

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 19 MAY 1871

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 19 May, 1871.

Mail Service by Torres Straits.—Re-establishment of Coast Reserve.—Mr. Thomas Scott and Sugar Cultivation.—Arthur Clerk Kemball.—Adjournment.

MAIL SERVICE BY TORRES STRAITS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY informed the House that he had that morning received a letter from the Victorian Government, in answer to a letter which he wrote some time ago, inquiring as to whether they would unite with this colony in the carrying out of a mail service by the Torres Straits route to Batavia. The answer was to the effect that the Government of that colony would have nothing to do with it.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF COAST RESERVE.

Mr. KING moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, for the purpose of considering the desirability of introducing a Bill to Re-establish the Coast Reserve, and extend its boundaries, and to cancel all pastoral leases within the same.

He thought it would be desirable that the coast reserve should be again thrown open for the benefit of the public generally. He knew that, so far as the district of Wide Bay was concerned, much injustice had been done by the closing of the coast reserve. In 1846, it was provided, by Orders in Council, that there should be a reserve for settlement, to the extent of three miles inland, all along the coast of the colony of New South Wales,

as it then existed. But in 1863, the Orders in Council—that was seventeen years after they were issued—were cancelled; and what was then regarded as the country set apart as a settled district afterwards came to be classed as belonging to the unsettled districts. The squatters were allowed subsequently to take up those lands, on leases extending for fourteen years. Well, in the Wide Bay district, the population, along the coast, had greatly increased every year; on account of the special advantages the country afforded for the purposes of sugar growing, and other agricultural products; and there was, consequently, a great demand for land for settlement and cultivation within three miles of the coast. If those lands had still remained in the hands of the Imperial Government, there would have been no need for him—twenty-five years after they were originally proclaimed for the purposes of settlement, under the Orders in Council—to have asked that the House should consent to the second reading of this Bill; for it seemed to have always been the intention of the Imperial Government, to secure, that the lands, most convenient for settlement, should be set aside for that purpose. He considered that a great injustice had been done to the population by the passing of the Act of 1863; inasmuch as it had had the effect of throwing the coast lands into the hands of the squatters.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS stated that if this Bill were passed it could only now apply to one or two runs; and one of those runs had been put up several times for lease, and no bid was made for it. At last, it was taken up by Mr. Arthur Brown for a period of five years. Now, if this Bill were passed it would amount to an act of repudiation in the case of that gentleman, as between him and the Government. There was only a small strip of land along the coast to which this Bill would refer that was of any value. The rest was a dense mangrove scrub. All that the honorable member for Wide Bay wanted by this Bill was, that the Government should take up a portion of one run on the coast. Now, that being the case, he thought the House ought not to consent to the second reading of the Bill. Besides, it seemed to him that such a measure, if passed into law, would virtually amount to a piece of personal persecution in the case of one of the pastoral tenants of the Crown. He would, therefore, oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MILES said he felt half inclined to vote for the motion of the honorable member for Wide Bay; but, after the speech of the Minister for Lands, he would make a suggestion to the mover. The suggestion was, that the honorable member should bring in resolutions to resume and throw open all the lands under the ten years' leases, and those included in Schedule B. He was not afraid that his own run would be taken up.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would much rather see such a motion brought

forward as was suggested by the honorable member for Maranoa, than the one before the House; because then they could fight it out on broad grounds. The motion was hardly worth fighting about. No legislation should be allowed against one individual for his run. However, he did not think the Government could allow the motion to be withdrawn. The House should discountenance any attempt to persecute a private person. He believed the honorable member for Maranoa was not afraid of losing his run. He had secured the better part of it.

Mr. MORGAN regretted that the honorable member for Wide Bay had thought proper to bring forward such a motion. Although he was an advocate for having the land thrown open, yet he was not in favor of partial legislation. If a motion such as that suggested by the honorable member for Maranoa was brought forward, he should support it, but he would prefer that honorable members on the Treasury benches should bring forward a Dummying Prevention Bill.

Mr. KING denied *in toto* that this motion was meant as private persecution.

Mr. MACDEVITT said he acquitted the honorable member for Wide Bay of any desire to persecute any particular individual. While the honorable member might be credited with the desire to do what was right, by introducing his motion, in its present form it was not good. It was an established principle in legislation, that no change should be made in vested interests without compensation. Upon reconsideration, the honorable member would see that his resolution, if passed, would be unconstitutional, as interfering with rights already existing. The pastoral lessees held their titles by Act of Parliament; their leases, the conditions of which they fulfilled, gave them the strongest titles, and they ought not to be interfered with in any way without the fullest compensation being provided. That having been left out of consideration by the honorable member, he must come to the conclusion that his motion could not be entertained.

Mr. KING, in answer to the assertions by the Minister for Lands, which had been to some extent endorsed by the Colonial Secretary, said that his proposed measure was not intended to touch any private individual. He believed that the Minister for Lands, in making that assertion, was endeavoring to deceive the House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS rose to order.

The SPEAKER ruled that the honorable member for Wide Bay was not in order in using such language.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS, in explanation, said he had not spoken of the honorable member's intentions, but of the effect of his motion.

Mr. KING: The honorable member had spoken of a Bill which was not before the

House. The motion asked for leave to prepare a Bill. It would be time enough to speak of its intention when the details were known, and then it could be seen how it dealt with existing interests. He did not hold with persons who had obtained runs within the coast reserve getting compensation. They had taken advantage of a political party being in power to obtain those runs, and they had no fair claim to consideration if the runs were resumed. A Bill had been brought in by the Government to repudiate land orders; and why should not he "go the whole hog" and repudiate the leases? It was a scandalous thing that, twenty-five years after the proclamation of the coast reserve, he should have to ask leave to introduce a Bill to re-establish it. Were the agriculturists, who, he maintained, had a vested right in the coast reserve, offered compensation when it was taken away from them, and closed against them? It would be found that his Bill did not deal with the coast reserve alone. The Burnett River was not known at the time the reserve was proclaimed under the Orders in Council, nor were many other rivers, or, he had no doubt, the reserve would have been extended along their banks, as in the case of the Hunter and Glenelg rivers. If his Bill was introduced, it would be seen that he proposed to extend the reserve along every tidal river for three miles on each side. The Bill dealt with no individual; and, as to vested interests, it might be a question whether compensation should be given when the measure was in the hands of honorable members.

Mr. ATKIN contended that the honorable member's arguments would have been in place before the passing of the Land Act, but they were not of any avail now. That Act had changed the affairs of the colony by throwing open the land. Why, the unfortunate squatters on the coast reserve should be picked out for, and others allowed to remain quiet from disturbance, he could not understand. He believed a great mistake was made by honorable members who had advanced ideas on the land question in advocating the throwing open of the lands at the present time. Where were the people to occupy them? They were certainly not in the country. Where were they to come from? There was plenty of land open for all requirements. What would be the result of resuming any more of the leases? The result would be, if it was done on the Darling Downs, that persons from Melbourne, who could command a million of money, would have all the land in a week. True, there would be plenty of money in the Treasury; but there would be no settlement in the country, and the whole of Darling Downs would be monopolised by fraud and perjury. The supply of land was at present equal to the demand—until there was wiser Government, and a better land law, than the colony now had, with a good system of immigration, and confidence restored in Queensland.

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

Ayes, 2.	Noes, 15.
Mr. King	Mr. Palmer
„ Moreton.	„ Thompson
	„ Atkin
	„ Wienholt
	„ MacDevitt
	„ McIlwraith
	„ Thorn
	„ Scott
	„ Bramston
	„ Roys
	„ De Satgé
	„ Jordan
	„ Terrett
	„ Cribb
	„ Bell.

Before the division was announced,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he claimed the vote of the honorable member for Maranoa, who had called with the “Noes,” and then left the House.

The SPEAKER said an honorable member's vote should go with his voice; but he could not prevent an honorable member leaving the House while the doors were open.

MR. THOMAS SCOTT AND SUGAR CULTIVATION.

Mr. JORDAN moved—

That th's House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the propriety of empowering the Government to issue an Order for Land, of the value of one thousand pounds, to Mr. Thomas Scott, of Brisbane Water, in acknowledgment of his persevering and successful efforts to establish the cultivation of the Sugar-cane in Australia.

He said, he brought the motion forward at the request and on the suggestions of several gentlemen who were interested in the cultivation of the sugar-cane in Queensland, who were of opinion that Mr. Thomas Scott might properly be considered the father of the sugar industry in Australia.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Hear, hear.

Mr. JORDAN: He would just quote a few passages from the Report of a Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly of the neighboring colony that was appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Scott, in New South Wales. But, first of all, he would read a passage or two from a letter which was addressed to himself by Mr. Scott:—

“I may, however, be now allowed to give a synopsis of the facts upon which I rest my hope of a favorable issue of my appeal to the Queensland Government for a recognition of my humble efforts, during these last fifty-three years, as the persistent pioneer to develop the sugar industry in these colonies.

“At the early period of my very protracted labors to develop my discovery, Queensland, in my published letters, was named as the most eligible locality as a sugar-producing colony; and as early, I think, as 1859, up to about 1867 and 1869, I wrote many letters to the Brisbane journals; had a large amount of private correspondence; sent canes thither; and otherwise by direct acts, urged the Queenslanders practically to test my discovery. These facts are well known to many gentlemen in Brisbane.

“At the times referred to, I did not entertain the remotest idea of any personal benefit for the performance of a common duty, which man owes to his fellows; but my late pecuniary losses have urged me, against my disposition, to now seek from the commonwealth, at least, a moiety of the expenditure I have incurred for the benefit of the masses.”

That letter very briefly set the case before the House. He respectfully asked honorable members to listen to what was contained in the report of the select committee before alluded to, from which he thought they would consider that this was an important case.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear.

Mr. JORDAN: He would not detain the House long:—

“Mr. Scott (your Committee have ascertained) had been a sugar-planter on the island of Antigua, in the West Indies, towards the close of the last century, being now ninety-four years of age, and had afterwards, at the close of the American War of 1812, visited the sugar plantations of New Orleans in the United States of America; but, on subsequently arriving in New South Wales, in the year 1816, when on his way to Calcutta, where he had a near relation in high office, Sir David Baird Scott, he was induced to remain in the colony, chiefly from the favorable opinion he had been led to form of the adaptability of the soil and climate to that branch of cultivation. At the instance, however, of the agents of the London Missionary Society in Sydney, he accepted a temporary engagement to form and organize a plantation for the growth of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of sugar in the Society Islands; and your Committee have reason to believe that it was the success that had attended his efforts under that engagement that recommended him, on his return to Sydney, to the favorable regards of Major Goulburn, then Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, as a fit and proper person to superintend and manage the proposed sugar plantation at Port Macquarie.

“After experimenting on the cultivation of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of sugar at that settlement for a series of years, Mr. Scott had succeeded in raising a crop of seventy tons of sugar in the year 1827, together with a large quantity of tobacco which he had grown at Port Macquarie, by convict labor. This amount of produce was forwarded to Sydney, and sold by public auction at the Commissariat Store; and it appears from the evidence of the Rev. Dr. Lang, who saw and tested the sugar, of which a quantity had been purchased for sale to his customers by a respectable grocer of this city, that it was of fair marketable quality, and could bear comparison with the produce of other countries then imported into the colony. But the greatly increased demand for convict labor by the free settlers of the colony, and the usual unwillingness of an incoming Government to patronize and promote the favorite schemes of their predecessors, having led to the breaking up of the penal settlements of the colony generally, shortly after the arrival of Sir Ralph Darling, who succeeded Sir Thomas Brisbane in the Government of New South Wales, the Government establishment for the cultivation of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of sugar at

Port Macquarie was forthwith discontinued and broken up. It was not therefore from any failure in the experiment, or from any want of confidence in the experimenter, that the cultivation of the sugar-cane was given up by the Government of the day in the year 1827, but simply from the causes indicated above. It is also matter of history and beyond all doubt that Mr. Scott was the first person who produced from canes grown in the colony a large quantity of marketable sugar in Australia.

"After this result of his efforts and labors at Port Macquarie, Mr. Scott settled on a small property of his own at Point Clare, Brisbane Water, where, having formed a small experimental plantation of five acres of sugar-cane, he has been employed since—that is, for forty years past, in making experiments on a limited scale on the cultivation of the sugar-cane, and the manufacture of sugar, distributing far and wide, specimens of sugar grown by himself—including twenty-eight pounds to the Paris Exhibition, for which he received a silver medal—and in writing numberless letters to the colonial papers of the day, directing the attention of the colonists generally to the subject, and containing all manner of instructions for the cultivation of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of its juices into sugar.

* * * * *

"First one and then another was at length convinced, by Mr. Scott's letters, experiments, and specimens, that the object was both feasible and practicable, inasmuch that the universal scepticism of a comparatively recent period has been gradually succeeded by a general belief and conviction that the cultivation of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of sugar are destined to be one of the most prolific sources of the future wealth and prosperity of this colony. For when it is borne in mind that not less than half-a-million sterling is expended annually by this colony alone for the purchase of sugar grown beyond the seas, it must be evident that this industry must not only prove a mine of wealth for the colony, in the way of supplying its internal consumption, but an export of incalculable value for its future inhabitants.

* * * * *

"All the witnesses examined by your Committee agree in regarding Mr. Scott as the pioneer of sugar cultivation in Australia; and it is the general opinion of the witnesses that, but for Mr. Scott's long-continued and unwearied exertions in the cause, sugar cultivation would not now have been heard of in Australia."

Some gentlemen gave evidence in support of Mr. Scott's claims. Dr. Lang said, in answer to a question:—

"Do you consider Mr. Scott the pioneer in the promotion of this matter in this colony? Decidedly he is—unquestionably. His own experience was matured from what he had seen at Port Macquarie, where he was very successful in the cultivation of the cane to a very considerable extent."

The Chairman asked Mr. Edward Knox:—

"You are aware that Mr. Thomas Scott, of Brisbane Water, has been engaged in this pursuit for a series of years? I am aware he has been writing on the subject and urging the cultivation of the cane for a series of years. I have not personally known Mr. Scott till within the last few months.

"Do you consider that his experiments in the culture of cane and his efforts otherwise have been highly beneficial in promoting this industry? I think it is very likely that we should not have heard of the cultivation of the sugar-cane here but for Mr. Scott's persistent efforts to induce people to cultivate it in the colony.

"In your opinion, he has been a pioneer in the matter, and a consistent promoter of it? He has undoubtedly."

Now, he (Mr. Jordan) thought those quotations established the fact that we were chiefly indebted to Mr. Scott for having by his persistent labors, extending over forty years, led gentlemen in this colony to go in for practically testing the capabilities of Queensland for the cultivation of sugar. He learned from the report of the Chief Inspector of Distilleries, that the consumption of sugar in Queensland was 5,000 tons a year. In New South Wales the consumption was valued at £500,000 sterling, for a population of 485,356. Taking these figures as a basis of the population of the other colonies, and of their consumption of sugar—there were very few persons who had a correct idea of the large consumption of sugar in Australia—they afforded proof that, although Queensland would likely very speedily produce as much sugar as would supply our own wants, there was still a very large market close by without exporting any to Europe. The population of all the colonies being 1,821,095, the consumption of sugar annually would be about £2,000,000 sterling. There was no doubt that sugar-growing would be a very great source of wealth to this colony. The industry might be said to be fairly established. He might say, from his own experience, that it was likely to prove successful. He thought that it would be very successful in the southern portion of the colony, and that it would be a good investment of capital, even by the employment of European labor. He had satisfied himself on that point—that capital might be safely invested, and with better returns, than in any other industry, even by the employment of European labor, if the land was suitable, and the industry was carried on intelligently under the superintendence of the proprietor. He was perfectly convinced that Coolies were not required for sugar-growing in this colony. The advantage of that experience which the planters now had, for five years, was being sensibly felt; and there was no doubt that sugar cultivation would soon be a source of very great wealth to this colony, whether we had European or any other description of labor. Taking those facts into consideration, the matter he had brought forward was not unimportant. Here was an old man, of ninety-four years of age, who, for forty years, had been endeavoring to direct the attention of the colonists to this particular matter. He (Mr. Jordan) had in his possession a number of letters which Mr. Scott had sent to the newspapers from time to time during a long series of years. One thing

they proved—that Mr. Scott had laid down rules for the preparation of land for the cultivation of sugar-cane, for the manufacture of the article itself, which were decidedly in accordance with, and very little different indeed from, those which the planters had established as necessary and essential to success by their five years' practical experience in this colony. He could not, therefore, come to any other conclusion than that they were indebted chiefly for what they were now doing to the principles laid down by Mr. Scott, years ago, which were contained in some of his letters to the newspapers. They had not arrived at what they now did, as to the mode of planting, the proper kind of cane, the proper mode of treating the cane, simply by their own intelligence and experience; but they had been greatly assisted by Mr. Scott, as proved by his letters. He was aware that some few sessions ago a grant of land was made to the the Honorable Louis Hope for his enterprise in this direction. That would be adduced as a reason why the House should do no more in recognising the services of Mr. Scott. He did not think that that would be an argument at all against the motion. There was evidence before the House, in the extracts he had read, that Mr. Scott, in his endeavor to promote the cultivation of sugar, had sustained some pecuniary loss, which would render the consideration he (Mr. Jordan) asked for a very great boon to himself and his family. He did not think, taking those facts into consideration, that there would be any hesitancy on the part of honorable members in recognising Mr. Scott's services.

Mr. MILES seconded the motion, for sake of the opportunity of saying a word or two, though he did not intend to support the motion. Of all the monstrous propositions he ever heard, this was the worst. That Mr. Scott, who never was in the colony at all, at the age of ninety-four years, should get a land order for £1,000! He wanted a whole churchyard to himself. The arguments the honorable member for East Moreton had brought forward in support of the motion, were of the most extraordinary kind. He had commenced by telling the House that numbers of letters which Mr. Scott had written to the papers entitled him to a grant. He (Mr. Miles) knew a great many individuals in the House who wrote a great many letters to the papers. The honorable member quoted some evidence given in New South Wales; and it was an extraordinary thing that he had brought Dr. Lang forward as one who had given evidence as to the great services that Mr. Scott had rendered. Why, that gentleman had presented a petition to the House for a grant, and was himself a candidate for land orders. The honorable member for East Moreton trifled too much with the time of the House with such a matter. He (Mr. Miles) had been laughed at for suggesting the resumption of the coast district, and the lands under schedule B; but

the House would require them all in order to satisfy all the parties who were making claims to consideration in the shape of large grants. He suggested that a Bill should be brought in to allow Mr. Scott a grant of land, six feet by six.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was not going to make this a Government question. A land order for £1,000 would represent £1,000 out of the Treasury. One night the House were asked to take the gold export duty off, to relieve the diggers, and thus lose a large amount of revenue. How, then, the Government were to find this £1,000 he did not know. For himself, he had set himself against all grants. He had opposed the grant of land to Captain Hope, who certainly had twenty times the claim that ever Mr. Scott had. He thought it bad in principle, though, in the one case, the cultivation of sugar was introduced and practically demonstrated; in the other, it was arrived at theoretically. He did not think the country had anything to do with Mr. Scott. He did not think he ever was in Queensland. If, however, the gentleman had done so much for the sugar-growing interest, it would be a very handsome recognition on the part of the successful planters to present him with a very valuable testimonial; not to ask the whole colony to do it. His (the Colonial Secretary's) district had not benefitted by Mr. Scott's endeavors. Let the planters give as much as they liked. The House would make no objection, not the slightest objection, to their doubling or trebling the amount mentioned in the motion. But he must oppose it on principle.

Mr. MACDEVITT agreed with the honorable member for East Moreton, that some benefit had been derived by the colony from the labors of Mr. Scott. That gentleman might, or might not, be entitled to the reward proposed; but one thing was certain, from the statements made by the honorable member, that there was reason to come to the conclusion that Mr. Scott had been mainly instrumental in causing the sugar industry to be firmly established on Australian soil. He thought it became that House to consider what recognition Mr. Scott deserved at its hands. The honorable the Premier had stated, that the sugar growers who had benefitted by that gentleman's labor, might well make him some recognition; for not only had they received great benefits through him, but they also enjoyed great privileges by having the duty off their sugar and rum, and they could afford to reward Mr. Scott as he deserved. He thought, at the same time, when an individual, by the exercise of his forethought, energy, and enterprise, had been the means of benefitting the whole colony by the establishment of a new industry like sugar cultivation, he was entitled to some recognition from the colony. If the sum proposed was too large, it should be reduced by one-half, and the honorable member should

accept such a proposition. He (Mr. MacDevitt) had, himself, passed through that House a resolution for rewards to the discoverers of gold fields; and there were also bonuses to cotton growers, which were introduced by the honorable gentleman at present in charge of the finances of the colony; and he considered that, although the applicant, Mr. Scott, possessed no legal claim to compensation, still, in strict justice, he had claims deserving some sort of recognition.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS confessed that he had watched for more than twenty years the labors of the venerable gentleman referred to by the resolution, with considerable attention, and he had watched how he had attempted to instil into the minds of the colonists, that the sea-board, at least, of certain portions of Australia was admirably fitted to the cultivation of the sugar-cane. At last he saw that Mr. Scott had succeeded in Queensland in inducing certain gentlemen in that colony to try the venture, which, he believed, to a considerable extent, had been such a success, that the cultivation of sugar would lead eventually to this being the richest and most prosperous colony in the Australian group. He was perfectly convinced that it was due to that venerable gentleman that the experiment had been made, and he thought that all the colonies, and not only this one, should make him some recognition. He was sorry, on account of Mr. Scott's extreme age, that he could not be expected to enjoy for any length of time anything which might be given; but whatever was done by that House should be done with as little delay as possible.

Mr. LILLEY said he had, from time to time, in years past, seen the writings of the gentleman referred to, but he was not going to support the motion, because he thought that when they gave a grant to the Honorable Louis Hope, for a similar object, they had done enough; and that if they were once to establish a precedent, they would be deluged with similar applications. In fact, any gentleman who thought he had been a benefactor to Queensland, would go to that House for some recognition of his services. Another reason why he would not support the resolution was, that he thought that those who entered upon the cultivation of the soil, in the first instance, did so entirely for their own interest, and not with much idea of benefitting their fellow men. He, however, thought Mr. Scott had earned the gratitude of the growers in New South Wales; and if he was entitled to compensation, it was the duty of that colony to accord it to him. He thought that, seeing the numerous applications of the sort, it would be a good plan if the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government would institute an order of merit, to be conferred on deserving persons, who, no doubt, would value it as highly as a grant of a thousand acres of land.

Mr. JORDAN thought the objection of the honorable the Premier to taking a thousand pounds out of the Treasury could be met by his granting the remission of the purchase money of land to the value of £500. It was very evident that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was not acquainted with the merits of the case, or he would have suggested something more than a mere piece of ribbon.

Mr. ATKIN wished to know whether the Government of New South Wales had granted anything to Mr. Scott, because, if not, it would be quite time for the Legislature of this colony to take some action.

The question was then put, and the House divided with the following result:—

Ayes, 6.		Noes, 17.	
Mr. Atkin		Mr. Lilley	
" Jordan		" Palmer	
" Cribb		" Moreton	
" Stephens		" Thompson	
" MacDevitt		" De Satgé	
" Walsh.		" Forbes	
		" Fyfe	
		" Scott	
		" Bell	
		" Miles	
		" Wienholt	
		" Ferrett	
		" Rodds	
		" King	
		" Thorn	
		" Bramston	
		" Mellwraith.	

ARTHUR CLERK KEMBALL.

Mr. ATKIN moved—

1. That a Select Committee, with power to send for persons and papers, and to sit during any adjournment, be appointed to inquire into and report upon the claims for compensation put forward by Mr. Arthur Clerk Kemball, late Police Magistrate at Maryborough.

2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Bell, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Moreton, Mr. King, and the mover.

The honorable member stated that he had brought this question before the House last session, as a claim for compensation, and it had been suggested by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary that it should be referred to a select committee. It was unnecessary for him to say more, and he would leave the matter in the hands of the House.

Mr. MILES did not think the gentleman alluded to had any claim at all on the country, and he thought it was very bad taste for him to go to that House at all, after he had been superannuated; and especially as he had been voted £20 a-year more, in order to make up his allowance to a larger sum. He thought the House had behaved very handsomely to him, and that he was not entitled to ask it to pay his law expenses. Moreover, a great cost would be involved in the appointment of a committee, which, after all, might result in nothing. Mr. Kemball was like all Government officers, and was never done asking for money.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he gave a promise last session that he would not oppose

the appointment of a committee comprising the names now mentioned, when the honorable member for East Moreton brought forward a direct claim for compensation. He was not sure what claims, if any, Mr. Kemball possessed; still he thought it was a fair subject for inquiry. The best thing to do would be to add the name of the honorable member for Maranoa to the committee.

Mr. JORDAN trusted the motion would not be opposed, as Mr. Kemball had good claims to compensation.

Mr. LILLEY said that he refused twice, when in office, to entertain the claim now put forward, and as he did not believe the committee would result in any recommendation in Mr. Kemball's favor, it would merely be a loss of time; if carried, it would prove that every police magistrate who made a mistake, and was mulcted in damages, had a right to go to that House and ask for compensation.

Mr. ATKIN explained, in reference to the remarks of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, that Mr. Kemball was not mulcted in damages, as the jury gave a verdict in his favor. He would not say Mr. Kemball's claims were just, but he thought they should be inquired into, as one morning's sitting would be enough.

The question was then put and negatived.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY, in moving the adjournment of the House till the following Tuesday, said he wished the House to decide whether there should be an adjournment over the next week, as it would be useless for him and a few honorable members to attend there unless there was a quorum. It was a matter entirely in the hands of the House.

Mr. JORDAN moved the adjournment of the House until Tuesday, 30th May, as he thought, although some honorable members might attend during the next week, there would not be a quorum.

Mr. LILLEY said he should oppose the motion, only he recollected on a former occasion, when there was no adjournment, he used to attend every day, and perhaps be the only member present, except the honorable gentleman who then filled the office of Speaker, and he should be sorry that the present Speaker should be put to the same inconvenience.

Mr. MILES rose to a point of order. He wished to know whether the House could be adjourned until Tuesday week without the usual notice.

The SPEAKER stated that it was usual to give notice, but the difficulty might be avoided by an honorable member moving an amendment on the motion of the honorable the Premier.

Mr. ATKIN moved, by way of amendment, that the word "23rd" be omitted with a view of inserting the word "30th."

The amendment was put and carried.

A A