

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 7 JULY 1870

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 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 7 July, 1870.

Address in Reply—Resumption of Debate.

 ADDRESS IN REPLY—RESUMPTION OF
DEBATE.

The Address (p. 19) and the amendment (p. 29) were read.

Question—

“That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question.”

Mr. WILLIAMS said he should support the Government most decidedly on this occasion. He should endeavor to make his reasons as plain as he possibly could; but before he entered on his speech, he appealed to the House to bear with him as tenderly as they could, inasmuch as he was suffering from an affection over which he had no control, and which would prevent his dealing with the subject as it deserved. He should first say a few words with reference to the vote he gave to turn out the late Government. He had no sympathy whatever with the speech that was made by the honorable member for Northern Downs, nor with the sentiments expressed by him; and he did not give his vote on that occasion against the then Premier, but against the late Government, because he believed that they were unfit to govern the country; and he was still of the same opinion. He was surprised, astonished, knowing as he did the character of the honorable member for Northern Downs, to see him, after the extraordinary speech made by him on that occasion, take the position he occupied to-day. He should like to know what induced him to sit on the Opposition side of the House, after his extraordinary speech against the most sinless of the late Government. He looked upon the honorable member for Fortitude Valley as the most sinless man of the bad lot associated with him; and, because they were a bad lot, he had been very glad to vote against them

under any circumstances. He hoped that the honorable member for Northern Downs would explain his conduct: it was contradictory; it rendered his speech a nullity, of no effect; and, whether he was temporising with his constituents or not, it was the most inexplicable thing that he ever heard of or looked upon. The late Premier was the very best man, and beyond comparison with his colleagues, of the late Government. With reference to the steamer and the school questions for which, it was said, the honorable member had been found fault with in the Governor's Speech, he (Mr. Williams) stated candidly that, knowing what he did of him, if he could believe in his heart that the reference to them was intended as a slur upon the honorable member, he would go over to the Opposition and vote with them. He believed now, that he honorable member's action in regard to the steamer was a statesmanlike one; it was an action that none but a statesman could take or contemplate; and he had reason to believe—he thought he might say, he knew it—that the honorable member acted in opposition to the views of his colleagues—but, for expediency sake, they agreed with him! The honorable member for Fortitude Valley had proved himself a statesman by taking the action that he did take, not only in reference to the steamer, but also in giving free education to the children of the colony. He (Mr. Williams) gloried in the man; and he regretted extremely that he (Mr. Lilley) could not see his way clear to coming over to the men who did not abuse him. He was unable to be present at the opening of Parliament, to hear His Excellency the Governor deliver his Speech; but, as soon as he arrived in Brisbane, he made it his business to find out what sort of a Speech it was. He had read it over very carefully, more than once, to see whether, after a night's sleeping on it, he could come to any different conclusion from that he at first formed; and he now told the House fearlessly that it was one of the best speeches ever put into the Governor's mouth since Queensland was a colony. It did not promise so much, but only what the Government meant to carry out. The Governors' Speeches that Parliament had hitherto heard, were a lot of fulsome bunkum—blatherskiting—things, promises that the Government had no more intention of carrying out than he had of flying to the moon. The present Speech had nothing in it but what was reasonable, and what, under reasonable circumstances, could be carried out. It did not suggest the carrying of a railway from one end of Australia to the other, through this colony, to the Gulf of Carpentaria! Supposing the honorable member for Eastern Downs was Premier, the House would have seen a paragraph in the Speech to the effect that His Excellency's Advisers recommended that a line of railway from the southern to the northern extremity of the colony should be made. But would he ever carry it out?

Nothing of the kind: it was all bunkum. Who were the men of progression?—the men who promised everything, and whose propositions were those of madmen, which could not be carried out; or the men who proposed little, and only what they could carry out? None but lunatics would pretend to the extravagant opinions advanced by some gentlemen who came forward as advocates of a progressive policy. There was no progress in bunkum; and nearly all the speeches the House had heard from the Opposition were bunkum. He did not think it would be necessary for him to go through the Opening Speech, clause by clause; there was none of it that he could find fault with, according to his own interpretation. He did not accept the interpretation put upon it by honorable members of the Opposition. He approved of the Speech, and he would support the general carrying of it out. He wanted to know what the Opposition was about? He asked the honorable member for Eastern Downs what it was about? He asked him, as a man, was it not that he wanted a thousand a year? Was there a single clause in the Governor's Speech that he could object to? He had made a lot of amendments; there was not a principle in them that he could carry out; and what was the use of wasting the time of honorable members over them? The Opposition had taken a personal turn, and it was of a most improper character. He (Mr. Williams) said so advisedly; and he hoped the day was not far distant when the conduct of honorable members who instigated and led that Opposition would be hurled in their teeth! They were not worthy of the Government. The Opposition had nothing to do with the demerits or merits of the present Ministry, about whose character as men and statesmen not a word was said. Its promoters were actuated purely by factious, personal, determinedly selfish motives, for the sake of office and a thousand a year, and nothing else. When he first had the honor of a seat in the House, he allied himself with what was called "the great liberal party"; and, now, he stood self-convicted of having been a fool; for, of all the counterfeits he ever met with in the whole course of his life, that so-called liberal party was the greatest. He believed he was always and was still a liberal, and he had associated himself with them because they called themselves liberals; but what did he find?—that they were liberal only in abuse; they were committed to prodigality, pledged to spend the people's money. What they called liberality, he called, in mildest language, prodigality. It would be in the memory of honorable members, that before he was in the House six months, he found he was in bad company—that he was in the wrong shop; he found that his allies were the gentlemen from the northern districts: the liberal party were so clever, it took him six months to find that out. He

had had enough of them; he was disgusted with them; he had found them out, and he now discarded them. He did not want them to vote with the Government; he, as a ministerial supporter, would rather be quit of them; he should not appeal to them. Let them vote where they were. He hoped what he was saying would not only go to his own constituents, but to the constituents of the honorable members for East Moreton, who did not represent them; to the constituents of the honorable members for Brisbane, who did not represent them; to the constituents of the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba, who did not represent them. The present Government were the first, since Separation, that recognised the wants of the farmers of Queensland; not by blowing and blatherskiting, as the honorable member for Eastern Downs would do, but in a tangible shape: they had come down to ask the House to go in for a loan of £50,000, to enable the farmers, not only in East and West Moreton, but in all Queensland, to bring their produce to market. Did ever any Premier offer that before? Yet the Government were called "pure merino." They were the best supporters of agriculture the country ever had. There were no farmers on the Opposition. One reason why he would support the Government was, their recognition of the agricultural interest; and he would do all he could to keep them in the position they occupied. He supposed he need not say anything about their personal character; but, he supposed that it stood as good as that of any other four or five gentlemen who ever occupied seats in the House. It had been hinted to him that there were men better qualified—he did not know whether morally or socially; but he did not care how. First of all, he would go to the Premier. Did any one in the House ever hear a more manly and straightforward speech than his exposition of the policy of his Government? Was there any buncum about that? Was there any blowing or beating about the bush for popularity sake? No. For his merits as a statesman, every honorable member should support him, and for his plain, practical speech, the House must respect him. Then, there was the Treasurer. He (Mr. Williams), knew as little about him, perhaps, as he did about anybody in the House. His manner, he would not say it was attractive, but it certainly was not repulsive; and the way in which he carried out his part of the programme was such as must have commended itself to those who were going to vote against him on the present occasion. He knew exactly how they were all going to vote; but it could not be said by those adverse to the Government, that their opposition was in consequence of any failure on the part of the honorable the Colonial Treasurer to make himself understood. Although his honorable friend and

colleague (the Secretary for Public Lands) said it pretty plainly, last night, it was worth repeating—the Opposition believed that themselves and the country were in a very bad state, and they were afraid to "take stock." His honorable friend for Brisbane (Mr. Fraser) understood the term; he (Mr. Williams) used trade terms,—he was not so well up in parliamentary business as he was in commercial affairs. The Opposition were afraid to take stock, afraid to see the balance sheet. If they did see it, all their grand imaginary schemes of the Government making railways, would go off with the wind. They were the greatest lot of cowards he ever saw in his life. The Minister for Works, from what he was told, he was prepared to defend, with all his faults. In spite of the honorable member for Eastern Downs' manœuvring, management, coquetting, and humbugging, he told him that if the present Ministry lasted six months, the honorable member for Maryborough would be far more popular than was ever the Minister for Works in the Macalister Government. Why? Simply because the honorable member for Maryborough knew how to treat the poor man when he went to him; he was, without exception, the most agreeable man to do business with that person used to going to the Works' Department had ever met. Because he was peculiar, somebody had said he was an Ishmaelite, and again that he was Mephistopheles! The way in which the honorable member worked in his office, and the manner in which he treated all persons who had communications with him, as the head of the Public Works Department, entitled him to support; and he (Mr. Williams) should be glad to find circumstances such, that the honorable gentleman would remain in his present position a long time, as he believed it would be for the benefit of the country. Impracticable, some liked to call the honorable member for Maryborough; but he was not the only one that had been called impracticable. Unfortunately, he (Mr. Williams) was old enough to remember that a great politician, the Right Hon. John Bright, was called impracticable, one whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him; there was hardly a word in the English language sufficiently bad to express what he was thought to be;—yet, where was he now? He was courted by the wealthy; he was high in position, near his Sovereign; he was a great statesman, as he (Mr. Williams) had always thought him;—and he believed that the honorable member for Maryborough would turn out something like him. Give him a chance to do it! John Bright was denounced, as well as the honorable the Secretary for Public Works. Give him the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the requirements of the public service, and the House and the country would find him one of the most valuable men that the colony ever had the advantage of securing in its service. Referring to the fifth paragraph of

the Governor's Speech, in connection with the remarks of the honorable member for Warrego, he wished to say that however able a railway engineer, contractor, or manufacturer that honorable member might be, he was not a financier. He hoped the day was far distant when that honorable member would have anything to do with the finances of this colony. The honorable member told the House that he was going in for protection; and he argued that, because there was a duty which protected the sugar-growers, the House had admitted the principle of protection. Now, he (Mr. Williams) denied that altogether. If the honorable member for Warrego would take the trouble to ask the honorable member for South Brisbane, or the new Treasurer, or any honorable member who was ever Treasurer, or the Collector of Customs, or anybody who knew anything about the matter, he would be told that the sugar duty had nothing whatever to do with protection: it was simply a question of revenue. The country could not be carried on without revenue. If the House were told that the duty did protect the sugar-grower—

Mr. McILWRAITH: So it did. That was what he said.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That was another matter. That it operated as a protection to him was admitted; but he must not be told that that duty was a protective duty. The honorable member knew nothing about free-trade or finance; though he knew something about railways. He (Mr. Williams) had no doubt the honorable member came here expecting that he would find an opening in which he would do something of profit, something for his own advantage and gain. But, now, he would discuss protection with the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba, who would have the advantage, being more eloquent than he; but, if the honorable member would come to facts and data, he would leave him without a leg to stand on. It was the most effete, rotten, worthless proposition that was ever heard of; it was dead and gone, buried, and could not be recuscitated. Last week he had an opportunity of speaking with one of the honorable member's constituents, a farmer; and he asked him what his idea of protection was—the man having informed him that he had been educated in protection by his representative, the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba. This was the man's idea:—That the farmers of Queensland should be protected by a fixed duty of two shillings and sixpence per bushel on maize, four shillings and sixpence on wheat, and seven pounds per ton on hay! Now, he asked the House, or the Opposition, were they prepared to endorse such a protective system as that? Was that the protective system shadowed forth by the honorable member for Eastern Downs to promote colonial industry? In addition, the farmers, educated in protection, wanted the protection

of cheap railway rates for carrying their produce to Ipswich. Yet with all disadvantages against them, the unfortunate farmers of East and West Moreton had sent up, in one month, more than the granary of Queensland had sent down in two years! Now, after that, he was not surprised that the men educated by the honorable member for Drayton and Toowoomba wanted protection. God protect them! The question of railways seemed to be one put prominently by the Opposition; and if a late honorable member for Ipswich were in the House, he would have to designate a new disease which afflicted them, especially the honorable members for East Moreton, Brisbane, Warrego, and Northern Downs; and which disease, for want of a better term, he (Mr. Williams) would call "railways on the brain." Why did not they, like honest men, say if they could afford the railways? If they could, and shew him how, he would support them. He was not opposed to railways, if they would allow the Treasurer to make his statement. If that statement was conclusive, that the Government could afford to make a railway between Ipswich and Brisbane, he would go in for it heart and soul. He knew that the colony had been brought to the verge of ruin by the extravagant expenditure on railways heretofore, and he did not want to go into additional debt even to finish, as it was called, existing lines; and if additional debt was to be incurred, he would oppose railways, no matter where they were to go to or come from. If it were shewn that the colony could afford to make them, he would support railways. But he wanted to hear the Treasurer's financial statement; and he asked the Opposition, as honest men, why they would not allow the Treasurer an opportunity of making it? It was the most unmanly thing he ever heard of. But it was no use talking to honorable members on that side of the House. Every one knew what tyrannical majorities could do; he knew what they had done before. It was an eternal disgrace, that they had expelled from the House one of the most useful and respected members who ever sat in the Assembly, for sake of a vote! What was the good of appealing to gentlemen who would do the like of that? Well, he defied them! He hoped the Government would take the common sense view of the occasion, and dissolve the House; he would guarantee that the country would back them up, and when next they met Parliament, after a general election, a strange lot of faces would be seen instead of those now on the Opposition side. He was not going to select them, but he could tell who would not come back again. If the Government appealed to the country, some of the Brisbane and East Moreton folks would not come back—no mistake about that! It would be discovered what the state of the country was, and the inference was plain;—the misrepresentatives of East Moreton, South Brisbane, Drayton and Toowoomba,

and Northern Downs, would be told, one of these days, what o'clock it was! The Opposition seemed determined to have the Ipswich and Brisbane Railway at all hazards; some of them did not know how it was to go, or when it was to go, any more than they knew where it was to go. But some of them did know where it was to go: the honorable member for South Brisbane did. He had had a most accommodating engineer, who had brought the line into the honorable member's paddock. £65,000 was taken out of the colony by Mr. Fitzgibbon, the late Engineer-in-Chief of Queensland Railways; and yet the country was to go on spending money to bring the railway from Ipswich—into the middle of the honorable member's paddock. He was an example of the very liberal man, who had a seat in the House; and he knew as well as anyone what a gentleman in office could do when he had an engineer of an accommodating spirit, and how nicely things could be twisted and turned. "Make money!" was the axiom of an Englishman; "make money, honestly if you can; but, make money." He (Mr. Williams) did not say there was anything dishonest in the action of the honorable member for South Brisbane: if he had a paddock more than he knew what to do with, he might like to take the railway through it.

Mr. STEPHENS begged to deny that any railway line or plan had been taken through any land of his, much more into the middle of it.

Mr. WILLIAMS said he should like to know if a line had not been surveyed by Mr. Thorneloe Smith, the terminus of which was brought into the honorable member's land?

Mr. STEPHENS: He did not know where Mr. Thorneloe Smith took his terminus. He did know that it was not brought within a quarter of a mile of his land: the line must be brought in somewhere within sight of his house.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The intended railway between Ipswich and Brisbane was, he declared before the world, nothing but a gigantic swindle, to promote private interests at the expense of the country. The honorable member for South Brisbane knew that he was himself one of those who would reap the benefit of the swindle, if carried out. He (Mr. Williams) did not know but that the honorable member for Warrego would be one to benefit too. He had been informed on what he considered very reliable authority that the honorable member came here for the express purpose of making railways here, there, and everywhere, in the colony, as he got a good profit.

Mr. McILWRAITH: Who told you?

Mr. WILLIAMS: That was his business. He believed the honorable member came, and he was sorry to say he was justified in his belief that there were a lot of men in opposition, prepared to squander the funds of the

colony in railways. He had heard that the honorable member came here for the express purpose he had asserted: he was brought here on false pretences. He regretted that the honorable member, or any one else, should have anything to do with the honorable member for Eastern Downs, who fooled everybody that had anything to do with him. He regretted that he ever had anything to do with him, as a politician. The honorable member was, without exception, the greatest failure, as a politician, that was ever heard of. He (Mr. Williams) had not intended to express an opinion of him; but he was fortified in what he said, by the opinions of those who had been associated with the honorable member for Eastern Downs. He was not wanting a screw, or a place hunter; consequently, he was not in such a good position to speak from actual knowledge and experience as some honorable members who sat on the Opposition side of the House; but, still, he would call attention to the opinions of some of those gentlemen who were rushing into the arms of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, and who were united with him in opposing the Government. He thought he should be pardoned for occupying the time of the House, when he had shewn in what estimation the honorable gentleman was held by the most prominent of his associates. For himself, he believed that the colony was brought into the desert state it was in a year or two ago, mainly by the action taken by the honorable member for Eastern Downs; and he held him responsible for the extravagance and the waste of money which everyone now deemed characterised the construction of the Southern and Western Railway. It was now said that if proper precautions had been taken, the railway could have been constructed for a million of money less than had been paid for the 130 or 140 miles that the colony possessed. Were honorable members going again to entrust the honorable member for Eastern Downs with the ship of State? If so, he would oppose him as far as he could. The honorable gentleman had proved himself to be utterly unworthy of confidence; and now he (Mr. Williams) would shew that that opinion was shared in by honorable members of the Opposition, who were now going to rush into his arms as the saviour of the country. The honorable member for Burnett, Mr. Pring, speaking to the Address in Reply to the Governor's Opening Speech, on 8th August, 1867, said of the honorable member for Eastern Downs and of railroads generally—it was a long speech—as follows:—

"Now, the railway question was a very vexed question in this House from the outset of it; and, I have no hesitation in saying, so far as my firm conviction enables me to judge, that it is to the railway question we may trace the present bad state of the colony."

To that, he (Mr. Williams) said "hear, hear," and thoroughly endorsed those sentiments;—

what was true, then, was ten times more true now; and the honorable member for Burnett was a prophet then, for what he had said was now accomplished. He was sorry to say he had reason to believe that the honorable member had changed his mind.

The Hon. R. PRING: Hear, hear.

Mr. WILLIAMS: To-morrow, he would change it back. The ministerial side would have him again, too.

The Hon. R. PRING said he could not hear the honorable member: he was indistinct.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It was not his fault—it was his misfortune. He endeavored to make himself clear, and he had asked the forbearance of the House at starting. He would read a few more words of the honorable member's, which would shew the esteem in which the honorable member for Eastern Downs was held by him; and he should then ask, if he condemned the leader of the present Opposition, did he not do so in very good company? This was in a debate relative to the Native Police force, on the 6th February, 1868;—the honorable member for Burnett was at that time Attorney-General—

The Hon. R. PRING said he had not the slightest objection to the honorable member referring to anything that he ever said in his life, or to anything that he had said about the honorable member Eastern Downs; but he wished to ask whether, when his mouth was shut—when he could not get up in explanation—when his lips were sealed, on the principle that he could not, in the House, refer to previous debates—the honorable member could quote from "Hansard" what he had said on previous occasions?

The SPEAKER: The honorable member can discuss anything that has not been debated this session—he can refer to the debates in previous sessions, but not quote from a debate of the present session.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I am not a lawyer, but I am quite right.

The Hon. R. PRING: Nobody ever gave you credit for being so.

Mr. WILLIAMS: I tell you what it is that they give me credit for—being honest.

The Hon. R. PRING: I will make you prove it, by-and-bye.

Mr. WILLIAMS: All right!

The SPEAKER: Order! These interruptions must not go on. Honorable members must keep order.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Order, order! and Chair, chair!

The Hon. R. PRING: "Hear, hear!"—Rubbish!

The SPEAKER: Really, some notice must be taken of this. The honorable member, when I call order, calls "rubbish."

The Hon. R. PRING: No, no. I can say "hear, hear." That is perfectly parliamentary.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member has interrupted the debate; and it is not the first time he has acted in this way.

The Hon. R. PRING: Not when I said "hear, hear."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was meant for me, sir, I really think. When I called "hear, hear," the honorable member used the word "rubbish"—not to you, sir. I really think he ought not to interrupt the debate.

The Hon. R. PRING: I can say "hear, hear."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He keeps up a running commentary.

The Hon. R. PRING: I know my duties as a representative.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The honorable member for Burnett need not be afraid; I would not insult him, nor would I insult any man.

The Hon. R. PRING: The ruling is given.

Mr. WILLIAMS: The honorable member knew it before. At the time at which the speech he was about to quote from was delivered, the honorable member for Burnett was Attorney-General, and the honorable member for Eastern Downs was in Opposition; and it appeared that the former was out of the House while the latter was speaking:—

"He did not hear the eloquent speech of the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Macalister; but he came into the House just in time to catch the dulcet tones of that honorable member as he concluded, and he must say he was surprised. He asked himself, what could have caused the change which had come over his old colleague?—and, at last, he said to himself, 'Policy, policy!'—and he at once came to the conclusion that the oratorical display on the part of the honorable member was nothing more or less than expediency."

It was not the first time he had met that term, and it was not the first time the honorable member for Eastern Downs had practised the policy of expediency; yet the honorable member for Burnett was now rushing into his arms to carry out a similar piece of work. Wait a bit! Here was something more:—

"He could only say"—

Mind, he was speaking seriously now; let them not forget that, whatever honorable members did—

"That if the honorable member himself believed in the sentiments to which he had given utterance, why, then, for the last seven years had he been a living deceit before the public?"

That was the character of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, as given by the honorable member for Burnett, his expectant Attorney-General. He (Mr. Williams) hoped the day was far distant when the honorable member so described would be Premier. He should like, indeed, to see the honorable member for Burnett Attorney-General; but not the two together. They were dangerous men. He next came to another occasion on

which the honorable member for Burnett felt it his duty to express his opinion of the honorable member for Eastern Downs. It was on the 28th January, last year, when those honorable gentlemen happened to be in antagonism on a motion for the adjournment of the House. Mind, he (Mr. Williams) was not expressing his own opinions; he would simply read the honorable member for Burnett's opinion of the honorable member for Eastern Downs. He was sorry to say it was coupled with the name of another honorable member, who, he did not think, should have been named in that way. The Premier, at the time, was the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, who, said the honorable member for Burnett, Mr. Pring—

“Always considered the honorable member for Eastern Downs, a traitor, and he had always entertained certain feelings of mistrust, if not against the Premier, against another member of the Government. So that in consequence of that mistrust, the Government was entirely broken up. Then the honorable member for Eastern Downs resigned, and only three out of five were left of the members of the Ministry. He contended that, under such circumstances, the Premier should have resigned then and there, because he was not in a position to carry on the business of the country, or to lay a single business paper before the House. But he had not thought fit to do so, and what had he done? If there had been distrust between the members of the Government, what distrust must there be now? The Premier could have no greater faith in the honorable member for Eastern Downs to-day than he had yesterday, when he had expressed the most damaging opinions against him, and he would ask whether members who could abuse each other as those two honorable members had done, like Billingsgate fishwomen, were fit persons to carry on the business of the country?”

He asked whether honorable members who abused each other so, were fit persons to carry on the business of the colony? He asked the honorable member now?

The Hon. R. PRING: If I am asked a question in this way, I ask you, sir, if I have not a right to answer him? I know it is contrary to the rules of the House; but he dares me to do it. He knows I can't answer him. I wish I could; I would walk into him.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Order, order.

The Hon. R. PRING: You may call out “Order.”

Mr. WILLIAMS: I regret, Mr. Speaker—

The Hon. R. PRING: If you challenge me, I'm ready for you!—out of the House, or anywhere!

Mr. WILLIAMS: You go on, if you will.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member for Ipswich is wrong in addressing an honorable member instead of the Chair; and he must not ask honorable members questions. It is not in order, decidedly.

Mr. WILLIAMS: If he had transgressed the rules of the House, he humbly apologised. He thought some little allowance should be

made for him. He did not trouble the House often. He admitted it was not right to address the honorable member; but it was contemptible to threaten him. He held the honorable member and his threats, as he did the honorable member for Eastern Downs, in the supremest contempt. Neither of them, nor the pair of them, nor the whole House, nor the whole colony, dare wag a finger at him. He defied them, or anybody else, to point a finger at him and say he had done anything unhandsome or unmanly that he need be ashamed of. He had as much right to express his opinion, to take advantage of what the honorable member for Burnett had said—although he might not be so high as he in the social scale—as any other man; he was an Englishman, and he stood on that and the dignity of an Englishman; and he maintained that he had a right to express his opinions. He threatened, the honorable member did—by-and-bye—out of the House—he would walk into him! If he did, perhaps he (Mr. Williams) would smother him!

The Hon. R. PRING said the honorable member had made use of a most unparliamentary expression, and he only wished he would come outside the House and make use of it.

Mr. WILLIAMS said he felt very safe where he was, and must decline the honorable member's invitation. The question was, whether the two honorable members—the honorable member for Eastern Downs and the honorable member for the Burnett—who had abused each other like a couple of Billingsgate fishwomen,—were fit to govern the country? Who, he would ask, in that House, was the greatest adept in abuse of that kind—and who indulged in it the most frequently? The honorable member for Fortitude Valley never forgot himself—he talked and discussed the questions that came before him like a gentleman, so that the question did not apply to him, at any rate; and if it were applied to him by any one else, he (Mr. Williams) would repudiate it in the most strenuous manner. But that language of that kind had been used, and that it was intended to apply to the honorable member for Eastern Downs, he had no doubt whatever. He had no doubt, either, that it was properly applied. He asked them, again, were such men fit to rule this colony?—they should not, if he could prevent it. There was another matter which he had forgotten—in consequence, probably, of having been interrupted by the honorable member for Burnett's polite invitation to go outside, which he absolutely declined. He was not quite sure whether he was a member of the House at the time, or whether he was simply in the gallery, but he very distinctly remembered hearing the honorable member for the Burnett giving the House the benefit of his experience of the character of the honorable



member for Eastern Downs, and he certainly made use of what he (Mr. Williams) thought very strong terms. He would now repeat them, as well as he could, in his own words. In the course of some discussion, the character of the honorable member for Eastern Downs was in question, when the honorable member for the Burnett said it was the opinion of the people outside that that honorable member was "the greatest scoundrel unhung." That was what the honorable member told the House was his estimation of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, for by repeating it in the House he endorsed it.

The Hon. R. PRING rose in explanation, and said he recollected his remarks perfectly, as he had been asked, in the House, to state the words he had used; and he had stated that it was not his own opinion, but the opinion of certain persons outside the House.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That was just what he had stated most distinctly—that the honorable member had given the words as the opinion of people outside the House. But he maintained it was a fair inference to draw, that the honorable member, by repeating that opinion, had adopted it.

The Hon. R. PRING: No; he repudiated it. He could repeat the actual words he used: they were these—"One would think, from the abuse the honorable member had received outside the House, that he was the greatest scoundrel unhung." No inference that he endorsed such an opinion could possibly be drawn from those words. He was not going to take "Hansard" as an authority, but he pledged his word and honor as a gentleman that those were the words he had made use of.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Well, he had said all he wanted to say on the subject. That was so dirty an arrangement that he could not have anything to do with it.

The Hon. R. PRING rose to a point of order. Had the honorable member any right to designate the conduct of another honorable member as a "dirty" arrangement?

The SPEAKER said the honorable member for Burnett was quite right in interrupting the honorable member for Ipswich, when he used such language. As he had often stated before, when an honorable member rose in explanation to repeat his own statements, his word should be accepted.

Mr. WILLIAMS: He would apologise to Mr. Speaker, but to no one else. If it were now his turn to speak, he would do so. The honorable member for Burnett had a great advantage over him, as he had a more perfect acquaintance with parliamentary tactics than he (Mr. Williams), who did his duty honestly, but perhaps roughly; but he would defy that honorable member, or any other man, to impugn any statement he made, or the position he had taken up that evening; and if the honorable member could prove any dirty transaction on his part, either

as a politician or as a private member of the community, he would shut up. But he defied the honorable member, or anyone else, in this colony or in the old country to do so. A good character had been handed down to him, and he had endeavored to maintain it; and when he retired from the House, he felt sure that his character would compare with that of the honorable member for Burnett. However, the honorable member was worth leaving alone. He had had his say. He was not finding fault with him, but with the honorable member for Eastern Downs, and certainly with the honorable member for Burnett, for rushing into that gentleman's arms, after having had so much to say against him. He could not see why the honorable member should hold himself responsible for that gentleman—he hoped he would not hold him responsible when he went outside the House. There was another honorable member, who was to be Colonial Treasurer, if the arrangement were carried out. He thought there were honorable members on both sides of the House, who had been connected with a commercial undertaking, in the shape of a newspaper, called the *Guardian*, and the honorable member he referred to—one of the members for East Moreton, who was to be the new Treasurer, he had been informed—had the management of the financial department of the *Guardian*. He should like to ask those honorable members, who had been connected with that undertaking, whether that gentleman had managed the affair to their satisfaction or not. He did not mean to say, that the money had been improperly applied, but had it been employed to their advantage—had it been employed in a profitable manner, in such a way as to induce them to think he could be safely entrusted with the management of the finances of the colony? As far as his knowledge went, he had been led to understand—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said, he should be sorry that any unjust suspicion should attach to any honorable member. He believed Mr. Atkin, the member for East Moreton, was the person alluded to, and he could, therefore, assure the honorable member that that gentleman had had nothing to do with the financial department of the *Guardian*.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Then he had been misinformed, and he regretted exceedingly the remarks he had made. He would put it in this way:—Had that honorable member ever done anything in any shape or form of speech or procedure, to lead the House or the country to suppose, that he had any idea of finance of any kind whatever. He affirmed it was simply a piece of audacity on his part, unparalleled in the history of Colonial Parliaments, to come forward and ask the country to gulp him down as Colonial Treasurer. Those were the men who were now ready to rush into the arms of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, to make a Ministry, and

what sort of a Ministry would it be? A good deal had been said about combinations. What sort of a combination would that be?—a Government composed of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, as Premier; the honorable member for East Moreton, as Colonial Treasurer; the honorable member for Maranoa—he was going to add the honorable member for Northern Downs, but he believed they had sold him. What could be said of a Government composed of such gentlemen as those? Would not that be a coalition Government of a most extraordinary—most worthless character? Why, any coalition Government, of which the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was the head, would be worth fifty of such Governments in the eyes of the colony at large. It was only a few months ago that they had ousted a coalition Ministry, and were they going to support a Ministry of that stamp? He was astonished, beyond expression, to see gentlemen possessed of far more intelligence than he was, and enjoying much greater advantages than he did, lend themselves to bring such a Ministry into power, as that was likely to be. But he thanked God there was no chance for them—not the slightest in the world, if the present Government, as he sincerely trusted they would do, appealed to the country. If they did, he felt sure the House would soon present a very different aspect, and several honorable members on the opposite side would be missed from their places. The would-be Colonial Treasurer, he predicted, would no longer be found there. There were other honorable members too from that side who would also be missed—men who, under other circumstances, he believed would do good service to the country, but who had been misled by the honorable member for Eastern Downs, and the silent tongue of the honorable member for East Moreton, and were now going headlong to destruction. But even supposing—and it was the very utmost stretch of imagination to do so—that this wonderful coalition Government, composed of the incongruous elements he had mentioned, could be formed, did not the House think they would be a happy family? With the opinions which the honorable member for Burnett entertained of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, and the opinion entertained of him by the expectant Treasurer, the honorable member for East Moreton, they would indeed be a happy family, and have a very happy time of it! The honorable member for East Moreton, the expectant but disappointed Treasurer, in speaking of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, in January last year—

Mr. JORDAN rose to call the honorable member's attention to the fact that there were two members for East Moreton.

Mr. WILLIAMS: He begged the honorable member's pardon. The honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Atkin, in speaking of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, in

January, 1869, had referred to him in these complimentary terms:—

“He agreed with a great deal that had fallen from the honorable member for Maryborough, but not from the same motives. He confessed that in the present state of public affairs it was the duty of every public man to support whatever Ministry came into power. At the same time, he must enter his protest against the present combination. Immoral as such combinations were, he was prepared, as long as he sat in the House, to give the present Ministry his loyal support. So long as they were prepared to go on with those things which were in arrear, and advance the business of the country, he would do so. Although he promised that, after listening to the speech of the Premier against the colleague he had dismissed from his office, and after seeing the position that colleague took up on Tuesday last, he could not help saying that the honorable member for Eastern Downs going back to office was like a dog returning to his vomit.”

Now, that was the opinion of the expectant Treasurer of an expectant Premier; and after the opinion of the expectant Attorney-General of the expectant Premier, which he had read, what could the House think of such a combination? When he was in London some time ago he saw a cage carried about the streets with all sorts of animals in it: there was a terrier, a cat, a rat, and other animals of different instincts and habits, all living together in the utmost harmony, and to all appearance having a very nice time of it; but one night their natural passions got the better of them, and they all set upon each other and tore each other to pieces, just as this new Ministry would do some day or other.

The Hon. R. PRING begged to correct the honorable member in one statement he had made. He had spoken of the Attorney-General: he (Mr. Pring) was not Attorney-General; there was no Attorney-General in the House this session; he should have liked to have seen him.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Well, they would have this wonderful Government following the example of the animals in the cage. As soon as they got together, they would tear each other, they would rob each other, and the country would reap the consequences. It would be a most unfortunate thing for the country, unfortunate as it had already been, if, by any possible combination of circumstances—he cared not what—such men were allowed to assume the reins of office; it would be a dreadful blow to the prosperity of Queensland. Entertaining that opinion, and he did honestly and conscientiously maintain it, he would do as an individual all he possibly could to prevent them from coming into power until they had learnt something like reason. And he felt convinced that when the policy of the present Government came to be known by the country—and especially by the farmers of East and West Moreton; when those people—who were now suffering from the absence of any means

of communication with the towns—learned that, for the first time, their wants had been recognised, and that £50,000 would be set apart for the construction and maintenance of roads for their use, they would feel bound to give their support to the Government, and with such a phalanx of strength, intelligence, and independence, as had never been seen before. A new era was dawning on Queensland—he recollected the words used last night—but not such an era as the honorable members opposite anticipated. They looked forward to an era which meant lots of plunder, lots of spoil. The state of things was well known in which they had revelled, and from which the country was now suffering. There was any quantity of money to be had, and that was all they cared about, and they did not care where it came from. The honorable member for Brisbane, Mr. Fraser, had made, the night before, what he considered a most unworthy remark. He had asked, what sop had been offered to the members for Ipswich to induce them to support the Government? Such a thought could never have occurred to a pure-minded man. He could only come to the conclusion that the Brisbanites had become so habituated to sops and bribes, and all sorts of expenditure, that they thought no one could be honest without that sort of thing. For his part, he never had, and had never wanted a sop in his life; and if he were insulted by being offered one, he hoped he should know how to resent it. That was his answer to the honorable member for Brisbane. He occupied his seat because he represented his constituents, while the honorable member misrepresented his, and the time would come when he would know it to his cost—that was to say, if he valued his seat; if not, it would make no difference to him. He had not quite done with the honorable member for North Brisbane yet. That gentleman had stated more than once, when speaking of the Brisbane and Ipswich Railway, that there could be no objection to it, from the fact that it ran alongside a navigable river; because, in the old country, railways along navigable rivers paid; and he had given, as an instance, the railway which ran between Glasgow and Greenock. Now, the intermediate population between these two towns was upwards of one million persons, and the line, he believed, was only some fifteen or eighteen miles in length. He had endeavored to find out what that line of railway had paid, and he was now in a position to state, that until it was taken over by a very large company, the Great Caledonian Company, whose ramifications extended to the very heart of England, it had never paid one single iota of dividend. He had, himself, travelled from Glasgow to Greenock, in steamboats, for threepence; and he would ask the honorable member for North Brisbane, whether he was going to make a railway here, alongside a navigable river, to carry passengers at threepence a head? Could he get the honorable member for Warrego to

make a railway between Brisbane and Ipswich for threepenny fares? If so, he would get lots of supporters, and there would be numbers of people ready to pay their passage, in order to satisfy themselves that such a place as Brisbane existed.

MR. FRASER begged to correct the honorable member, who had made a mistake in using his name. He did not think he had ever mentioned the Greenock and Glasgow Railway to him; it must have been some one else.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, then either he or the honorable member must be wrong, and yet he thought his memory was pretty good. There was one question which the Opposition intended to make a great card to catch the votes of honorable members, and that was the protection paragraph in their amendments. The paragraph relating to separation was also intended to catch the votes of northern members. He would tell the House what he thought of separation. He thought the time had nearly arrived when northern members would be perfectly justified in asking for separation. Where the point of separation was to be, whether at Dawes' Range or elsewhere, he was not sufficiently acquainted with the geography of the country to say; but that they were entitled to separation, if they demanded it, was as plain as that he was standing there; and he only regretted that Ipswich and West Moreton could not also go in for separation also; and if the honorable member for Warrego could only invent some plan of bringing a line of railway straight down to the Bay, without coming to Brisbane, it might be done. They had seen too much of Brisbane, and did not want to come into closer contact with it. Why, the Ipswich people knew nothing about immorality until they came into closer connection with Brisbane. They wanted no Contagious Diseases Bill in Ipswich until the Brisbane people sent up some of their immoral characters. But as to separation, whenever the proper place was decided upon, and the northern members demanded it, he would support them, and say, go and God bless you.

MR. BELL said that, after listening to the speech of the honorable member who had just sat down, he could not help regretting that the division had not taken place the evening before, as the House would then have been spared that oration. He had not intended to speak on the question, but the honorable member had unearthed him. He had listened carefully to the many speeches made by different honorable members, and had felt that, for once, a debate had taken place which, in its tone, character, and ability, had equalled any which had ever occurred in that House. The address of the honorable member for Ipswich, however, had given it a very different aspect. It was one of those small stump-oratory speeches which he thought the House would willingly have dispensed with,

The honorable member had made great researches into the "Hansard" of the colony; but, instead of acting up to the sentiment of the poet, "the greatest pleasure is the recollection of happy scenes," he had taken an opposite course, and had taken pleasure in raking up unpleasant reminiscences. The honorable member had thrown down the apple of discord and altered the tone of the debate—

HONORABLE MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. BELL: Honorable members might say "no," but that was his opinion. The honorable member, among his many personal allusions, had referred personally to a speech which he (Mr. Bell) made when moving an amendment on the Speech on a previous occasion, and had characterised it as a lamentably disgraceful attack upon one member of the Government, and not upon the Government collectively. Now, in contradiction to that statement, he asserted that the words he made use of were clearly and strongly put, and that they were in disparagement of the Government generally. If by any words in his speech he had disparaged the honorable member at the head of that Government, he had as strongly expressed his opinion of the Government as a whole, and the opinion which was entertained of them out of doors. To return to the debate which now occupied the attention of the House, he would say that the grounds of difference between the Government and the Opposition were so clear and distinct, that he did not believe any of the speeches which had been made had succeeded in changing one single vote. With regard to his own position, which had been referred to by the last speaker, and which that gentleman seemed so little able to reconcile, he felt bound to offer some explanation. Now, it was not his intention to say one single word in disparagement of any honorable member who now sat on the Treasury benches; because, with those gentlemen, who were individually and collectively identified with the same interest as his own, he had the strongest sympathies; and he believed their conduct, as a Government, since the House had met, had shewn that they were all and more than had been expected of them. But he found it was impossible for him, holding the opinions he now held, and had long held, to give them his support. He would gladly have found himself sitting on the other side of the House, but his opinions had prevented him up to that point. He objected to the formation of the Government, because, in the first place, it was an unwise combination. He thought it was impossible for any Government so composed to enjoy the confidence of the country. It might be, as the result of an adverse vote, that they would appeal to the country, and that the result of that appeal would give them a majority; but even then they would have but a short life to live, for the past history of the colony shewed that

class combinations could not possibly succeed. That was the opinion he had always held in reference to Governments in this colony, and he saw no reason to alter it. Even were the composition of the present Government different to what it was, he should not be able to satisfy himself that the policy they had introduced would compare with the policy initiated by the Opposition,—when he found the strongest objection on the part of the Government and their supporters, to take any step in the direction of protection to native industry. (No, no, from the Government benches.) He judged by the Speech of His Excellency, in which no mention was made of it. He took it for granted that, if the Government had held any such views, they would have taken that opportunity of expressing them, and would have given them a prominent place in the Speech which announced their policy. He must, at any rate, record his own dissent to that policy. He quite agreed with the honorable member for Warrego who spoke on the previous evening, when he told the House he believed the initiation of some system of protection was of great importance to the colony. He had no doubt the honorable member meant, as he did, a system of intelligent protection, not a protective duty upon everything consumed in the colony. No doubt, such a system would necessitate an expenditure of money by the community generally, but he could also see clearly that that expenditure would represent much of the taxation which the people now paid. He could take it for granted that the money now spent on immigration caused increased taxation; but then he took it for granted that the adoption of an intelligent system of protection to native industry would bring about the introduction of a large number of immigrants, who—if the public works, which he thought might with advantage be undertaken, were commenced—would relieve the country from the large annual outlay for immigration purposes. He did not expect that this would be done at once, so as to avert the Loan Bill, which must be brought forward sooner or later; but if successfully carried out, it would prevent such a large expenditure on immigration. He found that this colony, since Separation, had expended—including land orders, but not cotton bonus land orders—over a million of money. It had expended in cash, £500,000, and in land orders, £700,000—in all, £1,200,000; and this expenditure, if the policy of the Opposition were properly carried out, might, he repeated, be reasonably expected to be no longer necessary. But he saw other advantages arising from a wise system of protection. He found that the *ad valorem* duties had had some slight beneficial effect upon the trade of this colony. He could recollect when Baltic pine was imported at such a low rate that it had the effect of closing several large sawmills; but since the imposition of the *ad valorem* duties, this importa-

tion had ceased, and the trade in the interior had expanded. That was one of many instances he could quote, and it clearly shewed that such a system of protection as he had referred to would be of great advantage to the colony. There were, no doubt, a number of persons who had not learned to alter the views with which they had been educated on this question, and whose interests were probably opposed to any such change; but when they looked at the beneficial results which had followed such a course in Victoria, he thought they would agree with him that no time should be lost in following the example set by that colony. The eyes of the people of this colony would not long be closed to the fact, that although at first it might seem more advantageous to import goods, it would be of much greater general advantage to pay a little more for them, if they could be manufactured here. The question of protection *versus* free trade would take a long time to discuss, and there would probably be a good deal of agitation on the subject throughout the colony before it was adopted. He could say for himself, that he could have no direct or personal interest in either proposing or advocating protection; because, as a producer, he would, of course, have to pay a good deal more than he paid now for articles he imported: but, feeling convinced that it was absolutely necessary in the present state of the colony, he could not support any Ministry who did not propose to aid and encourage native industry. Unless that, and the construction of cheap railways, formed a prominent part of the policy to be carried out, he saw very little hope for the colony. It was absurd, while the country was in such a languishing state, to talk about introducing immigrants, when there was no capital to find employment for them. The new system of fencing adopted by the sheepfarmers in this colony, and other causes, had thrown a number of persons out of employment, and they were now rambling about from station to station, looking for work. He did not feel any great concern on that account, because he believed that this state of things would not last long, and that a new era was dawning upon the colony. He looked upon the stand which had been taken in that House that evening as a sign that the people of this country were at last alive to the difficulties of the position, and the pressing necessity for progress. He would, he repeated, have had no objection to give his support to the present Government if they had included those two important points of policy in their programme. He had no other reason to oppose them. He must say, he thought there was a slight shade of insincerity in one portion of that programme. He referred to the absence of any expressed intention to abolish the two-thirds clause, as it was clear that unless that clause were done away with no additional representation was likely to be effected. He looked upon the absence of any mention of the two-

thirds clause as nothing more or less than a denial on the part of the Government of any intention to bring about a re-distribution of seats. He had no doubt they had made up their minds, and that they did not intend to alter the electorates of the colony. He was in principle opposed to the presence of that clause in the Constitution Act. He also objected to the small number of members in that House; but it was clear that no alteration could be made without the desired change. To come to the question of railways, as it had been mentioned in the amendments moved by the honorable member for Eastern Downs, he fully intended to give his support to the general principle of railways of a cheap character, where they could be constructed without the expenditure of large sums of the public money. Personally, he did not see his way clear to the successful establishment of such a system at present. He himself could not see it; when he did, he should be prepared to support it, if the details of the scheme should, in his opinion, be applicable to the circumstances of the colony. He believed there were honorable members on that side of the House who were prepared with a scheme suitable to the views they entertained, and to produce it when the proper time came. But that scheme he had not seen, nor did he know what it was intended to bring about. He therefore wished it to be clearly understood, that until he knew the particulars of that scheme he should not give it his unqualified support. As he had stated at the commencement of his remarks, he should not have spoken at all, if he had not been drawn out by the honorable member for Ipswich, as he was in no way prepared to address the House on such an important occasion, and he had simply taken the opportunity of expressing his opinions on the general question. He would conclude by saying that he should support the amendments.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE said he believed that the inhabitants of this city, of which he had the honor to be one of the representatives, would expect that he should take some side on the question before the House. Now, he was decidedly of opinion that the policy of the present Ministry was not a policy the country would approve of; or that, having such a policy, the Ministry would be able to rule the country successfully. He, therefore, must vote in favor of the amendment. In the development of their policy, the Ministry had told the House that railways might be constructed, if arrangements could be made with companies to undertake such works, and be remunerated by receiving grants of land. Ministers had also told the House that the Brisbane and Ipswich Railway might come in the same category. Now, that was what he and those with whom he acted in respect to the Brisbane and Ipswich Railway could not stand. The people of Brisbane had been laboring under serious disadvantages ever since railways were commenced. Of all that

he had heard during the present debate, he was most surprised by the extraordinary attack that was made on the honorable gentleman who moved the amendment—and that by the honorable member for Ipswich. Now, of all the mistakes the honorable member for Eastern Downs, Mr. Macalister, ever committed, his greatest were in favoring Ipswich to the extent he did, when member for that town. All his principal misdeeds were committed through a desire to benefit Ipswich. When he was in the Ministry, while representing that constituency, if they wanted £2,000 for their roads—there was the money. If they wanted a loan of £3,000 for the improvement of the streets of the town—there was the money; or if they wanted £3,000 to assist them in connection with the School of Arts—there was the money. The inhabitants of Brisbane had far more to complain of on account of the conduct of the honorable member who now represented the Eastern Downs, than the people of Ipswich had; and yet it was only by the honorable member for Ipswich that he was attacked. Was the railway, he would ask, commenced for the benefit of Brisbane? No; it was commenced for the purpose of favoring Ipswich. The people of Brisbane were required to be content with the means of communication by river; but, Ipswich was provided with a railway to enable them to bring the produce of the interior to their very doors. Almost every act of the honorable gentleman, when he was member for Ipswich, was directed to obtaining money for expenditure on that town, or for the purpose of benefitting it in some way or other. The party which he (Mr. Edmondstone) belonged to at that time, strenuously opposed the railway policy of the Government of the day. They opposed it on the ground that the cost of the railway would be a burden the country could not support. They endeavored to shew to the honorable gentleman in every possible way that the railway would be an enormous extravagance, and that to borrow so large a sum of money as would be required to construct it would impose a burden upon the people they would scarcely ever be able to get rid of. Such had been found to be the case; and it was hanging like a millstone round their necks at the present time. But it was not one gentleman only, or the Ministry alone, that was to blame, but the whole Parliament, for the railway could not have been gone on with unless the Parliament had sanctioned it. The highest authority in the colony, and both Houses of Parliament, were alike responsible for it. Then, why should the honorable gentleman, who was then Minister for Works, be entirely blamed for it now? It was wrong to cast upon him the whole of the blame. He was not sure that he would have spoken on the present occasion if the honorable member who last addressed the House had not adverted to the vote which he and others gave when the Lilley Government was thrown

out. Now, the explanation he had to give for his vote on that occasion was similar to the explanation that had been given by the honorable member for the Northern Downs. As that honorable member had stated, honorable members now on the Opposition side of the House voted against the Ministry, not for the purpose of casting blame upon the honorable member for Fortitude Valley for any of his acts, but because they had not, at the time, confidence in the Ministry as a body. They all knew how the Land Act of 1868 was handled by the Minister for Lands in the late Government. The session before the last they were given to believe by the Treasurer that they would have a surplus; but instead of that, they had had a deficiency. Of course, that might be the Treasurer's misfortune, and not his fault. It would be useless for him to say that he would support any Government that would not undertake to carry out the extension of the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane. The people of Brisbane had for years trusted to that work being commenced and carried out, and up to the present time they had been disappointed; but he hoped now to see it commenced in a short time. He would be exceedingly glad to see the railway carried out by a company, somewhat on the principle the tramway was to have been carried out. The tramway company had not sufficient powers given them to carry on the work they undertook; and if the Government had rescinded the Act, and passed another Act giving greater powers to the company, capitalists would have come forward with the necessary means, and the work, which would have been a most useful work, would have been carried out. But everything was done to make the project a failure, and it was a failure. As to their extravagant railway policy, as it had been described, it probably did not emanate from the Minister for Lands and Works; but possibly it originated with a higher authority. However that might be, the Parliament passed the Act for its construction, and now the colony was burdened with a very heavy debt indeed; and unless by some extraordinary way—perhaps by increasing the debt so as to complete the railways, and thereby obtain an increased revenue from the portion that had been already constructed, he did not see how they would be able to relieve themselves from the burden. The honorable the Minister for Works, when referring to railways, said that any railway that might be constructed, should go through East Moreton for the benefit of the large agricultural population settled in that district. Well, was the railway he was now advocating not to go through East Moreton? Why, it was to go through the very centre of East Moreton. He had been all over East Moreton, and he knew every portion of it. There was not a place scarcely that he did not go to, in order to see where roads were required.

Every time he asked for money for roads for the district, while he represented the constituency, he received promises which in some instances only were fulfilled. Yet now it was put forward, that any railway works that might be constructed should pass through a portion of the country which had hitherto received but a small amount for the formation and maintenance of common roads. The railway now asked for would greatly benefit the farmers in the district of East Moreton through which it would pass; and the agriculturists settled in the other portions of the district, would be satisfied to receive a portion of the £50,000 it was proposed to raise by loan, for the formation of ordinary roads where they were required, and the repair of those that were in an almost impassable condition. He would not, however, consent to the expenditure of the money being entrusted to the honorable the Minister for Works. For the expenditure of such moneys, they ought to have road boards established throughout the several districts of the colony. He was not a little astonished to find, that on the railway question, the Minister for Works and the Treasurer contradicted each other. The latter honorable gentleman said that if there were a railway to Roma, sheep and wool could be brought from the interior to the head of navigation at much less expense than at present; and that the railway would create a traffic for itself. Now, he fully agreed with all that. But the honorable the Minister for Works said—"Why make a railway to Roma through a country where there was only a few sheep?—to a place that was becoming depopulated more and more every day, and which, in a very short time, would be wholly deserted?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS stated that what he said was, that, so far as his opinion went, the country through which such a line would pass was almost a wilderness; and he asked them—why make a railway for squatters?—adding, that if a company could be got to do it on certain terms, all good and well,—and he could have no objection to that.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE: Well, he would accept the correction; but, nevertheless, what the honorable gentleman said was exactly the opposite of what was stated by the Treasurer. It was advocated by the latter honorable gentleman that the railway should be made to Roma, paying for it by grants of land. Now, that was exactly the way in which it was generally desired that railways should be made; but if the question should be referred to a select committee, as it had been suggested it should be, never anything more would be heard of it, till it was made the subject of a fresh discussion in the House. He certainly hoped that a sufficient sum would be put in any Loan Bill that might be brought before the House for the completion of the railway between Brisbane and Ipswich. The rest of the railways

that had been suggested, would, he hoped, be carried out by companies, and paid for by grants of land; if companies could be found that would enter upon such undertakings. The question of immigration had been so far settled, and he trusted it would be allowed to remain where it was, and that the system now in operation would be allowed to have a fair trial. He hoped that, whoever might be in power, the question of additional representation would not be lost sight of; for until there was increased representation, the colony was not likely to progress very rapidly. To get rid of the two-thirds clause might occasion some difficulty, but he thought the question of its repeal should be agitated until its repeal was obtained. That clause in the constitution had operated most mischievously from the beginning, and he hoped that every exertion would be made to have it done away with. In 1864 it was promised that an amendment of the Act would be made, and a census was taken, in order to provide a basis for the re-arrangement of districts; but, in lieu of such re-arrangement of districts, they got an Additional Members Bill, and the consequence was that they were now in the same unprogressive state, as regarded parties in the House, that they were in at the beginning. Now, what was wanted, was, that, for districts where population had increased, the representation should be increased; and that, where population had decreased, the representation should be diminished. What he advocated was the continuation of immigration, an alteration in the representative system of the colony, the construction of railways; and he might add that he would like to see the matter of protection introduced for experiment only. They had seen it in operation to some extent under the *ad valorem* duties, which had had the effect of raising up a few new industries, such, for example, as the establishment of salt works and tanneries. He thought they might follow the example of the colony of Victoria, where a great many new industries had sprung up since the adoption of a protective policy; and he had no doubt that, if they did so, the colony would be greatly benefitted.

Dr. BENSON said that, as a northern member, and as a new member, he had waited till about the last—till he had heard the speeches of most other honorable members—in order to be guided in some degree by them in coming to a determination as to how he should vote on the present occasion. (Laughter.) The members of the Ministry laughed at him for saying so; but he had now to tell them that he had made up his mind to oppose the present Government. Since he had been in the colony, he had come to the determination not to support a Ministry wholly composed of gentlemen representing one interest. Now, he saw on the Ministerial benches gentlemen, all of whom were engaged in the same pursuits; and he did not consider,

therefore, that, naturally, they could legislate for the general interests of the colony. When he looked at the Opposition side of the House he saw gentlemen there who were engaged in every pursuit, and representing personally almost every calling in the colony. He saw there merchants, squatters, barristers, medical men, and other professional men; and they were men who were prepared to bring forward such a policy as the colony had never yet seen. When he addressed the electors of Clermont, he said he believed that a new era was about to dawn upon the colony; and since he entered the House he had been confirmed in that opinion. He came to that House as the representative of working men, and he was proud to have the honor of holding a seat in the House as such. He was, he believed, the first to secure the return of a member to represent the working class in the House; and now he had himself been returned by the same class of men. At home the working-classes were beginning to be fairly represented; and it was the Tories they had to thank for it. He did not mean to say anything against the free-traders of Great Britain; but he feared the working classes must never expect to derive any benefit from them. Before speaking seriously on any subject, he wished to call attention to the remarks that were made by the honorable member for West Moreton, with respect to the way honorable members voted on the motion as to the right of Mr. Sandeman to continue to hold the seat for the Leichhardt. Now, he had to say that he voted conscientiously on that occasion, and he believed that every other honorable member, also, did. He spoke conscientiously, and he hoped it would be found that he always did so. Now, he felt it to be his duty to oppose the present Ministry, and he always would oppose them, though he should always like to see the class they belonged to fairly represented in the House. He was happy to be able to say that some of the best friends he had in the colony belonged to the squatting class—friends personally and politically. He was glad to know that some belonging to that class were waking up to a sense of what was necessary for the general interests of the colony. He did not mean to say that the position the squatters had hitherto occupied in the House was not one they were bound to take in consideration of their own interests. It was only natural that they, being tenants of the Crown, should desire to come into the House, so as to be in a position to maintain their own interests. Now, he must say that he thought that the leasing of the Crown lands was the worst thing that ever could have happened to the colony; for it had had the effect, most undoubtedly, of retarding the progress not only of Queensland but of every other colony in Australia. He had no hesitation in saying that it had been

the curse of Queensland; and until the lands were thrown open to free selection, there would never be a really prosperous community settled in the colony. He did not mean to say that the lands should at once be taken from those who held them from the Crown on lease. That was a course that must be pursued gradually. The leasing system, as he had already said, was a wrong system from the beginning, but the Crown lessees could not be turned out at once, for they had private rights, which must be respected. The change, however, must be gradually brought about. The leasing system would always be an incubus on the country; and he believed that every squatter would yet see that it would be for his own interest, as well as for the interest of the colony at large, that he should gradually relax his hold upon the lands. He had a local matter to refer to in the next place, and that was the case of the Clermont Hospital. A few days ago he applied at the Colonial Secretary's Office for the money that was due, by vote of Parliament, for the hospital, since the commencement of the present year. Well, the Under-Colonial Secretary informed him that the money had not been forwarded because the hospital committee had not complied with the terms of the vote by making direct application. Now, the money used to be transmitted quarterly until within the last nine months of 1869; but nothing at all had been received during the present year. He was told that the secretary to the hospital would have to write down for it; but that it could not be got yet, because there was no money. Well, after his receiving such an answer, honorable members could fancy what was his astonishment to find that last week £600 was sent up to the Ipswich Hospital—but that, he supposed, might be accounted for by the fact that the only six members the Ministry had to support them, were the members for Ipswich and West Moreton. That was what he had heard, but he could not prove that it was correct. However, as regarded the Clermont Hospital, he could assure the House that no portion of the vote was forthcoming as yet. The interests of the Clermont constituency had always been neglected, as long as the present Ministry had been in power; and while the member for Clermont sat on the Opposition side of the House. The next question he would refer to was, the question of Separation. In taking up that question, he did so voluntarily; it was not forced upon him, but he brought it before his constituents voluntarily; and he did so, because it seemed to him that the people were very lukewarm on the subject. He took it up, and he shewed the constituency that there was not likely to be any justice done to the north until there was separation; but he was not required to pledge himself upon the matter. However, he would continue to hold the same views upon the subject of separation, as he enunciated to his constituency, and to

maintain the necessity for separation until he saw a marked change on the part of the Government in its treatment of the claims of the north. He had, he believed, induced honorable members on the Opposition side of the House to take an interest in the question of separation; and on that account he would oppose the present Ministry. Not one word had been said by the members of the Government on the subject of separation; and the honorable the Colonial Secretary knew that, with his present supporters, he was not in a position to deal with the question. Now, he could shew why the honorable member was diffident to go into the matter. The honorable member for Maryborough, at present Minister for Works, said, on the 5th of May last year, as would be found in "Hansard," column one, page 37—

"He did not mean to say that those honorable members were traitors at heart who advocated separation; but such advocacy was traitorous to the well-being and future prosperity of Queensland, nevertheless."

Now, how far, he would ask, was the question of separation likely to be supported by an honorable member who would speak in that way? Then the honorable member, on the same occasion, continued to say—

"He could not help remarking that, when allusion was made to separation by the honorable member for the Kennedy, the honorable the Colonial Treasurer was the first to cheer the observation. Now, he believed it was part of the policy of Brisbane gentlemen to promote separation."

Well, he was glad to find that the members for Brisbane did take an interest in the question of separation; and if by their action financial separation were obtained—such financial separation as was desired—then the north would get nearly all that was wanted. Now, because of the interest taken by the Opposition in the matter of separation, he would support them. Then, again, the present honorable Colonial Treasurer said, on the subject of separation, on the 7th July last year, as reported in "Hansard," column one, page 444—

"He did not agree with the honorable member at the head of the Government about separation; for, he thought, premature separation would be a very great evil: he could see an enormous increase of expenditure, the multiplication of custom houses on the coast and on the border, and an interference with trade which they must bring with them. Queensland must lose a great deal in position by division: if cut up into small colonies, we could not carry the same weight, at home, or in relation to the other colonies, as now; nor occupy the important position which it was hoped Queensland was shortly to hold amongst the Australian colonies. If this applied now—if it applied to the South, it would apply with much more force to the North. The expenditure of the South would not be very much increased, though the revenue would be somewhat diminished, by separation; but the expenditure of the North would be seriously increased if it were erected into a new

colony, and the people should consider whether that expenditure was such as they could bear."

Then, again, at the foot of the second column of the same page, the honorable gentleman was reported as having said—

"He could not, he repeated, see that the North had been so much injured. There were many places in the South that were not more benefitted by the railway than Rockhampton."

Now, he would like to call the attention of the honorable member for Rockhampton to those statements; and he would ask him how he could support a Ministry that was opposed to the construction of railways in the north, and to separation. The honorable member for Rockhampton told his constituents that he would not pledge himself to separation; and he acted in a most honorable manner in saying that he would not come to the House as the delegate of any committee, but would take his seat as an independent member, representing the constituency of Rockhampton. Now, he hoped the honorable member would vote with the Opposition on the question before the House. The present Ministry, he maintained, had no right to expect the votes of the northern members on the present occasion. Except the honorable the Colonial Secretary—he being at the head of the Government—there was not a northern member who ought to vote with the present Ministry. He knew it would be a great inconvenience to northern members to have to go before their constituencies again so soon after their having been returned; but he was not afraid at all to meet the constituency of Clermont again. Notwithstanding all the powerful influence that might be brought to bear against him, he could carry the election at any time, so long as he pursued a consistent course, and advocated the interests of his constituents. It would not be in the power of the unchanged and unchangeable fourteen electors for Beaufort to turn him out. They always voted the same way; and so assured was he as to the way they would vote at the last election, that he did not go to the trouble of sending a scrutineer to Beaufort. He must certainly give the honorable the Colonial Secretary credit for the way in which he brought his men so well up to the scratch. He now came to the question of additional representation. He was fully convinced that additional representation was absolutely necessary. It was glaringly evident that an increase of members was required, by the fact that the three members for Ipswich, and the three members for West Moreton were the only supporters of the present Ministry. The whole of the main strength of the Ministry depended upon one town in the colony. That was the position of the Ministry that would go back to the country and test the opinions of the constituencies. Every honorable member who had come from the north had expressed his opposition to the present Ministry; though it was a northern member who was at the head of

the Government. The honorable member for the Mitchell, who the other evening took his seat in the House, signally defeated the present Attorney-General at the election; and therefore, under all these circumstances, he considered it was a farce for the present Ministry to speak of a dissolution. However, if His Excellency the Governor granted a dissolution, he (Dr. Benson), was quite ready and willing to meet his constituents. He trusted that when the Additional Members Bill was before the House, if the present Ministry stood, that they would take some measures to put out their friends. It was too bad that the town which was only the third in size in the colony should send in three members, and Rockhampton, the second town, should send in only one member, to the Assembly. He hoped that the Government were sincere in their wish to carry that Bill. He thought, he had a right to have a doubt about this subject, because the honorable the Colonial Secretary's views in July, 1870, were very different from those he expressed in August, 1869. The honorable gentleman said, on Tuesday evening, that the last subject of which he would speak was additional representation; and he would say, he believed the House, as at present, was too small. If there were no other reasons for enlarging the number of members—and there were many which he would not detain the House by entering into—one reason was that in a House of thirty-two members they were too apt to get divided into cliques and parties, and to disregard the main question—the welfare of the colony—by frequently running into what would suit parties for the time being. He would bring in and support a Bill to largely increase the representation of the colony. Now, to compare that with the former statement, made a very short time ago. On turning to page 704 of "Hansard," for 1869, that honorable gentleman said—

"If the Ministry were so earnest about passing an Additional Members Bill or a Re-distribution Bill, their first step should be to try their power in the House, by bringing in a Bill to repeal the two-thirds clause; that was their simple duty, and they had the example of the New South Wales Parliament before them."

Nothing could be more patent. Was it not evident as anything could possibly be, that the promise of an Additional Members Bill was a perfect sham—a perfect farce? The Colonial Secretary's views could not have changed so much; and the honorable gentleman was as perfectly aware, to-night, that it was impossible to carry that Bill, without the repeal of the two-thirds clause, as he was a year ago. With regard to the amendments, his (Dr. Benson's) views coincided, perhaps, somewhat with those of the Opposition; because he believed that, in a colony like this, without any industries opened up as yet, it was a matter of importance for labor to get employment. The lands were locked up; there were no manufactures; there was only

one thing a laborer could do, and that was to go shepherding. Until the colony could offer other inducements to labor to come hither—without the land was opened up and railways extended—it was nonsense to talk about immigration. As soon as ever railways were to be started, there was, first, the employment for labor; and, second, when the railways were formed, there was the land alongside to be settled and cultivated; and, again, there was the certain communication with a market for the produce of the land. This was too poor a colony to go into the subject in the extensive way that America had done; still, until a move was made in the right direction—until the surplus population of England, and Europe at large, was shewn that the Government were in earnest in the work of national advancement—it was, he repeated, nonsense to expect people to come. What was the view which honorable members who occupied the Treasury benches took? They did not require white labor, but Coolies, here. There was a vast difference between settling a white and a black population in this colony. The Minister for Lands asserted that the country was being settled; and, further, that the richer the rich man, the richer the poor. Now, he (Dr. Benson) said that the country was not being settled, but that the population was going out of it. Though there were agricultural farms in larger number than before, the populations of the towns were not increasing; the plantations that were taken up employed but a few white men and a large number of blacks. A white population would no more attempt to compete with black people, here, than in England. What would be said if Kanakas went to England to compete with white labor? There would be a revolution, at once. But the difference of opinion on the settlement of the country arose from the different views that honorable gentlemen in the Ministry took of white labor. There was one element that the Minister for Lands should remember, and that he lost sight of in his argument—that was, the market for produce. So long as there was a market for manufactures and produce, capital and labor regulated each other; but immediately the market fell off, the relations between capital and labor were altered. If Great Britain could manufacture more than the world could consume, immediately the relations of capital and labor would be altered. And, when capitalists competed with each other, where profits that were large became less, then the labor price came down. When the returns on capital came down to the lowest interest, it would not be expended in the country; but another market was sought for it in the world. England was in that position at the present time; for foreign nations were manufacturing for themselves, and there was such a glut of money in England, now, as might never arise again. Manu-

factures were overdone. England was taking no steps to populate this colony. The market was glutted with money, interest was low, and capitalists were seeking for various outlets for investment. Now was the time for this colony to go and borrow money, to get it at low interest, and to make Queensland progress, and attractive for immigrants. Honorable members were all perfectly well aware of the minerals which abounded, of the rich pastoral lands, of the rich plantation lands: they could make a profit of fifty per cent. out of England's money. If he were a speculator, and he could get five millions of money, which could be got in England, he would be able to make a very good thing, indeed, of it in this colony. The honorable the Colonial Secretary said, regarding immigration, the German portion of which this year would cost £18,000, that the Government would require a very large sum to carry out the schemes previously formed. If the Agent-General's views were carried into operation, the total amounts required would be between £45,000 and £50,000. Whether that money would ever be repaid to the colony, as was hoped by the promoters of the Immigration Act, was a question of time; in the meantime, however, if the Act was to be carried out, the money was wanted. It was manifest from the foregoing that the honorable gentleman's views were not very hopeful on the subject of immigration. As he seemed willing, however, to carry out the provisions of the Act, honorable members must not complain. To relieve his despondency, he (Dr. Benson) might just give him a few facts from "The Statesman's Year Book for 1870," concerning American immigration:—In 1856 there were about 142,000 immigrants landed at the port of New York. It was found upon inquiry—that was, the question was asked of each immigrant as to the amount of capital in his possession—that the average amount of money possessed by each on landing was sixty-eight dollars. And, it was shown afterwards, that many actually possessed more, having concealed the amount; and that their average of capital was 150 dollars, taking into consideration tools, clothes, &c. So that the immigrants actually possessed more capital than the people of the country; collectively they were richer. And, that was unassisted immigration. If immigration were directed to this country, it would be found that capital would be brought into the country in like manner; it would not have to be borrowed for immigration. It had been calculated that the Germans alone brought into the United States, 11,000,000 of dollars a year, and that from 1847 to 1859, the amount was 5,000,000,000 of dollars. And if 300,000 immigrants arrived annually, they would bring into the country a capital of 332,000,000 of dollars. Now, those facts spoke for themselves, and they could not be got over. He referred to

the "Statesman's Year Book," because it was an unquestionable authority. Now, if such people were to come out here, they must be able to find something to do; or, they must not be expected to come. It would not do for them to come up from Moreton Bay to walk about the streets with their hands in their pockets. Preparations must be made for them by special agents. It was an established fact, that in the State of New York, as soon as the immigrants arrived, they were taken charge of. The poorest class of immigrants were not allowed to remain in the city; they were forwarded to the interior. No doubt the honorable the Colonial Secretary would say that was an interference with the liberty of the subject. With regard to local self-government, there was a great deal to be said. He (Dr. Benson), as a northern member, was afraid to say much to-night; but as the House had been informed that the country was on the eve of a change, he must first look to his own interests; and secondly, he must let his constituents know that his views were in accordance with their interests. If he were a little tedious, he hoped the House would bear with him. He agreed with Burke's view, who said, Parliament was not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain as an agent and advocate against other agents and advocates; but Parliament was an assembly of one nation, with one interest, where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the universal good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. He asked, if the Parliament of Queensland ever could be such a Parliament, as long as honorable members came down from Clermont and other places, and, if they wanted a little bit of an hospital granted, must go begging to the gentlemen on the Treasury benches? So long as the House was constituted as it was, so long as it usurped municipal functions, so long honorable members could not hope to be as of one nation, with one interest for the universal good, without local prejudices and different interests. At the present day, the council in Prussia, the deputies in France, were engaged in considering the subject of decentralization; it was one that was being considered, now, in Italy, in Spain, in Austria, and all through the continent of Europe; it had received attention in America long ago, and was carried out to its full extent in the United States. When old continental countries were adopting local self-government, when it was put forward as the only system under which liberty could exist, and when it was taken up by the continental journals which warmly insisted upon municipal rights for the provinces, it was time for Queenslanders to see about adopting some such enlightened system, notwithstanding that there were difficulties in the way with the population so scattered throughout the country—something

suit to the wants of the colony. The Minister for Public Works said only last year, that

"He was never yet able to see how provincial councils, or any other system of local government, in this curiously-peopled country, could be carried out."

Well, of course, it was one of the honorable gentleman's usual erratic ideas:—

"If all were alike—if the people followed the same occupations—if the districts were all the same size, and had the same number of population—some scheme might be adopted that might be applicable to all; but with the varied interests that existed, he could not give his adhesion at all to what was called local self-government."

As a northern man, he (Dr. Benson) said he had nothing to expect from the Ministerial side of the House on local self-government: and, consequently, he would vote with the Opposition. Now, with regard to the fiscal policy of the country:—The Right Honorable James Wilson said—

"Finance is not mere arithmetic—finance is a great policy and lies at the bottom, at the root of the government of every country. Without sound finance, no sound government is possible. Without sound government, no sound finance is possible. In the commercial and fiscal policy of a nation lie the foundation, the happiness, the prosperity, and the welfare, not only of the working classes, but of capitalists also."

Now, although the Colonial Treasurer had not brought any policy before the House, at all, yet it would have been well for him, if he wished to command any votes on the Opposition side of the House, to have adopted some policy—he should have foreshadowed it, in some degree; he might have told the House in a straightforward manner whether he was going to protect local industries, or whether he intended to adopt the system of free-trade, or the system of protection, or a system between the two. He had told the House nothing whatever about the subject. Consequently, it was useless for him (Dr. Benson) to go into the question at all, although he was prepared to do so. He next came to the question of railways. It was perfectly useless for him to say much upon that subject, because so much had been said already. The House were well aware that the colony was sadly in want of a system of railways, and that no country in the world required them so much as Australia did;—the facts of having no navigable rivers, and of communication with the interior being so frequently interrupted in the rainy season, and of the difficulty of constructing good roads, rendered it necessary that some system of cheap railways should be adopted at once. He maintained that some good system of communication between the interior and the seaboard could be carried out cheaper than by ordinary roads. When he said ordinary roads, he

meant roads that, once formed and metalled, would carry traffic from year's end to year's end, with attention to repairs. But if the House went into that system, it would be more expensive than a system of cheap railways. He knew something about them, because he had practical experience of them, and he was perfectly well aware, from the estimates he had made on the subject, that a good system of railways for this colony could be made for £2,000 a mile. There was no doubt about that; and, if the colony adopted the American system of laying and working new lines of railway, there would be no difficulty in making them for less. There was an absurd idea that it was necessary to complete the lines before allowing them to be worked. He had been on the Grand Western Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, and he had seen portions of the lines for months—some of them for a year—totally unballasted. The major part of the roads in that country were not ballasted, not a particle of masonry put in the tunnels, trestle-work carried over the rivers, the earthworks dumped in from the cuttings: the rails were laid, and traffic went on some time before the line was finished. By adopting such a cheap system, with cheap way-side stations, the conductors travelling on the trains instead of having station-masters, it would be found that such lines as he spoke of could be constructed for less than £2,000 a mile. With reference to some of the views of the Government, there was something contradictory; and it would be a matter of importance for the House to be able to believe in their sincerity. In the seventh paragraph of the Speech, he read—

"You will be asked to empower the Government to contract with private individuals, or companies, for the construction of cheap lines of railway in the interior, and to pay for same by grants of lands, along the lines to be constructed." Now, he found that the honorable the Colonial Secretary's idea was, to shelve the question altogether, for that honorable gentleman had said that, as to railways, there was such a diversity of opinion, that the Government saw nothing for it, if they remained in power, but to ask for a Committee of the House, who would go thoroughly into the whole question of cheap railways. The improvements which of late years had been made at home rendered it very necessary that the greatest care should be taken before committing the country to a great amount of expense. He believed that it would be desirable that the Government should enter into agreements for the construction of railways into the interior, or he would even go so far as to say from Ipswich to Brisbane, if grants of land would be taken in return. The honorable the Secretary for Works had, however, with his usual tact, made a clean breast of the whole matter, and said railways had been a curse to the whole colony; that

£3,000,000 had been spent on 131 miles of line, the cost being something like £14,000 a mile. Now, this was from a letter sent by the honorable gentleman to his constituents:—

“My constituents will remember how strenuously I opposed the infliction upon the country of that gross job—the Warwick Railway. It began in crime, for the first £100,000 allotted to it was unvoted for that purpose, and misappropriated from another; and it was continued as unconstitutionally, for two resolutions were passed in the Assembly, the first moved by myself, and the second by Mr. Raff, that the work should cease. I remind, or wish to remind, you all of these facts, because the doubt can no longer be entertained of the tremendous loss which that line will annually entail upon the country, and because the same infatuation in many minds exists, and the same local desires are still at work, on the subject of railway extension, which, if acceded to, must end in further indebtedness and increased taxation. I am far within the mark when I say, that every mile of railway we possess entails an annual loss, *that has to be met from the general revenue*, of £500 annually; and I conscientiously declare that I can see no possibility, either by extensions of the lines, or the utmost economy in working them, of mitigating this frightful and, I fear, permanent load upon the general community.”

The patriotic manner in which the honorable gentleman proposed to shift the burden from the unfortunate country to the shoulders of the capitalists willing to rush on to ruin with their eyes open, and generously forewarned, was certainly edifying. Such a manly, straightforward course was not often adopted by the degenerate statesmen of the present age. The honorable gentleman said, when he addressed the House, that the Government had been charged with being insincere; that such was not the case. If they could get capitalists to undertake the railway across the country, the matter would be carried out, and he believed—notwithstanding all he said before—it would be a great benefit to the colony. But those railways took up the funds which ought to be spent on the roads. Farmers had come to him with tears in their eyes, telling him of the way they were being ruined. With regard to the honorable gentleman's sincerity, he (Dr. Benson) was sure nobody could be in doubt as to how much chance there was of getting railways extended under any system, by the honorable member at the head of the Works department: he would leave the House to imagine it. Now, he came to the honorable the Colonial Treasurer's statement. When addressing his constituents on his recent re-election, the Treasurer said—

“It was said by some of the Brisbane papers that the Government boat would be sure to founder on the rock of railway extension; but he could assure them, nevertheless, the present Ministry would pursue the course they had laid down on accepting the responsibilities of office. His own views on the matter were . . . that a railway to Brisbane would be a great public convenience, but

he could not lose sight of the fact that there were two very serious obstacles to its immediate execution—the one political, and the other financial. In the present condition of the House, it would be impossible to carry the Brisbane railway, without conceding a corresponding extension of the Northern line; and if they consented to undertake the whole of these unfruitful and expensive works, they would accumulate a debt that they would never, perhaps, be able to cast off.”

He (Dr. Benson) could take that for what it was worth—assertion. So far as the northern line was concerned, he would prove very conclusively that there was not a line in the world which, if it were carried out properly, would pay better. The honorable gentlemen who sat on the Treasury benches did not seem to know anything about the interior; they did not seem to have any idea about Clermont or the surrounding district. He was quite sure, though, that if they had taken the matter into consideration at all, the House and the country would have heard more about the railway. The following was a letter which he had received from the Secretary of the Peak Downs Copper Mining Company:—

“Peak Downs Copper Mining Company,
Sydney, 28th June, 1870.

“Sir—I have much pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and in furnishing you with the information which you require, relative to the amount of carriage paid yearly by the Peak Downs Mining Company.

“At the present time the company produces yearly 1,300 tons of copper, which are conveyed to port at the rate of £10 10s. per ton. £13,650

“We import tools, materials, and machinery, to the extent of about 300 tons annually, which have to be carried from the coast to the mine at the same rate 3,150

“The yearly expenditure for carriage is now £16,800

“As soon as the furnaces, now in course of erection, are completed, the annual production of copper will be 2,000 tons, the carriage of which will cost £21,000

“Add materials, tools, and machinery, 400 tons 4,200

“The cost of carriage will be 25,200

“The company gives permanent employment to 400 or 500 men, for whom supplies have to be brought from the coast by the storekeepers. The traffic from that source alone may be taken as equal to about 1,000 tons of assorted merchandise, which costs for carriage £10,500.

“You are aware that, owing to the nature of the soil, and to the absence of formed roads, carriers can travel only in fine weather, and that, in wet seasons, the communication by ordinary drays has often been interrupted for several months. We had an instance of this lately, although the mining and smelting operations of the company were carried on as usual.

“During the last half-year we have only exported 250 tons of copper against 1,000 tons

shipped during the preceding six months, and I may add that several drays, despatched from the mine in December last, had not reached Broad-sound on the 12th of June.

"Should railway communication be extended to the Peak Downs district, the Peak Downs Copper Mining Company would immediately extend its operations and find employment at once for more than 1,000 men.

"I have been informed that during the last two or three years several valuable copper mines have been discovered in the Peak Downs district, for which a working capital could not be raised in consequence of the cost and of the uncertainty of carriage.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"D. N. JOUBERT, Sec. P.D.C.M.C.

"J. R. Benson, Esq., M.P., Brisbane."

He thought that was conclusive proof, without saying one word more about the district of Clermont, that a line, built at any ordinary cost, built even at a cost of £5,000 a mile, would pay, at the rate of fifteen per cent., at that calculation. But, taking the carriage of wool and of supplies for Clermont—which was equally as large a place as Copperfield—and for the quartz-reefers and gold-miners, it would pay even if the line cost £5,000 a mile. There were several other matters that he should go into on the present occasion; but he had, really, taken up so much time. He thought he had stated very satisfactorily his views. The reasons that he had given were very satisfactory, indeed, as to the way in which he was going to vote. There was just one word he would say about the land question, but he would not enter into it at length, as he had tabled a motion with regard to throwing open the land in the interior districts: he should like to know, now, if any member of the Ministry would support him in that motion—if there was a single man on the Ministerial side of the House willing to do so. Were the Government prepared to give a hundred or a thousand square miles for settlement, around the towns? It was said the land was no good, and he had been told by the principal squatters that it was fit for nothing; but it happened, last year, that an enterprising Chinaman did get some land—nobody else but a Chinaman could get it—and he put in forty acres of maize, and he got forty bushels to the acre of a crop! He was constrained, occupying the position he held as a northern member, to vote against the Ministry.

Mr. FERRETT expressed the pleasure he felt as presenting himself to the House supporting the Government he found in power. He found in their policy, as he understood it from the Opening Speech, that they were inclined to do the colony justice, as much as any Ministry he had ever known in power in this colony. He could not see what the arguments of the Opposition were grounded on, unless that honorable members who supported the amendments wished to change

sides with the occupants of the Treasury benches, and take the places of the Government. Some years ago, when he was a representative in the Assembly, he was sorry to say he was a consenting party to the salaries of Ministers being raised from £800 a year to £1,000; it was one of the greatest mistakes he ever made. If that mistake had not been made by him and others, he did not think the party strife that the House now witnessed would be seen. The best interests of the country were overlooked while the strife went on for place. He regretted the personalities that had been indulged in by honorable members—he hoped all were honorable in the House, but they ought to prove themselves so—which ought to be censured somehow. Referring to the second paragraph in the Speech, he said that everyone knew that a loan was necessary, as contracts having been entered into must be paid for; and he did not see how that was to be done except in the way proposed. The extraordinary manner in which the third paragraph of the Speech had been commented upon was calculated to hinder the business of the country, not to benefit it. He did not profess to be a lawyer, but he took credit to himself for having a little common sense; and he had lived years enough not to be talked down by the honorable lawyers on the Opposition side of the House. As to the latter part of the third paragraph, it was quite necessary that "parliamentary authority" should be obtained for the subjects named; else, where was the money required to come from? He never would consent to public money being spent without parliamentary authority. The honorable member for Burnett, Mr. Pring, was, he granted, a very able lawyer; but it was not consistent that in the first case which came before the House he should argue that they were bound by the strict letter of the law—to turn an honorable member out of his seat—and in the next case, this very matter of spending money without parliamentary authority, he should argue against the law and Parliament, and want to make his Government independent of both. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley, late Premier, had put the subject in a different light, spoke temperately, and never so well; and he (Mr. Ferrett) said it with pride, the honorable member had improved much since he met him in the Queensland Parliament before. He considered it very necessary that the railway charges should be fixed by Act of Parliament, so as not to make John Jones pay one price and Tom Smith pay another, for the same class of goods. It had been reported to him, upon good authority, that some persons were charged twenty shillings or thirty shillings per ton, while other persons had to pay forty shillings for less distances, and he thought it was quite time to put a stop to this sort of thing. He was not going to say that this was done to favor any friends

of the Minister for Works, but he thought the matter was one which required looking into. The next clause referred to a number of measures which the Government proposed to introduce, all of which, he believed, the gentlemen who sat upon the Opposition benches would admit required immediate attention, and yet they denied the Government an opportunity of bringing them forward. They were Bills which it had been agreed on all sides were imperatively necessary. The proposed Bill to secure the payment of wages, was rather different from the Bill which had been brought in some time before, because it was a general Bill, and he approved of it on that account, as he was not one of those who was in favor of class legislation; although he had been spoken of as belonging to a class, he denied the charge. His interests were not connected with one class more than another, and he was only anxious to promote the general welfare. The next clause proposed the initiation of a system of cheap railways to be constructed by companies or private individuals, and to be paid for by grants of land. He saw nothing wrong in that. That was one of the subjects he had spoken of to his constituents, and whether the Government adopted the idea from anything he had said he could not tell. In his published address he had further stated that paying for cheap railways by grants of land was only coming back to the tramway scheme of 1860. He had had some little experience in tramways some years before Separation, and had been one of the first who wrote a letter to Sir William Denison, the Governor of New South Wales, on the subject. The same question had come up since Separation, and he had gone into the first tramway scheme in this colony, and lost some money over it. That tramway was the father of the Queensland railways, and there were honorable members in that House who knew that if that tramway had been carried out in its integrity, on the principle it was first intended to be worked, it would have saved the country from the burden under which it now labored. It would have answered for all purposes. The country had been led to suppose that the railways would only cost £4,000 a mile, but the real cost had been something like £14,000; and, therefore, now that it was attempted to bring forward a scheme for making railways at £2,000 per mile, it would not be much out of the way to estimate the probable actual cost at about £12,000; especially taking into consideration that the item of purchased land, which was an inconsiderable one in the existing lines, would be a serious item in the proposed Brisbane and Ipswich Railway. If he understood it, the cheap railway scheme shadowed forth by the Opposition, was a very different one from that proposed by the Government; and, therefore, the Opposition designated the latter a delusion. Surely the country was justified in placing as

much faith in the Government as in the members of the Opposition. If he had thought the Government never intended to carry out their scheme, he should never have made up his mind to support them; but he believed they did, and he believed their opponents would find out their mistake if they supposed the country would endorse the action they had taken. Were the Ministry to be condemned like criminals in a dock, without a hearing? The £1,000 a-year was the great attraction to the members of the Opposition—that was at the bottom of it all; and if he lived and continued a member of that House, he would bring in a Bill to reduce the salaries of Ministers, and then the time of the country would not be wasted by such factious proceedings. What was the Opposition got up for?—for pay; that was his belief. Let the Government have a fair trial, he said; and if they failed let them be kicked out, and he would help to do it. He was sorry to see honorable members on the Opposition side of the House, who, he believed, had made up their minds to vote against the Ministry before they had even read the Speech—there must be some reason for it. He did not like to be personal, but he should be obliged to be a little so. He should not be doing his duty if he did not refer to a little matter which had come under his notice. Why was a certain honorable member sitting on the Opposition benches?—because he said he could not sit on the same side as the Premier, after the way that gentleman had treated him in reference to certain land selections. He referred to the honorable member for Maranoa. He would put the question to the Premier, and the reply of that honorable gentleman might have something to do with his vote.

Mr. MILES denied having made use of any such expression.

Mr. FERRETT: He only referred to the matter in order to elicit from the Premier an explanation of his action with regard to these selections. The late Premier, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, was not in the House, but he could not avoid stating that a great outcry had been made outside in consequence of what he had done in ordering certain steamers. Now, who raised that cry? He should like to have heard that stated. If the present Government raised it to get Mr. Lilley turned out of office, he might have some reason to complain; otherwise he did not see that the honorable member had anything at all to complain of. With regard to the late Premier, in the matter of education, he could not quite endorse the action that gentleman took. If the House was sitting at the time, and he remitted the school fees without making some provision for those who had vested interests, he was wrong. It was plain that a great injustice had been done to the private schoolmasters, and they had every right to claim compensation. He did not object to the principle of free education—he

could even go further and say compulsory education; but he did not like to see injustice done to any one.

Mr. LILLEY: Perhaps the honorable member will allow me to give him a little information on the subject. During the whole time I was in office, and for some time afterwards, I had only one application from a private schoolmaster to be embodied under the Board.

Mr. FERRETT: He was pleased to receive that explanation, but it did not follow because there had only been one application, that there were not other cases where those persons were suffering. He knew of more than one who had to seek fresh employment, but they would not apply to the gentleman who had taken the bread out of their mouths. If the system had been initiated in a different way, the private schoolmasters might have had an opportunity of procuring situations elsewhere; but, done as it was, at a moment's notice, he maintained it had caused a good deal of distress. But he hoped the honorable member for Fortitude Valley did not suppose that if the question of free education had been brought before the House he would not have voted for it. With regard to immigration, the honorable member for South Brisbane had spoken at great length on the subject, but he (Mr. Ferrett) had been unable to gather what was going to be done, except that immigrants were not to come out unless they paid their own passage, and that, he thought, should be amended to a certain extent. With reference to hospitals, it had been remarked that the Ipswich hospital had received a larger share of support than other institutions of that kind. He was not aware that such was the case. He thought it would be found, in looking over the payments made by the late Colonial Treasurer, and other Treasurers, that the Brisbane hospital had received a great deal more. He was not a great advocate for out-door relief to hospitals, because he believed that in many cases it was abused. He came next to the question of railways. Now, there was a great authority upon railways—the honorable member for Warrego. He had been much struck by the way in which that honorable member took up what had been termed the wild railway scheme to the Gulf of Carpentaria, or somewhere else in the interior, and with his statement that the gentleman who first propounded the scheme was no less a person than a gentleman named Grant. It appeared that some one had said that gentleman was mad. He should like to be told by the honorable member if he knew whether he was mad or not. He (Mr. Ferrett) might be mad, but he certainly could not accept that authority for the scheme. That was the honorable member's great authority—a gentleman in Victoria, whose name was Grant. Now, he had been in other countries besides Queensland, and he was prepared to state that the scheme in question had been laid before the

House of Assembly in Sydney either thirteen or fifteen years ago by Dr. Lang. Then, about the great railway scheme between Brisbane and Ipswich. Well, he should be very pleased to see such a railway; but he was not going to vote for that, or any other railway, without knowing how it was to be paid for, while there was such an enormous debt hanging over the colony. He did not ask the Government how they were going to carry out their railway scheme, but he asked the Opposition to show how they were going to carry out their great scheme. The question was, would the line from Ipswich to Brisbane pay. He maintained that it ought to be taken further. It should go to the sea-board, and he believed the best place to take it to would be Victoria Point. But, in his opinion, the best plan would be to take it from the terminus at Ipswich direct to Victoria Point, with a branch from there to Brisbane, or from Ipswich to Brisbane. It was not, perhaps, so well known that the land through which it would chiefly pass in East Moreton was Government land fit for agriculture, and there was a very good harbor at Victoria Point. Close to that point there was also a small island, which could be reached by constructing a small bridge; and alongside the island there were seven fathoms of water, and in no place was there less than forty feet of water. There were plenty of good sites for wharves on the island, and plenty of good land near it—in fact, he believed, if the line went that way, the sale of the land through which it went would pay the whole cost of making it, as well as the branch line to Brisbane—

The Hon. C. LILLEY here called the attention of Mr. Speaker to the interruptions caused by strangers in the gallery.

The SPEAKER said he had spoken of it once before. If the interruptions were repeated, he should cause the gallery to be cleared, and its occupants would have no one but themselves to blame.

Mr. FERRETT resumed: If that railway were carried out—and it would be carried out, some day—it must be done in a very different way to that in which the Southern and Western Railway had been done. He maintained that the money squandered and lost upon that line would not have been so badly spent if anyone but a lawyer had been at the head of the Works Department at the time. If the land alongside it had been put up for sale at the proper time, there would now have been settlers and producers upon it, benefiting the country; but where were they, and where was the money gone to that was paid for making the line? The best bone and sinew that ever came to this colony, the railway laborers, would have remained in the colony and settled, if there had been any inducement held out to them in the shape of land. As soon as one section was finished, or even before that, sales of land

should have been proclaimed all along the line, to meet the requirements of people who came out here, many of them, with the express intention of settling in the country. He did not say this for the purpose of censuring the gentleman who was, at the time, the head of the Department, so much as for the purpose of preventing a like error in future. That honorable member did, perhaps, as well as he could; but, he repeated, a lawyer was out of his place as Minister for Public Works. He did not think there would have been so much occasion for immigration—which was now such a great cry—if these railway laborers had been settled on the lands. He was sorry to hear such a remark made, by a member of the Opposition, as that a sop had been given to the representatives of Ipswich and West Moreton. It was an attempt to slight those representatives which, he thought, was quite uncalled for. He did not wish to particularise, but, as one of the members for West Moreton, he must defend himself and his friends. He came into that House as independent and untrammelled as any honorable member;—he came to represent the people who sent him there, and he should do so, to the best of his ability. He was proud to be their representative, and, after reading the Speech, and listening to the statements of the Ministry, and seeing the liberal way in which they proposed to construct the necessary roads to the interior, he should give them his support, in spite of the amendments brought forward by those who were so anxious to take their places. There were a great number of farmers in the colony, who were perfectly shut out from any market by the state of the roads around them. If their wants had been attended to, at an earlier date, by the previous Ministry, he had no hesitation in saying that the farming population would now be in a prosperous condition. He attributed the scanty supply of many articles of produce in the market entirely to the state of the roads: there were large quantities of corn, and other products, which were lying at the different farms unsaleable, because there was no means of getting it to market. If the railway scheme he had suggested were carried out, it would be quite necessary to lay down some feeders from it, running for eight or ten miles on either side—cheap wooden railways costing about two hundred pounds per mile, so as to enable farmers to send their produce to the different markets—Ipswich, Brisbane, and Toowoomba, though, from what he knew, he did not think there would be much sent to Brisbane. In conclusion, he would simply allude to the amendments. He certainly saw nothing in them, except what seemed a catch in the last paragraph—it was, no doubt, correctly termed a “catch” for a northern member; but he hoped that honorable member had taken notes of what had been said in the House during that and the two previous nights, and would judge for himself as to

what was best for the interests of the colony. The way in which the question of separation was put into the Speech shewed very clearly that the Opposition had no intention of taking any action, themselves, in the matter. For his part, he was quite ready to go in for separation, if the northern members asked for it.

Dr. O'DONERTY said that, after the eloquent and rather lengthy oration they had just heard from the honorable member for West Moreton, he would occupy the attention of the House for but a short time. With that native modesty for which his countrymen were celebrated, he found himself coming in at the fag-end of an important debate—a debate which he considered was one of the most important they had yet heard within the walls of that House—a debate which he hoped, and believed, would be fruitful in results for the well-being of the colony—a debate which had been distinguished by unusual ability and moderation. There were one or two points he should wish to refer to, which he thought had not been satisfactorily dwelt upon, and which, he thought, were of sufficient importance to be dwelt upon before the debate came to a close. He did not think he could add much to the lustre of the debate they had heard; but, representing as he did many important interests in that House, he did not think he would be doing his duty if he did not refer to those points he had as yet only hinted at. The most interesting and important to which he would like to refer, was the extraordinary change of opinions they had heard, as evidenced in the speeches of many of the leading representatives of the House; and, moreover, not only the extraordinary changes that had taken place in the opinions of those honorable members, but the radical and almost revolutionary changes that had taken place in the views of the constituencies of the northern and western portions of the territory, as shewn by the speeches of the honorable members from those districts with respect to what should be the policy of the country. By no individual member who, like himself, had never sat, and who had never sought to sit within the charmed circle of office, could those speeches have been listened to, but with surprise. He must confess to having experienced a feeling of gratification in witnessing such great changes as had taken place in so short a time—a feeling of gratification that was mingled with some surprise, that those changes had taken place so suddenly. If he had ever had the good fortune of being associated with the upper ten who sat on the Treasury benches, he might not have been so much surprised. But he was surprised at hearing so overwhelming a voice coming from the Opposition side of the House, expressing the views of the constituencies in the north, the south, and the west, in favor of the adoption of a progressive policy, which he and some other honorable members had had for

several years been attempting to force upon successive Ministries. But if great satisfaction were felt at seeing such a change in the opinions of those holding leading positions in the House, much greater must be the satisfaction experienced at seeing the great northern and western constituencies coming forward to assist in the struggle which he and other honorable members had for years endeavored to carry on. It was only ten months since that he himself, towards the close of the last session but one, ventured to make what was considered a last appeal, and an earnest one to the late Ministry—an appeal which was supported by petition after petition from a great majority of the southern and western portions of the colony—an appeal, urging on the Government to resume those great public works which had been commenced some years before, but the completion of which was subsequently suspended. Those petitions, emanating from Brisbane, West Moreton, Dalby, and remote districts of the interior, all uniformly represented that the extension of the railway was a work that was urgently called for. They represented that it was a work that could be carried out with satisfaction to the country; and maintained that it was a work that was necessary to be carried out, in order to relieve the inhabitants of the colony from some of the difficulties that pressed upon them. At the time he made the appeal, he urged the petitions on the attention of the Government of the day; and urged especially upon their attention, the petitions from the more remote districts of the territory—from the Maranoa and the Warrego districts; and he did not think he could do better than read a quotation from the petition from the Warrego district, as applicable to the present debate. [*Vide* "Hansard," vol. 9, column 1, page 489.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS asked if the petition was in "Hansard."

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he was reading from "Hansard." He quoted only a portion of the petition on the occasion he referred to. The whole of it was not in "Hansard." The petition, as he stated on that occasion, was signed by almost all the occupiers of pastoral lands in the district, and those who had not signed it were, as he had been informed, in favor of it. He regarded the petition as of great importance at the time; and the House, he thought, also regarded it as of great importance. Now he thought the petition, and the statements contained in it, were of sufficient importance to be brought again before the House during the present debate, in connection with the statements that had been made by the honorable member for Clermont, and also in connection with the extension of the Western Railway. It had been stated over and over again in the course of the debate, that it was madness to ask that the railways should be pressed forward on

an extensive scale, and that on the ground that they would not pay; and that it would not be advisable to go to the London market at the present time, for a new loan for railway extensions. Now, he thought it had been proved, that the works could be entered on without involving any risk in the matter of raising a new loan in the London market; and he was glad to find that members had been sent from the south and the west, who were prepared to support the extension of the railways. The honorable gentleman at the head of the Government had appealed to the House, in what had been described as pathetic terms, to give the Government a fair trial. Now, he wished to place on record his opinions of the issue that was now before the House. When the Government asked for a trial of that kind eighteen months ago or thereabouts, the honorable gentleman, now at the head of the Government, was a member of the Mackenzie Ministry. That Ministry was defeated by the late Ministry; and it was defeated because the members of it consisted of one class. That Ministry was appropriately described as a pure merino Ministry; and because of its being of such a character, it was defeated by a vote of the House. Well, Sir Robert Mackenzie appealed to the country, and the present Parliament, as a Parliament, was returned. It would be in the recollection of the honorable members, who were members of the House at the time he now referred to, that Sir Robert Mackenzie took a vote of the House, which in effect amounted to a question as to who should be leader, and he was defeated—and defeated, because the Government had not altered their policy in any way, but came in again as a pure merino Government. When that Government was defeated, the Government of his honorable and learned friend, Mr. Lilley, succeeded to office; but the power of the party represented by the honorable gentleman now at the head of the Government, was sufficiently strong to force upon the honorable member for Fortitude Valley the necessity of forming a coalition Government; as he found it was impossible to carry on the Government of the country without forming a coalition with that party. Now, they all remembered the history of the session during which the honorable member for Fortitude Valley held the position of Premier Minister of the Government; and he ventured to assert that there was not an honorable member of the House who held a seat in the House during the session he alluded to who could deny that the members and adherents of the wool-growing party, headed by the honorable gentleman now at the head of the Government, virtually ruled the destinies of the country for the time being—that the Opposition coalition, formed between the honorable members for Port Curtis, Rockhampton, Clermont, the Mitchell, and the members for Ipswich and West Moreton,

virtually ruled the colony. That coalition, he thought he was justified in saying, was formed for the advancement of party interests on the one side, and partly local interests on the other; but not with a view to the advancement of the general interests of the colony. That coalition forced the then Premier, Mr. Lilley, to abandon his policy, except in so far as suited their purposes. Now, it was well known to everyone that, at the end of that session, the voice of the country was not so much in favor of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, and some of his colleagues in the Government, as it was now. The dissatisfaction felt with the Lilley Government, during the last portion of the last session of Parliament, was increased during the recess; and he had no hesitation in stating that the defeat of the late Premier arose, purely and solely, through the action of his own party. But the reasons for the dissatisfaction felt by that party had never been properly put before the House until the other evening, when the honorable member for Fortitude Valley addressed the House, and availed himself of the opportunity afforded him by the present debate of entering upon a defence of his conduct. It had been alleged, by honorable members on the Government side of the House, that the late Ministry were thrown out because of the ordering of the steamers, and the remission of the school fees, without the previous sanction of Parliament;—and some other matters. Now, such were not the grounds of the defeat of the late Ministry. He could assure the House the late Premier's Government was defeated, simply and solely, because the Premier allowed himself to be ruled by the pure merino party. The main cause of dissatisfaction, which was at first felt as to the late Premier himself, arose from a belief that the purchase of a fleet of steamers, involving a cost of between £40,000 and £50,000, besides a large annual outlay, showed that the honorable gentleman had set aside the main part of the policy which placed him in power—and that was the opening up of the interior by the providing of adequate means of communication between the interior districts of the colony and the sea-board. It was felt that the honorable gentleman had commenced at the wrong end—that, instead of purchasing steamers to trade with ports where no traffic existed, he should have commenced with the construction of railways, to produce traffic for steamers. Now, he would repeat that the principal feeling the party who supported the late Government had for assisting to drive the Lilley Ministry from office was, that the honorable gentleman then at the head of the Government had allowed himself to be too much influenced by the pure merino party in the colony. Well, he would wish to trace this matter a little further. To the astonishment of the party that insisted that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley should leave

the position of Premier, instead of such a Ministry coming to power as was expected, they found the honorable member for Port Curtis, Mr. Palmer, come into power, and bringing in as his colleagues gentlemen who, with himself, constituted a Ministry which was a *fac simile* of the Ministry that had been previously driven from power when the Lilley Administration succeeded to office. He did not know what sort of hanky-panky work had been resorted to, and he did not care to inquire what sort of hanky-panky work was required. He was satisfied now as to the course things had taken. He had a firm belief that Providence ruled all things; and he had never known an occasion in the history of Queensland, in which they could not trace the over-ruling hand of Providence. He believed that the result of what had taken place would be this—that they would see a Ministry come into power with a policy that would be calculated to advance the progress of the colony. He trusted that the result of the present debate would be to open a new era in the history of the colony; and that it would break up the old parties that had become flat, stale, and unprofitable. He thought he might safely say, that honorable members would not again have to raise their voices against a pure merino principle of Government. If the debate should have the result of breaking up those old parties, it would be one of the most beneficial results that could flow from it. He had stated as his conviction that the present Premier had no right to be in the position he now held—as the successor of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley—and he believed the universal voice of the colony would support him in that opinion. At the cessation of the late Parliament, the party the honorable member for Port Curtis represented, and members of which he had again gathered around him, was defeated, and appealed to the country. The Ministry again came before the House and was again defeated; and when, by the shuffling of the cards, the honorable gentleman was lately placed at the head of the Government, he had had the bad taste to come before the House, with a Ministry of precisely the same character as the Ministry of which he previously was a member. He would guard himself in the strongest manner from saying one word against any member of the present Ministry personally. He believed the honorable the Premier and his colleagues who were in the House, and the honorable the Attorney-General, who was not in the House, were all individually most honorable men; and they were men who, he had no hesitation in saying, would always be a credit to the House, and to any Ministerial party to which they might belong. Still, in the matter of politics, they were, as a whole, opposed to the progress of the colony. They were of the old pure merino type—as perfectly so as any Ministry

of the kind that had ever appeared in the House. The Minister for Public Lands had tried to prove that such was not the case, and had put himself forward as a proof that it was not the case. Now, he could not agree with the honorable member there, as he thought that the honorable member, if he was not a squatter exactly, the sooner he got to be a squatter the better, for ever since he came into the House he had never given a vote but for that party. He could well understand why the present Premier, in selecting the members of his Ministry, felt it necessary to consult the wishes of the members for Ipswich and West Moreton; and, no doubt, amongst the members who represented those constituencies, he naturally expected the Minister for Lands would be the most fit to join him. Now, he maintained that the vote which he, as one of the representatives for Brisbane, would give on the present occasion, was one that he could not with any sort of conscience decline to give. Had he intended to vote otherwise than as he did intend, and to give what the present Ministry—what the honorable the Premier called a fair trial—he would be forced by the arguments that had been put forward by the northern and western members to vote against the Ministry. At the outset of the present Parliament the representatives for those constituencies were members of the pure merino party. The whole body of them were representatives of that one class; and notwithstanding that, the vote of the House went against the party who now so earnestly solicited a fair trial. Since then those constituencies had changed their representatives. In the room of Mr. Hodgson, the former member for the Warrego, they had now Mr. Thornton; and in the room of the former member for Clermont, Mr. De Satge, they had now Dr. Benson, who so forcibly addressed the House the previous evening. Now, if those two gentlemen, representing the constituencies they did, were to vote against the Ministry, it would be impossible for him to vote for the Ministry; and he considered that, in giving the vote he intended to give, he would only be expressing the universal voice of the country. He believed that, should the present Government appear before the country, it would be found that the vote which would be given to-night would be justified by nine-tenths of the people of the country. If the constituencies of Ipswich and West Moreton should return their present representatives, they would find out their mistake; but he hoped the result of this debate would convince those constituencies that to return the same gentlemen again to represent them in the House would be to act against their own true interests; and that a further pursuance of the tactics that had characterised the conduct of those gentlemen in the House would not meet with the sympathy of the rest of the colony. As a body they supported the previous

Ministry, and as a body they had supported the present Ministry. Always, when there was anything before the House for the benefit of Ipswich, they supported it, but in almost every other instance, they were found opposing what, for his part, he conceived would be for the general benefit of the colony. He believed the opinion he now expressed would be largely shared in during any new election. As he had just stated, he hoped the decision the House would come to this evening would convince those honorable members, or if not, that it would convince their constituencies, that the tactics those gentlemen had pursued would not, if persisted in, be of benefit to the constituencies; but would place them in an isolated position, and make them to be regarded as constituencies that were opposed to the general welfare and interests of the colony. He hoped they would take to heart the lesson they would get to-night, and return representatives who would not act upon merely narrow-minded principles, and for purely local interests. He had now only further to say that he would vote for the amendment.

Mr. FORBES said that the late Ministry seemed to him to have come to an end chiefly because of their falling out amongst themselves; and also because of falling out with their supporters. How could the members of the late Government expect the support of the House, when they could not rule their own party. From the coalition Ministry that was formed by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, great things were expected, but the House and the country were disappointed. After the able manner in which the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Williams, had exposed the happy family, he did not see it was likely they would ever have a Ministry of the kind again. Where there was no union amongst Ministers themselves, he did not see how they could expect or should ask the support of the House. If he saw a Ministry in power that would bring forward a railway policy—such a policy as would create a new era in the history of the colony, and relieve the colony from the evils it had of late been suffering, and still suffered from—he would support them. Notwithstanding what the honorable members for Clermont and Warrego had said, the colony could not afford railways, after the enormous expenditure that was already incurred, unless they could be made without further burdening the colony with debt, and unless there was a certainty of their being reproductive. They were under the mark in their estimate of expense of cheap railways; at any rate, he (Mr. Forbes) was always doubtful of figures, after what had occurred in this colony. He had heard honorable members speak of the character of the Maranoa district. He knew from experience, dearly bought, that it was not what it had been represented to be; he did not go out of the way when he said it was a desert, with

here and there a few bits of good land ; there was nothing in it that would pay one-half the expense of a railway. He condemned the alliance of the Opposition, and their policy to raise money, and the association of the late Minister for Public Works with a late railway contractor of another colony ; and said he must look upon them with suspicion as candidates for a possible new Government. The continual cry of the daily press of Brisbane was for expenditure in the capital, to revive its trade, to put a heavy burden on the colony which would take half a century to remove : all for the sake of the people of Brisbane. No other part of the colony would ask that money should be borrowed for the purpose of benefitting itself exclusively. He admitted that a healthy stream of immigration was wanted, and that the true policy was to give the utmost facility to settle the people on the land ; but he did not believe that the colony should be saddled with another large loan to be expended on non-productive works, for the mere sake of finding employment for the people coming here, or for the sake of one part of the colony. It appeared from the course pursued by the " in-coming " Government, that the House were to be made up of vampires and lawyers. It was the profession of lawyers to talk ; it cost them nothing to be in the House ; but the vampires from the other colonies would suck the heart's blood of the country and prostrate it in destitution. The Opposition said, if their policy was not supported, the people would not have their adversaries, the supporters of the Government, again, as their representatives. He had sufficient faith in the people, even in the far west of the colony, in Mitchell and in Warrego, to think that, if the matter was fairly and properly represented to them, they would never allow railway contractors from the other colonies to send representatives to the House to back a Government to carry out their designs. If there was anything in the colony—if there was to be spoliation—if it were determined to go in for repudiation—let those who were Queenslanders have the plunder amongst themselves ! Do not call the minions of other colonies to pack the House for it. At one time he was as liberal, perhaps, as any honorable member of the House, and he advocated and introduced as liberal measures as any did ; but when he found liberality and prodigality synonymous terms, he threw liberalism aside—to those on the Opposition who professed liberality, and who were not friends of the country, who were traitors to the country, and who must be despised by the people from one end of Queensland to the other. The House had been told that the Governor's Speech was a bad copy of that made under the former Government. No doubt it appeared a bad copy in the eyes of honorable members opposite, for this reason : that what was bad for the colony was left out of the Speech, and

what was good still remained in it ; the Government had adopted the better part and left the rest to their opponents. For that, the Government deserved the thanks and support of the country. Whether he remained in the House or not—it might not be his wish to be here longer—he felt that whoever represented his constituency would represent the sentiments he uttered. He believed that a new era had, indeed, begun for the colony, and that the electors would find out who were true to its interests ; and they would discriminate between liberal promises and the intention of those who made them to carry them out. Something had been said about the steamer contract ; a mistake had been made in that. When the people found that the late Government had done an act for which Ministers would be impeached at home, their constituents would never listen to them. The report of the Auditor-General shewed that the late Government deserved to be hurled from office. It had been his intention to ask the Government to bring in a Bill of indemnity for the illegal acts which had been committed by their predecessors in office. The attack on the Attorney-General by the honorable member for Burnett, Mr. Pring, had come to nothing ; since it turned out that the opinion of the Attorney-General was maintained by the highest legal authorities of England. The Attorney-General was right in his advice to the Government. That must be the death-blow to the legal knowledge and reputation of that luminary of the law, the honorable member for Burnett. Whether there should be a dissolution or not, there were honorable members on the Opposition side of the House who would have to appear before their constituents ; and depend upon it, they would have to give an account of their conduct in impeding the business of the country and interfering with good Government. The electors were watching over their interests a little better more than in the past ; and there were gentlemen now in the House who would never more, after another election, cross its floor. He hoped, if honorable members now in Opposition should succeed to the Government—if they should be trusted with the public money—that, if they were found wanting in truth, honesty, virtue, justice, they would be hurled from their position ; and that there should be an Opposition that would gain popularity by vigilance in watching that Government, and seeing that they performed their duty in a way for which he could not now give them credit, from his knowledge of their past conduct. Seeing the honorable members for Ipswich and West Moreton bound together, not for party, but to assert and carry out those principles of rectitude which would best guide the House, and especially the Government, he trusted that they would always so act together for the good of the country. In concluding, he expressed a desire that honorable members on both sides

of the House would coincide with him in approving of a matter that had not been referred to in the debate, and that was set out in the tenth paragraph of the Governor's Speech. Far more even than keeping the Ministry in power, he should like, if possible, that steps be taken at once to carry out the object of that clause. He looked upon it as the duty of the House to give it effect; and, if it were possible that by adjourning their decision on the Address for a few hours, to pass a Bill for the purpose of giving effect to that paragraph of the Speech, he was sure that they would do no more than was right for them to do, on behalf of the honorable and venerable gentleman who had so long and so ably presided over the deliberations of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, and who had so faithfully earned the proposed consideration at their hands, as not only a representative of the country, but as a representative of their House. He referred to the subject, anxiously hoping that some prominent member of the Opposition would take it up and give expression to the feeling of the House in far more eloquent language than he could command. The honorable member who told them that he was "the father of the House," would be able to do so better than he could pretend to do.

Mr. HANDEY said, that at such a late hour of the night it was not his intention to occupy the time of the House but for a few moments; indeed, he had not intended to speak at all; but, as he found that every honorable member had spoken, he was reluctant to give a silent vote. He knew the House would excuse him from entering into a long speech, for two reasons: that he did not anticipate having the opportunity to address the House on this subject, for when he arrived in town, about twenty-four hours ago, he had not expected to see the Ministry in power; another reason was, that being the youngest member of the House, whose political existence dated only twenty-four hours back, he thought it improper at this time that he should address the House at all. He should distinctly state on which side he would vote, and why;—he durst say that both sides of the House anticipated his action. He had reason to regret that the honorable member at the head of the Government was in the company he was in. There was no one, he assured that honorable gentleman, who had a more profound respect for him personally, and for his public honesty, than he had; his manly way of doing business, his integrity, and outspoken sincerity, and perfect independence would entitle him to the respect of any House. He was sorry to find him, not only a northern member, but a representative of the pastoral interest, in the society he was in. He would, with great pleasure, have done all he could, in his humble way, to further the liberal views or beneficial projects instituted by that honorable gentleman; but in the society he was in, he decidedly must oppose

the Government. When he heard of the honorable member, the Premier, being called for to form a Ministry, he had bright ideas as to the colony's prosperity; but when he heard of the Ministry formed by him, he conceived that ruin was pending, and he conceived it to be his duty to go to the far north-west, some seven or eight hundred miles, and contend against the Government, there, and, if he could, oust a member of the Government; and he had contributed, as much as any of the Opposition, to put out the Government. He was not wrong in his anticipations, inasmuch as he had been successful in his endeavor to eradicate the nucleus—to remove the poisonous incubus—that threatened to oppress the colony. From his knowledge of Queensland, he attributed all the mischief and all the ruin that the colony suffered from, at the present moment, to the policy that Ipswich and West Moreton had carried out, in conjunction with the Darling Downs. When he found that all the support the Ministry had, consisted of the six members representing Ipswich and West Moreton, with the honorable member for Burnett, Mr. Haly, and the honorable member for Leichhardt, Mr. Royds, he was gratified with the position he occupied on the Opposition side of the House. He found there members from the north, the east, the north-west, and the west—the nucleus of a good and a strong Government having the interests of the colony generally at heart; and he certainly felt bound, as the representative of one of the best districts in the colony that was ever opened for occupation, to vote with the Opposition—a district which, he vouched to the House, could not be surpassed in all Queensland. There was no more beautiful country than the Mitchell—not even the famed Darling Downs; and no more perfect and highly educated gentlemen, than those in possession of that portion of the colony could be found. It was a district that ought not to be ignored. As he was elected on progressive principles, he could not support the present Ministry, however good they were, because they stood still. He must oppose the present Ministry, because there was not one particle in their programme which would meet the requirements of the district he represented. But the majority of the whole colony, north, south, east, and west, except Darling Downs, Ipswich, and West Moreton—he meant that portion of the Darling Downs represented by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer—was leagued against the Government; and he could not submit to their policy, which was a stand-still policy. Honorable members saw the only provisions the Government intended to make, the only Acts they intended to introduce, were for the completion of current contracts; no opening up of the country by railways. Ipswich did not want the railway at all; West Moreton had it where it was; and Darling Downs had

got what it wanted; and the Government wanted to leave the colony where it was at the time of separation. He was in favor of cheap railways into the interior, to open up the country; otherwise the fine country to the westward and northward would remain at a standstill. He found that the Opposition purposed to append to the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech, that they proposed the "effectual opening up of the interior." That went a great deal beyond the policy of the Government; therefore, for that reason, he supported the Opposition on the present question. There was another reason why—the Premier would not vote for or have anything to do with separation, except as an extreme measure; he had not introduced in his policy anything to satisfy the northern colonists—to calm them, to pacify them—anything about separation. He had not consented, even, to extend the little railway; so that the whole country, from the Mitchell to Bowen Downs, down to the Valley of the Ward, could get its wool down. Storekeepers, in fact, had their teams on the roads for six months. But the question of separation should be discussed, and, if the North required to be pacified by beneficial measures, the Opposition were prepared to pacify the North; therefore, he (Mr. Handy) supported the Opposition. As to railways, it was hard for him to be expected to support such a body as he saw on the Ministerial side of the House. The Minister for Works, himself a squatter, had announced no railway for the benefit of squatters; and he was carrying out exactly the same policy as was announced in the third paragraph of the Speech. The honorable member who last addressed the House would not vote for railways—until they became reproductive works! That was the policy of the Ministry. Railways, as he (Mr. Handy) conceived, ought not to be built merely as reproductive works; they ought not to be built for the purpose of making revenue out of them; they ought not to be built for the purpose of enabling the country to make a profit out of them; but they ought to be built merely as a substitute for roads. He contended that the Minister for Works, the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Forbes, and the honorable the Colonial Treasurer himself, could not maintain that a road for waggons should be made for the purpose of profit. He had been surprised to hear such a philosopher as the honorable member who last addressed the House state that he would not vote for railways until they were reproductive works. He must vote for progressive railway works, and must therefore vote against the Ministry. He gave his reasons simply for voting as he intended to vote. Perhaps another occasion would turn up, when he should speak more fully on matters of interest suggested by the debate. He compared the Mitchell district with the Darling Downs, saying that in every produc-

tion, especially stock, it surpassed the so-called garden of the colony; and, in the matter of sheep, Darling Downs breeders were beaten in Melbourne market by a Mitchell squatter. If there should be another election, he had not the slightest fear that he would represent the Mitchell again, even if he never went there. He had gone a long ride, and defeated the Attorney-General, to prove that he was sincere in desiring the welfare and good government of the colony hereafter. Those who had governed it heretofore had brought it to ruin. He had fought the battle, and had gone a long way to fight it, on the memorable 18th of June, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo; and, if necessary, he would go again, and cross swords with the Attorney-General again. He had no fear.

Mr. MILES said the policy of the Government had been discussed three days, and, at such a late hour of the night, it was not his intention to take up the time of the House long. They were few remarks that he had to make, and they would entirely apply to the Government as politicians. If they would permit him to say so, he had no hesitation in saying that he had the highest respect for them, collectively and individually; but notwithstanding he entertained that opinion of them, he felt that he should not be doing his duty in supporting them as a Government. He would endeavor to state, shortly, why. He thought the class he belonged to had been long enough in disrepute by class legislation, simply from having Governments composed of that class alone; and, whatever their policy, he felt inclined to oppose any Government composed of one class of persons, whether representing towns or sheep. On another ground, he opposed them because he did not believe they were sincere or had the slightest intention of carrying out the programme they had laid before Parliament. He judged them entirely from their speeches, which could not be reconciled. He excepted the honorable the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Treasurer. The honorable the Secretary for Public Works ought to have been clearer than he was; and he (Mr. Miles) had no trust in him whatever, that he intended to carry out the policy put forward. The members of the Government were not place-hunters, he must say; and he was perfectly aware that the Premier, in forming his Government, had no wish to be called upon, but he had done his duty. But the honorable gentleman must have felt his position, when, after having formed his Government, he could not get any one but the honorable member for Leichhardt, Mr. Reys, to move that Ministers' seats had become vacant by their acceptance of office;—the consequence of that, and of there being no House at the close of last session, from the absence of Ministerial supporters, and of the subsequent prorogation, was the loss by Mr. Sandeman of his seat and of a vote for the Government. The circumstances of the

colony were changing. In another three years, at the rate at which the fencing in of runs was going on, there would be nothing to occupy the country but sheep and cattle; for labor would hardly be required. Since he was last in the House, he had travelled a considerable distance to the westward, and until then, he, though a squatter, had no idea of the extent of country fenced in. In the Maranoa district there were stations that had easily employed sixty or seventy hands; but, now, they employed about sixteen; yet the country had still to keep up the expenses of postal communication and police protection. Where was the revenue to come from, to meet that expense, unless population was increased? He had come to the conclusion that the only way it could be done, was by opening up the interior by railways, by promoting immigration, and by settling population on the land. The honorable the Secretary for Public Lands said he was in favor of free selection all over the colony. He (Mr. Miles) should like to see it. The want of it was what he always complained of. That was why he opposed the Immigration Act; because there never was a gentleman at the head of the Lands Department who would go in for free selection. If population was introduced, the people must have facility for settling down on the land. The Minister for Lands had said, the present Government did not go into office to create a sensation; they went in to govern the country in a humdrum way—to answer letters, and to pocket their salaries.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He did not say that. He said they did not go in to create a sensation; but to do their duty.

Mr. MILES: The honorable member said "humdrum."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes.

Mr. MILES: The country wanted more than that; it wanted progression.

"You will be asked to empower the Government to contract with private individuals, or companies, for the construction of cheap lines of railway in the interior, and to pay for same by grants of lands along the lines to be constructed."

Now, if he were not mistaken, he had heard the honorable member for Maryborough ridicule the idea of making a railway to Roma—to a wilderness; but he could assure the honorable member it was a great mistake to call it a wilderness, for there was as good country in the neighborhood of Roma as there was anywhere in the colony, and he would support no Government who was not prepared to open up the country and to settle a population upon it. He regretted to be compelled to say it, but he believed, if that had been done some time ago, the squatters would have been able to give employment to half a dozen men where they now only employed one, and they would not have felt the depression as they had done. As this question had been tra-

velled over and over again in the course of the debate, he would not take up the time of the House by going further into it. He thought it was most humiliating to any Government to be supported by the members for Ipswich and West Moreton alone. Nor could he understand how those honorable members could support the Minister for Works, who used to designate the inhabitants of Ipswich as paupers. Members on the Opposition side had been taunted with the threat that, in the event of a dissolution, they would none of them come back to the House. For his part, he had always adopted what he considered an independent course. He was going to vote for the amendments, and he was quite prepared to accept the responsibility. He begged to assure honorable members that he had not been sent to the House as a delegate: he had been sent there to exercise his judgment. He was perfectly unprejudiced, and he felt sure his constituents would endorse his action. There was only one vote out of all those he had given which he had any occasion to regret, and that was the vote he had given in favor of The Manning Retirement Bill, which had saddled the country with a payment of £600 a-year. It was stated that Mr. Manning's health was ruined, and that he was in a most precarious state. And now, what did they find? Why, that the Government had gazetted him as a magistrate—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A visiting justice, without pay.

Mr. MILES: There might not be any pay, but there would be travelling expenses, and he believed that if it had not been for an amendment made when the vote was passed, he might have been allowed to go into another colony and obtain employment, still receiving £600 of the public money. He had intended to say something about the Ipswich hospital, but as the Government policy had been discussed for three days, and nothing appeared to him to have been left unsaid in the course of the debate, he would now conclude by stating that he should vote for the amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in reply: Sir, I am exceedingly sorry that the last speaker should have imported a subject into this debate which has nothing whatever to do with the question at issue. His remark about Mr. Manning was, I think, quite uncalled for. If that gentleman has, under God's good providence, so far recovered as to be able to do his duty to this colony in return for the pension he receives, I think we should thank God for it. No blame can attach to this House for voting a pension for him under the certificate of the leading members of the medical profession in this colony. I shall allude to the subject no further. The remark of the honorable member was utterly uncalled for, and the question has nothing to do with this debate. The honorable member who addressed the House just before the honorable member for Maranoa, drew a very lively picture of the

sufferings of the squatters in the far west, from the want of railways. Well, sir, I have also been a sufferer; my drays have been six months on the roads, but that is no reason why I should plunge the country into a large expenditure for railways. Why should I attempt to make men, who have nothing whatever to do with my interests, pay through the nose in order to enable me to take down my produce and bring up my supplies? The honorable member told us—I think about fifteen times in the course of his speech—that he was going to vote against the Government. Well, I knew that, and I was not afraid of his repetitions. I will make the Opposition a present of his vote, for I attach no value to it whatever. Before going into the reply which I am going to make this evening, I must refer to two or three matters alluded to by some honorable members who have spoken this evening. The honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Ferrett, called upon me to answer some allusions, in his speech, to certain land selections made by the honorable member for Maranoa. All I can say is, that that gentleman did make some selections on the Downs during the time I was in office as Colonial Secretary and Secretary for Lands. The honorable member did me the honor to press upon me his right to select this land at, what I considered, a very inopportune moment—immediately preceding a division of this House—and I then told him, what I told another member of this House, that I had no power to do an illegal act, and that the question rested with the Commissioner; and the honorable member did not get his land. Another insinuation was made by the honorable member for Clermont, that the Government had thrown out a sop to the Ipswich members, by giving the Ipswich hospital the amount of money voted for it for the year by this House. That was the sop. Now, look at the honorable members for Ipswich, and see if they are men who are at all likely to go into the hospital. And what do they gain by getting this vote from the Government? I wrote to the Secretary of the hospital at the time, telling him we were perfectly aware that we were stretching our powers in giving them that money at the time. Could that be called a sop? Honorable members must know very well, many of them, that if the House had not voted that money, the hospital must have shut up for want of funds. They must also know that it was owing to the action of the honorable member who then represented Clermont, that the vote for that hospital was cut down to such a limit as to render necessary an application to the Government for funds to carry it on with. The sum on the Estimates was cut down, I repeat, by the honorable member for Clermont, and there was not money enough left to carry on the hospital. Now, I don't think it is a proper course to pursue—when it is a question whether a charitable institution should be shut up, and the inmates

turned into the streets, and the old and debilitated patients, of whom there are twelve, thrown upon the hands of the Government—when the question is, simply, whether the Government should step forward and give the money voted by this House—to bring the matter forward as a political question. I do not envy the feelings of the honorable member who brought it forward, and I entirely deny that any member for Ipswich or West Moreton brought the slightest pressure to bear upon the Government. The money was given simply because we considered it a case of urgent necessity; and if we remain in office, we shall come down and ask the House for a great deal more money for the hospital for the present year, and I have not the slightest doubt we shall get it. I have known this House for some years, and I never knew them refuse any amount of money for charitable institutions, when it was shewn that that money was wanted and would not be wasted. I have now disposed of that charge, and I shall allude no further to that part of the speech of the honorable member, who would impute to any Government the motives he imputed to us in giving that money to the hospital. There was another complaint made by the same honorable member, to show how badly the North has been treated, I suppose—we used to have a great many of these northern grievances—that the amount voted for the Clermont Hospital was not paid. Now, I happen to know a little about this, because, some time after the honorable member arrived in Brisbane, he called upon me and asked about the vote, as I understood it, for 1869, and I told him that, although I was Colonial Secretary, the payments were made in the Treasury Department. I, therefore, referred him to the Under Secretary, and I understood the honorable member to say to-night that he was satisfied, and fully understood that the vote for 1869 was paid. If honorable members will take the trouble to look, they will see that in all cases the amount paid by subscribers must be sent to the Treasury. This regulation was made, not by the present, but by the previous Government, and the attempt to make political capital out of it is a great absurdity—it is altogether despicable. Now, sir, I shall come to the amendments proposed to be made upon the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech, and notwithstanding the abuse we have received from the Opposition—in fact, in consequence of that abuse—I am led to believe, as I believed when that speech was made, that it was the very best speech ever delivered by any Governor in this colony. I sincerely believe it to be so; and if it had not been so good, it would have been treated like other speeches have been. But this speech must mean something, because every member of the Opposition has been trying to pull it into pieces, and I believe, if all these speeches were put together, it would be found that

what one condemned another applauded. I repeat that it is one of the very best speeches ever delivered. It has one great merit—it is very short; and it has another merit—that there is nothing in it which the Ministry do not intend to carry out. Well, sir, we have, as an amendment upon the Address in Reply to that Speech, a very nice little set of paragraphs. The first is—

“(1.) That no Ministry will receive the confidence or support of this House that is not prepared to introduce a financial policy that, in its fiscal arrangements, will afford, for a time, aid and encouragement to the development of colonial industries.”

I think it must have taken two intellects to compose this paragraph. Now I think that, considering the Opposition will not listen to the Treasurer's statement—I will not say they are afraid to listen to it, because there are so many of them—considering that they will not even allow the Treasurer to lay before them his policy, as I asked them to do the other night, I think they are going a little too fast. They now know no more of the financial policy of the present Government than they did when they made up their minds to oppose it, whatever it might be—they know no more about it than they did then. And if the Opposition think they are going to draw me out, or to draw out my honorable colleague, the Treasurer, to state that policy, they are very much mistaken. The next paragraph is—

“(2.) That no Ministry will receive the confidence or support of this House that is not prepared to initiate and carry out a general railway policy, which will include the immediate completion of existing lines, and the effectual opening up of the interior.”

Now, sir, this is about the most extraordinary amendment I ever heard—“which will include the completion of existing lines;” why, it is the very thing we ask for. We say we are going to introduce a Loan Bill for the purpose of completing those works. The second paragraph in the Governor's Speech is—

“Among the first and most important of those, will be a Bill to enable a sum of money to be raised on loan, secured on the general revenue of the colony, sufficient to cover the outlay incurred on, and the contracts entered into, for completing railways and other public works, and for immigration purposes.”

There they have it in the Speech—in fact, they have more than that, because they have the effectual opening up of the interior. The 7th clause in the Speech said—

“7. You will be asked to empower the Government to contract with private individuals, or companies, for the construction of cheap lines of railway in the interior, and to pay for same by grants of lands along the lines to be constructed.” What necessity, then, was there for the amendment? Well, the third amendment proposed, is—

“3. That no attempt to provide additional representation can be regarded as sincere that is

not preceded by a repeal of the two-thirds clause of the Constitution Act.”

Well, this great liberal party, who have been in power for so many years, have only, at the eleventh hour, found it at all necessary to talk about the repeal of the two-thirds clause. What have they been doing all this time, I should like to know. Surely, if it is necessary now, it has been necessary ever since separation. The party represented by the present Opposition have been in power for years, and yet we have never heard anything about the repeal of this clause until it was introduced into the Speech at the beginning of the last very short session. Now, I believe it is quite possible to provide for additional representation without repealing the two-thirds clause, for honorable members will never make up their minds that additional representation is necessary, and it is my firm belief that they do not want it; and knowing that it is next to impossible to repeal the two-thirds clause, they put it in here as an amendment. Now, sir, I say it is not at all necessary to repeal that clause in order to get additional representation, if the Opposition members will only assist the Government. Then we have No. 4 amendment—

“4. That it is a matter of regret that, in your Excellency's Speech, no notice has been taken of the northern question of separation.”

It would be a very nice thing, indeed, to put into the Governor's Speech a proposition to take away part of the country he was sent to govern. I wonder how His Excellency would look at a member of the Government who made such a proposal to him. Now, sir, I am prepared to go as far as any honorable member of this House for separation; but I am not prepared to insult His Excellency the Governor by proposing to divide the colony he has been sent out to govern. The 5th amendment says—

“5. That, in the absence of any announcement in the Speech delivered by your Excellency at the opening of this session, of an intention on the part of the Government to introduce measures to Parliament having the foregoing objects in view, we have no confidence in your Excellency's present responsible advisers.”

Well, sir, I felt a little alarmed when I read that, but I got over it. I do not know what effect it might have had upon me, if I had had to speak about it the first night; but after a couple of days, I cared very little about it. Now these are the amendments, and a nice lot they are. I think I have pretty well disposed of them, and if it were possible to bring any vote from the other side of the House, I should have done so; I know I have changed the opinions of some of the honorable members who sit on the opposite side of the House; but opinions and votes are very different things. The Government of which I am the unworthy head, may be very sleepy, but still they do not exactly follow the example of the ostrich, and hide their head

so as not to know what is going on. The honorable members opposite, could not discuss their arrangements so quietly, but that a bird of the air brought the matter to the Premier's ears. I knew before I came down to this House what the division would be; I could tell it to a man. I say that no matter what policy we had put forward in the Governor's Speech—no matter what words we had put in his mouth—the result would have been the same; we should have had just the same opposition. It was all arranged before the House met; before one word of His Excellency's Speech had been delivered, and before the policy of the Government was known in any possible way, it was decided that we should be turned out upon an amendment to the Address.

The Hon. A. MACALISTER: I must rise to a point of order. I positively contradict that statement.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no point of order to raise. I am merely stating my firm convictions. I am giving my impressions, and I object to be interrupted.

The Hon. A. MACALISTER: The honorable member has made a statement of facts, which I positively contradict, and I say he has no right to repeat it. He has stated that the Opposition had made up their minds before they entered the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I submit, Mr. Speaker, that there is no point of order at all.

The SPEAKER: The Colonial Secretary has said he is only expressing his own opinions; the honorable member for Eastern Downs can speak after he has finished.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I stated what my impressions were, and no point of order or counter-statement will induce me to alter my opinion. I repeat that my impression is, no matter what policy we had brought forward, we were to be opposed by an amendment upon the Address. Now, sir, where is the point of order? The interruption of the honorable member for Eastern Downs, is just of a piece with the speech he made after I addressed the House. I never expected anything better from the honorable member. He endeavored to distort the words I used into a sneer against the Government bankers, which my language did not convey. On the contrary, I carefully guarded myself; I merely drew a parallel case. I said a man with an overdrawn account, and a surly banker, was not in a position to do certain things; and I carefully guarded myself by saying that the Government had every reason to be satisfied with the courteous treatment they had received from the Government banker; and yet the honorable member attempted to distort that. Now, sir, after every other member has addressed the House, I think I have every reason to express my satisfaction at the way they have treated my humble attempts to explain myself. It is a delightful change to turn from the speech of the honorable member for Eastern Downs to

that of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley; and however that honorable member and I may differ—and we have differed often, and may differ again—I must reciprocate the sentiments to which he gave utterance in his speech, and say that no political differences will ever make us less friendly, and this is principally because the manner in which he combats the opinions of his opponents is as different as light from darkness from that of the honorable member for Eastern Downs. We have differed, and may differ again; but while I think I am right, and he thinks he is right, I think we can differ without shewing any feeling of acerbity towards each other. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley thinks the Government ought not to have said anything in the Speech about his ordering steamers in Sydney.

Mr. LILLEY: No. I only referred to the latter part of the paragraph—the remission of school fees.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, sir, I believe that if we had not put it in the Speech, we should have been equally attacked for being afraid to bring it forward. I believe I explained the matter pretty fully when I addressed the House last. No reflection upon the previous Government was intended by the insertion of that paragraph. Feeling, as we did, that the previous Government had almost exceeded their powers in entering into that contract, we considered it our duty—having refused to interfere with the contract until it was ratified by the House—to refer to it in the Speech; and having resolved upon that, I put it to the House whether we could have done so in a more temperate manner. I am sorry that, in the absence of the honorable member for Burnett (Hon. R. Pring), I shall have to allude to a portion of his speech in which he reflected upon the conduct of the Attorney-General. The impression left upon my mind from the honorable member's remarks was, that the Attorney-General of the colony had given advice to the Government in this matter which had not been acted upon, and that he, Mr. Pring, had given advice which had been acted upon. That is, I believe, exactly what the honorable member stated. Now, sir, I have not in my possession the Executive minute referring to this matter, but I have the Cabinet minute, of which the other is a transcript, and it is to this effect:—

“The Colonial Treasurer having laid before the Executive Council the letters from Messrs. Eldred and Spence, dated 25th April and 4th May respectively, on the subject of Mort's contract for a steamer:

“Recommended that the present Government decline to interfere in any way with Mr. Mort's contract, being of opinion that they have no power to bind the colony to such a contract without the express sanction of Parliament, and that the letters herewith to Messrs. Eldred and Spence, and Messrs. T. S. Mort, embodying the foregoing resolution, be approved and forwarded accordingly.”

Now, I state here boldly, and without the slightest fear of contradiction, that the opinion of the Attorney-General of the colony, of which I think a very unfair advantage was taken, was abided by in the minutest particular. No other opinion was taken; and holding the position I held as Premier of the colony, I should have been ashamed of myself, and unfit to hold that position, if I had gone beyond that opinion. Then, sir, an honorable member did us the honor to say, that the present Government were Mr. Lilley's enemies—that we were the men who turned him out of office, and made an attack upon him personally. I deny it *in toto*. I say, sir, that if the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had any friends in the House during the last session, they were not on his own side of the House, but on the opposite side; and I say that, without any exception, the members of the present Government were his friends on that occasion, and not in the least anxious that he should leave office. They were not prepared to endorse every act of his, because they thought he had made mistakes, but they were prepared to support his Government; and the honorable member for Maryborough and I were the only two members in the House who spoke in his favor, and said that the vote of the House—certainly our votes were not given against him personally, but against the Government as a whole. We did not, like the honorable member who moved the amendment on the Address, entirely direct our remarks against the head of the Ministry.

Mr. BELL said, he wished to explain that, as a matter of fact, his speech was directed against the Government generally.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The speech is on record, and I say it was a direct attack upon the honorable member, who was then Premier. That honorable member was not defended by his colleagues, and if he had only defended himself, or if the members of the Government had defended their actions, the result would have been very different. There were quite enough members in the House to have supported them, if they had spoken up, as I believe they ought to have done. However, they acted upon their own judgment, and abided by the result. Now, sir, we know that on the subject of these very steamers, which we are blamed for introducing in the Speech, the late Colonial Treasurer, under Mr. Lilley's Government, told the electors of South Brisbane, that everybody knew he was not to blame for getting these steamers; and yet that honorable member blamed us for making mention of them in the Speech. He wanted to know why they were mentioned in the Speech, and I will tell the House why. We wanted the opinion of this House—the only legitimate holders of the public purse—as to whether that contract was legitimate, and that opinion we should have accepted. The honorable member also taxed us with making an appeal

ad misericordiam. Now, I am satisfied he did not know the meaning of the word. I believe he thought it was Irish. If he thought I would make an *ad misericordiam* appeal, he must have looked upon me as a fool, and considered that I must have a very poor opinion of the tender mercies of the Opposition. The idea of my making an appeal *ad misericordiam* was about the best thing I have heard. Then another charge was brought against me—that in forming a Ministry, I selected, as members of it, men from my own class. Well, if I could not find any better men in the House, what could I do? Perhaps I ought to have gone to the members of the late Ministry, and formed another happy family. But, as I believe the members of a Ministry ought to be pretty well of one mind, and not, like the dog, the cat, and the rat, all at variance with each other, I did select honorable members who thought with me upon general subjects. But, as to selecting them from a class inferior in position or intellect, I deny it. I am the only pure squatter among them. My honorable colleague, the Colonial Treasurer, is a freeholder, but more of a settler than a squatter. The Minister for Works has some cattle somewhere in the bush, I believe, and then he is the representative of the third town, if not the second town, in the colony—in the centre of a large agricultural and mining district. I say, therefore, that if, as a squatter, he is considered by such a community as that of Maryborough a fit person to represent them, he is taken out of the class of squatters pure and simple. The Secretary for Lands is an attorney. Now, is he a squatter? Then what becomes of the charge that the Ministry is taken from one class? What was the coalition Ministry; were they of one class? Not exactly; but they were always on the same side, and always voted together, although they called themselves a coalition Ministry. They have always hung together pretty well when there have been any loaves and fishes to look for. Now, sir, it is said that it is the duty of the Government to introduce any amount of population in order to lessen the burden of taxation. I think that comes with a very bad grace from the honorable member for South Brisbane, because no man, I believe, has done more, by restrictions upon Land Bills, to injure the settlement of the country than he has done. There has never been a Land Bill introduced in this colony, but that honorable member has put some restrictions upon it, and no man has succeeded in driving population out of the country better than that honorable member. But for the restrictions of the honorable member for South Brisbane, all the navvies who were employed on the Ipswich and Toowoomba line would have been settled on the lands. There is no doubt about it; it is not the first time I have taxed the honorable member with injuring the sale of land by the restrictions, he insisted upon putting on it. We were also blamed for

making His Excellency say something he ought not to have said. I say, sir, that the want of etiquette is shewn in introducing the Governor's name into the debate in this House at all. The Government have never done it; they have never alluded to him in any way, and the want of etiquette—the impertinence, I may say—has been in introducing his name at all. The Speech is our Speech, and no honorable member has a right to mention the Governor's name, except to refer to the Governor's Speech. There was another charge—the appointment of Lieutenant Rowlands as agent at Madras. Now, we never did anything of the sort. That gentleman was appointed by the Madras Government as agent to Queensland, and he was only appointed as successor to a gentleman who had been there for years, and had died. I found a despatch in the office, when I took charge of it, requesting, as a matter of form, that this appointment should be confirmed by the Queensland Government. This despatch, which ought to have been attended to when it arrived, had been shelved. The popular Government could not afford to attend to it. It was brought to my office by an honorable member who, we were told at one time, was to be the saviour of the colony—that was Mr. Fitzgerald. He came to my office and asked me if I had heard anything about it—that it ought to be gazetted. I inquired about it, and the impression on my mind is that the liberal Government would not have anything to do with it, and quietly shelved it. However, sir, I am not afraid of any outcry; I never went in for popularity, and I had Lieutenant Rowlands gazetted, and what more have we got to do with it? If any gentleman wants Coolies, he has only to go there and pay his dues, and the Government have nothing more to do with the matter, except to see that the regulations are adhered to. And I have just been reminded by the Colonial Treasurer that they are British subjects, and have as much right here as any one else. The Government have been taxed with a desire to discourage white immigration, and import black labor. Well, sir, the way I encouraged Coolie immigration was this:—Mr. Fitzgerald wanted some forms printed when he applied for the introduction of Coolies, and I said, Yes, I will get them printed at the Government Printing Office, and whoever wants them must pay for them. And that is all the Government had to do in the matter. But, why Coolie immigration should not come into the colony, if anybody wants it, I cannot see. Now, it is well known that the present Ministry were, almost to a man, opposed to the last Immigration Bill. We did not see how we were to settle a large population on the railway lands in such a short time. We were opposed to the appointment of an Immigration Agent at £1,000 a year; but it is the duty of every Government to carry out the existing law, and for

that I claim some credit, although I am still of opinion that the immigration is ill advised. I think we are still importing immigrants for New South Wales, as we have been doing for a number of years. That is a patent fact, for it is well known the late Premier, Mr. John Robertson, remarked that they wanted no Immigration Act there, as long as ours was in force. I believe we are about to perpetuate the same mistake under the present Act. Still it is an Act, and while it is so, it is the duty of every Government in power to see it is carried out. Then we have been condemned because we did not give the Opposition the benefit of our ideas on the subject of the tariff. I really think there must be some speculators on the other side of the House, who want to make money out of our policy. But we shall refuse to the last, and say nothing about the tariff, unless you will allow us to place our whole financial policy before the House. The intentions of the Government will come out one day or other—for we keep a few memoranda—and I believe it will be approved of; although it has been condemned by persons who can know nothing about it, yet are prepared to oppose it at all hazards. The Government has been taxed by the honorable member for the Warrego with inconsistency, but I can inform the honorable member that he has discovered a mare's nest. He taxed the Government with inconsistency because in my election speech I stated that the railways had cost so much, while my honorable colleague, the Minister for Works, stated that they had cost a larger sum. Now, the discrepancy between the two statements can be easily explained. I stated in round numbers what was the cost of construction, without referring to interest; but the Secretary for Works stated what they cost, and in his statement he included interest and compound interest. Now that, I think, is an explanation of the discrepancy between the two statements, sufficient to satisfy any one that is willing to be satisfied. I was sorry to hear an honorable member speak of the duty on sugar as a protective duty. For my part, I cannot see that it is so. At any rate, it was in existence before we took office, and there it is still. The same honorable member also objected to the *ad valorem* duties. Well, I objected to them also, and I do so still; but I can say this in their behalf, that they bring in £70,000 a year to the revenue. I should be very glad to see my way to a reduction of the *ad valorem* duties, but I cannot see it at present. The honorable member, Mr. Jordan, told us that we were opposed to agriculture. Now, I have no hesitation in saying that amongst the Ministerial supporters there are more farmers on the Government side of the House than there are on the Opposition side of it; and farmers who have cultivated more land, and

know more about farming, than any farmer on the Opposition side. So far from our being opposed to agriculture, we have shewn that such is not the case by the simple fact of our having stated, in the programme of our policy, that we intend to ask for a loan to the extent of £50,000 for the purpose of making roads to enable the farmers to bring their produce to market. We may have our own opinions as to whether farming will pay or not; but our expressed intention to provide roads for the benefit of agriculturists, shews that it is our desire to make agriculture one of the interests of the colony. It was the party to which I belong that succeeded in passing the Land Act of 1868; and, under its operation, a large agricultural population has been settled throughout East and West Moreton. It is most unjust to charge the Ministry with being opposed to the agricultural interest, for the charge is not correct. If I were a betting man, I could almost place the members of any new Ministry that may be formed—vote for vote. The result of the vote to-night must lead to one of two results, for this is not a trimming Ministry; and will not be so, as long as I am at the head of it. The result must be that the Ministry will either resign or dissolve the House and appeal to the country. I should be inclined to take the latter course, in the event of our being defeated; but I have some human feeling for others; and when I see so many honorable members opposite ready and willing to accept office and go into power, I must confess that my heart becomes softened; and I do not see how I can possibly advise His Excellency to grant us a dissolution. I have thought it might be well to split my advice to His Excellency, and that I might advise him to adopt a course that would admit of the formation of a coalition Ministry. There are sixteen members on the Opposition side of the House, cagerly expectant of office, and I have been thinking it would be well to advise His Excellency to share the Government amongst them; giving it to four at a time for four months each. But as there are seventeen members on the Opposition side, there would by this plan be the odd man out, and I do not know what to do with him. I therefore think I shall have to leave His Excellency to his own advice. If a new Ministry should have to be formed, it will have to be on the principle of observing honor amongst thieves. I am quite prepared to go to a division of the House; and if it should be against me, to accept it in a humble frame of mind, and I hope in a proper frame of mind.

The question, That the words proposed to be omitted from the Address in Reply stand part of the question, was then put and negatived without a division; after which the question was put, That the words proposed to be inserted in place of the words omitted,

be so inserted,—and the House divided as follows:—

Ayes, 17.	Noes, 11.
Mr. Pring	Mr. Palmer
„ Bell	„ Thorn
„ Fraser	„ Forbes
Dr. O'Doherty	„ Ferret
Mr. Edmondstone	„ Roysds
„ Fyfe	„ Haly
„ Miles	„ Ramsay
„ McIlwraith	„ Williams
Dr. Benson	„ Murphy
Mr. Groom	„ Thompson
„ Jordan	„ Walsh.
„ Stephens	
„ Handy	
„ Thornton	
„ Lilley	
„ Atkin	
„ Macalister.	