

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 1871

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday 19, December, 1871.

Absence of Mr. Speaker.—Adjournment of the House—Mutilation of the body of Mr. Zieman.—Order of Business—State of Public Affairs.—Gold Fields Management Bill.—Adjournment.

ABSENCE OF MR. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER, on taking the Chair, said he had to thank honorable members for the kindness and forbearance they had extended towards him during his accidental and unfortunate absence; and said that, in now resuming his duties, he would endeavor to perform them with satisfaction to both sides of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was sure that both sides of the House deeply regretted the cause of the absence of the honorable the Speaker, and that they were equally glad to see he was able to resume his duties.

Mr. LILLEY said that he and other honorable members on the Opposition side of the House deeply sympathised with the honorable the Speaker because of the severe accident he had met with, and which had occasioned his temporary absence from the House. He now desired, for himself and others sitting on the same side of the House, to assure the honorable gentleman that he and they were much pleased to find that he was now able again, within so short a time after his accident, to resume the duties of his high and important office.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—MUTILATION OF THE BODY OF MR. ZIEMAN.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said he rose for the purpose of moving the adjournment of the House, with the view of bringing under the attention of the House, and of honorable members of the Government, a statement which appeared in

the *Brisbane Courier* of the previous day—a statement which consisted of a portion of the evidence of Sergeant Downie, at the magisterial investigation held at St. George, with relation to the murder of Mr. Zieman. In the report of the investigation in yesterday's *Courier*, he found the following statement as part of the evidence of Sergeant Downie:—

“I left Constable Henry in charge of the body; on the morning of the 29th, I assisted Dr. Godfrey to make a further examination of the body; there were no further marks of violence on the body; we stripped the whole of the clothes off on that occasion; the trousers and braces produced are those I took off the body; in my presence, Dr. Godfrey removed the head from the body, and an hour afterwards the neck; I afterwards escorted the head and neck into Surat; the remaining portion of the body was then buried about 200 yards from where it was found.”

He had no means of ascertaining the exact amount of truth that was contained in the statement; but as it consisted of the sworn testimony of a sergeant of police, he thought it was his duty to call the attention of the Government to the matter; and he thought it was highly important that the attention of the Government should be directed to it. There were two circumstances connected with the case which he could not but regard as monstrous. The one was, that the body should have been so abominably mutilated as the body of Mr. Zieman seemed to have been; and the other was, that Mr. Godfrey was not a legally qualified practitioner. He (Dr. O'Doherty) had taken the trouble to make inquiries at the Medical Board as to Mr. Godfrey, and he had found that there was not a medical man of that name on the list of legally qualified practitioners. Now, this man was, nevertheless, allowed, in the presence of Government officials, to cut off the head, in the first instance, and then to cut off the neck, of Mr. Zieman. The head and neck were placed in a tin box, and taken into Surat, and the other portion of the body was buried about two hundred yards from where it was found. In olden times, that might not have been so extraordinary, when there were few medical gentlemen in the colony; but it was extraordinary now, and he could only account for it in this way, that it had been done for the purpose of producing sensational evidence at the trial. Such a proceeding he had never heard of in the old country; and he considered that in this case, it was altogether owing to the abolition of coroners' inquests, where legally qualified medical gentlemen were required on oath to certify to the cause of death. If a coroner's inquiry had been held on the spot, and a duly qualified medical practitioner had been examined as to the cause of death, there would not have been any necessity for the mutilation of the body. He did not see that there was any necessity whatever in the interests of justice that there should have been such a mutilation of the

body of Mr. Zieman. Now, he would repeat that this was only one of the many disadvantages arising from the abolition of the holding of coroners' inquests. He observed the honorable member for Fortitude Valley smiling at that remark, but he could inform the honorable gentleman that in the opinion of gentlemen as well qualified to judge as he, Mr. Lilley, was—though not lawyers—great disadvantage had arisen from the abolition of the holding of coroners' inquests. He could inform the honorable member, and the House, that any properly qualified medical man could at once, on examination, have certified as to the cause of death, without mutilating the body in the way that Mr. Zieman's body had been mutilated. Why, he would ask, should any tinker that might be found in the bush be allowed to mutilate the body of a human being in such a way; and why should the life of a fellow-being be left dependent upon such evidence? But this was not the first case of the kind that had occurred recently. Within the last twelve months a case of a similar nature took place—similar to this extent, that a man who was not a legally qualified medical practitioner was called upon to give evidence on a critical case in which the accuracy of the medical testimony involved the liberty of a fellow-citizen. Now he held that it was quite contrary to the spirit of all justice, that the evidence of any tinker who might be picked up in the bush should be received as to the cause of death, seeing that upon his evidence might depend the life of a fellow-man. He had only to say further, in conclusion, that he thought it was the duty of the Government to institute inquiries as to why the body of Mr. Zieman was so mutilated, and why Mr. Godfrey was called upon to make examination as to the cause of death.

Mr. LILLEY said he would not refer to the medical portion of the speech of the honorable member for North Brisbane; and as to the legal portion of it he would only say, that he thought it would have been well the honorable member had left the question of the law alone.

Dr. O'DOHERTY: He had not spoken as to the state of the law at all.

Mr. LILLEY: Well, at any rate, the honorable member was wrong as to the state of the law. He (Mr. Lilley) was the author of the statute of which the honorable member complained; and he could tell the honorable member that the only material alteration it made in the law was that it dispensed with the necessity of requiring that a jury should be summoned to hear evidence and return a verdict in certain cases of inquiry as to the cause of death; and that it gave a legal sanction to a magisterial inquiry, which was a form of inquiry that, from experience, had been found to work well. He brought in the Act, when Attorney-General, because of a verdict that was given by a jury, the one part of which verdict was contradictory to the

other. In consequence of the character of the verdict he found it necessary to have the body exhumed in order that it might be ascertained whether death arose from natural or accidental causes, or whether it was occasioned by murder. The Act, then, merely dispensed with the presence of a jury. There was not the least harm caused by it; and he would even go so far as to say that it had been found to be one of the best Acts that had ever been passed in the colony. The Act provided that a magistrate making inquiry as to the cause of the death of anyone, should, if unaided by professional knowledge, put certain questions to the witnesses—which questions were specifically stated in the Act—and based upon the information received in reply to those questions, the magistrate was required to express his opinion as to the cause of death; and the opinion so expressed was generally found to be more correct than the verdict of a jury. The Act, which removed much of the cumbrousness of procedure of the law of England in such cases, had been found to be a very useful one.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Government were not in possession of any information on the subject to which the honorable member for North Brisbane had called attention, beyond that which was contained in the newspapers. He thought the honorable member had, in the course of his remarks, given strong reasons to shew why Mr. Zieman's body should have been mutilated in the way it had been. If Mr. Godfrey, as asserted, was not a legally qualified medical man, he could not give evidence at the trial as to the cause of death; and, therefore, it was necessary that the skull should be sent down for evidence as to the cause of death at the trial of the parties in custody for the murder of Mr. Zieman. The honorable member had spoken of Mr. Godfrey as a tinker; and if he was correct in saying so, Mr. Godfrey's evidence as to the cause of death could not be received. He had known of other instances where the skulls of persons who had been murdered had been produced in court, for the purpose of affording evidence. As to the holding of magisterial inquiries instead of coroners' inquests, he quite agreed with the honorable member for Fortitude Valley that the alteration of the law in that respect was a great improvement. The Government, as honorable members must be aware, had no power to prevent the mutilation of the body of Mr. Zieman, in the way complained of; and he must repeat that if the honorable member for North Brisbane was correct in stating that Mr. Godfrey was a tinker, it was absolutely necessary that the skull should be produced in court at the trial, for the purpose of affording evidence as to the cause of death.

Mr. MILES said he fully agreed with the honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, that there was no necessity for the mutilation of the body of Mr. Zieman.

He did not see that it was at all necessary for the ends of justice that the head should have been cut off, and then the neck, and that those portions of the body should have been sealed up in a tin case, and sent down under escort to Surat. He believed that the evidence of Mr. Buttanshaw, and of the members of the police force, who were present when the body was found, would have been quite sufficient to satisfy any jury as to the cause of death; and he held, therefore, that it was quite unnecessary that the body should have been mutilated as it had been. The honorable member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, had spoken of Mr. Godfrey as a tinker. Well, he was not prepared, from his own knowledge, to say what Mr. Godfrey was, but he could say from good authority in Surat—and his authority was a gentleman in the public service—that Mr. Godfrey was a highly qualified medical man, and a very skilful practitioner. It seemed, however, that from some misfortune—such as that which prevented the honorable member for West Moreton from figuring at the bar—he had not obtained his diploma. He had not passed the Medical Board in this colony, and was not, therefore, a legally qualified practitioner. But he was a highly respectable man; and he (Mr. Miles) was prepared to say that, though Mr. Godfrey was not a legally qualified practitioner, he was, as a medical man, far superior to most medical gentlemen in the colony who were qualified by law. In the outlying districts of the colony, where there was not sufficient population to induce a legally qualified medical man to take up his residence, people were glad to obtain the services of gentlemen who were known to be otherwise qualified. Now, he had it on very high authority, that Mr. Godfrey was a most competent medical man. To have obtained the services of a legally qualified man, in this instance, it would have been necessary to have gone about a hundred miles from the scene of the murder; and there was no telegraph in the district, by which means a legally qualified medical man could have been sent for at once; and Mr. Zieman had been dead two days before his body was discovered. Well, it would have taken several days to get a legally qualified medical man to go up and examine the body; and by that time, at this hot season of the year, the body would have been in a very advanced state of decomposition. Now, though he considered that it was unnecessary to cut off the head and neck, he maintained that it was quite right to take the best evidence that could be obtained in the district as to the cause of death, so as to further the ends of justice. As to the change in the law which had been referred to, he thought that where there was a sparse population, a magisterial inquiry was preferable to a coroner's inquest; and he also thought that in the outlying districts the change had been found to operate beneficially rather than otherwise.

Mr. ATKIN said it was quite a common occurrence for a body to be more or less mutilated in cases where there were suspicious circumstances as to the cause of death. For instance, he remembered the case of a young man dying at Roma, and as it was thought that he had been poisoned, his stomach was cut out and sent down the country for chemical analysis. Now, the mutilation in that case was no less than the mutilation of the body of Mr. Zieman. The only difference was as to the parts where the bodies were mutilated.

Dr. O'DOHERTY said, the honorable the Colonial Secretary had remarked that if Mr. Godfrey was not a legally qualified medical man, and could not, therefore, give evidence in a court of law as to the cause of death, a good reason existed in that fact why the skull of Mr. Zieman should be sent down for evidence. Now, it was not for the purpose of investigation by others that the head was removed, but for the purpose of farther examination by Mr. Godfrey himself; and therefore he insisted that there was no justification for the mutilation of the body. Now, the Government, he maintained, should not sanction the cutting up of a body for evidence in a criminal case, by one who was not a duly qualified medical man. He also maintained that the mutilation of the body by Mr. Godfrey was not justified, on the ground that, if he had not removed the head, it would have been necessary to send to Roma for a medical man to examine the body as to the cause of death. It was the duty of the Government, he held, to go to the utmost necessary expense in order to secure evidence that would be received in a court of law in such a case. Notwithstanding what had been said by the honorable member for East Moreton, and the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, he maintained that, under the circumstances, such a gross mutilation of the body of a human being was unknown anywhere out of Queensland. The honorable member for East Moreton had mentioned the case of a young man's stomach having been carried away; but that was in a case of suspected poisoning, which rendered it necessary that, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth, the stomach should be subjected to chemical analysis. Now, in the case of Mr. Zieman, any duly qualified medical man could, by an examination of the head, have stated what was the cause of death, and that without any mutilation whatever. The Government, he would again assert, ought not to tolerate such a gross outrage. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley had stated that he (Dr. O'Doherty) was in utter ignorance of the law in respect to inquiries in such cases. Well, he would tell the honorable member, and other lawyers who might be in the House, that he was not struck down or overwhelmed by the charge of ignorance as to the state of the law. It seemed to him that in some respects they got too much law; and the case of Mr.

Zieman, he thought, shewed that the law, which abolished coroners' inquests, was far from beneficial. The provision for magisterial inquiries might be beneficial in remote parts of the colony; but, as applied to the colony generally, it was not so. He believed that in all the cities and towns in the colony, the change which had been made in the law, substituting magisterial inquiries for coroners' inquests, was greatly disapproved of. As to the case of Mr. Zieman, where there had been such gross inhumanity exhibited, he thought the Government ought to interfere in some way or other in the matter.

The motion that the House do now adjourn was then put and negatived.

ORDER OF BUSINESS—STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

Mr. LILLEY rose, he said, for the purpose of moving that all the Orders of the Day upon the business paper should be postponed until after the general notices of motion had been considered; and he did so in order that the Government might be enabled to place before the House and the country an explanation as to the present state of the public affairs of the colony. Now, honorable members on the Opposition side of the House had been engaged for several months in a struggle with the squatting party in the House; and that struggle had retarded the whole of the legislative business of the colony, and had embittered public feeling very much; and it was, he thought, likely to lead to a still further delay, and seriously inconvenience the progress of public business. Now, he should be sorry if it should go forth to the world that a set of business men such as were to be found in that House were unable to carry on, by fair discussion, and by their power of voting, and by the legitimate use of parliamentary forms, the legislative business of the country with satisfaction to the people who had entrusted them to perform the duties of their representatives. It was not the less needful that it should be known that the forms of the House were not merely idle things; but that they had been created, if he might so speak, for great and useful public purposes; and those forms were, in fact, placed, as it were, in the hands of those honorable members who happened, for the time being, to be in a minority in the House, to be used by them as a means of protection, or, it might be, as a weapon of defence. Honorable members on the Opposition side of the House had from time to time, for months past, given their reasons for resorting to the use of those forms—because they had felt it to be necessary that they should be resorted to; and he was now anxious, seeing as he did, no hope of anything like concession on the part of honorable gentlemen on the Government side of the House, to give his reasons for the course of conduct which he, and other honorable members who sat on the same side of the House with him, now pursued. He saw that

there was no hope of securing what he believed to be the just rights of the people of the colony, except by persevering in the use of the forms of the House; and he was, therefore, anxious to express his reasons for urging the necessity for the observance of those forms.

The SPEAKER directed the attention of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley to the fact that he was not strictly in order; especially as the motion he had made proposed that the sessional orders of the House should be superseded.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was quite aware from the first, that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was not in order, inasmuch as he proposed by his motion to supersede the sessional orders of the House as regarded the days for Government business. The honorable member he knew could not bring forward such a motion, without the permission of the House; but he (the Colonial Secretary) did not wish to make any objection to the discussion of the question, which had been raised by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley.

Mr. LILLEY: Well, as there was no objection, he would proceed to quote a notable authority as to the value of parliamentary forms. The writer of the work he was about to quote from was for many years a member of the House of Commons, and he gave a number of instances of the usefulness of parliamentary forms. Now, here, when recourse was had by a minority to the forms of the House, it was alleged that it was for the purpose of obstruction; and it seemed to be the opinion of some honorable members that it was the duty of the minority always to give way to the majority, and allow them to do whatever they thought to be proper. For his own part, he must say that he altogether objected to that opinion. There were many instances on record of the forms of the House of Commons being resorted to for the public benefit; and there was one instance in particular in which the forms of the House were resorted to—and that successfully—for the purpose of upholding the liberty of the press.

Mr. THORN: Yes—the liberty of the press.

Mr. LILLEY: Yes—the liberty of the press. Not the license of the press, by which some people were enabled to become the assassins of private character; and which license was perhaps supported by some honorable members on the Government side of the House for their personal or party purposes. The extract which he had to read was as follows:—

“The forms of the House are for the protection of minorities; and the minority should learn how to use them much more efficiently than they do. One cannot remember an instance in which a great encroachment on public freedom has been defeated or seriously delayed by that application of mere forms which every now and then, when there is no party interest at stake, is found to be so availing. Mr. Warburton, with only three or four to help him, was able to delay Serjeant Tal-

fourd's Copyright Bill a whole session by merely availing himself of the forms of the House. I should like to see a ministerial measure or a great party measure thrown out by the firmness of a minority daring to avail itself of a machinery so often used for less worthy purposes, for almost any purpose but that of securing untouched the rights and liberties of the people.³⁹

That was the opinion of Mr. W. J. Fox, one of the ablest and most eloquent members of the House of Commons, as to the usefulness of the forms of the House; and he was not alone in that opinion.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Who was he?

MR. LILLEY: Well, the honorable member asked, who was Mr. W. J. Fox? and he would tell him that he was one of the most distinguished members of the House of Commons, and sat for many years as member for Oldham. There was scarcely an important occasion in the political history of England, during his time, in which Mr. Fox did not take a leading part. He took a prominent part in connection with the first Reform Bill, and in every instance where the rights of the people were at stake. Now, it would be remembered by honorable members that, when the present struggle commenced, he and other honorable members on the Opposition side of the House, distinctly stated what they believed would be the most beneficial course of policy that could be pursued—the course of policy that would be most beneficial to the colony, that would promote its progress, and place its prosperity on a sounder footing than it rested on at present, and which they also believed would lead to the accomplishment of the wishes of the majority of the people. They had urged strongly upon the Government the necessity of adopting some scheme that would keep up a continuous stream of European immigration to the colony. They believed that there was a strong party in the colony—a party that was represented by honorable members on the Government side of the House—who were in favor of the importation into the colony of a form of labor that was cheap, but alien, and, as he and other honorable members believed, not adapted to the circumstances of the colony. At all events, it was a form of labor that was highly distasteful to the European inhabitants of the colony, and which was not calculated to be of benefit to the colony. They were, therefore, anxious that European immigration should be encouraged to a much greater extent than it was at present, and that the public lands of the colony should be thrown open, so as to provide for the settlement of an increased European immigration. Honorable members on the Opposition side of the House also urged that the representation of the people of the colony was not fair—that it was unequal and unjust; and that, as it stood, it tended to the support of a class interest in the country; and that it could be so used as to bring into the House an undue representation of one class in the colony. He also

believed that the members of the Opposition urged upon the Government, as well as on the country, that some amendments should be made in the representation of the people of the colony. Honorable members on the Opposition side of the House had, at the same time, urged the desirableness of encouraging European immigration by grants of land for settlement and cultivation, and the discouragement of Polynesian immigration. Now, the encouragement of European immigration, and settlement upon the lands, the fair representation of Europeans in the colony, and the discouragement of Polynesian immigration, should, he maintained, all go together. The Opposition also insisted on the necessity of an extended system of public works, the cost of which should be borne out of the proceeds arising from the sale, or the disposal otherwise, by agreement with the Government, of the lands of the colony, or by those who were anxious that public works should be carried out through the districts, in the progress of which they were personally interested; and it was a condition attached to a proposition made by the honorable member for the Kennedy for the carrying out of public works—that every district should bear the expense of its own public works; and that proposition, he believed, was assented to by every member of the Opposition. But, as in the case of other measures, it was objected to by the Government. As an instance, it was not till pressure was brought to bear, by one of the honorable members for East Moreton, last session, that a Bill was brought in by the Government to provide for an additional representation of the people; and when they brought in that measure they shewed no disposition to deal with it in a fair spirit. The measure they brought in was one that was calculated only to strengthen their own position, but not to remedy the existing state of public affairs. Honorable members, of course, knew what became of the measure. In the next place, the Government took their most offensive and, as he believed, illegal, action in moving the adjournment of the House for five months; and that motion was made at a time when there was under the consideration of the House a motion, simply, for adjournment—and that motion was brought forward, only, in order to afford the honorable the mover an opportunity of expressing his opinions on the existing state of public affairs at that time. Well, that motion, which was simply brought forward as a formal motion for adjournment, was followed up by a course of action that would never be forgotten or forgiven; and that was the arbitrary and oppressive use of the Royal prerogative by which the power of a second dissolution was given to the same Ministry within a period of ten months. Now, the second dissolution, he could not help thinking, was granted for the purpose of wasting the resources and the

strength of the Opposition; and whatever might be said, either here or elsewhere, on behalf of the then Acting-Governor, he was sure that the people of the colony would not fail to consider his conduct, on the occasion, as a standing disgrace. It was, he would repeat, an oppressive and arbitrary use of the Royal prerogative to grant that second dissolution to the same Ministry within so brief a period. He understood that the Acting-Governor was recommended to prorogue the House, and to re-assemble it within a short time, and that recommendation he believed was in writing. That and other circumstances might yet come out, if an investigation, conducted in a spirit of justice, was held in respect to those matters; and he wished it to be distinctly understood that he did not desire the condemnation of anyone; and that he only made those remarks with the view of securing for the future the protection of the public rights of the people of the colony. Now, he would ask, how the last elections were carried out? He did not hesitate to say that they were carried out in a way that was disgraceful to those who had the charge of carrying them out. In some instances bribes were offered to constituencies to secure the return of Ministerial candidates—and bribes that were now standing on the Estimates in the hope that the House would be weak enough to pass them. Now evidence might be given of that before the present debate was concluded—evidence that some constituencies were attempted to be corrupted. He believed, however, that only in a few instances, if any, those attempts at corruption were successful. At all events, as he understood, those bribes, to the honor of most of the constituencies, were rejected, and they did not produce any appreciable effect in the result of the elections for those constituencies to which they were offered. Now, whilst in the case of some of the constituencies to which those bribes were held out, they appeared on the Estimates, there were other constituencies that were really entitled to votes, which were not even mentioned. It was only for those constituencies that returned Ministerial candidates that votes appeared on the Estimates; and constituencies that returned members for the Opposition side of the House were not mentioned on the Estimates at all. Such were the features that, in some instances, characterised the proceedings in connection with the recent elections. Why, for instance, in one district, almost every voter had a polling place alongside of where he was living; and did such an arrangement, he would ask, secure independent voting—did it secure, in fact, what was really vote by ballot?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Where was that?

Mr. LILLEY: It was in the Mitchell district, where there were eleven polling places, and some of them were quite close to the residences of the voters. Now, what was

really vote by ballot could not, he maintained, be properly exercised under such an arrangement. In some cases, again, the polling places were shifted from where they formerly existed; and great inconvenience was thereby occasioned to some of the electors for those districts. Now, he could tell the House that honorable members on the Opposition side were not unaware of the fact that honorable members on the Government side were making preparations for another struggle. He had himself received several letters from the country, by which he was made aware that honorable members on the Government side of the House were endeavoring to have the rolls so made up that they would be able, in their respective electorates, to secure the return to Parliament of men of their own party; and he believed they were determined to do so, even by packed benches. He observed that the honorable member for the Western Downs was smiling grimly at the remark; but he could tell him that honorable members on the Opposition side of the House had in their possession letters informing them of what was taking place in his own district in that respect.

Mr. RAMSAY rose to a point of order. If the honorable member meant to say that he had anything to do with the packing of the benches in his district, he begged to tell him that the statement was utterly false.

Mr. LILLEY said he did not mean to accuse the honorable member of being concerned in the matter in any way whatever. He did not know if the honorable member was at all aware of what was taking place in the district he represented, with respect to the packing of the revision benches; but there were other proceedings which it was suspected the honorable member knew about; and he might be able, in the course of the debate, to inform the honorable gentleman of proceedings that he was aware of, that were equally as bad as that of the cooking of the rolls. Some things had been done so unblushingly in the colony by some honorable members opposite—

Mr. FERRETT rose to a point of order. He would like to know if it was not contrary to the Standing Orders for the honorable member to refer to anything having been done unblushingly by any other honorable member of the House.

The SPEAKER said he did not understand that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was referring to any honorable member in particular.

Mr. LILLEY said he hoped the honorable member had not yet lost the power of blushing; and if his natural modesty and sensitiveness were so great, he would except him from the number of those persons who could do acts of the kind he referred to unblushingly; but if a man did a wrong act, he did not think that it mattered much whether he blushed about it or not—the action remained the same. Now, it was very well known that

in many of the electoral districts of the colony, the revision benches had been packed by prejudiced persons, and he had letters to prove it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he hoped the honorable member for Fortitude Valley would excuse his interrupting him. If it was the intention of the honorable member to bring the opposite parties of the House together, the course he was pursuing was not well calculated to do so. The honorable member, he thought, was speaking altogether away from the question.

The SPEAKER said that it was quite out of order for the honorable member for Fortitude Valley to have moved the postponement of the Orders of the Day, and to proceed in the way he was doing; but it was with the permission of the House that he did so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he was quite aware that they could stop the honorable member at any moment;—and if he would confine himself to questions of public policy, the Government were quite willing to hear him. It was only out of courtesy that he had been allowed to proceed; and he had taken advantage of that courtesy to make charges against honorable members on the Government side of the House that were altogether without foundation.

Mr. LILLEY said he would not accept of permission by courtesy to proceed; as he did not want any courtesy from honorable members on the other side of the House.

The honorable member then resumed his seat.

GOLD FIELDS MANAGEMENT BILL.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he had a very important Bill to lay on the table of the House, namely, one for the management of the gold mining interests; but, owing to the extraordinary way in which legislation had been carried on during the present session, he thought that there was very little prospect of his being able to bring it forward for some time to come, unless the House would consent to allow the fourth Order of the Day to be taken before the other business on the paper. He trusted that, as the measure was one of very great importance to the mining interests, honorable gentlemen opposite would concur with him as to the desirability of having it laid on the table as soon as possible, in order that it might be circulated in the country among those most interested in it. If they would agree with him, he would move, although he was aware it was somewhat irregular to do so, that the three first Orders of the Day be postponed for the consideration of the fourth, which was for the consideration in committee of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to provide for the Management of the Gold Mining Interests and the Administration of Justice in relation thereto. He considered that the introduction of such a Bill was a duty they owed to the mining interests of the

colony, and as such would justify honorable members on both sides of the House in acceding to his request.

The motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. LILLEY rose to move—

That this House do now adjourn;

and stated that his object in so doing was for the purpose of concluding the remarks he was addressing to the House when he was interrupted. The elections having all been over, the House could have been called together at a much earlier period than it was, but he presumed that the Government, actuated by some petty motive, chose that as the House had been adjourned according to the threat of the honorable the Premier till the 7th November, the new Parliament should not be called together until that day. Therefore, he concluded, that if there was any difficulty now in despatching the business of the House the fault lay with the Government. Owing to the late period of the year at which the Parliament was summoned there had been no time to discuss any question of reform, and, what was more, the Government had distinctly refused to give the country that measure of reform which it required.

Cries of "No, no," from the Treasury benches.

Mr. LILLEY would repeat that they had distinctly refused to do so, and had entered upon a course of conduct wholly unjustifiable and unparliamentary—unparliamentary, in holding within their own majority a parliament of itself—in preparing measures and Bills affecting the representation of the colony, and then bringing them forward in such a way as to be equivalent to a mere direction to honorable members on his side of the House to pass them without discussion or amendment. "Now or never was the time," observed the honorable the Minister for Lands. Now or never was the time certainly for the honorable members of the Opposition to defend the just rights of the people; and now or never was the time for honorable members opposite to fasten on the people of the colony the domination of the Crown tenants.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That remark was used in reference to your own debate.

Mr. LILLEY: Exactly; but he understood the honorable member to mean that now or never was the time for honorable members opposite to pass a measure that would give them still greater power.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No. What he meant was, that as the honorable members opposite had succeeded in passing a measure by which the two-thirds clause was taken out of the Constitution Act, now or never was the time to pass a measure of reform; and the Government had offered a measure of reform, and a very large measure indeed.

Mr. LILLEY: So far as that measure of reform went, they had already discussed it, and proved that so far from its being a large measure of reform, it was absolutely worse than a delusion; it was, in fact, a barefaced attempt to defraud the people of the colony of their rights. That at least was the feeling of honorable members on his side of the House, and that was the feeling of the majority of the country outside. They felt that it was not a measure of reform—that it was not a real increase of representation. He might say that nothing had gone more to prove than the speeches of some honorable gentlemen opposite, that it never was the intention of the Government to give fair representation to the people of the country. Their views were founded on their own interests, and that was proved by their speeches; and no one, on hearing or reading the debates, could come to any other conclusion than that it was the intention of the honorable members opposite to secure that interest only to which, with one or two exceptions, they all belonged. He believed that the honorable member, Mr. Johnston, and the honorable the Minister for Lands were the only real exceptions, as, directly or indirectly, all the honorable gentlemen opposite belonged to the one class, or were mixed up with that class. Now, he would ask, knowing as honorable members did know the principle that persons having contracts with the Crown were not permitted to sit in that House, whether it was not contrary to that principle, and one of the greatest anomalies, that the Crown tenants—that those honorable gentlemen who formed the present majority—should be in that House to legislate for themselves, and for their own interests? Their conduct in sitting in that House and legislating for themselves, was opposed to the spirit of the constitution, and was wholly unparliamentary. Almost every session, since the establishment of representative institutions in the colony, had seen some legislation for the advantage of that squatting class—of the Crown tenants; and he maintained that it was a ridiculous anomaly, if not absolutely dangerous to the public interests, to see those gentlemen have the control of the public lands, and thus place them in the position of being both landlords and tenants at the same time. He considered that such a state of things was monstrous, and, if honorable members opposite were not those Crown tenants themselves, they would at once perceive the anomaly of their position. It was not at all consistent with the true meaning of a representative position in that House; and, therefore, the sooner it terminated, the better for the interest, prospects, and progress of the colony. One thing was certain, that the House ought not to increase the power of the Crown tenants, and ought not to give them further means of getting the lands of the colony in their power, which honorable members opposite had shewn a

strong resolution to do. Honorable members on his side of the House could not disguise from themselves the fact, that the honorable gentlemen opposite, who were interested in the duration of the ten years leases, were very unwilling to surrender a single inch of their holdings, and they had evidently resolved not to do so, which in itself was contrary to the spirit and intention, and even the very letter, of the Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868, which provided that they should only hold them on the distinct condition that the lands should be resumed, when required, for agricultural settlement. But now, on the Darling Downs, they had been told that there was no land left for agricultural settlement, as it had all been manipulated by the honorable gentlemen opposite, or their friends. He knew that there was a very strong interest in the minds of honorable members opposite in resisting the passing of certain measures, during the present session, which would deal with the land question—that there had been a strong feeling, on their part, against the passing of a Bill to resume certain lands for the purposes of settlement—that there was a strong opposition on their part to the passing of a Dummies Inquiry Bill, a measure certainly in which some of their friends were deeply interested; and to such an extent, that they had just reason to fear the passing of such a measure. It could be easily understood that those honorable gentlemen were exceedingly anxious to secure all they could of the public lands. They had been told also by the Government that there was no prospect of the obnoxious features of the Representation Bill being struck out, and that the Opposition, in availing themselves of the forms of the House to resist the passing of that Bill in its present obnoxious form, were factiously obstructing the business of the House and the country. Then they had been told that, by the course they were pursuing, they were seriously endangering the credit of the colony; but he could not see any such danger. It would be plain to the creditors of the colony that it was not from any unwillingness on the part of honorable members on his side of the House to discharge the liabilities of the colony to the last farthing, but that they, the representatives of the majority of the people, had delayed the public business of the country for the purpose of securing their just demand for representation; and that so soon as those rights were secured, every farthing would be paid. The public creditor would have no fear of men who were fighting for their freedom—for their just rights—becoming defaulters. He ventured to say that, unless the Government knew their business very badly indeed—unless they had managed the finances of the country very badly—they would be able to meet the demand of £100,000 at the end of the year. Moreover, he would ask, whether it was to be believed that the

credit of the colony would be in any way affected by the non-payment of that sum on the very day on which it was due? It was absurd; and, for his part, he had no fear of that bugbear which had been raised—the jeopardising the credit of the colony. He believed that there would be no anxiety at all on the part of the public creditor about the payment of the money, as they knew that the people of Queensland were not in any way desirous of repudiating the payment of their debts, but, at the same time, that they had no idea of surrendering their just rights of representation; and the moment honorable gentlemen opposite conceded those rights, and gave that fair representation which the people required, that moment the public creditor would be satisfied. It would have been well had any disposition been shewn by the Government to yield on the question of representation; but he was quite satisfied that there was none. There was not the least intention on the part of the Government to give the people what they wanted—certainly there was none on the part of the honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, who stated, when the question was put to him, that he was not called upon to give any answer. The course pursued by the Government, since, in trying by mere physical force to coerce the Opposition to pass their Representation Bill, and to give them the public money before they secured their just rights, shewed that there was no intention on their part to do justice, but a determination on their part not to concede what honorable members on his side of the House had a right to expect, and what were the rights of the community. Now, whose duty was it to give way if the credit of the colony was in danger?—which he did not believe—for there could not be the slightest danger when the cause of the delay was so well known. But, if the credit of the colony was in danger, it was the duty of the Government to give way, as by so doing they had the means of removing the danger. If the colony was in danger, why refuse the concession of their just rights to the people? But if it was held by honorable gentlemen opposite, that the Opposition should give up their just rights in order that the credit of the colony should be preserved, he thought the sooner such credit perished, the better. What, he would ask, was the use of the credit of the colony being maintained, if justice was refused to the people? If administration and not legislation was, according to the honorable the Premier, all that was required—what reason had the Government to complain? But it was the character of the honorable gentlemen opposite which was at stake, and not the credit of the colony—if they remained blindly obstinate in the course they were pursuing—and if they made up their minds by force to withhold from the public that to which they had a just right, the consequences would be upon

them. If there had been such peril to the colony, such danger to its credit, how was it that no mention was made in the Vice-regal Speech of the 7th November, of the necessity of making provision for that £100,000? Why were the House not told, among the money matters in the Speech, that they would be required to provide for that £100,000 before the end of the year? It was a mere bugbear raised by the honorable the Treasurer, and about which there was no danger to the credit of the colony. But there was danger, if the Representation Bill was passed, of having a squatting Government for years, as that Bill, no matter what had been said to the contrary, was purely in the interests of the squatting class. He did not think that it was to the interest of the squatting class that they should have such a strong hold on a government. On the contrary, he believed that it kept up a spirit of irritation in the colony, and a feeling of suspicion, of jealousy and distrust, whether justly or unjustly, which was in every way inimical to that class, and certainly was not beneficial to any class of the community whatever. That was much to be deplored, but it was inevitable at the present time, as the people would suspect any party in power when the possessors of that power belonged to one class only. With regard to lawyers, about whom something had been said by his honorable friend, the member for North Brisbane, Dr. O'Doherty, he would point out that there had been no revolution or reform that had been accomplished in England which had not been carried out by lawyers. Take Lord Somers, for instance, during the reign of William; and the revolution in the time of Charles the First, where there was Pym and others—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Cromwell was not a lawyer.

MR. LILLEY: No; he was a brewer, not a lawyer; but still all the great reforms were brought about by lawyers. They did not find any shepherd kings among the people who were the reformers; still he would not say that there might not yet be found a Cromwell in the remote squatting districts. He maintained, however, that lawyers had always had a large share in the foundation of all our parliamentary liberties. He would ask the honorable member for North Brisbane to look at the list of patriots in his own country. Why, the roll was filled with lawyers—with such men as Grattan, O'Connell, and Curran. Then, again, let them take America, or France, or any other country under heaven, and they would find the lawyers in the front of the fight of reform. Why, in America, they were not contented with fighting the battle in the Senate, but took to the field and became commanders; in fact they were to be found wherever there was any fighting to be done. No; lawyers were entitled to credit as reformers, although, no doubt, there had been many bad ones;

there had been bad and unjust judges, which were great evils; but throughout the whole world lawyers, as a rule, were entitled to the respect of the world. Notwithstanding that, however, he would not like to see nineteen lawyers sitting opposite, as then, if there were twelve or thirteen squatters sitting opposite to them, they would be fleeced, shorn, skinned, and sold. Now, those very honorable gentlemen who sat opposite to him had very strong temptations, and a very great personal interest in their connection with the public lands—temptations to which they should not be subjected. He maintained that such a state of things should not be, and that a pressure should not be brought to bear upon honorable members of the Opposition to make them pass a Representation Bill which would be likely to strengthen that state of things, and perpetuate the present position of affairs in the colony, which he considered the measure brought forward by the Government would have the effect of doing. He might say that the people outside felt that. It was not what they desired; and unless there were eliminated from that measure the obnoxious features which had over and over again been pointed out, he feared there could be no hope of any public business being carried on during the present year. He was perfectly satisfied from what had fallen from honorable members opposite that there was no intention on the part of the Government to yield, and it was impossible that there could be any yielding on his side of the House, however anxious they might be to see the question of representation settled, and the business of the country proceeded with. If there had been any desire shewn by the Government to meet his side of the House, he was sure that not only he, but honorable gentlemen sitting with him, would have been glad to do all in their power to assist the Government in passing a measure which would be for the benefit of the whole colony. He would conclude by moving the adjournment of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that although the manner in which the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had commenced his address was decidedly one beyond the rules of that House, still, as he had before stated, honorable members on his side of the House were quite willing to debate the question under almost any circumstances after the way in which the time of the House had been wasted away by the tom-fooleries which had been practised by honorable gentlemen opposite for the last fortnight. He might say that it was quite refreshing to him, after listening to all that nonsense, to hear the common sense they had just heard; for small, although it was in quantity, it was quite refreshing in comparison with what they had recently heard from the honorable member opposite. As the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had now put forward his reasons for obstructing the public business of the country, he (Mr.

Palmer) would endeavor to reply to the arguments of that honorable gentleman. He had stated when introducing the Bill for additional representation, that he would always be happy to meet honorable members opposite on argument; but, as he had then foretold, there had been no argument, but only a trifling away of the time of the House and the country, when the business of the country should have been going on. They had been told by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley that the Standing Orders of the House were their weapons of defence; but he (Mr. Palmer) maintained that any three honorable members on his side of the House could stop the business of the country just as well as the Opposition had done. Any three members who determined that the public business of the country should not be proceeded with, could stop all legislation so long as their physical capacity would endure. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley had quoted from some book he got hold of, and which he said was written by Fox. Now, he believed from that, that it might reasonably be supposed that it was the great Fox, of England, who was referred to, and not some lesser light who had not been heard of out of his own parish—some Fox not known out of his own hole,—and the honorable member read out of that book an example of how private business was stopped by five determined members of the English House. Now, he (Mr. Palmer) would say that any three members could stop all business of that House, if they were so disposed, so long as the present Standing Orders existed; but it might be a question whether a majority of that House, or a majority of the country, would much longer allow such Standing Orders to exist—whether they would allow the whole business of the colony to be interrupted by three or four honorable members—when the House had in its own hands the power to dispense with or so alter those Standing Orders as to put it out of the power of a few honorable members opposite to do as they had done during the present session, and all through last session, namely, stop all business being transacted. The use of the Standing Orders was a very good thing, and no honorable member on his side of the House objected to the proper use of them, but they did object to the abuse of them; and he maintained that the whole tendency of the arguments of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley went to shew that the use of the Standing Orders was to prove the right of a minority to govern the colony. That was in fact the whole tenor of the honorable member's speech. The constitution was to go for nothing, and a minority was to govern the country; but if that were so, then, he submitted, there would be an end to constitutional government. The whole tendency of the constitution was, that the Government should be carried on by majorities of the House; and if the Standing Orders

were to be made use of for the purpose of enabling a minority—and a small minority—to conduct the business of that House—and such was the substance of the argument of the honorable member—the sooner they were done away with the better; and he might say that it would probably come to that if the present system of obstruction was continued much longer. They had been told the policy of the Opposition—one of the objects of which was to encourage a large stream of European immigration. Now, in reference to that, he would say that if the present course pursued by the Opposition was the way to encourage immigration, it was a most extraordinary way. He had informed honorable members opposite, on the last occasion on which he spoke on that subject, that the vote for immigration purposes was nearly expended; that, in fact, the next two ships would absorb the balance of the vote of, he thought, £35,000 appropriated for immigration; and he thought honorable members would agree with him that a better system could not be devised for checking immigration on a large scale, than the course pursued by the Opposition of stopping supply. That was the policy put forward by honorable gentlemen opposite to carry on a large stream of immigration. The Government had carried on a large system of immigration, and now they were told by a minority of that House that they would not be allowed the money to pay for those who were now on their way to the colony. Then, again, honorable members on his side of the House had been accused of encouraging Polynesian immigration. That he entirely denied. He denied that Polynesian immigration formed any part of the policy of his side of the House. No one knew better than the honorable member for Fortitude Valley the purposes for which the Polynesian Laborers Act was introduced into that House; and no one knew better than that honorable member that that Act had done a great deal of good since it had been passed. That Act was not intended to encourage Polynesian immigration, but to check the abuses which were already in existence, and to give the protection of British law to those men when they landed in the colony. So far as he could ascertain, it had fully and entirely carried out that intention, as there had never been a single instance brought forward, to his knowledge, where Polynesians had been ill-treated in the colony; and as there were so many of them in the colony, if there had been any such ill-treatment, no doubt cases would have been brought forward. There had not been any cases of cruelty or kidnapping, as far as the statements of the Polynesians themselves were concerned. He had been present when many of them were examined by the Immigration Agent, and he could say that he had never heard of a single case where an islander stated that he had been induced to leave his home to come to

the colony under false and fraudulent pretences. That, however, had nothing to do with the taunt thrown out against honorable members on his side of the House, that they had encouraged Polynesian immigration as a matter of policy. They had not encouraged it—but where they had had anything to do with Polynesians, and he himself had employed them, they had to import them at their own cost. The importation of Polynesians had not cost the country one penny, although he was sorry to say that owing to the late prosecution for kidnapping there would be some expenses to pay. Still, even amongst those men, for the kidnapping of whom the prosecution against the captain of the vessel was instituted, not one could be found to say that he was taken from the islands against his will. They had been questioned over and over again, and not one of them would say that he had been brought against his will. But that had, after all, nothing to do with the Government. The Polynesians were imported at the expense and risk of private individuals, and without any interference on the part of the Government beyond preventing the men being imposed on as they were before the passing of the Act; in that respect the Act had been successful. Another point of the policy of the Opposition, as put forth by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, was the opening up of the Crown lands. The Government had been accused of having no intention to open up the lands, but honorable members opposite had been told over and over again that it was the intention of the Government to introduce a measure for the very purpose of opening up the lands. But the same remark he had made in regard to immigration would again apply. How were they to put any Bill on the table, or how carry on any business, if the present system of obstruction was carried on? Honorable gentlemen opposite had been told that a measure was actually in print for the purpose of dealing with the land question; but what was the use of placing Bills on the table which would neither be read or listened to, when the whole time of the House was taken up, as it was last week, by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, in reading an Act of Parliament—the Companies (Trading) Act? He had never before known or heard of the leader of an Opposition party talking against time; but the honorable member for Fortitude Valley did not even talk against time, for he could not, he had to read; he was so worn out that he was past speaking, and had to take to reading, and worse reading he (Mr. Palmer) certainly never heard. It was almost impossible to hear what he said on his side of the House; in fact, the honorable member seemed perfectly overcome, and he really felt for him. Again, another charge of the Opposition against the Government was that of not legislating, although, at the same time, they obstructed and prevented them from

doing so in every way. That was the only policy they appeared to have.

Mr. LILLEY: Oh no, not at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, it appeared like it. Again, reference had been made to the adjournment of the House last session; but the honorable member quite forgot to go back and state the reasons which led to that adjournment. The reason for that adjournment was because the Opposition were pursuing the same course of obstructing the public business as they were now adopting, and they then boasted that they would keep the Government there until Christmas, unless they were allowed to have the government of the country. It was not because the country had not been properly governed, not because the Additional Members Bill was not sufficient for the wants of the colony—not because the Elections Bill was not necessary—it was not on account of any of those things that the course of obstruction had been pursued, but because honorable members opposite could not carry those measures themselves—because they could not get the seats of the Government on the Treasury benches, and carry those measures. Now, he had no hesitation in saying that if the honorable gentlemen opposite were in power, they would endeavor to do so, with the assistance of other honorable members; and if they did get on to the Treasury benches they would find, as they had found before, that when measures for the good of the country were brought forward by them, instead of meeting with obstructions of every kind, they would have had the assistance of honorable members who were now on the Government benches, in passing them. There was not, he could safely say, an instance on record in which, when his party had been on the Opposition benches, they had ever offered a factious opposition to the Government of the day, and he believed that he had himself never been counted in a division against them more than twice. He considered, therefore, that for a small minority to put themselves in the position honorable members opposite had done, was a most extraordinary course to pursue. It shewed very clearly to the country that it was not for the good of the country that they were really working, but to obtain seats on the Treasury benches. Now, allusion had been made to the last elections, and the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had stated that they were conducted in a most disgraceful manner, and he (Mr. Palmer) believed from some affidavits which he had read last week, that they had really been conducted most disgracefully. He had read of an extraordinary affidavit having been made by a person who admitted that he was paid for procuring votes at the last West Moreton election, and also for the personation of votes at the same election. Some very extraordinary revelations appeared when reading some of the proceedings of the Supreme Court, and, although he noticed that the *Courier* newspaper, with its usual fairness, had entirely

omitted one affidavit, he had been informed that it stated that a certain party had been expressly retained by the great liberal party to procure votes for the West Moreton election.

Mr. LILLEY: That is not true.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The honorable member said that the proceedings had been most disgraceful, and no doubt they were, for personation under all circumstances was disgraceful. Then there was also a case in the police court the other day, in which a man was charged with personation, and it struck him with awe on reading the case, that if the man did not commit personation, then the honorable member, Mr. Edmonstone, must have committed it. Either the man who was charged with the offence of personation at the police court, or the honorable member for North Brisbane must have been a personator; that was how the case appeared to him, for, although he could not suspect the honorable member for one moment, it must have been one or the other. Now, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had, as was usual with him, professed to shew a great deal more than he did shew. He said he would shew that bribes had been offered by members of the Government—

Mr. LILLEY: I said they would be found on the Estimates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, the honorable member sat down without shewing where those bribes were, and he certainly would like to have them pointed out. The general and sweeping assertions of the honorable member, that bribery had been committed, went for very little; but, if the honorable gentleman would point out one, two, or even twenty instances, they would be met, and no doubt the charges would be disproved. As it was, a general sweeping charge such as that made could only be denied and was worth nothing. Another charge made by the honorable member was that polling places had been altered to suit the convenience of the Government. That he denied *in toto*. That alterations were made, there was no doubt, but he would defy the honorable member to prove that they were made to suit the Government. Those which had been made, were made as much for the convenience of honorable members opposite as for the honorable members on his side of the House.

Mr. LILLEY: Look at the *Gazette*.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Would the honorable member point them out in the *Gazette*? He defied the honorable member to point them out. Very few were made, and those only to suit the convenience of electors. With regard to the Additional Members Bill, he would repeat what he had before stated—that it would suit the country very well indeed; but if it suited the people ever so well—and he believed that the majority of the people of the colony were satisfied with it—if it suited the people ever

so well, so long as honorable members on the other side of the House supposed that it would not increase their chance of getting into office, so long would they oppose it. He believed, however, that so far from the Bill preventing honorable members from getting into office, the addition of eleven members to that House would alter the balance of power even with the majority the Government now had, and that the Opposition, by rejecting the Bill, were throwing away their chances of going to the Treasury benches. Some honorable gentlemen on his side of the House had actually pointed out that the Bill was too liberal, and that by it the Government were throwing the preponderance of the representation of the colony into the towns—and he believed that they were quite correct. They were giving that measure hand in hand with the Electoral Bill, which gave manhood suffrage, and, by so doing, they were actually out liberaling the liberals. He would repeat that if the Government studied their own interests, and the likelihood of their remaining in power for years, they would allow things to remain as they were. That it would be much easier to get on with a House composed of thirty-two members than it would be with one of forty-three, must be patent to every honorable member; and he was perfectly satisfied that if the Bill was passed, it would, as he had before observed, entirely alter the balance of power in that House for some time to come. He did not believe, however, that, if the Opposition did get back to office, that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley would go back as leader. He believed that there were several honorable members on the opposite side of the House who would push the honorable member out if they got into power, and that whilst the honorable member thought he was leading them, he was being driven. There were some honorable members on the other side who were more pushing than the honorable member was, and more energetic, and he firmly believed that that honorable member would not occupy the position he expected to occupy.

Mr. LILLEY: I am not alarmed, I can always hold my own.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The honorable member had forgotten to say anything about the Elections Bill, as well as the Additional Members Bill. Now, the Government had been taxed with not wishing to carry that Bill into law, and with not wishing to alter the representation of the colony at all. But, looking at the circumstance that last session the Government introduced an Elections Bill with the principle of manhood suffrage, under a few restrictions, and that during the present session they had brought forward the Additional Members Bill at the earliest possible opportunity after the tables were completed, he thought he might safely say that the argument on that point had failed. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley, who

he believed had frequently admitted on several occasions that he was no financier, looked very calmly on the question of maintaining the public credit.

Mr. LILLEY: No.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, he did not think the honorable member really was a financier, and he had told the House that afternoon that he looked very lightly indeed on the matter of £100,000 worth of Treasury bills falling due at the end of the year. The honorable member had told the House that the public creditor, when he considered the high motives which influenced the members of the Opposition in refusing to go on with the business of the country, would feel perfectly safe that his money would be paid. But, he (Mr. Palmer) would tell the honorable member that the public creditor did not care twopence about such matters; all he cared about was getting his money when it was due, and the credit of the colony was not to be trifled with in the same way as a petty-fogging tradesman's bill, which might be overdue for weeks, and who, when the interest was paid upon it, said nothing more. They were bound to pay that sum of £100,000 for Treasury bills on the very day it became due; and if it was not paid then, he maintained that the credit of the colony would be gone, and gone for a very long time. Looking at it in another way, and supposing the argument of the honorable member was right—that he was standing out on the principle that grievances should be redressed before going into supply—he (Mr. Palmer) still contended that they were bound first to study the credit of the colony, and that it was their duty before the end of the week to pass such measures as would enable the Government to meet the liabilities of the colony. The mere fact of allowing the Government to pass a Treasury Bills Bill, would in no way prevent honorable members opposite from refusing to go into supply until grievances were redressed. But the public creditor must be secured, and the public faith of the colony must be kept, and the Opposition could do that without giving up one tittle of their right to refuse supply. It would be very easy to discuss the whole question on the motion for going into supply; and in the meantime they could pass the Bill, which would enable the Government to redeem the credit of the colony. He maintained that it was the duty of honorable members opposite to do that—it was their duty to throw aside all party spirit in such a matter, and enable the Government to meet the demand made upon them; and that could be done without, as he had already observed, in any way impairing their right to refuse supply. As to that question—the question of refusing supply—that was another matter altogether, and they could do battle on it when the proper time arrived. He would remind honorable members, however, that it was a very grave responsibility for any party in the House to refuse supply; and he did

not think that many honorable members opposite really understood what would be the consequences of such a course. He was sure that outside it could not be known or conceived what downright misery would arise to hundreds and thousands of people in the colony by the stopping of supply. It was not a question of keeping one Government out and another going in, but he looked to the consequences of such a course. It was that, with the exception of the money to be expended in the loan votes, and the money in the schedules for the salary of the Governor, the Judges, and the Ministers, with which the House had nothing to do, no money could be paid unless voted by the House. He knew that instances had occurred where a Governor had been asked to sign warrants for the payment of money without any authority from Parliament; and he believed that, in Victoria, money was obtained from banks in order to carry on the Government; but he believed also that both of those courses were wrong, and that if His Excellency would sign warrants, he (the Colonial Secretary) would be the last man in the country to ask him to do so. The result of refusing supply would be felt by every individual in the public service, and the roll was pretty large in the colony, and a great many interests depended upon it. Policemen, clerks, and every officer in the service, warders in the gaols and in the different asylums—none would be paid unless they chose to give the Government credit for their salaries; and the effect of that would be that the civil servants would be thrown into the hands of discount houses; and he believed that a great deal of speculation was already springing up in certain discount houses in the city; at any rate, he had heard rumors to that effect. Thus, then, if honorable members would only consider the inevitable distress and almost certain ruin which would fall upon men and unoffending women alike, by pursuing their present course, he thought they would pause, and very carefully weigh the whole matter, before driving the country into such a state. They had been told that if such a thing did happen, the onus would be upon the Government, because they would not concede. Concede what, he would ask?

Mr. ATKIN : Justice.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : Justice. Why, they had had it. The Government were quite willing to concede it; they had thrown it at honorable members opposite, and they would not take it. No, the concession the honorable members wanted was the Treasury benches. All they desired was that the Government should say that they were heartily tired of their position, and that honorable members opposite should be allowed to take their places. They wanted the Government to give up the whole principle of the Bill. They wanted them to give up the principle of redistribution; but though he was not going to do that, he was, as he

had said before, quite prepared to meet honorable members in committee, and give and take. He was not wedded to all the boundaries of the electorates, but it was very clear from what had fallen from the honorable member for Fortitude Valley that they wanted to take all and give nothing. Honorable members on his side of the House were quite willing to alter the boundaries, to discuss the matter in an amicable spirit, and listen to argument; but if the honorable members opposite expected that they would give up the whole principle of redistribution, they expected the whole power to be given into the hands of a minority, who would put in members wherever they thought they could get supporters to assist them in getting the government of the colony. All they wanted was to go on to the Treasury benches. He had never heard of such a thing before in the history of constitutional government. He would again say that the Government were quite willing to meet the honorable gentlemen opposite, and, what was more, he thought those honorable gentlemen were very much mistaken, if they refused to accept that proposition, as he believed it would be for their benefit even if they accepted the Bill as it stood. He had not the slightest doubt that, if it was passed, the balance of power would be altered; and he believed now, as he had always, that the people of the colony must be fully represented, and no hope of clinging to power, of which he was not very desirous, would induce him to avoid the question of extending the representation of the people of the colony. He maintained that, when the Government, with a large majority at their back, came forward with such a liberal measure as the present Bill was, that it ought to have been received at once. He had good reason to believe that it had given great satisfaction to the majority of the people of the country. He believed that, in East Moreton, it had given great satisfaction, as the people of the Logan and Caboolture did not wish any longer to be represented by members who were returned by the electors of Brisbane. He also believed that the electors of Wide Bay and the proposed district of Mulgrave had no wish to be represented by the honorable member who was returned by the mining interest of Gympie. That was not representation, but swamping a district by giving all the representation to one class. He had also reason to believe that the people of Normanby and Bowen had no wish to be represented by the honorable gentleman who was virtually sent into that House by the miners of the Kennedy; and, from communications he had received, he believed that the Bill had given universal satisfaction throughout the country, and that the discontent was confined to the honorable members on the opposite side of the House, and that, even in the districts represented by them, a great majority were in favor of the Bill. He believed that, when representation was spread

over the country more, that when there was a House of forty-three members, it would be a much better House than any House that had yet been elected in this colony, and that more real justice would be done by spreading the representation all over the colony, in the manner proposed by the Bill, than by giving the whole of the representation to Brisbane, Rockhampton, and a few other towns in the colony.

Mr. LILLEY: Explain the principle of the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had already explained the principle of the Bill, which was, that they did not interfere with existing representation of electorates—they did not meddle with some districts which did not require altering, as South Brisbane and West Moreton, for instance. South Brisbane was only entitled to three-tenths of a member, but they left it as it stood; and West Moreton was not interfered with because no additional representation was given; but they interfered with the Maranoa by cutting it up into separate districts.

Mr. STEPHENS: What about Western Downs?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They did not alter that at all—they had not altered the boundaries of it in any way. They had altered the district of the Burnett, and for this reason—that there were ninety-five inhabitants in one portion of the district, big and little, where the boundary was an artificial line; and it was found that some of those individuals, the boundary line being so very uncertain, had their names actually on two rolls. To prevent that they had altered the electorate to its natural boundaries. The Peak Downs was cut up into two electorates because the interests of different parts of the present electorate were different, and the alteration was proposed with the view of giving representation to the separate districts. The Bill was thorough throughout, and he thought that, if honorable members opposite saw their own interests nearly as clearly as he did, they would pass it, and would leave it to a full House to make a thorough redistribution of the electorates of the colony. That was a matter for a full House, and not for a House of thirty-two members.—

Mr. STEPHENS: Why have any redistribution now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Because it was necessary to the interests of the colony. Would honorable members suppose for one minute that, if he had brought in a Bill, such as he introduced two sessions ago, making all new electorates, that it would pass the House? Why, they knew it would not, as he did not suppose that honorable members would vote themselves out of their seats. He thought it was his duty to bring in a Bill that there was some possibility of getting passed, and he trusted honorable members opposite would consider it reasonable, and that they would give it their atten-

tion, and no longer continue the present course of factious opposition.

Mr. LILLEY wished to make a short explanation, in reference to the statement of the honorable the Premier that a person was retained by a liberal candidate to procure votes at the West Moreton election. Now, that statement was not correct. He was counsel in the case, and he could assure the honorable member that there was no affidavit or any statement made of the kind.

Mr. KING said that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, in moving the adjournment of the House, wished to lay clearly before the country the reasons why the Opposition had felt compelled to adopt the course they had lately pursued, and to call the attention of honorable members to the proceedings of the courts for the revision of the electoral rolls for the ensuing year. The Colonial Secretary appeared to imagine that the conciliatory language of the leader of the Opposition was a sign of weakness—that it was only a prelude to surrender. The honorable gentleman was mistaken. There was no intention on the part of the Opposition to recede from their position; and, if there had been any such intention entertained by them, the speech of the Premier would effectually prevent its being carried out. Nothing was more calculated to exasperate that party than the manner of the honorable gentleman in answering the speech of the leader of the Opposition. It was never their intention to depart from the line they had hitherto followed. It had been pointed out that they held different opinions from the Government on the questions of immigration, the administration of the public lands, and the construction of public works, and that the Ministerial policy would not satisfy them. In point of fact, the difference between the two sides of the House on those questions would, under any other circumstances, become very serious; but, at the present time, no notice was taken of it, the Opposition being prepared to postpone any action on those questions, and any fresh legislation on any subjects whatever, until the people of Queensland were properly represented in the Legislative Assembly. He (Mr. King) had no doubt that when the people were properly represented in the House their representatives would point out to the Government how much advantage would follow to the country from the adoption of the policy of the Opposition rather than from the policy of the Government. The policy of the Government and their adherents was to lock up the lands in the hands of a few possessors, to encourage black immigration instead of white—to establish in this colony, a state of things similar to what had prevailed in the Southern States of America—to have a few insolent proprietors, with a legion of slaves, and a small population of mean whites. The Opposition would be able to shew that the cost of the construction of public works would be less to the colony than the continuance of the gross

jobbery and corruption entailed at the present time to keep the Ministry in power. Last session the Government gave as a reason why the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane should not be constructed, that the colony could not afford to pay the interest on the outlay; yet he found, on reference to the Estimates of Expenditure for 1872, that the increase proposed by the Government in three departments would be sufficient to pay that interest more than three times over. Not only was the expenditure to be increased under the Estimates-in-Chief, but the Supplementary Estimates for this year provided for a very large additional outlay, solely for the purpose of bribery. As the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had distinctly laid down, the Opposition did not insist upon enforcing their own policy at the present time; they only demanded that the people should be represented in the House; and, thereafter, they would abide by the verdict of the majority of the people's representatives. The Colonial Secretary clearly explained the policy of the Government when he said that the party he headed could not consent to an Additional Members Bill which would turn the minority into a majority. But the present minority in the House represented 70,000 of the people of the colony, and the majority represented only 48,000. The Colonial Secretary would agree to pass a Bill which would keep the representatives of the majority of the people in the minority in the House;—that was the plain English of what he had said.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Mr. KING: The honorable gentleman had given as an excuse for not redistributing the electorate of West Moreton, that no Government could introduce a Bill that would pass with such a provision.

Mr. CRIBB: He did not say so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He did not.

Mr. KING: He ventured to say that when a Minister, the leader of a party, brought in a Bill to deal with the representation of the country, the first thing that Minister ought to do was to satisfy himself that it was a just measure; and that he should not allow the exigencies of party to tempt him to make it otherwise. Whether the Colonial Secretary regarded his Electoral Districts Bill as a just one or not, or whether honorable members on the Government side of the House who expected to benefit from it thought it was the most desirable one, he (Mr. King) maintained that its effect would be to silence the voice of the people for ever in the Assembly, to stifle free discussion, and to enable those honorable members, in the solitude of their stations, to decide what the legislation of the colony should be in future. The Colonial Secretary had said that a full House would be required to deal with the question of the redistribution of seats—and he agreed with the honorable gentleman. If a full House was necessary to redistribute the

seats for West Moreton and Ipswich, it was equally necessary to redistribute the seats for East Moreton and Wide Bay. The honorable gentleman had said that there were some people in East Moreton and Wide Bay who were in favor of the redistribution part of his scheme under the Bill which he had introduced. Well, there was not a community in the world unanimous on any subject; but the honorable gentleman knew well what the strength of his party was in Wide Bay, even when the electoral roll was so cooked—to a degree never before known, by the partisans of the Government—that there were only two hundred and forty electors on the roll for that district, while the population numbered over seven thousand.

The SPEAKER interrupted the honorable member to inform him that he was out of order in referring to a debate that had taken place this session.

Mr. KING said he was replying to what had been said by the Colonial Secretary in this debate.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member was alluding to a debate already closed.

Mr. KING: He had not made any allusion to any debate that had taken place before the speech of the Colonial Secretary, this afternoon, and he was answering that speech. Not a single member or supporter of the Government dared to come forward in the last election for that district; the contest was between two candidates both opposed to the Government, who could not put forward one of their own supporters as a third candidate. In any community there would be some disaffected men who would support an opponent of the sitting member.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Hear, hear.

Mr. KING: If Wide Bay was to be split up into two electorates for the sake of the forty electors who voted for Mr. Palmer, the Ministerial candidate at the last really contested election for that district, how was it that West Moreton had not been divided to suit the minority of six hundred electors who voted there for Mr. O'Sullivan? Referring to Gympie and Maryborough, with their large populations, he asked, why they should have but one member each? He denied, on behalf of the farmers and settlers on the Burnett, that they approved of the Bill; and, if ever they had an opportunity of recording their votes, the Colonial Secretary would find that they disapproved of the subdivision of the district. But, even, if his constituents were in favor of it, upon what principle of justice should 1,300 men of Western Downs be allowed two members, while Gympie, with 1,612, had only one member? How was it that Northern Downs and Dalby, which, taken together, according to the Colonial Secretary's own basis—the adult male population—were entitled to only 1·5 member, were each to have a member; whilst Gympie, entitled to 1·9, was to have only one member—or, only half the representation of the

others, and of what it was entitled to? Under the Bill, 63,000 people would return eighteen members for the Opposition, whilst 24,000 would return seventeen out of the twenty-five members for the Government; and the whole twenty-five would represent only 49,000 people. The colonists of Queensland, as well as the Opposition, were awake to the fact that they were a great deal better off with the present representation than they would be if the Bill passed.

An HONORABLE MEMBER: Hear, hear.

Mr. KING: They could see through a hole in a ladder as well as honorable members on the Ministerial side of the House, who had drawn up the schedules of the Electoral Districts Bill so nicely, to suit themselves. They knew what the motives of those honorable members were, as well as if they had assisted at the Ministerial caucuses. They knew that population was extending, and that if the people got on the electoral rolls, many districts now represented on that side of the House would, after the next election, be represented on the Opposition side. Northern and Western Downs would not much longer be represented by pastoral tenants, if the farmers could secure fair play; nor would Burnett return two squatters when the miners of Mount Perry exercised the franchise; and, if there was any possibility of the mining population getting on the roll, the Colonial Secretary would not get returned for Port Curtis. Under the Bill, small squatting constituencies, with an average population of 1,300 to 1,500, would swamp the country; and there would be no longer any need for honorable members on the Government side of the House to contest any troublesome seats. No member on that side would want to go any more to Maryborough, Port Curtis, or Rockhampton, or other populous electorates of the colony. The Ministry and their supporters would simply go to the outside and corner squatting electorates which they proposed to create, and which, with West Moreton and Ipswich, would return them in a majority to the House. The Government must imagine that the Opposition were very foolish, if they thought there was any chance of the Bill passing. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley had very properly put the issue before the House, that the people demanded additional representation, and that redistribution needed not to be dealt with at present. If three members were to represent Ipswich, why should there not be two for Maryborough? If East Moreton was to be redistributed, why not West Moreton? If Burnett returned two members in a bunch, why not Wide Bay, which immediately adjoined that favored district? The Opposition offered to meet the Government fairly upon the question of additional representation. They proposed that additional members should be granted to those districts which were now unrepresented or inadequately represented in the House; they did not attempt to

lay down any certain line beyond this—that the question of redistribution must be abandoned. When, with the additional members, the House came to allot the representation, the Opposition were prepared to deal fairly with that question. They did not propose to disfranchise any districts which were over-represented now. They did not propose that Mitchell, with its population of 692, returning a member to the House, or Warrego, with 943 inhabitants, returning a member, should be deprived of that representation.

Mr. MOREHEAD: South Brisbane.

Mr. KING: Well, South Brisbane, also, they would allow. They would act liberally, but they expected the Government to meet them liberally, too, and not to insist upon cutting up the colony into small electorates, as was proposed under the Bill. There should be a fair average of representation of the population on both sides of the House, and not all advantage for one side. The Opposition were prepared to meet the Government, if they would take the provisions for redistribution out of the Bill altogether; but if the Government would not do that, there was no question it would be very little use their attempting to proceed with any kind of legislation whatever. The Colonial Secretary had threatened them with the suspension of the Standing Orders. That had been tried once before, and had failed. The Opposition were perfectly prepared to meet the honorable gentleman again, and he was at perfect liberty to try again. They could have a forty-eight hours' debate; and, for the good of the country, they could again "talk against time." The mining population had largely increased and formed a very important part of the community; one-tenth of the whole population of Queensland was engaged in mining;—and, at the present time, the mining interest might be considered the second in the colony. Yet that interest was represented in the Assembly by two members out of thirty-two, a sixteenth of the representation of the colony. Under the Bill, that interest would be represented by two members, in a House of forty-three, or one-twenty-second part of the whole representation of the colony. The Bill was one to provide for the representation of interests! The House had been told, as an apology for the departure from the adult male basis of representation, that the Bill was framed for the representation of interests. Still more, from the speeches of the honorable the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Lands, it was perfectly evident that it was intended that the mining population should not be represented in the House. But the Opposition did not intend to force any policy on the Government, which they had no business to do; they said that, as far as the people of Queensland were unrepresented in the House, they did not recognise in the party in office a Government according to the will of the country. Honor-

able members on the Treasury bench might be a Government, *de facto*, but they were not, *de jure*; and the Opposition declined to recognise as the Government a party who only held the reins of power by stealth, by fraud, by the violation of the law and the constitution. The Colonial Secretary had charged honorable members of the Opposition with seeking the possession of the Government benches, and said that they would be ready to accept the Bill, if they were on the other side of the House. Charges of that kind were very much to be deprecated; they detracted from the dignity of the House; and however low his opinion of the Government, he should like them to have respect for their position as Ministers. Such charges might always be met by the *tu quoque* argument; and the Opposition were entitled, when the leader of the Ministerial party made an accusation such as the House had heard from the Colonial Secretary, to compare his conduct and that of his colleagues with the conduct of those whom he had accused. There were three honorable gentlemen on the Opposition side who had, before now, held Ministerial positions; and, if it was possible for any honorable member to shew that those gentlemen ever attempted to retain office in the way that the present Ministry clung to it, he challenged him to do so. Those honorable gentlemen had resigned the Government on every occasion that they found they were unable to carry on the business of the country;—they had resigned with a majority of one in the House. But what was the conduct of the present Government, who did not seek office; who did not care for power; who, as the Colonial Secretary had said, had not the slightest wish for place—he was actuated solely by a desire to benefit the country, he said, but it was a desire solely to benefit the squatters? Let the House see what the honorable gentleman had done. Last session, he met the House with a majority of one, obtained by the passage of a prominent member of the Opposition to the Government benches, who had never spoken or voted for the Ministry up to the time he went over. With that majority the Ministry attempted to carry on; and it was the only instance in which such an attempt was made in this country, though there were numerous instances in which a Ministry with such a majority had resigned. And, it must be remembered that that majority was all the Premier had in a House elected only ten months before, after a dissolution obtained by himself. The honorable gentleman held on to office for some considerable time under circumstances unparalleled, but he could not advance the public business. In such circumstances, previous Ministries had resigned. He then adjourned the House for five months, in order to suit the convenience of his supporters. Then came another act in the drama. How it was played out, the House did not know. They did not know whether pressure had been

brought to bear by Ministers upon the Acting-Governor, or whether his Excellency had brought pressure to bear upon them; but, unconstitutionally, the Premier got another dissolution. The question upon which the Government went to the country was solely this:—Whether the Palmer Administration should retain office or not? He (Mr. King) had something to say as to the manner in which that appeal to the country was conducted; but before he said anything about it, he wished to read some extracts from a speech made by the honorable member for Maryborough in 1867, when that honorable gentleman brought forward a motion of privilege, in consequence of the interference of the then Postmaster-General in the Warwick election. The honorable gentleman then moved:—

“1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is contrary to the spirit of the constitution, and imperils the due formation of the representative Assembly, when members of the Legislative and Executive Councils take part in electioneering proceedings.

“2. That the conduct of the late Postmaster-General, in addressing the electors at Warwick, during the last election, was improper.

“3. That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded, by address, to His Excellency the Governor.”

In speaking to those resolutions, that honorable member deprecated in the very strongest language that he could use, the interference of Ministers in elections;—and the House knew what strong language he could use! And, they knew too, what means the present Government had used in the recent elections, by promising moneys for public works, and so forth, to influence the returns in their favor. The honorable member had said that

“One of the rights and privileges of the Assembly, of which honorable members should be most jealous, was that elections should be carried on free from Government control.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear.

Mr. KING: Then the honorable member went on to say, in reference to something which had been said by the Postmaster-General:—

“Was that language which a member of the Legislative and Executive Councils—a Government political touter—should use, even when he accepted his degrading position?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What he had objected to, was, a member of the Legislative Council interfering with the election of a member of the Lower House.

Mr. KING: If he had misquoted the honorable gentleman, he was sorry; but there was the speech, occupying the greater part of four pages, 156-159, “Hansard,” vol. v. He was not going to read it all; the honorable member could.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are afraid to do that.

Mr. KING: It was sufficient to say that that honorable gentleman, when not holding office, stigmatised in language peculiar to himself, the conduct of a former Minister; and, yet, that the honorable gentleman's own conduct as a Minister was exactly what he had condemned.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was as a member of the Legislative Council.

Mr. KING: As a member of the Legislative Council and of the Executive Council, both. Now, he found that during the late general election, there was, first of all, a great disturbance of the old polling places—in spite of what the honorable the Colonial Secretary had said. That honorable gentleman had said that he would have appointed polling places on the requisition of Opposition candidates. It was a pity that the Opposition candidates had not been aware of that before; because they were not, during the elections, under that impression. The Colonial Secretary had gone even further than that: after the arrangements had been advertised by the returning officer for Wide Bay, that officer appointed a new polling place at Musket Flat, because the Minister for Works applied for it. Did the Colonial Secretary mean to say that that officer would have appointed a polling place, if he (Mr. King) had applied for it?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He only answered for himself.

Mr. KING: No doubt, the honorable gentleman could tell, or not. But the elections had been tampered with in other ways. Returning officers were removed, and others appointed who were intimately connected with candidates on the Ministerial side.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Where?

Mr. KING: Warwick.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As a matter of personal explanation, he might tell the honorable member that he was utterly wrong. The only returning officers who were removed were officers of the Government. There was always a strong objection to have police magistrates as returning officers; and, whenever he could get any other individuals to act, he was very glad to remove police magistrates and put in other persons to act as returning officers.

Mr. KING: It was the first time he ever heard that the returning officer for Western Downs was a civil servant.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You only mentioned Warwick.

Mr. KING: He found, on turning to the Supplementary Estimates for 1871, that some very large items of expenditure were put down for certain districts. The total amount of those Estimates was £70,700. He might point out the extraordinary increase that had taken place in the Supplementary Estimates for this year over those for previous years. In 1869, the Supplementary Estimates were £43,946 16s. 3d.; in 1870, when there was a general election under the auspices of the present Government, they were £79,454;

and, in 1871, when there had come another general election under the same Ministry, the Supplementary Estimates were £70,700. He also found that the Estimates-in-Chief for next year shewed an increase in the cost of the departments, and that the Civil Service was increasing very largely. In the Colonial Secretary's department there was an increase of £12,000; in the Treasury, £4,500; and in the Post Office, £4,000. He would, by-and-bye, shew for what reason some of those increases were put on the Estimates.

The SPEAKER said he thought the honorable member was acting irregularly in discussing the Estimates.

Mr. KING said the Colonial Secretary had challenged honorable members to shew instances of bribing, by the Government, and he (Mr. King) would shew instances, and would first allude to the honorable gentleman's own election. When the honorable gentleman was canvassing his own constituency for election, he promised a bridge over the Dawson, which was to cost £6,000.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was nothing of the sort: it was promised long before.

Mr. KING: It was never placed on the Estimates before. The honorable gentleman was taxed at Rockhampton, at the time, with making an improper use of his power by promising the bridge to gain votes. What did he say? That the money which was to be expended upon the Dawson Bridge was not a fresh grant—that it was to be taken from the grant for other roads and bridges in the district;—and he quoted the sums—£3,500 from one place, £2,000 from another, and the rest from somewhere else; and he said it would be for the good of the district that the money should be spent in one place instead of being frittered away in small works. Yet, it was found that the sum was placed on the Supplementary Estimates for 1871.

The SPEAKER said he must state again that the honorable member for Wide Bay was out of order in discussing items in the Estimates which would come forward for consideration at the proper time.

Mr. KING said he was not referring to the Estimates, except to illustrate his argument.

Mr. LILEY: It was very important that no limitation should be put upon the debates of the House. He had said to the Colonial Secretary that sums of money had been promised by the Government with a view to influence the elections—in other words, that bribery had been practised; and he had stated that some other honorable member would shew instances. The honorable member for Wide Bay was perfectly in order in using the material in debate that he found in the Estimates. The honorable member was doing nothing connected with supply.

The SPEAKER: If the honorable member discussed items in the Estimates which had been referred to Committee of Supply, he was not in order.

Mr. LILLEY: He was speaking to that very question, and he was questioning the Speaker's ruling; and he had a right to do so; and he would do so. He would not have a limitation put upon his right to debate that was not authorised by the rules of the House. It was quite absurd that an honorable member could not discuss what was brought before the House: the honorable member for Wide Bay was not discussing a vote on the Estimates, or whether money should or should not be voted; he was using what he saw in the Estimates as an illustration of his argument, in answer to the statements of the Colonial Secretary. If the House were to be subject to rulings similar to what the Speaker had condescended to give since he took the chair, there would be no debating anything, not even the conduct of a Minister, if it could by any possibility become a record of the House. He never heard of such a thing before. It would soon become utterly impossible to conduct a debate. He was speaking as much in the interest of honorable members on the Ministerial side as of the Opposition. He could not conceive how a debate could be conducted unless all records, all papers, laid before them could be referred to by way of illustration. There was no discussing as to whether or not a sum of money should be granted, but the fact of its being proposed to be granted was pointed out in support of the argument used by the honorable member for Wide Bay. The expediency of granting or refusing the item was not in question.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was very convenient for the honorable member for Fortitude Valley to protest so long as he occupied the position of leader of the Opposition; but he (the Secretary for Public Works) should like to know if it was ever intended by the Standing Orders, or by any other rule, that the mere liberty of debate which the honorable member now clamored for should be the total cessation of all parliamentary business? It could not be that liberty of debate meant that the House should, night after night, listen to the wordy, windy, senseless orations that they heard from the honorable member for Fortitude Valley and other members of the Opposition. It meant that as members of a deliberative body they should, in accordance with parliamentary government, get into that position in which they would be enabled to pass measures for the good of the country. It was never contemplated that an honorable member should refer to matters that were not brought before the House for discussion—

The SPEAKER: The question raised was, whether the honorable member for Wide Bay had a right to discuss the items of the Estimates, which Estimates had been referred to Committee of Supply.

Mr. LILLEY: No, no. His protest was, that the honorable member was not discussing the items. He had merely pointed out

that such items were on the Estimates, in support of an argument he was using in answer to the Colonial Secretary.

The SPEAKER: It was not competent to discuss them.

Mr. LILLEY: He said the honorable member was at liberty to allude to them—to mention the fact that they were there—as an argument.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He was astonished at the honorable member for Fortitude Valley bandying such words. The Speaker had ruled that the honorable member had no business to refer by anticipation to debates which everyone knew must come on at a future time.

The SPEAKER: The Estimates could only be discussed in Committee of Supply, to whom they had been referred. The House were not supposed to know anything that took place in Committee of Supply, until it was reported to them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There could be no doubt that the Speaker's ruling was admirably constitutional, but it did not suit the digestion of the Opposition. It was a most pitiful thing that honorable members who professed to represent the people, who were constantly talking of being the only representatives of the people in the House, should get up and take exception to the ruling of the Speaker, the first gentleman in the land. The very essence of parliamentary government was that the representatives of the people should recognise the high position of their Speaker, and then obey the majority. He (the Secretary for Works) deprecated such exhibitions as were witnessed in the House by the driven member for Fortitude Valley, who was no leader, now, being bound to obey the members on his own side of the House, for the purpose of bringing parliamentary government into contempt, and defeating every honest constitutional ruling that was given in the House. He did not think the Speaker had given one ruling that had not been taken exception to by honorable members of the Opposition—that had not been sneered at by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, or those who drove him. He should talk no longer of that honorable member as the leader of the Opposition. It would be casting discredit on his constituents who returned him as leader, it would be disparaging the Opposition, to do so. If there was one thing in parliamentary practice that was laid down clearly by "May," it was that no measure of which notice had been given, in the shape of either a Bill or a motion, could be discussed by anticipation on another question brought before the House. And, yet the whole business of the session, if this could be called a session, had been the discussion by anticipation of measures about to be submitted for consideration by the Government. The Bill for the increase of the representation had been discussed over

and over again upon every pretext, and upon every question brought forward. The same words and thoughtless arguments had been put forward by honorable members, time after time, though the second reading of that Bill was passed, and they were not entitled to discuss it except in committee—its next stage.

Mr. ATKIN: Was that the point of order?

The SPEAKER: The honorable member for Maryborough was exceeding the point of order. When a question of order was raised by an honorable member, it was his duty, in the first place, to state wherein the observation he objected to was disorderly; then the Speaker would express his opinion upon the point raised:—

“When the Speaker is thus called upon to interfere upon the point of order, or when he interferes of his own motion, his duty only requires him, in the first instance, to state to the House what the rule of order is, in reference to the matter in question, and to declare, at the same time, whether the member?”—

against whose speech the point was raised—

“is, or is not in order, in the course which he is pursuing or attempting to pursue. * * * * * When the Speaker's opinion is thus pronounced, it is deemed to be acquiesced in, and to make an end of the question, as a matter of course, unless something is done to overrule it.”

If the House should not acquiesce in his ruling, it was the duty of some honorable member to move that the decision of the Speaker be referred to the House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Speaker did give his ruling, and honorable members of the Opposition demurred to it; and he wished to shew that that ruling should be satisfactorily acceded to by the House. Almost every speech on the other side was a departure from the question. There was the lamentable exhibition of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, who had taken up the time of the House, talking to a point of order and reading Acts of Parliament. Members of the Opposition had been told off to speak for so many hours; and they spoke simply to waste time and to shew that there were certain sides to a point of order. He (the Secretary for Works) was not one to make such a spectacle. He trusted that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley would not in future be driven to dispute the Speaker's ruling. It was bad enough to lead such a party as those honorable members on the other side of the House; but it was a miserable spectacle when the so-called leader had to do the bidding of such members. He was now speaking to the point of order, to which he wished to draw the attention of the House. Was there a single question that the honorable member for Wide Bay had touched upon, that ought not more properly—

The SPEAKER: The honorable gentleman was exceeding:—

“All language not addressed to the House in a parliamentary course, must be considered mere noise and disturbance.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He should be glad if honorable members on that side obeyed the Speaker's ruling.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Shew them a good example.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He should be very glad to set a good example, by obeying the Speaker's ruling.

Mr. ATKIN: No one wished to dispute the Speaker's ruling, or to refrain from obeying it, and treating the occupant of the chair with deference. But it was always the way of the honorable the Secretary for Public Works to take exception to what other honorable members did, and to throw down the apple of discord in the House. He must consider what position the House were in. There was a motion for the adjournment of the House before them, anticipating a motion by the honorable the Colonial Treasurer for the suspension of the Standing Orders, to hurry through supply at one sitting; if there ever was an occasion to discuss supply it was now.

The SPEAKER informed honorable members that the motion for the adjournment of the House was a substantive motion in itself. Of course, it was competent for honorable members to introduce any subject for discussion under motion.

Mr. KING said he was a very unfortunate man, as he never got up to speak that there was not a point of order raised to take up two or three hours in the course of his speech. The discussion had not lasted so long on this occasion. He was not discussing the Estimates; he was only alluding to the fact that certain votes were to be proposed in Committee of Supply which bore upon his argument. Estimates were prepared and presented for the purpose of letting honorable members know what was to be proposed in Committee of Supply. He was not discussing the expediency of the vote he had last touched upon; but he said it was a remarkable fact that in looking over the proposed votes of supply he found that, for that very electorate where there had been a sharp contest between the Ministerial and Opposition candidates, the very large sum of £6,000 was proposed for a bridge over the Dawson River.

Mr. FERRETT: The honorable member was alluding to that very vote.

Mr. LILLEY: He might say that the Colonial Secretary had challenged the reference.

The Hon. R. PRING: He rose to this point of order; for, he must confess—

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. FERRETT: That the honorable member was referring to the bridge over the Dawson, which was now on the Estimates.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member had not stated that he was referring to the Estimates; he was referring to the bridge. The House were not supposed to know what was on the Estimates.

Mr. KING said he would not refer again to the Estimates; but he would say that, in every instance where a contest had taken place, the Ministry had made very large promises of aid to the districts, and that attempts were made to carry out those promises. The sum of £850 was to be given for the repair of public buildings at Mitchell, where there was a population of six hundred and eighty;—that was, twenty-five shillings a-head of the population. Promises had been made to influence the electors, and if they were not kept, it was because they had failed in their intended effect. He would give another instance to those already given, which was very suspicious. Honorable members all knew that, during last session, the Secretary for Works, for some purpose or other, cancelled a contract for coke for the railway. It was supposed that there was some political reason for that—the contractors were not supporters of the honorable gentleman. However, a contest took place in the last elections for Ipswich and West Moreton: it was very expedient that all the people should be brought to vote together in the interests of the Ministry! The consequence was, as the House had been informed in answer to a question, this session, that the dispute between the contracting parties was referred to arbitration, and, whether as compensation to the contractor who supplied the coke or not, they found that somewhat about nine hundred pounds was awarded to him. He (Mr. King) must not look at the Estimates, to explain about the item as to costs or otherwise; but it was extraordinary that, just as the election came on, that man got his claim settled. If he had not the shadow of a claim—if he had only influence—he could get his claim satisfied. There was no doubt, as had been remarked by the honorable the Colonial Secretary, that much inconvenience would be occasioned to everyone, and especially to the members of the Civil Service, if the Estimates were not passed; but he hoped that, in consideration of the circumstances of the present time, that inconvenience, which would only be temporary, would be borne with; rather than that they should lose their right to take part in the Government of the colony. It mattered little to honorable members on the Opposition side of the House whether the present Government should be able to carry on or not; but he could say this much, that if they carried on as they had done, it would be found that there were worse troubles in store for the colony than they had experienced hitherto. If there was, for instance, a continuation of the importation of black labor, by which white labor would be reduced to the condition in which it was in some portions of America, it

was not difficult to imagine what the consequences would be. What the Opposition contended for was that a majority of the people had a right to be governed by themselves, and that they should not be governed by the squatters, who were a minority. Now, in pursuing that course, the Opposition were only advocating the observance of constitutional principles—they were only advocating that which was right and just and legal.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: No, no.

Mr. KING: What was the use of the honorable member saying "No, no"? Such a cry amounted to no more than a plea of not guilty. Honorable members on the Opposition side of the House knew well enough what were their rights; and they also knew what was the strength of the party opposed to them. What chance, he would ask, would the present Government have if they were to go to the country on their Redistribution Bill? He ventured to say that not a single populous electorate would be found to vote for their redistribution scheme. But the cry of the squatters was "now or never"; and they knew that if they did not at the present time carry the day against those who represented the majority of the people, they would have no chance of success afterwards. Their cry was "now or never," and the Opposition members in answer to the cry said—Never. If they thought they were to get the Opposition members to register the decisions that were come to by the Government supporters at their caucus meetings, they were very much mistaken. It had been said that they would be placed in a difficulty as to the credit of the colony, on the score of repudiation, if they did not pass the Bill for £100,000; but the public faith was pledged to the investment of more than £100,000 for the credit of the colony—and that was the lives, the liberty, and the interests of the people of the colony; and as to repudiation, what, he would ask, was to be said about the administration of the Land Act of 1868? That Act provided that the squatters should give up portions of their runs whenever they should be required for the purposes of settlement, but the Government refused to carry out that provision of the Act. Now, that was repudiation in the case of those who had been induced to invest their lives, their liberties, and the happiness of their families in the colony. He knew of some subdivisions of runs that were made, and in a few months afterwards fresh subdivisions were made; and the applications that were sent in for lands on the first resumed portions of those runs were refused. Honorable members who had not access to official records, could only pick up information as to some cases of the kind; but, at any rate, it was very well known that a squatter could get his run subdivided so as to suit his own convenience. As to the representation of the people of the colony, let them take as one instance, the state of the roll for the electorate

of the Mitchell. In that district there was a population of 7,308, but on the electoral roll there was only 263 names. Now, twenty-three of the electors were absent, which left only 240 to vote for the representation of a population of 7,308. He also knew that some hundreds of the electors in the Maryborough district were objected to at the last revision court, and that many of them were objected to because they were opponents of the honorable member for Maryborough, and because it was known that if their names were allowed to remain on the roll, the honorable member for Maryborough would not have been again returned for that electorate. In England the revision of the rolls was conducted by an independent barrister, and his decisions were subject to appeal before the Queen's Bench; but here, where the revision courts, in many instances, were packed, the magistrates could do what they liked, and there was no appeal from their decision. Now, they knew that where there was an important struggle in any constituency, many of the electors were objected to. They also knew what was the cause of those objections; and many of the objections made were as to those who were so far distant that they would not be known to the parties themselves, till the time for appeal or representation as to their right to have their names inserted in the roll had passed. Now, the Government would not be acting wisely or prudently if they continued to allow the benches to be packed; and he hoped the honorable the Colonial Secretary would give instructions to the District Court Judges, that they should see there was no packing of the benches for the revision of the electoral rolls. He would not detain the House any longer; but, before sitting down, he wished to assure honorable members on the other side that if they would meet honorable members on the Opposition side of the House, on the question of additional representation without redistribution of electorates, they would be willing to meet them upon fair grounds of argument. If, however, they would not do so, he and other honorable members who sat on the same side of the House with him, were prepared to carry on the debate for forty-eight hours; and he was as well able to stand that as any honorable member opposite. All that the Opposition asked for in the matter of additional representation was that justice should be done; but they would not accept of injustice.

Mr. RAMSAY said he thought it would be better that any discussion in respect to the Additional Members Bill should be deferred until the measure was under consideration in committee, if it should be allowed ever to reach that stage. When the honorable member for the Wide Bay district rose to address the House, he (Mr. Ramsay) was in hopes that he would have confined himself to the discussion of matters strictly referring to the position of public affairs at the present

time; but the honorable member had not done so. He did not intend to follow the honorable member through the whole of his discursive remarks; but he felt called upon to advert to a few of them. The honorable member had urged that the judges of the district courts should be instructed to preside at the revision courts, and to see that the benches for the revision of the electoral rolls were not packed. Now, the honorable member must be aware, if he had carefully examined the Act, and no doubt he had done so, that it contained a provision to that effect. He would next call attention to the fact that one of the principal objections that had been urged against the Government was that they had not called the House together at an earlier period of the year. Now, he would ask, in the first instance, what would have been the use of doing so, seeing that honorable members on the Opposition side had distinctly asserted that no legislation whatever would be allowed unless the Government gave way to certain demands that were made by the Opposition? It was clear that, under those circumstances, there would have been no advantage secured to the country by the Government calling the House together at an earlier period than they had done; and, besides that, it was well known that some honorable members could not afford to be in Brisbane at a particular period of the year. He referred, of course, to those honorable members who resided at a distance from Brisbane, and whose vocations required that they should be absent from Brisbane for a few months at particular periods of the year. He presumed the Constitution Act provided that, generally at least, the several constituencies of the colony should be represented by local men; and it was well known, when the Act was passed, that there were certain local residents who could not, if elected to represent the districts in which they resided, be in Brisbane at a certain time of the year. That period was a very limited one, and extended to only about three months of the year. Honorable members who lived in Brisbane could not form any idea of the inconvenience that was occasioned to honorable members who lived in the remote districts of the colony by having to attend to their legislative duties during a particular period of the year. It occasioned great expense and inconvenience to those honorable members who had to come long distances from the country at those particular seasons; whereas it might be a matter of convenience, if not of benefit, for honorable members resident in Brisbane to attend the meetings of Parliament at such times. Now, he thought that it might have been conceded to the honorable the Premier that he must have had good and sufficient reasons for not calling the House together during the busy season of the year in the pastoral districts. It had been charged against the Government that there had been, and was, an organization amongst honorable members on their

side of the House for the purpose of carrying out certain political arrangements; but he could assure the House that, as he believed, there was not such a political organisation on the Government side of the House as there was on the Opposition side of the House. All the obstructiveness to the Government measures, he maintained, arose from the political organisation that existed on the Opposition side of the House. Particular reference had been made on several occasions to an expression which had been used by the honorable the Premier, to the effect that it was administration rather than legislation that was required for the colony; and what, he would ask, did the action of the Opposition amount to but this, that they were making administration rather than legislation more necessary than ever? It had also been complained of that the Government had not brought forward a Bill for the amendment of the present Land Act; but what, he would ask, was the necessity for doing so, when they were informed that no legislation would be allowed unless the Government gave way in respect to a certain portion of the Additional Representation Bill? There were other measures which the Government had intended to bring forward; but what was the necessity of their doing so when it was well known that their progress would be stopped except under certain conditions? Now, he would admit that any Government to whom the House refused to grant supplies would have to resign; and if they did not obtain supplies, it would be their duty to resign. That view of the question was so well expressed in an article in the *Warwick Examiner and Times* of the first of July last, that he could not, he thought, do better than quote it on the present occasion. The article to which he referred contained the following passage:—

“We will admit at once that no Ministry unable to obtain the supplies necessary to carry on the Government ought to remain in office; but we observe that this inability must arise from a legitimate source.

“It is clear that by mere numerical strength the Opposition could not, in the ordinary course of parliamentary procedure, prevent supply from being granted. They were in a minority. They could only do so by an extreme use of the forms of the House.

“The truth is that the inability to carry supply must, in accordance with the true constitutional practice and principles of Parliament, spring from reality, and not from form. It involves the existence of a majority hostile to the granting of the vote, or persistently and uniformly hostile to the Ministry of the day. The forms of Parliament regulate its method of procedure only. They are not designed to facilitate the triumph of parties. They secure freedom of speech and fullness of debate; but it is absurd to suppose them to supply elements in arriving at conclusions on questions of political conduct or political principle. When they are attempted to be so employed, they are strained beyond their legitimate application, and put to uses justified neither by their tenor nor by their origin.”

Now, it was quite evident from that opinion that, if any Government was placed in such a position that by constitutional action they could not obtain supplies, it was their bounden duty to resign; but if their inability to do so arose from an extraordinary use of the forms of the House by the Opposition, not only should they not be called upon to do so, but they would not, he maintained, be justified in doing so. Now, the present Ministry were here in the possession of a majority, and they would not be justified in throwing their supporters overboard in consideration of the behests of the Opposition. It was well known that, in the course of twelve days, Treasury bills to the amount of £100,000 would become due, and if they were not met when they became due the credit of the colony would severely suffer. Now, that fact should be viewed in relation with the other fact that the time might not be far distant when the colony would again be under the necessity of contracting a further loan. He did not mean to say that, if the present liabilities of the colony were not met, they would not be able to get a further loan; but he would ask, if it was likely they would obtain such further loan on as favorable terms as if they met their coming liabilities when they became due?—or if they would obtain as favorable terms for a renewal of the loan for a couple of years—which he believed was the intention of the previous Government? The honorable member for Wide Bay had said the public, including the civil servants, would raise the sum required to keep faith with the public creditor, rather than give up their political privileges. Now he must tell the honorable member and the House that the Government did not desire that any one of the public or members of the Civil Service should give up their political privileges for such a purpose. He would ask honorable members, what became of the money paid to the civil servants? It was not locked up from general public use, but was distributed over the whole colony amongst merchants and others; and that being the case, it must be evident that if supplies were not granted there would be great suffering and hardship experienced, not only by the civil servants but also by the public generally. He hoped that any step for the stopping of supplies would not be rushed into by the Opposition without due consideration. That, however, was a question which was quite different from the matter of meeting the Treasury bills; and he hoped the question of meeting the Treasury bills would be duly considered by the House before the general question of supplies for the ensuing year was gone into. He would only further add, that though the stopping of supplies would be severely felt by the civil servants, and, consequently, by the tradesmen and the public generally throughout the whole of the colony, the suffering would be nothing compared to what it would be in Brisbane.

Mr. WIENHOLT said he thought it was now high time when those honorable members who attended the House for the purpose of assisting in transacting the business of the country, instead of fooling away their time by talking against time, should express their opinion as to the unprecedented position which had been taken up by honorable members on the Opposition side of the House. It might suit some honorable members opposite to prolong the session to an indefinite period; but it did not suit him and other honorable members who had to come from remote parts of the country, at a particular period of the year, to remain for a prolonged period in Brisbane. Now he took his seat in the House with the earnest desire of promoting that line of policy which he thought would be best suited to the circumstances and the progress of the welfare of the colony; and he knew that there were honorable members sitting on the same side of the House with him who were actuated by similar feelings. They were quite willing to give those constituencies which it might reasonably be shewn were not so adequately represented as it was thought they should be, a fair voice in the representation and management of public affairs; and they were quite as anxious as honorable members on the Opposition side of the House to legislate for the gold mining interest, and every other interest in the colony, by the passing of such liberal measures as would meet their views, and protect their rights. He would ask of the House if it was not disheartening and discreditable for honorable members, and especially the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, to get up, as he did the other night, and speak as he did on that occasion, in respect to questions in which the interests of the whole body of the colonists were concerned? The honorable member on that occasion so far forgot the dignity that was due to his position, as the leader of the Opposition, and the respect that was due to the House, as to occupy the time of the House in wandering over a law book for several hours. Now, he would ask if it was not discreditable to the House that an honorable and learned member should descend to such a line of conduct as that?—a line of conduct that could have been as well pursued by any linen-draper, or grocer, or assistant behind a counter. What would be thought of the honorable Mr. Disraeli, or any other leading member of the Opposition in the House of Commons, if he were to descend to such a line of conduct as that? Why, he believed that such a thing would not be tolerated; and how much more blamable was it here, on the part of the leading member of the Opposition, on an occasion when the credit of the colony was at stake? When he (Mr. Wienholt) first took his seat in the House, he credulously thought he would find that the rule in this colony, as to the conduct of public business, was similar to that which prevailed in the Legislature of

other British colonies—that the Government of the country would be carried on by the voice of the majority of the Parliament. That, he believed, was the rule in all countries where responsible government existed. But what was the extraordinary spectacle that had been exhibited here during the last two sessions of Parliament? It was this, that they had found a minority attempting to usurp the position that properly belonged to the majority, and to stop all public business unless the management of the whole of the affairs of the colony were placed in their hands. And what was their excuse for pursuing such a course of conduct last session? Their excuse then was, that the Government had not a sufficient number of followers to enable them to carry on the business of the country; because, according to the Opposition, the Government had then only a majority of one, and the Opposition had the same majority when the House was in committee of the whole. The Opposition then took advantage of the local cry about the extension of the railway from Ipswich to Brisbane; and they stopped all legislation because the Government and their supporters would not consent to that, and to the placing of extra taxation on the necks of the people for that purpose, without fully considering the other and more pressing necessities of the country in the first instance. But now they had entirely shifted their ground. They could not now say that the Government had not a working majority. The fact was that the Government had a majority equal to a hundred in the House of Commons; and the Opposition were now reduced to the position of having to attack the Government as being a class Government, and on that ground they obstructed all legislation. Scarcely any honorable member opposite ever rose from his seat without making use of gross personalities with respect to honorable members on the Government side of the House. Honorable members on the Government side were freely denounced as squatters or as bank agents, or the agents of mortgagees. Honorable members opposite were in fact, in their own opinion, the representatives of the people; but those on the Government side of the House were not the representatives of the people. Now, take the honorable member for Fortitude Valley. He would like to analyse the opinion of that honorable member, as to what was necessary to constitute a colonist, one of the people.

Mr. LILLEY: To abstain from dummying.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Without wishing to be personal in any way, he would point it out. In the first place, he must become a resident of Brisbane; or look to honorable members opposite as being, with one or two exceptions, residents of Brisbane. Then anyone, to be regarded as one of the people, must not be engaged in any business or occupation for the opening up of the great natural industries of the colony; or the giving of employment to large numbers of the people; and thereby indirectly contributing to the support of the

majority of the population of the colony. It seemed to be necessary, that in order to be regarded as one of the people—or as one of their representatives—an honorable member should be occupied in connection with some profession or trade. Now, many who followed such professions or occupations, might be very estimable persons and very necessary for the purposes of society and of the country; but however necessary they might be, they did nothing, he maintained, towards the development of the resources of the colony. It seemed to be necessary, in fact, that a man should live upon the life-blood of the colony, instead of contributing towards the development of its resources, or adding to its wealth, before he could be entitled to be regarded as one of the people of the colony. That was, of course, according to the view of the question taken by honorable members on the Opposition side of the House. Now, that was not his opinion of the case. On the contrary, he believed that the interests of all classes of the community were so intimately welded and blended together that it became one of the first duties of the Legislature, and especially of those who aspired to rule and govern the country, to bring about a good feeling between all classes and sections of the people; and he looked upon it as a most shameful and unholy attempt on the part of the Opposition leaders, at the present time, to stir up class feelings throughout the country, because they found that the majority of the electorates had declared against them at the last elections. He would ask honorable members on the Opposition side of the House to consider dispassionately and calmly the position into which they would plunge the country, if they persisted in the unconstitutional course they were now pursuing. Were they disposed to say that they would support three or four persons, who might combine for the purpose, to bring about such a state of things as would lead to the stopping of all the public business of the colony? Was it, he would further ask, desirable that two or three honorable members should be able to force on another dissolution at the present time? Was it desirable that they should re-awaken at the present time the cry for separation, which the people of the northern districts were sure to raise when they found that the people of Brisbane and their representatives were pursuing a course of conduct for the purpose of obstructing public business and forcing themselves into power? He trusted they would be able to keep the various districts and interests of the colony united, and that honorable members on the other side of the House would reconsider the course they were pursuing. He would also ask honorable members opposite if they thought that it added to the dignity of the House, or to the advancement of the prosperity of the country, for them to get up, evening after evening, and heap abuse upon the heads of honorable members on the Government side of the House, and use

threats towards them? Would such a course of conduct be likely to induce capitalists to invest their money in the colony? And whatever honorable members on the Opposition side of the House might say, he maintained that it was the introduction of capital into the colony that was required for the development of the resources of the colony. Would that, he would ask, lead the mother world to have more faith in this colony? Would it induce them to lend to, and invest their means with us? Notwithstanding what honorable members opposite might think or say to the contrary, he would tell them that it was capital that the colony required—he said that without fear of contradiction—it was capital that was required to develop the undeniably great resources of this colony. It was capital which was required to give employment to the people already in the colony, and to tens of thousands that would flock to it without any forced immigration. And why would not the honorable the leaders of the Opposition party shew that they had at least one of the qualities necessary to statesmen and to men of the world—the quality of knowing how to accept a defeat? Why did they not shew that true English spirit that honorable members on his side of the House could all admire? Did they think that the vindictive and bitter party spirit which they were exhibiting would raise them in the estimation of the well-disposed and thinking portion of their fellow-colonists outside? Did they imagine that such conduct would add to their fitness some day to guide and rule the destinies of the colony? Did they consider it would bring about that confidence which all sections and classes of the community should feel towards those who were in justice to administer the affairs of the country? Let the honorable members shew that they were fit to fill that position which it could be seen and known they were now so anxious to acquire. Honorable members opposite could not be unaware, as it had been pointed out before, of the distress which would be thrown on a very large section of the community by the stoppage of supply. It was not only the civil servants who would suffer—although that in itself would be lamentable enough—but a large number of the industrious classes would be thrown out of employment. He would remind those honorable gentlemen who represented Brisbane, that nowhere would the loss be greater, or felt more severely, than among their constituents. With regard to the Treasury bills they had to meet at the end of the year, he would point out to honorable members opposite that, as representatives of the people, it was their first duty to protect the credit of the colony; and he did trust that if there were any honorable members among them who were not biassed by party feeling, they would not allow their leaders to blind them to the fact that it was their bounden duty to provide for the

liabilities of the colony, and to uphold not only the credit of it, as a colony, but also as a dependency of the great British Empire—to protect the honor of their race. He would appeal to those honorable members opposite, although it might not be much good, not to continue in a course that was making a farce of responsible Government, and that, if persevered in, could not but tend to the destruction of the constitution of the country; and if followed out, would lower in the eyes of the people of the colony, and in those of our neighbors, a Legislature which had hitherto held a high, and he might add, a proud position amongst the Legislatures of the colonies.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he felt that he rose to address the House under great disadvantages when contrasted with the able speech of the honorable member who had just sat down. That honorable gentleman had not spoken very often, being only a young member of that House; but he need not regret having risen that evening, and having spoken as he had done. He (the Secretary for Lands) only wished that it was in his power to make such a stirring appeal as that which had been made by the honorable gentleman. He should endeavor to approach the subject of the present position of parties in that House, and not the discussion on the distribution question, nor how elections should be conducted or had been conducted—as, if an honorable member had any objection to the manner in which an election was conducted, he had his remedy by appealing by petition. Great fault had been found by honorable members opposite with the way in which magistrates revised the electoral roll; but if they had only looked to the Elections Bill introduced by the Government, they would have found that one of the chief objects of it was to provide against the present defective mode of collecting and revising the roll. If honorable members had only allowed the Government to pass that very liberal measure, it would have abolished all the difficulties under which the country at present labored, and which the honorable member for Wide Bay had insisted on, as, no matter whether miner or not, a man, after residing in the colony for six months, would get his name on the roll. It was a purely manhood suffrage Bill brought in by the so-called Antiliberal Ministry, presented to the Opposition, and rejected by them. Now, that measure was one they should have taken when they had the chance, and have modified and made it as liberal as it could be. Another measure in which the Government had been thwarted was the present Additional Representation Bill. He contended that honorable members opposite could not see the object of that Bill when they refused to receive it; for, were he actuated by selfish motives alone, or were he looking to the interests of his party and

constituents alone, he should say, “Do not pass such a measure”; but even if his party or his constituents did find fault with him, he should think he was not doing his duty to the country at large if he did not support so liberal a Bill. He repeated that that measure was a fair one, and so fair that honorable members opposite could only object to it on general surmises; and he had yet to be shewn that, with one exception, the additional electorates proposed were not highly satisfactory to the people. He believed the people of the Kennedy were perfectly satisfied. The honorable member for Wide Bay was not satisfied, he believed. The Mitchell people were satisfied. East Moreton was satisfied; and Maryborough might not be satisfied—but when was it satisfied? Now, what was the position, after all, in regard to the Distribution Bill? He would take the leader of the Opposition as the mouthpiece of the country, and he would see what that honorable gentleman, the member for Fortitude Valley, said when he introduced a Bill to amend the constitution. The honorable member said he thought it would be an advisable thing to repeal the two-thirds clause; and what arguments did he then use? He (Mr. Thompson) would endeavor to shew. On the 1st of December, 1870, that honorable member, being in a minority, uttered, among other things, the following remarkable sentence—and if any honorable member said they were incorrect, he would inform them that the words were in the honorable member’s usual vivid style, and bore upon them his mark. The honorable member stated:—

“For a long time, sir, I am free to confess that I was unwilling to repeal this clause, and I may say that that unwillingness arose, not so much from any conviction I entertained that it was either a wise or an expedient provision—at least not a wise provision—but from some undefined and perhaps unjustifiable fear that one section of the House might prove too strong, and if it were repealed they might force upon us a law not just.”

Now, the honorable member at that time was of opinion that the two-thirds clause, with a simple majority, should rule; but now, when the Government had a majority of two-thirds, the honorable member thought they should not rule. There had been no change since, except that the Opposition referred to by the honorable member had now become a neck or nothing Opposition. He recollected then, that honorable member said, with great rhetorical force, that he was apprehensive that some great evil would happen to the country; but, although the honorable member took occasion to cry, “Wolf, wolf, wolf,” that was all, as there they were that day, and the country as prosperous as ever, and more so. With regard to large expenditure, he (Mr. Thompson) was perhaps an ultra-economist; perhaps the most retrogressive of his party as regarded expenditure, inasmuch as he would not spend anything

beyond the means of the colony—not on the ground of economy alone—but on the ground of giving happiness to the greatest number. He contended that that should be the great principle in expenditure, instead of, as now, the greatest happiness for the few. And that was why he had always taken that particular stand upon that point. The honorable member said, in December last:—

“I am inclined to the opinion that neither party in this House, and no section of the community, need hesitate now to repeal this clause.” That had been done now, and the honorable member did it. The honorable member went on to say:—

“I believe it will be impossible, and I think it has been proved to be impossible, to get through this House any measure for effecting a reform in the representation of the people, and to obtain the assent of two-thirds of the Assembly to that measure.”

He thought that the popular opinion was sufficiently strong to effect any reform, putting on one side the press; and he recollected very well, on the occasion to which he was now referring, pitching into the press of the colony, and from what he had seen since of it, he had had no occasion to alter his opinion of it. There was also another passage in the speech of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, on the 1st December, 1870, which was more appropriate to the present occasion; and he would ask the honorable member to take it to heart and say whether it was not more common sense than the course he was now pursuing. If the honorable member now pursued those tactics he then advocated, he might perhaps have split up his (Mr. Thompson's) party; but, so long as the Opposition went on with taunts, accusations, and obstructions, they might depend upon it that everything they did or said would only bind honorable members on his side of the House more together by that bond which united all men who were unjustly treated. If the Opposition had shewn some fair reason for attacking the Government—if they had shewn that some flagrant act of injustice had been committed by them, the result might have been that some of the supporters of the Government might have left them. But what were the tactics pursued by the Opposition?—why, they had adopted such a wholesale system of attack, that consequently anyone who deserted the party so attacked would be branded as a coward; and they were, therefore, willing to give way on small points rather than desert their party. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley was always talking about being a fearless advocate. Mr. Fox, they were told, was a fearless advocate; but he (Mr. Thompson) could never understand what was meant by that term “fearless advocate.” He could, however, understand a man feeling that he should not desert his fellow-men who were attacked, and that he should feel as a traitor if he did desert them; but he could not understand why the honor-

able member should always be talking of himself as a fearless advocate. Now, he would turn to what the honorable member said in December last was the proper course for the Opposition to pursue on an occasion similar to the present one:—

“We are willing on this side to endeavor to assist the Government to pass a reasonable, a just, and fair measure of representation—to affirm a Bill for the redistribution of electorates.”

Now, the honorable gentleman stated that they were not competent to do it; but then, that they were willing to assist the Government. Now they said the Government were not competent to do it. How could the honorable member reconcile his inconsistency? Why it was all owing to that extraordinary revulsion of feeling which he (Mr. Thompson) had never been able to discover the cause of. He had tried to perceive what was the difference between the Opposition of December last and the Opposition of the present time. Then, he found the honorable member saying:—

“I am willing to trust them even with a majority against me, this proviso being repealed.”

Why then did not the honorable member now fight the Bill as it should be fought? Let it go into committee and fight it clause by clause—why did he not do that if he was willing to trust the majority? Why did he not now think as he seemed to think then? Why did he not try so to fashion the Bill in committee as to get what he wanted? But no, the Government were to give up the whole principle of redistribution. If the Government went to the country the next day, it was likely they would come back with a still larger majority.

MR. LILLEY: It is likely, if you get the manipulating of the electoral rolls of the colony.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS would ask whether it was reasonable or fair, or in accordance with common sense, when, after a Government which, with a majority of one, would not resign, came back to that House with a majority of six, which in proportion to numbers, would be a large majority in the House of Commons, and which was a larger majority than was ever possessed by any Government in the colony before—with one exception—was it fair for an Opposition to say, “Well, you are strong now, and we will not let you pass your measures”? Where there were two parties, and one was stronger than the other, was it, he would ask, at all reasonable that the strong one was to give way to the weak? There was an old maxim, that “nothing succeeds like success,” and he prophesied to the honorable members opposite that, should there be another election, there would be several more gentlemen on his side of the House; not on that side of the House which owed its existence to the popular meetings held from time to time, or to newspapers, the writers for which misrepresented all sorts of

things. No, honorable members opposite might depend upon it, that their tactics were not those that honorable members would submit to. He did not know whether honorable members opposite thought that because they would not resign to the minority of the last Parliament, they would resign now to a smaller minority. Now, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley went on to say in the same speech in December last:—

“I do not suppose that any law we pass will be so good or so perfect, that in time, with the change of circumstances, we cannot repeal it.”

Now, the honorable member then spoke sense, and he desired to endorse it since, but he had never, to his (Mr. Thompson's) satisfaction, proved the reason of the course pursued by the Opposition. Now, supposing the honorable member formed a Ministry, or supposing a Ministry was formed by another honorable member of the Opposition, for he believed the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was to be unattached—and supposing they got a majority—how were they going to wipe out the bitter feelings of opposition they had taught honorable members on the Government side of the House, night after night? He would never adopt the style of argument of repeating what had been said by others; but still the Opposition had taught them that, supposing three honorable members chose to do so, they could stop the whole business of the country. There was only one matter in which they could perhaps succeed at first, but they might with a little practice—that was talking against time. Talking at all he abominated, but talking against time he looked upon as one of the greatest abuses he had ever known. If, however, he got an Act of Parliament, he thought he could read it as well as honorable members opposite. Did honorable members opposite really think that talking against time, and reading Acts of Parliament, were the recognised weapons of warfare of Legislative Assemblies? He had read from time to time a little about the Constitution of the Empire, and he had learned from it that the chief thing to secure for a country was its positive political morality. But if there was a dead-lock brought on by means now being used, either the written constitution was wrong, or the political morality of the country was at fault.—

MR. ATKIN: How about the dead-lock in Victoria?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That was an exception to the rule—and proved that one of the greatest politicians in Victoria was not able to carry through. Now, certain things had been said about his own department—and the management of the public lands—and he could say that he always felt happy, if only two or three little things could be proved against him as head of that department, as they were much better than one great charge; but he was not allowed to go

into those little things, for, if he did, he was at once accused of blowing his own trumpet. There might be something certainly in the petition which had been presented that day by the honorable member for Wide Bay; but supposing every tittle of it was proved, what would it amount to? Why that a man wanted some land in the Upper Burnett, and that the commissioner for the district gave that land to somebody else. But did the honorable member know how many selections were made in a year, and how possible it was that the commissioner could sometimes make a mistake? Did a merchant never make a mistake—did a lawyer never drop his client into something he had not conceived or thought of? He had heard it said, “Never attack a man where he is wrong, but where he is right, and then he is sure to go wrong.” And so, if a man was not entitled to the land, it was argued that something should be done to entitle him to it. That matter would, however, no doubt come before the House again. Then again, a great deal had been said about the supporters of the Government dummied land on the Darling Downs, and he thought he might as well answer what had been said in that respect. It had been said that the Downs had been dummied. Well, he would ask, how had they been dummied? Honorable members opposite were well aware that the eyes were picked out of the Downs by means of the pre-emptive rights of the squatters before 1860. That was without any fault of the squatters, as the Act under which they acted was one passed under proper circumstances at a time when the Government of the day were always in want of money, and gave every encouragement to selling the lands irrespective of all conditions, in order to provide funds. And, no doubt, they were right in the policy advocated in those days, in the policy of selling the land for money—that when they wanted money, why draw on the land. That was how the cream of the Downs was swept off; and why the cream of East Moreton and other places was not swept off in the same way he was not prepared to say. So that neither the squatters nor the Government were to blame. It was a bad system, no doubt—the same as the pound-an-acre system was a bad one. There was no doubt also, that a great deal of dummied land had been done; but under what Acts was it done? Why, under the Acts of 1866 and 1867, and what had that to do with the present Government, who had been only in office for some two years? The others were in office at any rate, and he believed the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had been a leading member of nearly every Government for years past; and why was it that that honorable gentleman had not done something to prevent dummied land? At any rate most of the dummied land had been done before the present Government came into power. He might tell honorable members that there were many difficulties in the way of stopping

dummying. In the first place, to act in the matter involved the expenditure of a very large sum of money. Secondly, it involved an inquisition into matters hard to get at; and thirdly, it involved punishing the innocent as well as the guilty, for that could not be avoided. There was no doubt that some day the evil would cure itself, for titles to lands would be disputed in a court of law; and then would arise the question, whether the money should be returned that was paid for the lands, or whether it should be put down in payment of expenses. Another thing was, that the Government had not had any leisure to do anything in the way of legislation in that House: all their time had been occupied by party fighting, and the charge of not having done anything was a serious charge always being pressed upon them. But what little the Government had done was good, and they had scotched the snake if they had not killed him. With regard to the notices which had appeared in the *Gazette*, all he could say was, that they were the actions of past Governments, and no doubt were very honest; and it must be admitted that the difficulties connected with checking dummying, were such as could not be met by ordinary means and under ordinary circumstances. Again, the Government had been charged with a desire to lock up the lands of the colony. Now that he most utterly denied—

Mr. MILES: Hear, hear.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The honorable member was very fond of speaking of his constituency, which he appeared to think was the whole colony. But he would tell the honorable member what had been done in his constituency. They had opened up a large reserve at Roma, and when the time arrived that would be extended. They had done the same in other districts, and there was not the slightest doubt that that had done good. They had also established land offices in all parts of the country, and the results would shew that their efforts had not been in vain. Again, it had been charged against the Government that they wanted to introduce black labor. That was simply a truckling appeal to popular prejudice, inasmuch as there was not a gentleman on his side of the House who would in any way, or in the smallest degree, countenance anything approaching to slavery in any form, or would do anything that was unjust or wrong to any section of the community. What had the Government to do with the introduction of Polynesians? Nothing at all. They did not pay for them, but when they were introduced into the colony what did the men do? They remained here for a certain term, and when they left they were paid, and left the result of their labor behind them. But not only as members of the Government, but in their private actions, they were guided by their own consciences; and he had himself told his constituents that he did not object to any man on account of his color or creed, but that he

recognised every man as a brother child of Adam. He said always, "Let them come and we will fight them with their own weapons. If they labor with their hands, we will labor with our hands. If they labor with their heads, why we will labor with our heads. If they introduce steam power to assist them, we will have steam power to assist us." That was his argument; he maintained that the colony should be open to all, and it was astonishing to him that so small a matter should be able to lay such hold of the public mind. Those poor black men were much maligned. They came to the colony as friends and were treated as enemies; and it was contrary to the practice of Britons to deny an asylum to any country or creed. So far as his opinion went it was this: If he thought that Queensland was in any degree tainted with the crime of slavery, he should be the first to hold up his hand and put a poll tax on Polynesians. For, repeal the Act, and what would be the consequence? Why, that the importers of that class of labor here would be at once placed on the same footing as the traders from the Fijis. They would have a steamer, as in the Fijis, sent down to cruise. There would be a schooner or brig, painted black, and armed to the teeth like a British man-of-war, and all that sort of thing. Those sort of things should be stopped—no doubt of that; but what had the Government to do with it? How would it be remedied by a repeal of the Polynesian Act? He had been no party to that Act, but he believed it was passed by both sides of the House as a measure of protection. There was exceptional legislation in the statute book for various classes of the community; there was exceptional legislation in favor of sailors on account of their liability to be imposed upon; there was exceptional legislation in favor of servants, so that they could obtain their wages; and there was exceptional legislation in favor of merchants, who were liable to be cheated by bills of sale;—why then should there not have been that exceptional legislation in favor of the Polynesian laborer? He should object to the repeal of the Polynesian Act, as it afforded protection to people wanting protection. But, on the other hand, if the honorable member, Dr. O'Doherty, was sufficiently strong in party to get the Act repealed, he must prohibit the introduction of Polynesians altogether. He had great hope on that Polynesian question, that a more enlightened feeling would prevail before long, and that the working classes in the colony would see that it was to their benefit that these men should come to help them in the matter of out-door labor, which they should always be striving to get out of. He was happy to say of his constituents that many of them were getting out of it, and that some of the most wealthy of them were—and he could be excused for using the word—clodhoppers in England, who came to the colony years ago. Those men never need fear the competition of any

black man. He had not intended to go so minutely into that matter, but it had become a habit with honorable members of late so to wander away from the question that he feared he had caught the infection. He would briefly refer to the question of redistribution, and he would merely ask honorable members opposite if they would point out to his side of the House the various constituencies which would return squatting members. He would now say a few words with regard to the credit of the colony in connection with the Treasury bills; and he might mention that honorable members opposite had got into the fallacy which all Oppositions in deliberative assemblies would do, of supposing that they were the people. They always addressed the House in this way. The people of the country will do this—the people of the country will let you know. But when the same honorable members got on to the Treasury benches they dropped the assumption that they were the people; and when in majority they were no longer the people. It was only when they were in a minority that they talked as if they were the people, and spoke of giving the people this and giving the people that. Now that style of thing was all very well, if it was only addressed to the Government; but honorable members must be aware that there was such a thing as a constitution, and that if they did not like it they must agitate for a repeal of it—but the idea of stopping the machinery of the Government was beyond all reason whatever. Now, coming to the question of credit, he took it that both sides of the House, and every section of the community, should unite in anything that was connected with the credit of the colony. He had no doubt that the holders of the Treasury bills would be quite satisfied, if they passed a measure that night, or some other night before the end of the year, for paying their bills. But honorable members ought to know that, if it went forth to the world that for party purposes a Treasury Bills Bill could be stopped decisively from night to night, that it would be considered that the credit of the colony was bad. It was like a man who, with a good balance at the bank, deferred paying his accounts—it damaged his credit. There was not the damage that they would lessen the value of the bills, for they were as good as gold; but there was the damage that it would go forth to the world, and to the capitalists from whom the colony borrowed, that it was not possible for a party, with a majority of six, to carry through a Bill to meet their liabilities. It was the circumstance of allowing persons to have anything to say about them, beyond presenting them at the Treasury and receiving gold for them, that damaged the colony in the eyes of the world. He thought the slightest breath of suspicion of its credit was most damaging to any country. Honorable members opposite had not taken a fair advantage of their position as

residents in Brisbane. He mentioned that, because he should, when the time arrived, give his most cordial support to a system of payment of members; as the House would then be composed of local men, who would be able to recoup themselves for the expense of sitting there night after to listen to speeches. At present, no doubt, the pleasure of speaking afforded honorable members opposite, who resided in Brisbane, some satisfaction; but it was not so with those honorable members who came down from the country, at great sacrifice to their private interests. Where did honorable members opposite suppose the interests of those gentlemen were, who came from a distance, during their absence—who did they think they could get to watch over them? Now, that was not a right state of things, and he should endeavor to have payment of members when the proper time arrived. He believed it would be a conservative measure in the true sense of the term—that was, that it would conserve a proper mode of doing business. He would just refer to the attempt of the honorable member for Wide Bay, to raise a discussion on the approaching revision of the rolls. Now, he thought the honorable member was wrong in what he had said, for he had cast a slur on the magistrates of the colony, which those gentlemen did not deserve. Indeed, he thought the honorable member's speech would not be very unfairly construed, if it was said to mean intimidation to those gentlemen. He had always understood that the battle of revision was to be fought in the registration court—he thought that was a maxim of Sir Robert Peel's, and did the honorable member wish them to give up that battle?

MR. KING: No, before the judges.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Well, he certainly thought the honorable member had most undeservedly thrown a slur upon the magistrates of the colony.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he would not have risen to address the House, had it not been for the scandalous libel which had been uttered by the honorable member for Wide Bay, upon the magistrates of that district. He had had great experience of those gentlemen, and he might say that more honorable men could not be found anywhere in Her Majesty's dominions; he thought it was a most cowardly thing for the honorable member to make such an unwarrantable attack upon them. The honorable member knew very well that he dare not utter such an unfounded libel outside the walls of that House, without fear of the consequences—

MR. KING: I have said the same in the Theatre Royal at Maryborough.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The honorable member might have done it, as the honorable member knew very well that he was never reported. He never said such things when he was likely to be reported; and he would tell the honorable member that if he dared to utter such libels at any respectable

meeting in Maryborough, or dared to write them in any respectable newspaper, he would soon be brought to the bar of justice. He denounced in the strongest and most emphatic language, the calumnious aspersions of the honorable member, when he accused the magistrates of the Wide Bay district of packing a bench with magistrates, with the exception of one or two whom the honorable member commanded. The honorable member had read a letter from a publican whom he had promised to put on the commission of the peace, but he dared not mention the name of that person; and on the strength of that the honorable member labelled a number of highly honorable men.

Mr. LILLEY rose to a point of order. He would draw the attention of the honorable the Speaker to the fact that whilst he listened in silence to the remarks of the honorable the Minister for Works, he had called the honorable member for Wide Bay to order for not using language half so bad.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. LILLEY: That the language used by the honorable member was not language which should be used in that House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS asked whether the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, who was driven to the course he was now pursuing, was to be the sole authority of what was a libel?

Mr. LILLEY would appeal to the honorable the Speaker for his ruling.

The SPEAKER quoted "Cushing" on Parliamentary Practice, that

"All language not addressed to the House in a parliamentary course, must be considered as mere noise and disturbance."

He thought the honorable member for Maryborough was not in order in using the expressions he had used.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said that the magistrates for Wide Bay were not present to protect themselves, and he felt that they had been vilely aspersed and libelled. He felt that if honorable members opposite were not so particular about their own characters, and so careless about those of honorable members on his side of the House, they would assist him in rebutting the assertions of the honorable member for Wide Bay, who, he would again repeat, dared not make such libellous charges outside that House. Then again, the honorable member said that a judge should be sent up to preside at the revision court; but if the honorable member had not been so blinded by passion, he would have remembered that that was the very thing done by the Government last year, when they asked one of the judges to go there. An appeal was sent down from Wide Bay bench, because they saw the slanders that the honorable member would utter, and so they defended themselves by asking for a judge to be sent up. He had listened for a long time to the extra-

ordinary debate, this evening, and he would say that, in point of ability, he thought it was equal to any he ever heard in the Assembly; but, mind, he unhesitatingly asserted that the ability was shewn only by members on the Ministerial side. He was as willing to give credit to his enemies as to his friends; but, after listening to the excellent speeches of the Premier and the honorable members for Western Downs, especially that admirable address of the honorable member, Mr. Wienholt, he could not help saying that the debate was a credit to the House, though he feared that the public of the colony would have little opportunity to appreciate it, as he did. Evidently, from fear of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, and charges of libel, the press would reproduce it cooked and garbled. He (the Secretary for Works) hardly received a letter from the country districts in which allusions were not made to the awful position of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, in connection with the press. If those speeches were reported faithfully by the press, they would turn the public feeling wholly away from those who were the pretended representatives of the people, and would open the people's eyes to the real and hazardous state of affairs, at this moment, which had been brought about by the Opposition.

Mr. KING: Send "Hansard" round.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But in that capital debate, the House had not been discussing the business of the country. Before him was the paper shewing what business should have been discussed; but instead of doing that business, they had been listening for the most part to attacks and rejoinders by honorable members of the Opposition. The House had been long in session, and it was about time they did something for the people, and passed those salutary measures that the people had paid for, by commissions and otherwise—that their pockets had been searched for. Instead of that, their time had been wasted by useless discussions; useless, he feared, because the debates would not get that publicity which they should have to shew the people how the House were engaged. There were on the paper some of the most important measures that the Government of the day or the representatives of the people could have charge of. For instance, the Savings Bank Bill, the Intercolonial Free Trade Bill, and the Gold Duty Act Amendment Bill, were to be considered and passed. The latter measure meant, in other words, the gradual repeal of the gold export duty. But the would-be and self-constituted representatives of the mining districts of the colony cared nothing at all for that vital measure, nor for any others that they clamored for in days gone by, while they had the paltry party question as to whether they should sit on the Ministerial side of the House or the present occupants of the Treasury benches remain where

they were. Did the Government get any assistance from the honorable member for Wide Bay, to repeal the gold duty? No. That honorable member wanted to get on to the Treasury bench, to get some of the gold of the colony! As long as he saw his way—he fancied he saw it, now—to get there, he did not care a button about having that duty repealed, or about the good of the country. There were two important matters on the paper by the honorable member for Maranoa, which he (the Secretary for Works) imagined were of the utmost importance to his constituents. One was a motion for £1,500, to build a low-level bridge over the Ballonne River, at Surat. Why did not the honorable member attend to his business and get that passed? It would have been passed long ago but for the obstruction of the honorable member and other members of the Opposition. Next, there was his resolution on behalf of his constituents for £700, for the purpose of building a Post and Telegraph office, at Roma, which, from his (the Secretary for Works) knowledge, was wanted.

Mr. MILES: You don't mean to do it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That was an assertion the honorable member had no business to make, until he had moved his resolution. If he had co-operated with the Government in passing those useful measures, his constituents might have been assured that their wants would have been attended to.

HONORABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear.

Mr. MILES rose to order. When he asked the honorable member a question on the subject, he was referred by him to the Attorney-General.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Attorney-General was a very good authority. That honorable gentleman had visited Roma. The honorable member for Maranoa had made a mistake, for the Attorney-General did not say that £1,500 or £500 was not wanted; and his sole object was not to let a vote be passed. The honorable member for Wide Bay took the liveliest interest in matters connected with his (the Secretary for Public Works) constituents. There was on the paper a very long notice of motion, which had for its object the making of a bridge over the Mary River. Only for the Opposition, that work ought to be commenced, and it would have been, even if that honorable member had not undertaken to move in the matter. But he and others of the Opposition members had absolutely prevented it, and, as far as he (the Secretary for Works) could see, they would prevent its being carried out for some time.

The Hon. R. PRING said he did not often rise to a point of order; and he had waited for some time to hear the Speaker rule upon the question. If his memory served him right, some days ago, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley alluded to a matter on the paper; and the Speaker ruled

that he could not refer to any notice of motion or order of the day, for the purpose of discussing it in connection with the question then in debate. The honorable the Secretary for Public Works had broken that rule for the past ten minutes.

The SPEAKER: The honorable member was out of order in referring to matters on the paper, as he had stated. It was impossible for him (the Speaker) to keep honorable members in order, if they would continually disregard his ruling.

The Hon. R. PRING: He was not casting any blame on the Speaker.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: For himself, he agreed with the Speaker. He knew he was out of order; but, after the last fortnight's example, when honorable members of the Opposition had overruled the Speaker's rulings, he did think they might have allowed him a little latitude in this matter.

Mr. ATKIN called attention to the state of the House.

The SPEAKER counted the House, and there not being a quorum, adjourned until next sitting day.