as an establishment for the punishment and reform of criminals. He would refer to them shortly; but he would state at once that the very fact that the charges brought against the management of the institution were of such a frivolous nature, ought to have put the honorable member for Maryborough on his guard, and prevented his putting faith in them; while the further fact that Caddle, after having been witness to the occurrences which he now brought forward, remained on the island without making any charge at all in connection with them—

Mr. WALSH: He was dismissed.

Mr. ARCHER: He was dismissed on account of his conduct; but these matters occurred while he was warder at St. Helena, and he made no complaint about them either to the visiting justice, with whom he had an opportunity of communicating every week, or to the medical officer, or, in fact, to any one. That was *prima facie* evidence that his statement was not to be credited, though no doubt many things that he said were true; he did see boots going into a prisoner's cell; but if that was an infraction of the prison regulations, why did he not report it at the time, instead of trumping up a charge after he was dismissed. There was no evidence to show that he had ever informed the superintendent or the visiting justice of these things; but there was evidence to show that, some other warder having mentioned that boots were being taken into a cell at night, he told that warder to report the matter to the superintendent, but that was all. He entirely agreed with the report that these charges were frivolous; he did not mean to say that there was not some truth in them, but the inferences drawn from the facts were false. One of the charges was that chests had been made by the carpenters for the superintendent and chief warder, and no doubt that was true; but, as it was shown that these chests were used for the purpose of keeping the prisoners' things in good order, it was only a proof of the frivolous nature of these complaints. He therefore agreed with the report, that the charges were frivolous and untrue in spirit, if not in the actual facts. With regard to the boat which went to Cleveland, the honorable member for Maryborough stated that it belonged to St. Helena, and was sent there with the knowledge of the superintendent; but there was no evidence to show that it was. The present superintendent of St. Helena, at that time, had charge of the hulk; he was in the habit of sending over to the island every morning a certain number of sailors, in charge of a warder, to do certain work on the island, and it appeared that this man, without the knowledge or consent of his superior officer, took the boat to Cleveland. The superintendent, of course, had all the boats under his charge, but was not directly and personally in charge of this boat; and it was

a very far-fetched argument that, because he was the superior officer, he was in charge of the boat which went to Cleveland. Then, as to the charge of selling a hat, that was not only proved, but one of the warders was found to have told a direct falsehood about it, and had since been dismissed. So far, Caddle had been the means of removing an untrustworthy person. His chief object in addressing the House was, however, to express his opinion with regard to the latter portion of the remarks made by the honorable member for Maryborough as to the reproductive capabilities of the island, and whether or not it was the duty of the Government to make the establishment self-supporting. No doubt, it was the first duty of the State to make better men of the prisoners, as far as they could. As to the reproductive capabilities of the island, he had no hesitation in saying that he believed it was capable of being made into the finest sugar plantation in the south of Queensland, and that it was in a fair way of becoming so. But he feared that Mr. McDonald, unless he had good advice on the subject, would be apt to make such gross mistakes as would tend to give the place a bad name. He talked about cutting twenty acres of cane this year; but there were only three acres there worth cutting, and unless he had some person of practical experience to guide him, he might not only spoil a good deal of property, but give the place a bad name. Of course, Mr. McDonald was doing his best, according to the information he was possessed of; but he (Mr. Archer) had only seen three acres of cane ready to cut, and it would be a great mistake to cut more. He spoke from experience, as he had, perhaps, seen more of sugar-planting than any person in the colony. Next year, the full quantity should be planted; and if the Government were not disgusted with the failures which were sure to occur this year, and supplied the necessary appliances, he believed the island of St. Helena might become, in a few years, one of the most productive sugar plantations in Queensland. Now the present was really an important question, although the honorable member for Maryborough thought it was not, and that it was a mistake to cultivate sugar-cane, as it would afford shelter to prisoners who wished to escape. He (Mr. Archer) thought, however, that there was not one part of the island which was not under lock and key; and there was not one part of it where a man would meet with fresh water, and, therefore, sooner or later he would have to give in. He must differ from the honorable member for Maryborough, that the first duty of the State was to punish criminals, and then try to reform them. He thought that better occupation could not be given to prisoners than to make them do everyday work, and wean them off from their old habits. That, he thought, was better than teaching them trades, in the gaol, although

all the buildings, the shoemaking, tailoring, &c., on the island was done by the prisoners; but above and beyond that, they had the mentally healthy occupation of out-door work in the fields, which was probably the best they could be put to, and was the best education which could be given to any men in their position. There were a lot of things which were now growing up, but which were not completed, but there were efforts made to establish schools, by which tuition could be given to the prisoners in the evenings. He did not believe that their tuition would be neglected, and he had the highest opinion of it, not only as regarded reading and writing, but, above all, to teach them to lead an honest life on their release. He thoroughly agreed with almost everything in the report, except a few words he had referred to, namely, that the charges which had been made had not been proved except in spirit. He should be in favor of the efforts now being made to make that penal establishment self-supporting. The cost of it now was very little, as compared with the value of it for the purpose of keeping offenders out of harm's way, and improving them in the future; but still there was no reason why it should not be made self-supporting. To do that a much larger sum would have to be laid out, but it must be made reproductive, and could be, so as there was no soil in the whole colony to be compared with that on St. Helena. He did hope that the Government, in keeping on the island, would support the present superintendent, and defend him when unjustly charged, and assist him in carrying out one of the greatest experiments ever made in the colony. He had much pleasure in saying that he should support the report.

Mr. RAMSAY, in reply, said that he did not intend to make any remarks about the report, but merely to say a few words in vindication of the conclusion arrived at by the committee, on Caddle's case. It would be a mistake to say that although the report did not mention the charges, the committee were not in possession of them, in detail. In all, there were four charges—making boxes and hats after hours, burning candles, and the chief warder sitting and talking familiarly with prisoners. The honorable member for Rockhampton had stated that they were untrue, except in spirit; but he (Mr. Ramsay) would first allude to the charge of associating with prisoners, which would be found in page thirteen, question 143 of the evidence—

"Caddle also complained of the chief warder taking his meals with a prisoner named Beames. Have you had any opportunity of knowing whether that was the case? It is quite false. The chief warder has no quarters; he lives in part of the offices, and takes his meals there. This man, Beames, acts assistant to the chief warder, and cleans out the office, clears up his table for him, and, perhaps, takes the dishes away; but that is all."

The chief warder himself denied it, and if they put his evidence against that of Simpson, they were quite right in believing Mr. McDonald. With regard to the charges made by Caddle, they were made after he was dismissed, and, therefore, it might very fairly be supposed that they were made from a spirit of revenge. Now, what was the evidence of people who knew Caddle. In answer to questions put to him, Mr. Barron, the visiting justice, stated—

"Has Caddle been brought before you?—Have complaints been made against him? Yes, in the month of February; for letting a man leave his gang, and for being too familiar with the prisoners. The case was brought before Mr. Bernays and myself, and the man was then reprimanded and cautioned."

"Was he brought up again? He was brought up again before me on the 8th June, for neglect of duty; and, after taking the depositions, I recommended his discharge."

The character of Caddle was a point they had to consider. The first charge against him was, that he allowed prisoners to make boxes when he should not have done so, and he must have been aware, when he saw the men working, that they were doing wrong. Then, with regard to the shoes, he might have known, or might not, about them; but it was in evidence that there was nothing wrong, as the shoemaker had permission to make them from the visiting justice himself. The whole thing, however, did not look well, and was the fault of the warder, who was discharged. He would now make some allusion to the remarks of the honorable member for Maryborough, that he (Mr. Ramsay) had laid too much stress on making the island remunerative. If he did not say so, he must have expressed himself very badly, for he was sure that he never thought the object of the establishment was to make it compete with the object for which it was intended. He believed first in punishment, and then in reform; and, therefore, he considered that men should be kept in strict confinement, and that any training or reform should be made subservient to that punishment. If there was any truth in the remark that the prisoners could conceal themselves in the canes, why then, of course, the canes would have to be cut.

Mr. WALSH said, in explanation, that when he left at the adjournment of the morning sitting, he sent the following telegram to Mr. McDonald at Lytton :—

"The Colonial Secretary has just stated in the House, that McDonald refused you a boat, and afterwards found it was to be used to take me oystering."

To that, the answer was—

"McDonald never refused me a boat, and on no occasion have I ever ordered one from the hullk to take you oystering."

He was quite sure that that gentleman had

been slandered, and that the House had not heard the last of it.

The question was then put and carried.

#### POLICE FORCE—REPORT OF COMMITTEE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY wished to know whether he would be in order in addressing himself to the above question, as he had been most grossly calumniated in reference to it, as also a gentleman who held a high position in the service of the Government.

The SPEAKER ruled that the Order of the Day was quite irregular, and quite at variance with the rules of the Parliament, as no progress report, not containing recommendations or something of the kind, could be discussed, nor evidence alluded to, until the full report and evidence were upon the table and in the hands of honorable members.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he must bow to the ruling of the Speaker, and was only happy to say that the evidence was in the hands of honorable members who could form their judgment upon its merits.

Mr. WALSH said he was quite aware that what had occurred would take place, but he would promise the Colonial Secretary that the whole matter would be brought up.

#### EXPORT OF MEAT.

Mr. BELL rose to move that the House do now proceed to consider the Legislative Council's message of the 24th instant, relative to the export of meat. In doing so, the honorable member stated that very great importance was attached to the question, when honorable members recollected that this colony produced an amount of sheep and cattle of which it was unable to dispose, unless through a system of utter waste of those articles of food; and when in Great Britain and Europe generally, there was a consumption of that enormous amount of meat which could be, and was produced here, there appeared to be in the face of the resolutions one step to bring about that which every colonist must desire to see. It was true that a great amount of talent had been brought to bear lately, on the subject of preserving meat, and in many parts of the world, many attempts had been made to establish a system by which meat could be exported to foreign parts—to Great Britain and elsewhere, and there was every probability of success being achieved. From the Australias, they were now exporting meat, and it would be of great advantage to the colonies as well as to the mother-country. Perhaps, honorable members might think that in the face of the great probability of success to which he had alluded being brought about, there was the less necessity for the resolutions they had now to discuss. But it must be recollected that, as far as the colony was concerned, however much the exportation of meat was established, unless this colony shared in it, they would not derive the benefit the other colonies

would enjoy. He thought the resolutions would go in that direction, because they would have the effect of establishing meat-preserving factories in the colony. The first resolution emanated from another place, in the year 1867, and was then brought forward in the form of resolutions, and he believed was sent down to that House; but through political excitement at the time, and the lateness of the session, the resolutions became numbered with the "Innocents" of the day, and never saw light since. But the effect of those resolutions, although not carried out, were of great advantage to the colony, because they found lately that one gentleman had been induced to look to the colony as a place where he could profitably carry out the object of those resolutions, and the process by which he intended to bring it into operation. That gentleman had subsequently exported a large quantity of meat from the colony. Now, that having taken place, he thought that the absolute passing of the resolutions would be of great advantage to the colony; and he was quite sure that few, if any, honorable members would be found to object to the principle contained in them. He had taken charge of them, and it would be his duty to support them in their entirety, as far as he could. He believed the question would be raised whether they were to have a retrospective effect or not; but he thought that had not much to do with the question before them, as no one yet had sent meat out of the colony in sufficient quantities to comply with the regulations. If it was the fact that some one had established a new process by which large quantities of meat would hereafter be exported, he thought that person had a right to come under the resolutions before the House. He was inclined to think that that was the object of those who assisted to pass the resolutions in another place, and of the mover of them. He thought it was mainly with the expectation of their being moved, that the gentleman he had referred to, Mr. Manning, had come to the colony at all. He (Mr. Bell) might have drawn up a resolution of a slightly different nature to those now before the House, as he would have made a separate bonus for uncooked meat sent to England in the carcass. That, he thought, would be a most important thing for the colony to achieve. As he said before, it was his duty to move the resolution, and he would now do so formally—

1. That in the opinion of this House, two thousand acres of land should be granted to the first person, or company, who proves to the satisfaction of the Governor in Council, that he, or they, have sold in Great Britain or Ireland, in a state fit for human food, one hundred tons of fresh uncooked meat, prepared and packed in Queensland.

2. That the person, or company, entitled to such grant should be allowed to select the land from any lands open to selection within the settled districts, or within an agricultural reserve.

3. That the Legislative Assembly be invited to concur in the foregoing resolutions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he was very glad to have had the opinion of the honorable member for Northern Downs on the subject, because he thought the honorable gentleman had put it in a light in which it would be clear to honorable members. There had been a report for some time abroad that a gentleman was on a visit to the colony with a view to commence preserving meat, but was waiting until the present resolutions were passed before he commenced operations. Before, however, he went into the question as to whether the resolutions should be retrospective or not, he might say that he most perfectly agreed with the object they had in view. He thought that when they took into consideration how the pastoral interest had recently suffered through the reduction in the price of wool, it was the duty of the Legislature to render them as productive as possible; and in carrying out the resolutions they would be carrying out the wish of the House as it had been expressed in regard to other industries. Although he was afraid that the resolutions could scarcely come within the provisions of a Bill which had recently been passed, yet, in order to give them effect, a Bill could be passed. He could not affirm the proposition that the Bill should be made retrospective, or that the gentleman to whom he had referred, should be entitled to come under their operation. He thought that no law should be forced back, but that whatever was to be done should date from the passing of the law. If those resolutions were to be of any effect, they should be thrown open to the whole colony, and not confined to one individual who, as they knew, would be in a position to derive the whole benefit, especially if the resolutions looked back. Then again, there was another question which had presented itself to his mind, and that was the quantity proposed to be exported, as he thought five hundred tons was hardly sufficient. He thought, if they were to give a thousand acres of land, the quantity of meat exported should be doubled; for instance, a man or company who could send home five hundred tons would be in a position to send home double that amount. With regard to the second resolution, which referred to agricultural areas, he might mention that they had been abolished since 1868, and therefore that part of the resolution should be struck out. With those observations, he thought that the resolutions would do a great deal of good, if altered in the way he had suggested. It would not be right for the House, however, to agree to them without knowing how far they were to be limited.

Mr. BELL explained that when he used the words "retrospective effect" he did not mean in date, but merely as regarded processes. That if a man had at any time gone into that occupation, and then commenced again, that then he should come under the resolutions.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL thought the

modification of the resolutions, by his honorable colleague, was very important, as he thought it would be unwise to grant privileges to persons already enjoying patents, in order that the competition might be open to all parties. Now it would not, according to the present resolutions, be open to all, except those who enjoyed an exclusive privilege. He hoped the honorable member for the Northern Downs would accept the alteration proposed by the Minister for Public Works. He believed honorable members all concurred with granting money or land, for the development of new industries; at any rate that had been the feeling during the present session; but they must be careful to see that they were not imposed upon.

Mr. RAMSAY would like to make one or two remarks in regard to the suggestion of the honorable the Minister for Public Works. He certainly did not think that a person having a patent should enjoy the advantages offered by the resolutions, unless he gave up his patent when he received the bonus. That, he thought, would be the best way of putting it, and he would agree to such an amendment. Then again, he would like to draw attention to the words "sold in Great Britain;" for how would that apply to Mr. Manning, who did not buy the stock, but merely prepared it at the request of the proprietors of the stock, and did not receive the money for the exports. He would like the House to consider that, as unless, indeed, a company, or private individual, bought the stock themselves, it would be hardly possible for any one to get the bonus. Then again, as regarded the blocks of land—a person must apply for so many blocks; but in his opinion it should be limited to so many selections. He doubted whether it would be advisable to restrict the resolutions to only one process in the colony, whilst there were so many in the other colonies. He thought so much land should be allowed for preserved uncooked meat, and so much for cooked meat, making the latter of less value than the former.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE thought that so long as things continued as they were, so long would such resolutions, as the present, receive the support of the Parliament, and he was very glad to see that they had been brought forward. He quite agreed with the honorable member for Northern Downs that a special bonus should be given for meat exported in the carcass; and he also thought that the suggestion of the honorable member, Mr. Ramsay, should be taken into consideration, and every care should be taken that no favor was shown to any particular individual. He had been informed that meat sent to England, in a cooked state, was not as acceptable as it would be in the manner proposed by the honorable member for Northern Downs.

Mr. FRASER presumed that the object of

the resolutions was to carry out the policy of the present session, namely the encouragement of native industries. If that was the case, the mode in which it was proposed to be done was open to grave objection. In the first place, he did not see why it should be restricted to meat sold in Great Britain and Ireland, nor why it should not be sold in other countries. Then, again, from the remarks which had been made, it was evident that the whole advantages would fall into the hands of one man. Why, it would be sufficient to induce a man of enterprise and capital to come to the colony, get the reward, and then leave it alone. He thought the resolutions should not be confined to one process or country, as then they would not meet the requirements of the country. As far as the colony was concerned, it might be a matter of very little interest whether the meat was sent home in a raw or cooked form; but, as regarded the English market, it would very soon correct itself. He thought that a bonus of two and a half per cent. should be granted for any meat sent out of the colony, whether raw or cooked. He thought something in that shape would meet the case very much better than the resolutions before the House.

Mr. GROOM was very much inclined to support the motion, as it was one similar in character to one of the measures passed in the preceding part of the day. He looked upon it as valuable, inasmuch as it would tend to still further open up communication with Great Britain. Still, he thought the present resolutions would not altogether meet the object to be attained, as, in point of fact, they were somewhat indefinite. The House, on a former occasion, intended that the subject should be embodied in a Bill, and he would move an amendment in the following form.

The amendment was afterwards withdrawn.

Mr. BELL thought that perhaps the honorable member who moved the amendment, would not object to an amendment on the original resolution, which he had drawn with the assistance of the honorable the Minister for Works.

Mr. GROOM consented to the proposition of the honorable member, and withdrew his amendment.

Mr. WALSH said he most decidedly objected to that portion which merely included cooked meat.

Mr. RAMSAY objected to the words "average quality," and thought it would be better to say, of a value of not less than 4½d per pound. Then again, instead of one block, he thought there should be two or three blocks. He also agreed with the honorable member for Maryborough, that there should not be any restriction as to the meat being cooked.

Mr. THOMPSON then moved the following resolutions, in lieu of that withdrawn by

the honorable member for Toowoomba, Mr. GROOM:—

1. That the question be amended by the omission of all the words following the word "land," in line 1, with a view to the insertion in their place of the following words, viz.:—"in one or two blocks, should be granted to the first person, or company, who proves to the satisfaction of the Governor in Council, that he, or they, have exported and sold in Great Britain or Ireland, at a price of not less than fourpence-halfpenny per pound, seven hundred and fifty tons of fresh uncooked meat, prepared and packed in Queensland, by a process not covered by a patent for the purpose; or if patented, when the holder is prepared to relinquish his right thereto, so far as Queensland is concerned. Such exportation is to take place from and after the date of the passing of these resolutions.

2. That the person, or company, entitled to such grant should be allowed to select the same in any part of the colony, under the Encouragement of Native Industries Bill of 1869.

The resolutions, as amended, were then put and carried.

The resolutions, amended as proposed, were agreed to, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, with the usual message.

#### LAND TAX.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of debate on Mr. Francis motion—

That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolutions, viz.:—

1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to impose a tax on all alienated lands;

2. That the proceeds of such tax should be applied in part to local public works, and in part to the renewal of European immigration,

Mr. ARCHER rose and said, it was now so long since this question was last before the House, that, though he intended to take part in the debate at the time, he had almost forgotten what he intended to say. Still, he remembered a few things that were in his mind at the time. He remembered that the honorable member who brought forward the resolutions, stated that he did not wish to levy a tax that would be heavy upon the owners of alienated lands, but rather desired to bring the principle of direct taxation to the door of every man. For his own part, he admired, in many ways, the theory of direct taxation, and he believed it would yet be found to be the only way by which the country would be satisfied in the matter of taxation. Still, he could see some obstacles to its practical application. The honorable member, Mr. Francis, stated that he only wanted to impose such a tax upon present alienated lands as would produce a revenue of £20,000 a year. Now he (Mr. Archer) found, from calculations, that, in order to produce that amount of revenue, in the way proposed, it would be necessary to impose a tax of fourpence an acre. Well, that might

not be a large amount upon lands alienated for sugar or cotton cultivation; but when they took into consideration that a large amount of the alienated lands of the colony were so exceedingly poor that the owners, though paying only at the rate of a farthing an acre for them, were scarcely able to make a living, he would like to know how it would be to their advantage to have to pay a tax of fourpence an acre. There were three classes of land in the colony—agricultural, and first and second class pastoral;—and he must deny that anyone having second class pastoral land could pay the amount of tax that would produce the revenue the honorable member for East Moreton desired to raise. The honorable the Attorney-General, in the course of the previous debate, stated that it would be unjust to put a tax upon lands that had been purchased under the idea that no land tax would be imposed; and, for his own part, he must say that he thought that was a very great objection to the resolutions before the House. The time might arrive when the country would be able to bear such a tax; but at a time when agriculturists and cotton-growers were coming to the House for bonuses, and when the people on the Downs were unable to dispose of their produce from the want of a railway to convey it to Brisbane, he did not think that it was a time when the owners of land would be benefited by a tax of the kind proposed. The honorable member must bring forward some scheme that had a better chance of working well, before he could support him. If the resolutions should be pressed to a division he must oppose them.

Mr. GROOM said that, as to the theory of the resolutions, he entirely agreed with them. In the excellent speech which the honorable member for East Moreton delivered, when introducing the resolutions, he adduced some good reasons for a tax of this kind being imposed when the colony was ripe for it. Those who had read the works of the great writers on political economy, would see that the theory of direct taxation was admitted by them to be a good one; and he thought the time was not far distant when the House would be called upon to reduce the theory to practice, to some extent. The honorable member proposed, in the second of his resolutions, that the proceeds of the tax should be applied, in part, to local public works, and in part to the renewal of European immigration. So far as local public works were concerned, he apprehended that the honorable member more particularly referred to the construction and maintenance of the roads and bridges in different districts of the colony. Now, he had a considerable amount of communication with farmers and others throughout the colony, and he found that there was almost a unanimity of feeling amongst them, in favor of a small tax being placed upon the land, provided that, whatever they submitted to in that way, should be

supplemented by the Government, from the general revenue. There was no doubt that the principle was a good one, and was working well, wherever it was in force. At the time the agitation took place in New Zealand, about eighteen months ago, for the abolition of Provincial Councils, the general opinion of most members of the New Zealand Parliament, who were not interested in the Provincial Councils, and who, therefore, could express a disinterested opinion, was in favor of the adoption of the system in force in Canada, where an Act was in force of the same kind as that referred to in the resolutions now before the House. The provisions of the Act did not extend to immigration, because that was a matter which the Government of the Dominion of Canada reserved to itself. In Canada, the local taxation was supplemented from the general revenue. The scheme proposed by Mr. Stafford, in New Zealand, however, was the one that he would agree with; and he thought that, next session, the Government, whoever might occupy the Treasury benches, would find it necessary to propose some such scheme for this colony. The scheme of Mr. Stafford was, that every £1 raised by local taxation should be supplemented by £2 from the general revenue. He was afraid that, to that extent, the scheme would not be carried out here, and that the House, generally, as well as the Government, would be opposed to it. He thought, however, that the scheme shadowed forth in the Municipal Institutions Act was a good one for adoption—by which the Government supplemented the amount raised by local taxation, by an equal amount, for so many years; then reduced it by one-half, afterwards, to one-third, and so on till it was found that the municipality could carry on without such aid. Some such scheme as that, he thought, would answer very admirably in this colony. At this late period of the session, however, he did not think the House should be asked to assent to any resolutions of the kind. He had no doubt the honorable member for East Moreton had merely tabled the resolutions with the view of taking ulterior action upon them; and he sympathised with him; for he believed from what he had read on the subject, that the principle of direct taxation was a good one. As far as he understood the honorable member, his object was to impose a tax upon alienated lands, with the view of putting down, what he considered to be, land monopoly. To impose a tax upon alienated lands might possibly prevent monopoly in some respects; but he did not think that such would be the effect of the scheme as proposed by the honorable member; because he did not see that every land monopolist would object to the payment of the tax, when he knew that the money was to be spent in improving the roads around his property. He did not, therefore, think that the system would have the effect of putting down land

monopoly. In principle, however, he agreed with the resolutions, and he believed that before long the House would be asked to give its attention to some scheme of the kind. He knew that in the district of Drayton and Toowoomba, and, he had no doubt, in other districts, the roads were in a most deplorable state. He believed that in order to put the roads in his district in a proper state of repair, not less than £15,000 or £20,000 would be necessary. In some places the people dared not move out after dark in case of serious accident happening to them. He was lately reading an interesting account of a public meeting at Maryborough, where a petition was adopted, for the honorable member for that constituency to present to the House, respecting the necessity for the repair of the roads and bridges of the district. Now, if the honorable member for Maryborough were to ask for any thing at all, he would require, in the opinion of his constituents, to ask for £20,000 for the works deemed to be absolutely necessary in the district. It was, however, impossible to carry out the desires of every honorable member, or of every constituency. If the Government would bring in a measure for the establishment of road boards, which had been attended with the greatest success in Victoria, the House would be saved a considerable amount of time and trouble in attending to applications for grants for local works. As he had already stated, he agreed in theory with the resolutions before the House; but he hoped the honorable member would withdraw them, after obtaining the expression of honorable members, either for or against them.

Mr. FRANCIS, in reply, said he did not wish to thrust his dullness on an unwilling audience; and, as he stated on the previous night, he had no wish to be there at all on this evening. Besides, he thought he would be exceeding his privilege of reply if he were to detain the House at any length on the present occasion, for he felt that he had really nothing to reply to. In bringing forward the resolutions some months ago, he anticipated every one of the objections that had been urged against them. It had been said that, in theory, he was all right, but that the resolutions were not practicable. Now, in reply to that, he would just say one word, and that was—that he thought there was no other way of improving their practice than by bringing it into harmony with sound theory. When they arrived at a sound theory they should adopt it as a guide for the doing of that which might improve their practice. Again, it had been said, that the time might come when the scheme embodied in the resolutions might be carried out; but the honorable the Premier had said the same thing nine years ago—for he was then in favor of the principle. Now, he must say, in reply to that view, that, in his own opinion, there was no time like the present time. What were the difficulties in

the way of their adopting those resolutions, and founding on them some practicable measure? Simply, that it seemed to be difficult to deal justly with the lands alienated, because of the different prices that had been paid for lands in this colony. Well, he would admit that it might be a matter of difficulty to arrive at a fair arrangement on that account; but, at the same time, it seemed to him that an arrangement might be made that would be just and equitable to the colony. Now, it was the future they had to do with at the present time; and, it must be apparent to every one, that if they went on alienating lands, there would never again be a time when there would be as few difficulties in the way of carrying out the propositions contained in his resolutions as the present. The difficulties must go on increasing. What he wanted was, that it should be affirmed, that, in the opinion of the House, alienated lands should be subject to a tax, or quit rent, or cess—or something of that kind. The honorable member for Rockhampton had said that, to raise £20,000 per annum from alienated lands would necessitate a tax of fourpence an acre—but, he did not mean that there should be a uniform rate. While, for lands that were sold at half-a-crown an acre, there might be a rate of fourpence an acre charged, lands that were sold at five shillings an acre, would be subject to only half that rate; and lands that were sold at twenty shillings an acre, would properly be assessed at a penny an acre.

Mr. WALSH said, he thought the honorable member was not altogether in order. In his reply, he was introducing new matter. If he had heard those observations before, he might have addressed himself to them.

Mr. FRANCIS said, he was not referring to any observations that had been made by the honorable member for Maryborough, but to some remarks that were made by the honorable member for the Western Downs, and he could assure the House that he had no wish to introduce new matter, nor did he see there was any necessity for his doing so. The honorable member for the Western Downs had raised some objections to the resolutions, and he was now wishing to explain how those objections could be met by his proposal—which he thought could be made fair and equitable. He held that there was a great practical value in the resolutions, and that they were adaptable to the present circumstances of the colony. As had been mentioned by the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba, he had referred, on a former occasion, to the large amount of land that had been acquired by land monopolists, who did not put the land to the best uses to which it might be put; and he thought that the imposition of such a tax as he proposed might have some effect in putting a stop to that. But there was something more important still, and that was, that the revenue so raised, if applied in

the way he proposed, would provide better roads and bridges than they had at the present time; and would produce many other improvements that were highly necessary. What was the reason that the Provincial Councils Act, upon the statute-book, was, at the present time, a dead letter? Simply, because there were no funds to give it vitality? Now, the adoption of those resolutions, would supply that want; and, he maintained that the adoption of a scheme founded on those resolutions, would have a very powerful effect in supplying the just demands of the outside districts. He was prepared to withdraw the resolutions, if it was the wish of the House that he should do so. He had desired to say what his opinions were upon the subject; and, that the resolutions should be fully discussed. He had expected to be supported by one or two honorable members who were not now present, but, as he had no wish to lengthen the evening's sitting, he would now, with the leave of the House, withdraw the resolutions.

Leave having been given, the resolutions were withdrawn.

#### CONSTITUTION ACT OF 1867 AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. FORBES, in moving the second reading of a Bill for the Amendment of the Constitution Act of 1867, said, he would just formally move the second reading; and, would reserve any remarks he might have to make to a later period of the evening.

Mr. GROOM said that he scarcely thought any honorable member should move the second reading of so important a Bill as this, without some explanation. He thought the House ought to be told what the Bill was for. He understood it was proposed by this Bill to repeal the most important clause in the Constitution Act—the two-thirds clause—and therefore he should have liked to hear some reasons advanced in support of the proposition. If the Bill were pressed to a division he would vote for the second reading; and he believed that, if anything more than another would induce him to vote for it, it would be the action that was taken by certain honorable members on the occasion of the second reading of the Additional Members Bill. It was found that those gentlemen who enjoyed more representation than they were entitled to combined to defeat a measure which, he considered, proposed a very fair instalment of justice towards a large number of districts that were at present unrepresented. Now, he would like to know what there was to prevent a similar combination of the House, next session, if the Government should come down with another Bill of the kind. It had been stated that they ought to be very cautious in passing a Bill of this kind, at present. In New South Wales, when the question was first raised, a great many honorable members hesitated as to whether it

would be judicious or wise to repeal the two-thirds clause; but, afterwards, they came to have no hesitation about it—because of a section of the House refusing to consent to the amendment of any part of the constitution. Now, this session, they had had here the same result as took place in New South Wales; and, therefore, he thought the honorable member was quite right in bringing forward this Bill for the decision of the House upon the question. He thought, also, it was necessary that the Bill should be passed this session, because, he believed, it would have to be sent home for the royal assent, before it could be of any value here. If it was necessary that such a measure should be passed before an Additional Members Bill could be passed, it was necessary that it should be passed now, so that, during the recess, the Bill might be sent home for the royal assent. An Additional Members Bill could then be introduced next session with some prospect of its being carried into law. He thought it was admitted by a majority of the House that there was an urgent necessity for an Additional Members Bill, and for a Redistribution Bill. There could be no doubt that West Moreton, as including Ipswich, was altogether over-represented, in proportion to other districts of the colony; but he was sure the honorable members for West Moreton and Ipswich would not consent to any measure of representation that would reduce their influence in the House; and there was, therefore, a strong probability that, if this Bill should not be carried, the representatives of those districts would unite to prevent either a Redistribution Bill, or an Additional Representation Bill, being carried next session. Rather than trust to the sense of justice of those honorable members he would support the second reading of the Bill before the House. He was firmly persuaded in his own mind that a Bill of the kind was absolutely required. He was not sufficiently conversant with the laws of the State, to be able to say if the very lengthy preamble to the Bill was necessary, but, probably, the honorable the Premier would inform the House on the subject. So far as the first clause of the Bill was concerned, which proposed the repeal of the two-thirds clause of the Constitution Act, he would support the measure; for he held it was absolutely necessary there should be increased representation; and he did not see there was any likelihood of a measure for increased representation being passed, so long as the two-thirds clause remained unrepealed.

Mr. THOMPSON said he intended to oppose the Bill, as he regarded the two-thirds clause as one of the few safeguards they possessed against rash innovations. It appeared to him, in the first place, that they could not even carry the Bill now before the House to-night, because, as he maintained, it required a majority of two-thirds to carry it. [Cries of "No, no."] He thought that remark would

be met with cries of "No, no;" but he believed would be able to show that the Bill did require a majority of two-thirds to carry it. It was admitted that this was a step necessary towards the carrying of a Bill requiring a majority of two-thirds to carry it; and the section which it was proposed to repeal, said—

"Provided always that it shall not be lawful to present to the Governor of the colony for Her Majesty's assent any Bill by which the number or apportionment of representatives in the Legislative Assembly may be altered unless the second and third readings of such Bill in the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly respectively shall have been passed with the concurrence of a majority of the members for the time being of the said Legislative Council and of two-thirds of the members for the time being of the said Legislative Assembly and the assent of Her Majesty shall not be given to any such Bill unless an address shall have been presented by the Legislative Assembly to the Governor stating that such Bill has been so passed."

Now, this was the first step towards such an alteration; and unless they held that this clause of the Constitution Act could not be repealed, except by a two-thirds majority, there was no use for the proviso, because the object could be accomplished by the suspension of the standing orders. He should certainly oppose the Bill, for he was not inclined to trust the constitution of the colony to a bare majority of honorable members of that House. Besides, he thought it was hardly the proper time, at that late period of the session, to bring forward a measure of such importance. It would not be possible to obtain for it that due consideration to which it was entitled. Honorable members were all anxious to go away, and the House was not in a humor to discuss so important a matter. What he thought was most wanted in the House was, as has been remarked by the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Francis, more deliberation; and, therefore, he considered that anything that stood in the way of precipitate action ought to be supported. He should certainly support the maintenance of the two-thirds clause, and would, consequently, vote against the present Bill.

Mr. WALSH considered that a Bill of this nature was one of such grave importance that he doubted very much, if it should be introduced by a private member, at all. If the two-thirds clause were done away with there would be an alteration of the Constitution every time that it might be considered desirable, by either party in the House, for merely party purposes, to have such a change. He maintained that honorable members were not sent there to tamper with the constitution but to legislate, under it, for the good of the colony. An important measure of this kind ought, also, he thought, to receive the attention of the Government; and he altogether objected to a matter of such importance

being brought forward by a private member, and without the House receiving the least information from the Government as to what were their intentions respecting it. He thought that, after the measure had been introduced to the House, the honorable the Premier ought to have stated what were the views of the Government on the question; but neither the honorable gentleman, nor any of his colleagues, had risen to do so. Ministers seemed to sit complacently on the Treasury benches when measures of importance were brought forward by private members till they ascertained what was the feeling of the House upon them—and then they stated whether they would support them or not. He did not suppose the honorable member expected to be able to carry the Bill, this session; and, from what he knew of the honorable member, he doubted very much if he would like to carry a measure of such importance at this period of the session, and in such a thin House. He thought that honorable members should refuse to discuss a measure of so grave a nature as this, until the Government had informed the House of their views upon it, and what they intended to do respecting it. For his own part, he entirely concurred in the opinion expressed by the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Thompson, that the Bill before the House could not be passed but by a majority of two-thirds of the whole House; and considering the small number of members now present, he thought it would be a piece of folly to go into the merits of the question at all. He regretted to find that honorable members on the Opposition side of the House had had to take precedence of the members of the Government in expressing their views upon the measure.

The Hon. R. PRING said the matter was one of grave importance, and it would have been better if so grave a question had been debated in a full House. He did not know how the Government viewed this Bill, but if he had to offer an opinion on the necessity or not of two-thirds of the House voting for the passing of this Bill, in order to pass it, he should decidedly say it was not required. He had considered this question for years past, and was under the apprehension some short time ago that the Imperial statute of 1865 had re-enacted the clauses which provided that a majority of two-thirds was necessary to pass such a Bill. But upon a careful perusal and consideration of the law he found he had been mistaken. They must fall back on the twenty-second clause of the Orders in Council. The Imperial authorities meant nothing more than that alteration of the constitution should be effected by two-thirds until the legislation took place provided for by the twenty-second clause. It gave the House full power to alter any of the preceding clauses. Some proviso would have been inserted in the twenty-second Order in Council if it had

been required that a two-thirds majority should agree to the repeal of the clauses sought to be repealed by the Bill. His view was, that the Imperial authority gave power to repeal them in the same way as other matters, but until the Act passed, the constitution was to remain in force. He hardly thought it advisable, at the end of the session, to say the Bill should pass; but that was not because he thought it could not be passed by a mere majority. He did not base his opinion upon the fact that a similar measure was passed there without two-thirds of the House being required for a majority, because that measure was passed there with the full concurrence of the whole House, and the question was not raised. They had no precedent to guide them. What was done must be done by themselves, based upon the best arguments ruling a majority of the House. It perhaps would be expedient, under the circumstances, if it passed, to send it home. Whether the Speaker would be in a position to present it to the Governor, or the Governor be willing to assent to it, were among the difficulties which might require it to be sent home for the royal assent. In that way, they would be taking the highest legal opinion, and show that they were anxious to do that which was legal and right under all circumstances.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he thought there was hardly any necessity for the observations of the honorable member for Maryborough as to the assumed silence of himself on this matter. Not many days ago he had given his opinion that the time had not yet come for the repeal of these clauses, and he thought he had said enough to show that he would not support the Bill. Certainly it would be almost impossible to make any change in the distribution of the representatives until the two-thirds clause of the Constitution Act had been repealed. Except by joint consent, or by what was known as "log-rolling," they could get nothing like a modification of the representation. It became a question whether the House was not growing into an oligarchy. And an oligarchy it would become, if they did not change and redistribute the electorates; for by-and-bye the vast mass of the colony would not be represented in the House. If they had obstinate legislators, they would always have the barrier of the two-thirds clause. This was called a safeguard, and so on; and it was also said to occasion that deliberation of which the honorable member for East Moreton was so fond. "This occasions deliberation," was an argument that might be used with regard to every measure of importance. In dealing with the waste lands of the Crown, a matter of the highest importance, they dealt with them by a mere majority. The same was true with statutes imposing the utmost penalties, and the punishment of death. They dealt with these by a majority; why not also with the constitution, subject to the revision and control of the executive power at home. He

was inclined to think that the time must come when this two-thirds clause must give way. He had not yet fully made up his mind that the time had yet arrived. He did remember when this two-thirds clause was a safeguard in the Queensland parliament. At that time he had great fear, indeed, for the result of the division, and he was satisfied that, if two-thirds majority could have been had at that time, the result would have been disastrous in the extreme. He felt, then, that it had been a safeguard, and had been cautious ever since against rushing too hastily to repeal this proviso. But, when the time was ripe, the two-thirds clause must go, otherwise there could be no alteration for the better in the representation. However, he had no intention to vote for the Bill, on the present occasion. They ought to have a fuller House to pass it, and it was not fair to take advantage of a thin attendance to do so. He had a feeling towards the repeal, but he should like the fullest expression of opinion from every member of the House, before it was repealed. Holding those views, he would not support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. FRANCIS said it was rather good of the Premier to tell the House that he required time and deliberation to make up his mind with reference to this matter. His mind had been made up long enough about it. The Premier himself admitted that he knew quite well that no measure of reform was possible without this Bill. The honorable gentleman reached the Treasury benches by professing to be in favor of representative reform, and, when he was there, told the House he would require much time to make up his mind about the repeal of a clause preventing it. It could not be denied by anyone that the repeal of the two-thirds clause was an essential prerequisite to any measure of reform. Honorable gentlemen on one side of the House were quite as clear sighted as those on the other. It was no use to suppose, then, that one side of the House could outwit the other. This game had been played too long; it was played out. It showed no honesty to refuse to see the necessity of the repeal of this two-thirds clause. There was no constitution in the world which contained this clause.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In America.

Mr. FRANCIS: In no other part of the British dominions was there any such clause recognised. The people of Queensland were competent to do as they liked with the law, and that House was in the place of the people. Supposing they had not the power to repeal the clause, the suggestion of the honorable member for the Burnett should be taken, and the Bill should be sent home, at once. If they did not take this step, they proved they were not in earnest when they pretended to wish for reform. No, the Ministry showed that they preferred to sit upon those benches in dishonor, to taking their proper places as the leaders of the people. He was glad that

the honorable member had persisted in bringing forward this Bill, even when every one was aware, and felt in himself, that he was taking part in a farce, because there was was no representation of the people, and that they might as well go home for all the good that was done. It was much to the honorable member's credit. The Bill had been on the paper for many months, and it did the honorable member much credit. If the honorable member only got two or three honorable members to stand by him, that night, he prophesied he would get double the number on another occasion. No important measure had ever been carried yet, except in the face of an objection on the part of honorable gentlemen who did not think it was yet quite time, and nobody knew what the consequences might be. He had no fear of the consequences. They were able to pass far more perilous measures than that. Those fears were altogether chimerical. He did not care whether the people living in East Moreton, or elsewhere, would obtain the balance of power, by electoral reform. But, honorable members, in their fear that the balance of power should be against them, were content to depart from principle. Honorable members must meet the question manfully. The House represented the people, it should do so fairly. He wished to see no more such useless sessions as the present would prove to be.

Mr. HALY said, that the honorable member had the evidence of Victoria, to show there were members in the House there, not fit to sit in it; because, they were proved to be corrupt and to have received bribes; and, it was chiefly from the repeal of this two-thirds clause. Did the honorable member want the same thing in Queensland? They had not enough demagogues here to excite the honorable member for East Moreton's talent in the House. He could assure the honorable member, that he had been in Victoria, which was a much more populated colony than this, and yet he had heard a great deal better debates in the House here, and on the very same subject, than any he had heard there. If the honorable member had only known, and considered, what had taken place there, he would certainly not have talked so rashly. That honorable member's common sense would have told him that the two-thirds clauses being repealed had been the main cause of this. He was strongly in favor of the two-thirds clause, and would oppose its repeal. But, he had no objection to debate its repeal, in a full House. He had talked with several gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, who were doubtful whether the two-thirds clause should be repealed. In a full House, it would be decided fairly, whether the repeal would be a benefit to Queensland, or not. He had no hesitation in saying, that it would be no benefit. If the honorable member would say that representation should be by adult male population, he would

have a strong support, and could redistribute the electorates in a fair and proper manner. But, if women and children, and orphans, and paupers, were to be represented, then, they would not be dealing rightly. There were eight hundred people who received relief from the Government, and those would then be represented. He only hoped that the honorable member would withdraw this motion. He, for one, sooner than see that Bill come to a division, would walk out, and make no House—a thing which he had never done before. They might distribute the members among the electorates, without the repeal of the two-thirds clause, if the Government would only bring in a reasonable Bill, and not devote more members to East and West Moreton, and Ipswich. As it was, the great question raised was, whether Ipswich and West Moreton should have more members than East Moreton and Brisbane? That was the question at present; and it was only a petty question. He took it, that the Premier was quite right in trying not to abolish the two-thirds clause.

Mr. FORBES said that the course he had taken was the course taken in the House of Commons. At the time of the general election, he had promised his constituents that he would introduce this Bill, and satisfied them that it was impossible to get reform until this two-thirds clause had been repealed. The better portion of the constituency agreed with him upon that subject. The many unsuccessful attempts made already at reform, showed it was impracticable, with the two-thirds clause in existence. Upon what grounds could he be charged with insincerity of purpose in dealing with this question? Last session, the first motion that was tabled was for the introduction of this Bill. It was a subject which he had watched with much care and interest, ever since Separation. At one time, when the honorable Premier wooed the sweet voices of Fortitude Valley, some nine years back, the pledge given was to restore to the people the rights of which they had been robbed by the Constitution Act. Now, the honorable gentleman seemed to adhere to this Constitution Act as one pre-eminently better than any other in the colonies. How often had the honorable gentleman declared against the two-thirds clause?—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. FORBES: That it was incompetent for a House composed of one-third nominees and two-thirds elective, to pass a Constitution Act for a representative body. The first step taken in New South Wales against this was by public meetings, at which the framers of this constitution were declaimed against; and it was resolved at public meetings, in all parts of that colony, that the first step taken should be the repeal of these clauses. That accounted for the unanimity spoken of by the honorable and learned member for the Burnett. He had always been satisfied that

the honorable member, Mr. Pring, deemed no more than a majority of the House requisite to repeal the two-thirds clause. Many attempts at parliamentary reform, here, had failed, owing to this stumbling-block. In 1863, the Additional Members Bill lapsed, through the impossibility of getting two-thirds majority in its favor. In 1862, a Bill introduced by the Minister for Works, lapsed for the same reason. An electoral Bill, introduced by Mr. Herbert, lapsed for the same reason; and two or three other Bills. All had lapsed by this stumbling-block in the constitution. He believed most of the country's grievances, and the burdens the colony had suffered from, were traceable to the unworkable constitution they had owing to this clause, which bound them to a certain position, and took from them all expression of the will of the people. It must be, and it has been admitted on all hands, frequently, that the Elections Act, the Electoral Districts Act, and Legislative Assembly Act, required alteration. Only the other night an elections Bill was introduced, and the present Act admitted to be imperfect. But that was but a tinkering attempt at electoral reform, and there was no sincerity connected with it. If the Government were sincere on the subject of electoral reform, they ought to assist him in passing this Bill. He could say, without fear of contradiction, that any member opposed to the repeal of this clause was opposed to any electoral reform. The great questions upon which Governments have failed to hold the confidence of the country have been connected with electoral reform. It was this stumbling-block of the two-thirds clause which prevented Governments from coming forward and saying "This is our policy; this our reform for the people." Until the Government were placed in such a position that they must either stand or fall by their measures, the country could have no responsible or party Government: and this two-thirds clause prevented that. Meanwhile, they had little measures of reform talked about, and it was, perhaps, wise to make an Additional Members Bill every year;—a Bill for one constituency one year, and, next session, a Bill for a member to represent another portion of the colony. But this was not a statesman-like way of dealing with a question of so much interest to the whole colony. Until the Government of the day, be they whom they may, were placed in a position, by this repeal, to make reform a measure upon which they could appeal to the country, they would never have any parliamentary Government, in the true sense of the word. He had been pleased to hear the speech of the honorable and learned member for the Burnett, as showing a great desire to effect good in a quarter where it should be looked for. He stated that there was no precedent to determine that a two-thirds majority was requisite. He thought that the advice given

by the honorable and learned member was good, and that it should be well received in the House. Certainly, it would be well received by the country that they should pass the Bill through its second reading; and if it passed both Houses and were sent to England for the royal assent, the colony would then have its eyes opened to its political position, and be ready to amend the constitution for the benefit of generations yet to come. It was very well for honorable members to say this matter required deliberation. If any fault could be found, it was that the distance between the notice and the time for the deliberation had been so great. The honorable Premier had told them that his mind was not yet made up as to the desirability of repealing this two-thirds clause. In the years 1860 and 1861 that honorable gentleman often declared his mind was fully made up as to its desirability—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL explained that the honorable gentleman was entirely mistaken. He had frequently expressed, in private and public, a similar hesitation to that he had given utterance to, that night, with respect to the repeal of the two-thirds majority clause. He believed the colony had escaped danger by the existence of that proviso.

Mr. FORBES: The blushing pages of that time would show a different record.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he must explain, as the honorable member was still wrong. His constituents were deprived, by an erroneous opinion of the present Chief Justice of New South Wales, of their full rights. The Chief Justice was of opinion that the Suffrage Act in this colony was to be carried out under the unreformed system of New South Wales. On the other hand, he considered it was entitled to the suffrage given in the reformed Act of New South Wales. In speaking to his constituents, he said he would do what he could to restore these rights, of which they had been wrongly deprived. He had no intention to get a new enactment, but simply the rights of which they had been deprived by the Chief Justice of New South Wales.

Mr. FORBES: At any rate, the effect had not followed upon the purpose of the honorable gentleman, and the people still have a muffled voice in the Legislature. So long as it was so, so long would the people continue to be the most unhappy colony of the whole Australian group. The American constitution had been alluded to as having these checks in existence. It was Washington's aim, after the Declaration of Independence, to remove these checks upon the constitution. He had quoted, the other night, a letter from Maddison upon the subject, where he said those persons opposed to giving Congress unlimited powers must have forgotten what their own interests and the interests of that

country were. He paid every respect to the honorable member for the Burnett, Mr. Haly, for his outspoken and candid expression of opinions to the House, but really they would have but little effect upon him in the course he should pursue. That honorable member adduced the colony of Victoria, to dissuade them from altering the constitution. But there might be something in the constitution of Victoria which required amendment. The people there were in a position in which the Queensland people were not : because the former could amend their constitution. Every other constitution in all the colonies was free from this check, and gave the power to remedy any evils inherent in them. It was not so in Queensland. Let them assent to the Bill, seeing that it was their duty to remedy the defects in their own constitution ; and this Bill giving power to do so, the House should gladly assent to it. That one cause why this two-thirds clause was not repealed, arose from the narrow jealousies of the different constituencies, he freely admitted. He was sorry that the people had so far forgotten their political rights as to lose sight of the general interests of the colony, for the supposed interest of some small constituencies. The people of the colony could not know and feel their power, politically, so long as they were under a constitution so narrow and so incapable of expansion as the constitution was. It had been asserted that this two-thirds clause was the bulwark of their constitution. Could anything be more ridiculous and more puerile ? Had such assertions been borne out by any reasoning or by facts ? No. It was bare assertion without argument. One man's assertion was not better than another's unless backed by reason or founded on facts. Was such a clause the bulwark of the constitution in other colonies ? Had not those colonies succeeded better without this check, as forming an element in their constitution. He must excuse himself from entertaining any desire to take advantage of a late period in the session to bring this question forward. It would have been much more desirable for him, for his country, and for the House, that this important matter should have been discussed five months ago. He felt the lateness of the session put him in an awkward position. Although the question was one of great magnitude, still it was quite competent for the House to deal with it, if a quorum were present. If they accepted the advice of the honorable and learned member for the Burnett, it was a fitting time for the second reading of this Bill. And if the second reading were on this occasion assented to by honorable members, they would never have to regret the step now taken, for the remainder of their existence.

Mr. THOMPSON called attention to the state of the House, which, in the absence of a quorum, was adjourned by the Speaker.