

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY 1872**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Wednesday, 15 May, 1872.*

Supply.

## SUPPLY.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty for the year 1872.

The motion was agreed to, and the House was put into committee.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

That there be granted to Her Majesty for salaries and contingencies for the establishment of His Excellency the Governor, the sum of £1,124.

Mr. STEPHENS moved—

That the Chairman report no progress.

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

Ayes, 7.	Noes, 15.
Mr. Lilley	Mr. Palmer
" King	" Walsh
" Stephens	" Ramsay
" Miles	" Bell
" Griffith	" Thompson
" Edmondstone	" Wienholt
" Handy.	" Thorn
	" Morehead
	" Cribb
	" Johnston
	" Clark
	" Ferrett
	" Royds
	" Buchanan
	" W. Scott.

Mr. KING moved—

That the Chairman leave the chair.

Mr. FERRETT thought that the farce had gone quite far enough, and that it was time now that the committee arrived at something like common sense. A farce was a farce, and if honorable members opposite liked to deny their own words by their actions, the end would be goodness knew where. Now, they had been dividing all the previous week, and he thought they should not do so any more; for what had they seen by the division papers?—that there were no accessions to the Opposition, but only eight honorable members on the Opposition against fourteen or fifteen on the Government side, without counting the honorable the Speaker, or the honorable the Chairman, who were both in the ranks of the Government. That amounted to more than two to one as the House represented itself, but what did it amount to outside of the House? Why to a minority of one-fourth, and was that one-fourth to dictate to the majority—the remaining three-fourths? He for one would not consent to be dictated to by it. Let them go into any business they liked, and see whether any such minority would command a majority of three to one. What he wished to be done was, that if honorable members opposite had anything to complain of, they should come forward and bring a vote of want of confidence; and if they did, and could not prove it, then it would be time for them to shut up their foolish opposition. On the previous evening the honorable gentlemen opposite had called together one of their great public meetings, and he supposed they thought they had done a great deal by it; but as a proof that the people did not believe in the course pursued by the Opposition, he might mention that he had been requested by people who did not support him at the last election, and whom he had never seen before, to say that they approved of the conduct of the Government, and hoped that they would stand out and carry constitutional measures, as they believed they were willing to do. He could not conceive that any good would arise out of the present course of conduct pursued by the Opposition. It was all very well for them to stop supplies, but what would be the end of it? All they wanted was to force the Government from office. He was not new to any matters of business—he was not new to matters where there was a committee of management required; but he never heard of such a stupid thing being carried out in a House like that was, which was founded on the same principles as the highest and greatest tribunal in the mother country. Had anything so absurd ever been heard of in the House of Commons, that one-fourth should rule the whole country? Was there ever such a miserable subterfuge heard, as the refusal of the Opposition to go on with the business of the country? Again, those honorable members professed to have the benefit of the country at heart; but he would like to know one single act which that party,

when they were in power, had done for the benefit of the country. Could the honorable the leader of that party say, when he was in office, that he ever, in his own voice, carried out one single thing for the benefit of the country? He certainly respected that honorable gentleman very much for one thing, and that only—that, with the assistance of others, he gave the country free education; but to have made that of any service, it should have been compulsory. Even, however, in that act the honorable member, it was believed, had acted unconstitutionally; in fact, it was the first step he took in the unconstitutional course he had since followed. Yet he was not disposed to think that the honorable member was the main moving spirit of the present factious obstruction, but that he was prompted by other honorable members to go on with his silly opposition. It had been stated by honorable members on his side of the House, that the present obstruction was caused by a desire to get office on the part of honorable members opposite, but he would not go so far as to say that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was anxious for office; he knew, however, that some of the honorable member's followers were. He would like to know why honorable members on the Opposition benches were more to be trusted than the present Government? Were they likely to benefit the country more than the honorable members now on the Treasury benches? If it could be pointed out that it was necessary for the good of the colony that there should be a change, he would be one with those honorable gentlemen opposite; but until that was proved, he should remain as he had been since the commencement of the present Parliament, a supporter of the present Government. He would not say that he was bound to support them through thick and thin, but he should do so in their general principles, and where he saw them acting for the good of the country. He would rather avoid personalities—

AN HONORABLE MEMBER on the Opposition: It looks like it.

Mr. FERRETT: He had spoken as leniently as he could of the honorable the leader of the Opposition, and he now came to the next honorable member of whom they had had any experience—the honorable member for South Brisbane. He certainly must say that that honorable member had never displayed, in his opinion, any very great ability as a Minister; and even when he, in his capacity of Treasurer, had the opportunity of checking the honorable member at the head of the Opposition, he failed to do so, and certainly shewed himself to be anything but an able financier. If that honorable gentleman acted differently—if he had checked his then honorable colleague, he (Mr. Ferrett) believed the honorable member at the head of the Opposition would not have been so ignominiously thrust from office as he was. It was not often he took up so much of the time of the

committee, and he had not been very anxious to speak then, but had been almost forced to do so, more especially when he saw such an insignificant Opposition holding out against the best interests of the country, against a large majority of that House, and the great majority of the public outside. He would like to know why they were so suspicious of the Government—why, as they said, they would not believe the Government? They would not believe the Ministers, and yet they expected the Ministers to believe them. It would be different if they could give some reason for such suspicion, or adduce some argument in support of it. Instead of that, however, they had no ground;—they simply said, “We do not believe you.” At all events, he would place before the country—after placing it before that committee—his opinion that, in a constitutionally elected body like that House, fifteen or sixteen members should be a recognised majority. He maintained that they were. If they were not, the best thing to do would be to pack up the Constitution Act, present it to the Queen, and ask her Majesty to devise some other form of government for them, as it was quite evident that they were not capable of understanding or appreciating the parliamentary system. It was quite clear to him that they did not understand it, if minorities were to rule. The privilege of a minority was, as he had said before, that they should be able to hold out if they were satisfied that they had a majority of the House in their favor. If that was not the principle of constitutional government, he did not know what was. Now, he thought he could shew that he was not alone in that opinion, but that he had a very good authority to support him. He regretted that he should be forced to refer to it, as the common sense of honorable gentlemen opposite should have rendered it unnecessary. The authority he referred to was “Cushing on Legislative Assemblies.” In page 167 would be found the following:—

“The rule of decision in all councils and deliberative assemblies, whose members are equal in point of right, is, that the will of the greater number of those present and voting—the assembly being duly constituted—is the will of the whole body.”

In a foot note was added the following from “Locke on Civil Government”:—

“If the consent of the majority shall not, in reason, be received as the act of the whole, and include every individual, nothing but the consent of every individual can make anything to be the act of the whole.”

If they were to come to that, that the consent of every individual was to be gained before any measure could become law, there would be an end to the use of majorities. The honorable member for the Maranoa had once stated that, if he could get any other honorable member to back him, he would block the Government in every way; but,

supposing there were two or three honorable members like the honorable member for the Maranoa, were the majority to be ruled by those two or three? He considered it was a disgrace to any Legislature to be ruled in such a way. He regretted that he should have been at all personal, but he felt that he had a duty to perform, and he unflinchingly performed it. He believed that he was correct in common sense if not in law—although he might be right in that—in regard to their carrying on the business of the country. The Opposition had refused Supply—

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition benches: No, no.

MR. FERRETT: They had refused to grant it in a constitutional way. He would, for one, never consent to pass Supply *in globo*, excepting in case of a dissolution or something of that kind. He was not one of those individuals who would allow a Ministry to spend the public money without having first gone over item by item, and he had always done that. He did not profess to be a Joseph Hume, but he was perfectly independent, and would know for what purpose the public money was required before he consented to give it. Now, all the honorable gentlemen opposite wanted, was to get on the Treasury benches—that that was their object was quite evident to him. But, supposing a lump sum of money was voted, the Opposition could at any time say to the Government, “You have not spent that money as we wished it to be spent, and therefore you must go.” In the present case the Estimates belonged to last year, and the Opposition had no right to withhold them. In fact, he had never heard of such an absurd thing as an Assembly granting the Government three months’ supply, and then refusing to vote it for the remainder of the year.

MR. MOREHEAD said he believed he was one of the “lesser lights” described by the *Courier* newspaper of that date, and presumed that one of the great lights was the honorable member for South Brisbane, who took care to revise his speeches in the back parlor of the *Courier* office, every night, before they were published. He was confident the honorable member must do that, as he had frequently noticed that the honorable member’s speeches, as reported in the *Courier*, were altogether different to those he had delivered. Now, he did not expect to be reported by the *Courier*, and in dealing with that journal, that was all he had to say at present. To him it did appear an anomaly that a young member of that committee, like himself, should have to address the Opposition upon constitutional law, and that he should have to point out to them the errors they were now committing in the position they had taken of refusing to grant Supply—

MR. LILLEY: No, no.

MR. MOREHEAD: Would repeat the words—in refusing to grant Supply to which the

Government was entitled. Such conduct was unprecedented. He considered himself, that if he had anything to do with the Opposition it would be to act as a break on the state coach, not as a dead-lock—but no doubt honorable members opposite thought that some upset would take place, and that they might be able to pick up some fragments—if they did, however, they might perhaps have to disgorge them. If those honorable members had any charge against the honorable the Premier, why was it that they did not impeach the honorable member and vote him out in a constitutional way, and not, as they were at present doing, throw obstacles in the way of the progress of this great colony? It had been told to those honorable members that the course pursued by them might be pursued by others, although it would not be by him; and, therefore, it must be plain to them that they were establishing a very bad precedent. The question was, not alone the payment of the civil servants and the obligations of the country, but it was whether a minority was to rule the country—whether the constitution under which they lived was to be recognised, or was to be abrogated? If the minority was to rule, let it be understood at once that such was to be the case; but he trusted that the House, and he believed the country, would not sanction the action taken by honorable members opposite. He believed that the press and the people outside had all along taken a wrong view of the question, and was, therefore, glad to see that one journal, which was usually a supporter of the Opposition, had at last taken the right view. As he agreed with every word in an article in that paper, he would read portions from it—

MR. LILLEY rose to a point of order. The honorable member could not read from a newspaper—

MR. MOREHEAD would merely refresh his memory, as the honorable member himself had done a few nights previously.

MR. LILLEY: The honorable member could look at notes of his own speech to refresh his memory, but could not read from a newspaper.

The COLONIAL TREASURER thought it was another instance of following a bad precedent established by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley. He thought, after what that honorable member had done, they might go a little further.

MR. MOREHEAD said he would embody portions of the article in his speech.

The CHAIRMAN said he would state the Standing Orders on the subject, as far as he could read them. The honorable member was at liberty to read from a newspaper when addressing the Chair. Standing Order No. 36 was—

“No member shall read any newspaper, book, or letter in his place, unless in addressing the Chair.” Again, Standing Order No. 86 said—

“No member shall read from a printed newspaper, or book, the report of any speech made in

Parliament during the same session; unless such report refer to the debate then proceeding.”

MR. MOREHEAD said he would embody it in his speech, as really he concurred with almost everything there was in the article:—

“Nothing, however, could withstand the vanity of the present leader of the Opposition, who, after resisting attempts to repeal the clause when he was himself in office, introduced a Bill after he was turned out, and in the face, too, of a Ministerial majority, to repeal this very clause. Some men are fond of sensational legislation, without the slightest regard to common sense. In place of doing this at a time when the Government could have followed it up by a good Redistribution Act, it was done at a time when the present Government had entered office, and was carried by Ministerial supporters. Thus, by the act of Mr. Lilley, the country, so far as a Redistribution Act is concerned, has been placed at the mercy of a Ministerial squatting majority. The Government are in a position to carry any Bill of the kind that they like, and it is to this fact that the country is now indebted for ‘dead-locks.’ Mr. Palmer says, naturally enough—‘The Government opposed the repeal of the Two-thirds Clause, the Opposition carried it by the aid of the Government supporters, and now you must make the most of the bed you have made for yourselves. You have given me the power by a simple majority to alter the Constitution, and I intend to do so, so as to suit myself and my friends—not you; and are the Opposition in a position to resist his doing so? We are afraid Mr. Palmer—’”

MR. FYFE rose to a point of order. The honorable member might refer to a paragraph, but he could not read a whole speech.

The COLONIAL TREASURER rose to a point of order. He believed that the honorable the Chairman had already decided that the honorable member for the Mitchell could read from a newspaper.

The CHAIRMAN: I maintain that the honorable member is in order.

MR. MOREHEAD would then go on:—

“We are afraid Mr. Palmer—”

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition: Read the whole article.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS rose to a point of order. The honorable member for the Mitchell was a very young member of that House, and it was bad enough not to have his speeches reported in the *Courier* without a persecution being carried into the House by honorable members opposite. He did hope those honorable members would cease their interruptions, and allow the honorable member to proceed. He knew that the reporters of the *Courier* were not taking down one word of what the honorable member said; in fact, he noticed that whenever certain honorable members on his side of the House rose, the reporters put down their pens, and did not take them up again until some honorable member of the Opposition rose.

MR. FERRETT would call attention to the fact that they had been told the other evening by one of the proprietors of the *Courier* that

only certain speeches were allowed to be reported. If that was the case he had only to add, that he considered such reporters should not be allowed in that House.

Mr. MOREHEAD would again attempt to read an extract from the article he had quoted from :—

"We are afraid Mr. Palmer cares very little for the present Opposition. Such members as Handy, Miles, Thornton, and Fyfe are not likely to frighten any Government, and Mr. Lilley has done his best to prevent any others being returned. It is useless perhaps to mourn over this state of affairs, but its influence on the public mind is more permanent and lasting. The present Government (nor any squatting Government) cannot long command the confidence of the country; but it is equally true that Lilley and his somewhat ragged tail have not that confidence. If the Government intend either to withdraw the Bill as being opposed to the views of their own party, or insist on carrying it into law, no opposition that exists can prevent them unless we are to suppose that parliamentary government has come to an end. If there be anything in the Opposition let them strengthen themselves with the country. It is not by 'stumping' it about Brisbane, abusing all who are best able to afford assistance, and setting the understanding of all thinking people at defiance, that good can be done to the colony. The present Opposition, however well meaning or honestly inclined, have no moral weight with the country, and therein is to be found Mr. Palmer's strength. Ipswich and West Moreton are in reality more progressive in their views than perhaps our neighbors, who exhibit theirs in a somewhat biassed light; but before these electorates can commit themselves to any party they are entitled to know of whom that party consists. That there will be a very important and serious alteration of our parliamentary representation at the next general election we have no doubt, but it will not be by the head of the present Opposition attempting to put voting machines into the Assembly. We make these remarks from the conviction that the Opposition have brought their present position upon themselves, and that, until that is improved by the substitution both of a different leader and different supporters, it is out of the question to expect that the country will place itself to any inconvenience on their account."

Now, he heartily endorsed every word said in that article. He certainly would have excised one name from the list mentioned in it; but, otherwise, he called it a very sensible and truthful article, and one that would carry conviction with it.

The question was then put, and the committee divided as follows :—

Ayes, 8.	Noes, 15.
Mr. Lilley	Mr. Palmer
" King	" Walsh
" Stephens	" Ramsay
" Miles	" Bell
" Griffith	" Thompson
" Edmondstone	" Wienholt
" Handy	" Thorn
" MacDevitt.	" Morehead
	" Cribb
	" Johnston
	" Clark
	" Ferrett
	" Royds
	" Buchanan
	" W. Scott.

Mr. MILES moved—

That the Chairman report no progress.

Mr. FYFE rose for the purpose of calling attention to the fact, that it was most unconstitutional to move that the Chairman report "no progress." It was a good way of killing time, no doubt, but he was almost certain that such a thing was not known in parliamentary warfare, as reporting "no progress."

Mr. THORN said he was rather surprised that the honorable member for Maranoa should have made that motion, as the honorable member had been included by the *Courier* of that day, among the "lesser lights" of that House. Now, he considered that the honorable member for South Brisbane, who had charge of that journal, paid the reporters to dress up his speeches, for he contended, that the speeches delivered by that honorable member were quite different from those which were published. In fact, he might mention as a proof of that, that on one occasion it took three days to dress up the honorable member's speech on the budget. He believed, that as long as that honorable member was a member of that House, and occupied his present position in regard to the *Courier*, so long would the speeches of honorable members who were not shareholders of that newspaper, not be reported. He referred not only to speeches delivered by honorable members on the Government side of the House, but to those of honorable gentlemen opposite, as he had noticed, that although the honorable member for East Moreton, Mr. Hemmant, had spoken on the previous evening, not one word that he said had been reported. Now, what was the result of that? It was simply an attempt on the part of the honorable member for South Brisbane, to damage in the eyes of the public those honorable members who did not agree with him, although the honorable member for East Moreton was infinitely superior to the honorable member in every respect. The honorable member for South Brisbane had, also, stated on the previous evening, that he had refused to take office; but the honorable member could not expect the people to believe that, as the honorable member had never shone as a Treasurer, but, on the contrary, had done more to retard the progress of Brisbane and of the colony generally, than any other member in that House. It was only two years ago, perhaps three years, that the honorable member talked about rest and caution, although at the time the colony might have made plenty of progress; but he supposed the honorable member considered himself a major light, as he looked upon the honorable gentlemen opposed to him as "lesser lights." He looked upon the honorable member, however, as less than a lesser light, and as one of the most incapable men in the House. The honorable member looked upon the honorable member, Mr. Hemmant, as a rival, and he supposed that was the reason why he would not allow the honorable member's

speeches to be reported; and another reason was, that the honorable member for East Moreton had once dared to oppose the honorable member at South Brisbane. All he could say was, that if he had been present at the time, the polling would have been different. He thought it was time that that nonsense was stopped—that untruthful and mendacious system of reporting; and if it was possible, he would like to see the reporters of the *Courier* banished from the House;—he did not see, however, how that could be done without banishing the public also. He had now done with the *Courier* and with the honorable member for South Brisbane, and would refer to the meeting which had been held at the Town Hall, on the previous evening. He was sorry he had not gone to it, but he was outside and just looked in, and saw that nineteen-twentieths of those persons who were present cared little or nothing about what took place. They did not in fact understand the question, and he was sorry that some gentlemen were not there, so that it might have been put in its proper form. The question should have been put to them, that it was not the Estimates for 1873 that the Government wanted, but those for 1872; yet, as it was put, the Government were made to appear to be wanting the Estimates for 1873. The honorable member for Wide Bay had endeavored to hoodwink his constituents in the same way, in a letter addressed by him to the *Gympie Times*, and everybody, on reading a paragraph in that honorable member's address, would be under the impression that the Government wanted the Estimates for 1873. He would read the paragraph—

Mr. FIFE rose to order. He thought he would be able to read the Book of Genesis, if honorable members were to be allowed to read from any newspapers they liked.

Mr. THORN would read one paragraph:—

"The Opposition are perfectly ready and willing to grant whatever sums are necessary for carrying on the business of the country from time to time, but they refuse to vote the Estimates for a year in advance until the people of the colony are properly represented in the Legislative Assembly."

Now the Government had not asked for the Estimates for 1873, and therefore the honorable member was only hoodwinking his constituents. The honorable member for South Brisbane also refused to put the question truthfully before the public in the columns of his paper. The honorable member for Wide Bay said again:—

"Yet this session, with a number of very important Bills before the House, we are called upon to pass the Estimates before a single one of them has been read a second time."

But the Government had not asked to pass the Estimates for 1873, but only those Estimates that ought to have been passed last year. That, however, was quite in keeping with every statement made by the honorable mem-

ber for Wide Bay, whom he looked upon, together with the honorable member for South Brisbane, as being the two evil disposed members on that side of the House. It was plain to him that those honorable members did not want the Government programme to be carried out, for they knew that so soon as it was, their occupation would be gone. One reason why the Estimates should not be passed in lump sums, as was proposed by the Opposition, was that he was anxious to scrutinise them. He was opposed to have lump sums of two or three months voted at a time, as, in so doing, they were not doing their duty to their constituents. He trusted, once for all, that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley would see the error of his ways, and that the public would find out that they were being deceived by honorable members opposite; as they would do if the whole matter was put before them in a proper light. If that was done, he thought they would alter very considerably the resolutions which were carried by the meeting on the previous evening. He would tell the honorable members for Brisbane again, that it was they only, with some honorable members who resided in Brisbane, who were holding out against all useful legislation in that House. He had discovered that the honorable the Premier was a great favorite in Brisbane, which was not to be wondered at, seeing that he and the honorable the Minister for Works had done more to improve that city in every way than any previous Government had done. The honorable the Premier had cleared the bar of the river, so that ships of a large size could now come up to the wharves, whilst the honorable the Minister for Works had built a magnificent Post Office. But, what had the honorable members opposite done when they were in power? Why, the honorable member for South Brisbane sold the dredge; whilst, if he had kept it at work, they would now have vessels coming to the wharves, of the same tonnage as those that went to Sydney. He was sure of one thing, that the people of Brisbane would rather be ruled by the honorable the Premier, than by any of the honorable members opposite, who were not supposed to be able to grapple with matters in a statesmanlike manner. He hoped that the honorable members opposite would give way and allow the Estimates for 1872 to be passed. Then, if it was found that the Government refused to carry out their programme, he would be one of the first to leave the side of the House on which he now sat, and cross over to the Opposition.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE said the statement that had been made by the honorable member who had just sat down was as great a misstatement as had ever been stated in that House—

Mr. MOREHEAD rose to a point of order. He believed that the word "misstatement" was one which an honorable member could not use, and he hoped therefore that the honorable member would withdraw it.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE said he would then call it the greatest error that had ever been stated, to say that the people of Brisbane had not understood what the question was, that was placed before them on the previous evening, at the public meeting. The honorable member said that he had looked into the room, but he was afraid to put his nose in, or at any rate, he had avoided going in. That the whole of the people were thoroughly conversant with the question now before the country was a great fact, not only in Brisbane, but at Rockhampton, and in every place where a newspaper was read. He would state, and with confidence, that every community—every diggings, where there was a small number of men assembled together, understood the state of the question before the House, and were all conversant with the fact that the Government had only gone on with their business, and with a small portion of Supply, on the distinct understanding with honorable members on the Opposition benches that the Redistribution Bill should be laid on the table; but could any person expect that those technical words would be adhered to—that the Bill should simply be laid on the table? Why, it was understood distinctly that that Bill should be laid on the table, and discussed so far, that it could be satisfactorily passed by both sides of the House, and then the matter of Supply be gone into. All the world of Queensland knew that Supply was withheld for that purpose, and that it was withheld, not only by the Opposition, but with the sanction of the Government. For an honorable member to get up and say that the people had been misled, by its being stated that it was the Supply for 1873 that the Government were wanting, was simply disgusting. He was sorry to find that so much of the time of the committee was wasted in condemning the conduct of newspapers, with which, after all, honorable members had nothing to do. If those honorable members wanted to get a newspaper to report their speeches *verbatim*, why did they not establish one of their own? but, to say that because the honorable member for East Moreton was opposed to the honorable member for South Brisbane on one occasion, his speeches were not reported in that honorable member's newspaper, was most surprising; and then again, he was sure it was quite out of place for that committee to say whether the honorable member for South Brisbane or the honorable member for East Moreton was the superior member. The honorable member for West Moreton had stated a great deal about the Government having studied the improvement of the city of Brisbane; that they had cleared the bar of the river, had built a Post Office, and had done other things. It was true that they had done those things, but in doing so, they had simply done their duty. In regard to clearing the bar, the way was cleared for them to do so, by the Ministers who had preceded them selling the dredge, and putting

the money thus obtained to the most useful purpose Queensland had ever seen. He was quite aware that the citizens of Brisbane had to thank the honorable the Premier, and the honorable the Minister for Works, for what they had done; but whence came the funds? Why, by the sale of the dredge they were enabled to clear the bar. And in regard to the Post Office, whence came the funds? He would tell the committee where they came from. The city of Brisbane was despoiled of its rights, and under the Parliamentary Buildings Act their endowments of land were taken from them for the purpose of building the House in which honorable members now sat. That Act was passed in spite of the opposition of the members for Brisbane, and the Post Office was built out of the unexpended balance of the money derived from the sale of those lands. He believed that the funds for building the Brisbane Hospital were also derived from that source. They had £10,000 not disposed of, and £9,000 was applied to the building of the Brisbane Post Office. Now, he would ask the House, or any man of common sense, if anything more could be said of the Government in respect to those matters than that they had done their duty?—and he would admit that they had done it well; but they had only done their duty, and nothing more.

The motion, that the Chairman report no progress, was then put and negatived, on a division, by a majority of 16 to 8.

The original motion was again put—

That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1872, a sum not exceeding £1,164, to defray the salaries and contingencies of His Excellency the Governor's establishment.

Mr. STEPHENS then moved, by way of amendment—

That the Chairman do now leave the chair.

The amendment was put and negatived, on a division, by a majority of 16 to 8.

Mr. KING next moved, by way of amendment—

That the Chairman report no progress.

Mr. FERRETT said he must protest against such a silly way of going on with the business of the country. He would like, he said, to know exactly what it was that the honorable member at the head of the Opposition really wanted. It was that honorable member who got the two-thirds clause in the Constitution Act abolished. Now, if that clause had not been done away with, the Redistribution Bill, which had caused all this delay, could not have been introduced without the consent of two-thirds of the whole House. If the two-thirds clause was considered to be necessary when the Constitution Act was passed, he thought from what had taken place, there was more necessity for it now. If that clause had not been abolished, the occasion might not have arisen that gave the minority the opportunity of ruling the majority. He thought that something should be done to put a stop



to the silly use that was being made of the forms of the House to obstruct the business of the country from being gone on with. There was no precedent whatever, he maintained, for the course the Opposition were pursuing. Now, he could again quote from the same authority as he quoted from this afternoon—and it was admitted by the honorable member at the head of the Opposition to be an excellent authority—and it was stated in it that the majority in all cases must rule; and that was the rule, both in England and in America. He very much regretted that he would be compelled to bring forward some motion to do away with the privilege the minority had of obstructing the majority. Unless some motion for that purpose was passed, he did not see there was any chance of their being able to go on with the business of the country. He hoped the honorable member at the head of the Opposition, and other honorable members opposite, would see the necessity of the minority submitting to the majority—and to such an overwhelming majority—to a majority that was more than two to one. If this silly use of the forms of the House were continued much longer, he would feel it to be his duty, if backed up by some other honorable members, to press the matter, not only upon the attention of the House, but also upon the attention of the country. It was high time that those forms were done away with when they found them used in the silly way the Opposition were using them.

Mr. CLARK said he could not but think that a good deal of misapprehension existed as to the position the Government had taken up in regard to this question; and he thought it would greatly facilitate their coming to an understanding if honorable members would agree to divest the discussion of all personal feeling, and adhere strictly to what was the real question before them. Now, he must say that it appeared to him that the position the Government had taken up was a correct and a very proper one; and it was one from which they could not recede. The honorable the Premier said that he wanted Supply, and that he would have it. Now, he fully endorsed the action the honorable gentleman had taken in the matter. But the Opposition said that he should not have his Supply till he had passed the Electoral Districts Bill.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition side: No, no.

Mr. CLARK: Well, the Opposition said he should not have the Supply he asked for till he passed the Electoral Districts Bill. Now, the honorable the Premier did not come to the House and say that he would not allow the Electoral Districts Bill, or any other Bill, to be gone on with till he got his Supply for 1872. He simply said, at any rate as he understood him, that before any other business was gone on with, he intended that Supply should be gone into.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition side: No, no.

Mr. CLARK: Well, he understood that the position the honorable the Premier had taken up was this—that before business was gone on with, he intended that Supply should be gone into; and that he did not intend to ask full Supply and the passing of the Appropriation Bill, but that he only asked that the House should go fairly into Supply, and when that had taken place, he had no objection to other business being gone on with.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear.

Mr. CLARK: He believed that was the position the honorable the Premier had taken up, and he believed that the honorable gentleman was fully justified in taking up that position. He also believed that many honorable members on the Opposition side of the House understood that that was the position the Government had taken up; and if the public outside only understood that such was the real state of the question, his opinion was that those few of them who sided with the Opposition would cease to do so. But he did not believe that the public outside understood the real state of affairs. He believed they understood this—that the honorable the Premier had taken up this position, that he would have the whole of the Supply for 1872 passed, and that the Appropriation Bill should also be passed before anything else was done. Now, he believed that the honorable the Colonial Secretary did not want that, but that he wanted only that they should go into Supply and deal with it.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition side: No, no.

Mr. CLARK: The honorable the Premier did not attempt to dictate to the Opposition, and say to them, "You shall do this and you shall do that"—and he must say that he was one who would not submit to any such dictation. It was no use for honorable members opposite to say "No, no." If he was wrong, they could reply to what he said; and if he had misunderstood the honorable the Premier, he could correct him. But if he understood the honorable the Premier aright, what he said was that he wished to go into Supply fairly, and that, when that was done, he had no objection to other business being gone on with. That was what he understood the honorable gentleman to say; and he believed that honorable members opposite understood that too. They might profess to have understood differently, but they knew that what he stated was what was the case. He altogether failed to see what arguments the Opposition could use, and had used, to justify the position they had taken up. It was no use for them to say that they would give another three months' supply to enable the Government to go on with till the Redistribution Bill was passed. He maintained that it was too much to grant another three months' supply; and, what was more, the Government did not want that. They only

wanted, as it seemed to him, to do what was right and proper, and only asked that the House should now do what should have been done last session.

Mr. LILLEY said the honorable member for Warwick had totally misstated the case. What the honorable the Premier said, at the outset, was that he would have full Supply for 1872, and that he would have nothing less, and would not go on with business till he got it; and honorable members on the Government side of the House did not misunderstand him, as the honorable member for Warwick appeared to have done. Now, at the present time, the Government were living on the credit of the colony; for until Supply was granted to them, and the Appropriation Bill was passed, they could not legally or constitutionally spend a single shilling of the public money. They must have all the Supply for 1872 passed, or a portion of it, with an Appropriation Bill, before they could do so. Now, they had a precedent for a part of the Supply for the year being voted, and an Appropriation Bill passed to authorise its expenditure, in the case of last session, when Supply was granted for three months, and an Appropriation Bill passed. The course the honorable member for Warwick had suggested for adoption, was one that was both illegal and unconstitutional, and one which could not be accepted either by the honorable the Premier or by himself. There must be an Appropriation Act to legalise any expenditure. There were only two alternatives. There must be a partial or temporary Supply, such as had been offered to the honorable the Premier by the Opposition, and rejected by him, or there must be the whole Supply for the year which he had asked for; and in either case there must be an Appropriation Act. That was the true position of the case.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not think the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had correctly stated the case. He never said he would not go on with business till he got full Supply, and the Appropriation Bill was passed. He was entitled to full Supply for 1872, but he never said he would not go on with any other business till they had gone through the whole of the Estimates and an Appropriation Bill had been passed. What he said was, that till the House shewed him that they would go fairly into Supply, and that they would vote all the Supply, and not only a portion of it, he would not consent to go on with any other business; but that was a very different thing from saying that he would have full Supply voted, and an Appropriation Bill passed, before he would go on with any other business. He never said any such a thing. The honorable member for Warwick had stated the case very fairly. Now, he had himself stated, over and over again, that he was entitled to Supply for 1872, and he was supported in that by the large majority of the House that was backing him

up, as the divisions to-night shewed. Though the honorable the Speaker, and the Chairman of Committees were not voting—that was, two members out of a House consisting of thirty-two members—the divisions were sixteen to eight in favor of the Government. Such a majority as that should shew to the colony, and to the world, that the Government were right in the position they had taken up. It was altogether wrong for the honorable member for Fortitude Valley to say that he demanded full Supply before he would go on with any other business, for he never said that he would do no other business till he got full Supply and an Appropriation Act. What he said was, that he would not do any other business till the House went fairly into the Estimates, and shewed that they were willing to go on with them.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The case had been very fairly put by the honorable member for Warwick, and it was fully understood before, by every honorable member in the House, except those who were not willing to understand it. The Government were entitled to this—that the House should go fairly into Supply, and shew that they were willing to go on with it; and if that was done, there would be no objection to go on with the Redistribution Bill and have it read a second time.

Mr. HANDY said he must take exception to the statement of the case, as it had been put both by the honorable the Premier and the honorable member for Warwick. It appeared to him by those statements that the Government were now changing their ground.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No, no.

Mr. HANDY: Well, it appeared to him that they were changing their ground, and he was very glad to see it; and that they seemed disposed to take a more common sense course than they had yet taken in respect to this question. The statement that was made by the Colonial Secretary, in his hearing, at the commencement of this debate, was, distinctly, that he would do no other business until he got Supply for 1872—that he wanted that, that he was entitled to it, and that he would have it; and that he would not go into any other business until the Opposition shewed a disposition to go into Supply—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The honorable member was quite misquoting his words. He did not use the words—"a disposition to go into Supply." The words he used were—and he stated them very distinctly—"when they go fairly into Supply."

Mr. HANDY: Well, even if that was what the honorable member stated, he would ask him to say when he would consider they had gone fairly into Supply. He believed that what the honorable gentleman really wanted was, that the whole of the Estimates for 1872 should be gone through, and that the Appropriation Bill should be

passed before any other business was gone on with. Now, he would not consent to that. He would not risk going into Supply, trusting to getting justice done on the question of the passing of the Appropriation Bill—a Bill which the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government could carry in his pocket, behind his back, unknown to any one, and get passed in a hurry, perhaps, at any moment that conveniently suited himself. Now, he for one would not risk the passing of the Redistribution Bill and the other important measures mentioned in the Ministerial programme, upon the chance of a guarantee of so slender a nature. He would not consent to the House going into Committee of Supply, and resting their confidence as to getting justice in the matter of the passing of the Redistribution Bill and other measures of public importance—after the whole of the Estimates had been gone through—merely upon the passing of the Appropriation Bill afterwards. If the Government had intended at first to go on with other business besides Supply, or if it was their intention then to go on with the Redistribution Bill, if the House went fairly into Supply, why did not the honorable the Premier say so at once, instead of moving that the Order of the Day for the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, which then stood first on the list of Orders of the Day, under the head of Government Business, should, as well as the other three orders that followed next it, be postponed until after the fifth Order of the Day, which was for the House going into Committee of the Whole for the consideration of Supply. Why did the honorable member put down the Redistribution Bill from the top of the list to nearly the bottom of it, that he might get on with Supply, if it was not his intention to go on with no other business till he got the whole of the Supply for 1872? Why did he not take the business in the order in which it was on the paper?—and it was all Government business. The honorable member did not take that course, but he said he would have Supply for 1872, and that he would have the whole of it, before he went on with any other business. (Cheers by the Opposition.) Well, the honorable gentleman might have it if he could get it, but he would find that he couldn't. He had no hesitation whatever in saying that the position now assumed by the Government and their supporters, on this occasion, was absolutely and totally different from the position they took up at the commencement of this debate. The position of affairs when this debate began was this. The first business on the Notice Paper, as he had said, was the second reading of the Redistribution Bill; and the fifth order was for going into Committee of Supply. The honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, when the first order was called on, moved that it be postponed till after the consideration of the fifth

Order of the Day. Now, he would ask any reasonable man to say if that was not putting the second reading of the Redistribution Bill after Supply? and the honorable gentleman in the course of the discussion that followed said he would have Supply; and maintained that he was entitled to it, as he had fulfilled his part of the compromise of the last session by putting the Redistribution Bill upon the table of the House, this session, at as early a period as it was possible for him to do so. Although he was comparatively a young member of the House, he had sufficient experience to know this—that the promise to bring in a Bill was understood to extend to its being read a second time, and so made ready to be considered in committee. The promise was not limited to the merely bringing in of the Bill, and having it read a first time, and laid upon the table of the House. At the time of the adjournment of the House last session it was understood the honorable the Premier said, that if he got three months' supply, he would bring in the Redistribution Bill. Now what did the honorable gentleman mean by that? Did he merely mean that he would have the Bill drafted and would place it upon the table, and let who would worry it? It was quite true that the honorable gentleman did not pledge himself or his supporters that they would go on with it and carry it through—and he had heard several of the supporters of the Government say that they did not like the Bill. When the compact was entered into at the close of last session, and when the Government then accepted the three months' supply, it was understood that they would bring in the Bill, and that they pledged themselves to have it carried through the House. That at least was the understanding of honorable members on the Opposition side of the House. It was understood that the Government would bring in a Bill that would be framed as equitably and favorably as possible to all parts of the country alike, and that they would proceed with it. Not simply that they would bring in a Bill and lay it on the table of the House. It was on that understanding that, on the one hand, honorable members granted Supply for three months, and that, on the other, the Government and honorable members on both sides of the House pledged themselves to the passing of a Redistribution Bill immediately that the House met this session. It was well known that the business of the country could not be properly or satisfactorily carried out when they had a large number of members in the House representing only one interest in the colony; and therefore it was that the whole colony was crying out for additional members being sent into the House. The city of Brisbane, of which he had the honor of being one of the representatives, had three members already, and the constituency did not want more; but they, notwithstanding, demanded that their representatives should pledge themselves to

the carrying of a Redistribution Bill, in order that those districts of the colony that were not adequately represented should be fairly represented. Such also was the feeling throughout the whole colony on this question, and he thought that the honorable the Premier should yield to the well-known wishes of the people. The honorable gentleman knew very well that the whole of the colony was crying out for such a measure, in order that the business of the country might be satisfactorily gone on with. He had only to repeat that, in his opinion, the position taken up by the Government to-night was totally different from what it was at the beginning of the session.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the honorable member who had just sat down was very far wrong indeed, and perhaps he would allow him to put him right. It was quite clear that the honorable member had altogether misunderstood the case. What he said at first, and what he said now, was this—that unless the Government got Supply for 1872, which they were entitled to, no business would be done. He never said, nor did he mean to say, that no business, so far as the second reading of Bills was concerned, should not go on. He never said nor hinted such a thing. But going on with the second reading of a Bill, and passing it before Supply was gone on with, was a different thing. He maintained that he had not shifted his ground in the slightest degree. He had taken the same ground now that he took at the beginning, and that was, that until the Government got Supply for 1872, which it was admitted by every honorable member they were entitled to, no business would be done—and that business meant the third reading of Bills. If the House went fairly into Supply, the Government would have no objection to go into the second reading of Bills. The Government did not want the House to go into the Estimates, and continue at them till they were finished. But even though they did ask the House to go on with the Estimates for 1872 till they were finished, that need only occupy them a very short time; for the Estimates last year were voted in three days. The honorable member for South Brisbane did not mention that circumstance the other night, when he stated that the Estimates could not be passed in less time than three weeks. He (the Colonial Secretary) did not contradict the honorable member at the time, though he might have done so; but by the records of the House, it would be seen that the Estimates last year were passed in three days; and having that fact before them, he did not think it was too much to say that they might expect to be able to pass the Estimates this year in as short a time, or even say four days. Now he would repeat again, that if the House would go fairly into the Estimates, he would be quite willing to go on with private business. He stated the same thing on the first

day this question was raised, and therefore it could not now be said that the Government were shifting their ground. The Government were quite willing to go on with private business on private days, and to go on with the second reading of Bills; but no business would be done till they got the Estimates for 1872 fairly gone into, which was quite a different thing from asking for the Estimates for 1873. The Government had no wish, at this period of the session, to press for the Estimates for 1873, nor did they intend to do so; and he had stated that over and over again. If there was a shadow of ground for the minority refusing the Estimates at all, that shadow might help them for refusing the Estimates for 1873; but they had not any shadow of ground whatever for refusing the Estimates for 1872.

Mr. WIENHOLT said they must not forget that the most important business they had to perform now was to uphold the constitution of the country. That was their first duty at the present time. That was the principal question now before the House. That was a greater question than the granting of Supply, or the payment of the civil servants. Now the honorable the Premier, he maintained, never said he would not go on with business; but what he said was this—that he would not take less than the whole of the full Estimates for the year. Now it was the business of the country and of the House, before any other business was done, to see that the Supply that was due to the country, and that was required for the carrying on of the business of the country, was granted. It was the first business of the House to see that such Supply was granted. It was required, and it was their duty as a Legislative Assembly to see that Supply was granted. It was for honorable members on the other side of the House—as far as their insinuations went—to say otherwise, when they cast a slur upon honorable members on this side of the House, and said that honorable members on this side would not go on with the Redistribution Bill if once Supply was granted. He could assure the House, for his own part, and he could speak confidently for many other honorable members on this side, that as soon as the safety of the constitution was asserted, and the great principle of constitutional government was asserted—that the majority in Parliament should rule—they would be ready at once to go on with the Redistribution Bill. Honorable members on this side of the House were most anxious and desirous to see a fair and equitable measure of redistribution passed, and they would remain in their seats for months, if necessary, or as long as might be required, for the passing of this measure. He could only tell honorable members on the other side of the House, acting as they did now, that if they wished to be obstructive and to stop legislation, and to do so quite constitutionally, they would have an opportunity of doing so when the Estimates for 1873 came before the House—Estimates which they knew full well must be

passed this year unless those honorable members wished to bring about another period of disorder. Then would be their time to act constitutionally; but why should they prevent the proper business of the country from being carried on at the present time? Why should they prevent Supply being granted at present, and so stop the passing of measures that would be for the good of the country? Honorable members were proceeding in a most shameful manner—in a manner which they might regret hereafter—in a manner they would yet be ashamed of, when they saw that, night after night, their names appeared in the division lists with a minority that was attempting to dictate to the majority of the House. For his part he felt ashamed that they should have a body of men in the country, returned by large constituencies, that could so disgrace a British Constitution, such as they lived under, in the way that honorable members opposite were doing.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he could not expect to be able to say anything by way of argument that would be likely to convince honorable members opposite that they were in the wrong, and that the Government were in the right; but this he would say, and maintain, that honorable members opposite desired to place before the country a false issue. They had stated all along that the honorable the Premier had made the statement—had volunteered the statement to the House—that, till the Estimates were passed, no other business should be gone on with. Now, that was not true. Whence arose that statement being made? It was because honorable members opposite told the Government that till they got the Redistribution Bill passed, no Estimates should be passed.

MR. LILLEY: No, no.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The honorable member for Fortitude Valley said "No, no," but he would appeal to honorable members on this side of the House to say if that was not the statement which was made at the outset by honorable members opposite—that till the Redistribution Bill was passed, not one farthing of the Estimates would be voted. That was the cause of honorable members on this side of the House saying that the constitution was in danger; and it was that which compelled the Government to say that no Government could exist under such circumstances as that, and that they, as a Government having a large majority of the House with them, would assert their right; and to say that till the Estimates and moneys that they were now owing should be passed, or be in a fair way of being passed, no other business would be gone on with. During the first few days of the debate, the Government were asked how much of the Estimates would be passed before other business was gone on with, and he distinctly remembered saying that the Government would insist on the Estimates passing through the House *pari*

*passu* with other measures. Honorable members opposite, however, now chose to forget that. To prove that he was right in what he now said, he had only to point to the fact, that the Government had gone on with some measures. If honorable members would refer to the records of the House—to the "Votes and Proceedings"—they would see that the Government had not stopped from going on with other measures. But, all along, the Government had been met with obstruction, and had been subjected to threats by honorable members opposite, that till they got the Redistribution Bill, they would not consent to the passing of one farthing of the Estimates. Now, the Government would not submit to such a degradation as that. As his honorable friend the Premier had so well explained, and as the honorable member for Warwick had so ably explained, the Government never said they would insist on the Estimates being passed altogether, and on the Appropriation Bill being passed, before any other business was gone on with. Why, that would come to this, that the Government wanted the Estimates to be brought in and passed, and also an Appropriation Act, in one night. Now, that was what neither this Government, nor any other Government could do. It would take several weeks to pass the Estimates. Honorable members opposite, he maintained, were raising a false issue, when they asserted that the Government said they would not consent to any other business being gone on with until all the Estimates were passed. Now he, for his own part, would not consent to all other business being stayed until the Estimates were passed altogether. No honorable member on this side of the House, and no member of the Government, would consent to that. He thought that considerable credit was due to the honorable member for Warwick for unmasking honorable members opposite in the way he had done. Now, he would repeat, that the Government never demanded that the whole of the Estimates should be passed before any other business should be gone on with. What the Government demanded was, that the principles of parliamentary and constitutional government should be observed in the House, and when they saw that done they would consent, and the majority of the House would consent, to go on with other business, and would see that other measures should receive as much time for their consideration as they were entitled to, or as they required. He did not think that the honorable member for Fortitude Valley met the honorable member for Warwick in that fair way he ought to have done. The honorable member said that no Estimates would be voted until a certain Bill was wrong from the Government; but the Government would not consent to the passing of a Bill under such terms. Now it was never intended that the Estimates should be absolutely passed before going on with other measures.

Mr. KING said he was glad to see that the Government were beginning to find themselves in a somewhat awkward position, and that they were now trying to back out of it. It was said by the honorable the Colonial Secretary, a few minutes ago, that he never demanded that the House should vote the whole of the Estimates before going on with any other business. Now, on the 30th of April last, the honorable gentleman said—

"Supply we mean to have; we are entitled to it; we will have it; and we will do no other business till we get it."

Those were the words which the honorable member used on that occasion; and he would ask, what was the meaning of them? In a previous part of the speech from which he had just quoted, the honorable gentleman said it was the Estimates for 1872 to which he referred. Now what was the meaning of what he said then? It was clearly this, that he meant to have the Estimates for 1872, and that he would do no other business till they were voted. The honorable gentleman could not shuffle out of that; but he now tried to explain it away by saying that the Government did not intend, when he said that, to refuse to go on with the second reading of Bills. If that was the case, why, he would ask, did the Colonial Secretary move that the Order of the Day for the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, when it was first on the business paper, should be postponed until after Supply? The alternative which the honorable the Secretary for Public Works had endeavored to point out was particularly unfavorable. The Government might say that at the present time they had one or two months' supply in hand, and that the House might go on with the Estimates, and also with the consideration of the Redistribution Bill, or some other measure. But what was the fact? Why that the Government could not now go on. They were not in a position to do so, and that was proved by the fact that they had stopped certain public works, and had discharged the men who were employed upon them. They could not go on with those works without the Estimates; and the Estimates could not be passed concurrently with the consideration of other measures, for several weeks. They had been reminded that the Estimates for 1871 were passed in three days. Well, suppose it would take six days to pass the remainder of the Estimates for 1872, and that other measures were to be considered concurrently with them, it would only be possible to give one day in each week to the Estimates, so that it would take six weeks to pass them. He, therefore, contended that the Government should rather, at once, take the two months' supply which the Opposition offered them, and which would enable them to carry on the business of the country, and to resume public works, while the Redistribution Bill and other measures of importance were being dealt with by the House. If the Government would accept of

the two months' supply offered them, and go on with the Redistribution Bill and other measures, then they might very fairly ask the House, also, to go on with the Estimates concurrently. The honorable the Minister for Public Works had stated that several measures had been gone on with by the Government since this question arose. Now, he (Mr. King) emphatically denied that such had been the case. There had not been a single motion that was not of a formal character, dealt with by the House, since the motion was brought forward for going into Committee of Supply. The honorable member, the Secretary for Public Works, had had a notice of motion on the paper ever since this question arose, for leave to introduce a Gold Fields Bill. Now, though that motion might be treated as one of a formal nature, the honorable member had never submitted it for the approval of the House. The Bill which the honorable member proposed to bring in, was one that ought to be before the country for several weeks before it passed beyond the first stage. The measure proposed to deal with one of the most important interests in the colony, and an interest in which very large numbers of the people of the colony were deeply interested, not only those engaged in gold mining and gold mining pursuits directly, but many others who were, more or less, concerned in them indirectly. The motion was simply to the effect that the House should go into Committee of the Whole, to consider as to the necessity of introducing a Bill relating to the gold fields; but even that much had not been done in the matter. Now, if the Government intended to go on with other business concurrently with the consideration of the Estimates, why was a measure of such importance as that not brought before the House? Why was it not on the table of the House, so that there might be time for it to be considered by the country before it was brought forward for a second reading?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It had been for six months on the table of the House.

Mr. KING: Then it was only the Bill that was before the House last session, with a new title; and if that was the case, the House might not have much trouble with it, as those portions which had been dealt with might be allowed to remain as they were, when they passed the committee. But be that as it might, the Bill was one of such importance that it ought at once to be proceeded with. Nothing whatever had been done with it this session, and he would challenge the honorable member to mention any one measure that had been advanced beyond the first stage since the House met.

Mr. THORN said the question before the House was not, on the part of some honorable members opposite, one as to a redistribution of seats. What those honorable members wanted was an Additional Members Bill. The honorable member for Wide Bay was

not, he maintained, sincere in obstructing legislation on the ground that he desired to see a Redistribution Bill passed, or any other of the measures in the Government programme. What that honorable member really wanted was to be on the Government side of the House. As long as that honorable member sat on the Opposition side of the House, he would not, as far as he could help it, allow any business to be gone on with. The honorable member for Wide Bay and the honorable member for South Brisbane never intended that a Redistribution Bill should be passed. Through those honorable members, and by means, also, of a mendacious press, a false issue, as regarded the question between parties in the House, had been placed before the public, and particularly before the citizens of Brisbane. The citizens of Brisbane, however, were now beginning to see what was the real nature of the question, in spite of the efforts of those honorable members to prevent them. As to what was said by the honorable the Premier, he understood him to mean from the first that, if Supply was gone into, he would be willing that other business should be gone on with concurrently with it. It was not the Estimates, however, that those honorable members wanted to be gone into, and which, he contended, ought to be gone into, and scrutinised item by item. The whole question with them was one as between going into the Estimates and granting Supply for two or three months. The Government wanted the Estimates, and the Estimates they ought to have. He thought the public would now see that it was the Government, and not the Opposition, who had the interests and the welfare of the country really at heart; and he also thought they would see that the honorable member for Wide Bay, of all other honorable members in the House, was the one who had most persistently thrown obstacles in the way of useful legislation. He had even obstructed the Gold Fields Bill from being gone on with, although he professed to take a deep interest in the prosperity of the gold fields. The public would now see that the Government were anxious to go on with business, if the Opposition, or a portion of the Opposition, would let them; and they would see that the honorable member for Wide Bay was doing all that was in his power to prevent them. So long as that honorable member sat on the Opposition side of the House, he would not allow any business to be gone on with if he could help it. He trusted that no other honorable member who sat on the same side of the House with him would endorse his views. Now, he maintained that the Government should get the Estimates—not a temporary supply merely, but the whole of the Estimates, to which they were entitled. If they got that, they would go on with other business. He must say that he thought the Government were fully justified in holding out as they had done.

Mr. LILLEY said that the honorable member at the head of the Government might interpret the promise he had now given as to going on with the second reading of Bills much in the same way as he had interpreted his promise of last session as to the bringing in of a Bill. If they went on with Supply, and voted the Estimates, and also went into the discussion of Bills, they might be told, when any Bill had been read a second time, that that was as far as the honorable the Colonial Secretary had promised to go with it—that the promise was to go on with second readings; but that there was no promise as to going into committee on the Bills. Now, if that were to be the case, there would be nothing whatever gained by accepting the present proposition of the Government. They had been told that the Government only promised to bring in the Redistribution Bill, and that they had kept their promise; but how did that correspond with the statement of the honorable the Colonial Secretary to-night, that he was willing to go on with the second reading of it? Now, at the present time, the Government were going on without Supply. They could not legally or constitutionally spend a single penny of the public money. For a Government to go on for one day even, without Supply, when the House was sitting, was both illegal and unconstitutional. The only way the Government could get out of their difficulty would be, by the passing of the Estimates for 1872, as the honorable the Premier demanded; or by passing a partial Supply and an Appropriation Bill, to enable them to expend the money that was voted. Now, the Opposition were quite willing to give the Government partial Supply to-night, if they would take it; and then they could go on with other business. The Government would not be in any better position than they were in at the present time, though they got the whole of the Estimates voted to-night. They would still be acting illegally and unconstitutionally if they spent any portion of the money that might be voted till they got Supply—till they got an Appropriation Bill passed; and if that were done, what guarantee would the House have that the Redistribution Bill and other Bills would be gone on with? The Government had admitted that they could not go on without Supply—that they could not spend any money that had not been voted and authorised to be spent. They had admitted that by the fact of their having stopped certain public works, and having discharged the workmen that were engaged upon them. Now, in doing that, if they had no money to continue those works, they did what was quite right; and if they had money to go on with the works, they should not have stopped them. By telegrams that had been received from Rockhampton, they had learned that certain public works there had been stopped, and that the workmen had been discharged, because the Government

had no more money for those works. Now, he would like to hear if the works had been resumed by the Government—and resumed, perhaps, because of the outcry of their own friends, or perhaps for the purpose of endeavoring to influence one honorable member on the Opposition side of the House. Now, there was no constitutional medium between the course proposed by the Government, and the one which he had proposed, for getting out of the difficulty. The only middle way by which they could get out of it would be by retreat; and the honorable member at the head of the Government might desire to get out of it in the way proposed by the honorable member for Warwick, and so endeavor to escape under his coat tails. Now, as the honorable member for the Warrego said, there seemed to be nothing for it, but that each party should nail their colors to the mast, and fight it out. If the Opposition were right, let them have the advantage of being right; and if they were wrong, let them suffer. He was as anxious as anyone in the House to get on with business; and he offered the fairest means of getting on with business, while holding at the same time a guarantee for the public that certain measures should be passed. That was the only safe position the Opposition had, and for them to do anything else would be to throw away the end they had in view at the commencement.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not understand what the honorable member for Fortitude Valley could mean, when he said that the Government were in a false and illegal position at the present time; and yet attempt to throw the onus of it upon anyone but the Opposition. Did the honorable member mean to convey the opinion to the House—did he mean to tell the House that by the action of two or three or four members—say four members, because they knew that four members in Opposition could stop the action of the Government on the smallest pretence any day—that the action of four members which was sufficient to place the action of the Government in jeopardy, by requiring them to spend money illegally—and the Opposition had more than four members acting in concert, but the principle was the same—did the honorable member mean to tell the House that he was prepared for such a position if he should come into office? If so, the honorable member could not carry on the Government for a single day, any more than the present Government could do so. Now, the honorable member said there was no middle course between that proposed by the Government and the course proposed by himself; and he was glad to hear the honorable member say so, for he also thought it was better they should fight it out; and he thought it was the seeking of the Opposition that it should be fought out. He thought that what had been said by the honorable member at the head of the Government, rendered it

altogether unnecessary to take such a position; but if it was the intention of honorable members opposite to take such a stand as would place the Government in jeopardy, he could tell them that the Government could stand as well as honorable members of the Opposition could; and he hoped that neither the honorable the Premier nor any of his supporters would retreat one step from their position, now that their position had been put clearly for the first time, to-night, by the Opposition. They now understood what really was their position; but until now, they had not understood it.

Mr. LILLEY said that the position of the Opposition was quite unchanged. The position they had taken up was thrust upon them. It was the Government that had changed their position, and it was idle to attempt to cast the onus upon the Opposition. It was a cowardly thing for the Government to change the position they took up so firmly and so determinedly at the outset; and now they sought to retreat from it, under the skirts of the honorable member for Warwick, or the honorable member for Ipswich, Mr. Johnston. The position was forced upon the Opposition. They offered at the first, as they offered now, to give the Government three months' supply to enable them to go on with the business of the country, and the Government rejected the offer. Had it been accepted, the Redistribution Bill, and other measures mentioned in the Ministerial programme, might, by this time, have been very considerably advanced in committee. Now, he was willing yet, if the Government would accept the offer of the Opposition, to go into the Redistribution Bill to-night; and he would sit as late as he could, and deal with it to-night; and he would go on with it tomorrow and Friday, and resume it on Tuesday, if the Government were willing to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said that he had been startled when the announcement was made by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley, that the Government were acting illegally and unconstitutionally, inasmuch as Supply had been refused them.

Mr. LILLEY: No, no. He was quite sure he did not say, that the Government had been refused Supply. They had refused Supply.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They had refused Supply! He had to unravel those words. What did they mean? Because honorable members moved alternately that the Chairman leave the chair, and that the Chairman report no progress; and because, thereby, a minority of the House obstructed Supply, the Government were acting illegally. If it was true that the Government were acting illegally, on that account, it would be equally true if a minority of four in the House stopped Supply; or, to draw the *reductio ad absurdum* still further, if two members in committee, as they could do,



stopped Supply. If the Government were acting unconstitutionally, there must be some way of making them liable. They asked to be made liable—in the regular constitutional way. The honorable member for Fortitude Valley had stated that he did not say the Government had been refused Supply. If not, they were in a much better position than honorable members on the other side would wish. They were obstructed in getting Supply in the regular constitutional way. They asked for £1,000; and what was offered to them? A lump sum, to be spent at their discretion, extending over some months, the exercise of which discretion they would be responsible for to the representatives of the people.

MR. LILLEY said it did not matter whether two or twenty-two obstructed, if they did it according to law, and constitutionally. If the Government incurred expenditure when they had no money in hand, or if they pledged the credit of the country without authority, that was acting unconstitutionally; and they acted illegally, if they did so without the sanction of an Act of Parliament. It might be a necessity to spend money, but still it was illegal without that authority. The honorable gentleman knew that as well as he did; in fact, he was poking fun at the House when he asked the House to hold him responsible. There was no legal tribunal to try Ministers. The notion was a favorite one with the late Mr. Plunkett, in New South Wales; but he (Mr. Lilley) should be very sorry, indeed, to give to any Parliament the power of personal impeachment. Just fancy his having the power to send the pleasant-looking, good-natured, Treasurer for trial, with all the elaborate forms of impeachment, for spending money, now, without the authority of Parliament! The Minister for Lands put a fallacy before the House. If even one man was able to stop Supply, and the forms of the House, or the constitution, allowed him to do so, his single vote was necessary to authorise the Government to incur liability, and essential to them before they could expend the revenue of the country. That was apart from the question of expediency. It might be unreasonable; but that single vote was essential to the Government getting Supply; unless the principle was accepted that a man was bound to lie down because the majority of the House voted against him. There were circumstances in the history of the nation where the minority had been compelled to take a stand; there would never have been reform in the world if the minority had not had the power and the will to stand out against the majority. No great moral or religious movement had been accomplished that had not been started by a minority—the minority confronting and resisting the majority, until they convinced the greater number and became in turn the majority—as just now, the minority of the House in Opposition were resisting the majority of the Government, and would resist, until the latter came to reason. The Opposition offered a reasonable thing, and the Government refused

it. But it was hardly worth while to be splitting hairs or balancing straws. The Minister for Works ought to be able to see that when a lump sum was granted, it was to be expended in proportion to the current requirements of the country, as before.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Ministerial benches: No, no.

MR. LILLEY: It was intended to be three months' supply upon the Estimates of the past year; and it was not any more in the discretion of the Ministry to spend a lump sum without regard to the Estimates than it was if Supply was granted and appropriated by Act of Parliament. If Ministers chose to do violence to the constitution, and if they found the Governor a partisan to help them, they could, of course, carry on the expenditure as they liked. But he knew that, even under the Appropriation Act, very many sums were at the discretion of the Government: where there was a surplus of one vote, it might be expended to make up the deficiency of another.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

MR. LILLEY: It had been done, often. If there was a surplus from one vote, it might be used for another.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not by an honest Government.

MR. LILLEY: It was done, now.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

MR. LILLEY: Where did the honorable gentleman, or the Government, get the money to build that Annexe to the Great Exhibition in London?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They had not got it.

MR. LILLEY: Then how was it built?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The same fund that built the "Governor Blackall."

MR. LILLEY: There was the honest Government, that could not spend money without the Appropriation Act! Though he had been accused of it, he did not expend money in building the "Governor Blackall"; he had pledged the credit of the Government. But he, also, put it upon the principle, that there was a strong necessity for what he had done; and, where there was a strong necessity, there was a discretion. What was the necessity for building the Annexe? The House had sat several times, when provision might have been made for that work. He thought the Minister for Lands would be quiet for the rest of the evening about spending money at discretion. He hoped, however, that he would not be understood as refusing a reasonable discretion in expenditure to make the colony well known in London. He did not wish to be understood as casting any censure on the Government for that work; but they might have asked the House, and the House would not have refused, to authorise the expenditure, especially by the hands of Mr. Daintree, who, he (Mr. Lilley) believed, was well acquainted with what was requisite to be done at home, to place the colony in a good position. At any rate, that gentleman was

well acquainted with the mineral wealth and resources of the colony, and he would make them well known. Upon the arguments of the Minister for Lands, he (Mr. Lilley) had said as much as was needed. Though they might lead to a better understanding between honorable members, he did not think they would have the effect of altering the views of either side of the House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he thought he now thoroughly understood the honorable member's dictum. It amounted to this:—That any minority, and therefore a minority of two, in committee, had power, by obstruction, to put the Government in an unconstitutional and illegal position.

Mr. LILLEY: For just cause.

The question was put and negatived on a division:—Ayes, 9; Noes, 16.

Mr. LILLEY thereupon moved—

That the Chairman leave the chair.

Mr. FERRETT called upon the honorable member for Fortitude Valley to assign a reason why Supply should not now be gone into. The honorable member was not acting in any way consistently or constitutionally; and he (Mr. Ferrett) protested against his conduct. It was a mere subterfuge when the honorable member said he did not believe in the promises, or pledges, or guarantees of the Government. Were honorable members on the Ministerial side to be considered "honorable" or not? Let the farce not go further, or honorable members of the Opposition would be soon taught that their little game would be put a stop to. He did not wish to resort to it; but he told them that there was a way.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY wished to say a few words in contradiction of a statement made, with his usual modesty, by the honorable member for Fortitude Valley. That honorable member had repeated that he, as leader of the Opposition, had offered the Government Supply. It was not in his power, nor was it in the power of any member, to offer Supply. He was the leader of only a small minority in the House; he had no power to offer Supply. That statement had been repeated over and over again, till he (the Colonial Secretary) was sick of it; and he wished the country to understand that neither the leader of the Opposition, nor the minority, had that power. It remained with the majority to grant Supply.

Mr. STEPHENS: He thought the Parliament that ought to have granted Supply for 1872, met in April, 1871—thirteen months ago; yet the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government had not succeeded in obtaining Supply to this time. He did not see very much difference between the Opposition saying that they offered Supply, and that they withdrew all their objections to Supply and would let it pass. The honorable gentleman failed to acknowledge as an absolute fact, his inability to get Supply. Could he refute that fact? If those who had prevented him get-

ting Supply would make opposition no longer to his getting it, that was offering Supply. The offer of the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was to remove the difficulty in the way of the Government. It would be well for both sides of the House to admit facts. If the Government voted against Supply, or if they refused to take a vote when they could get it—when the Opposition were willing to join them in getting it—the fault was their own; when they refused a distinct offer to remove out of the way the difficulty which for thirteen months had prevented them getting Supply, and which prevented them getting it now, they, therefore, refused the Supply offered to them.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Another column of the *Courier*! and not nearly half so interesting as the advertisements in that journal. If the honorable member for South Brisbane would weary the Chamber, and exhaust the printer's devils, with his speeches, and the reiteration of his worn-out arguments about giving—"Give, give," cried the daughters of the horse-leech—it could not be helped. But the Government asked for nothing to be given by the Opposition. They demanded their just rights, and those they would have. They would have no concessions at the hands of honorable members opposite. Let that be put before the country! He should be very sorry to place himself at the mercy of any of the honorable members opposite. They got up and said they disbelieved in the honesty of purpose of the Ministry; that they acted for the welfare of the country! But it was known that some of them did not mean so honestly for the country, or for the party they were allied with, as they professed. If he were forced to do it, he should name them. There were honorable members ventilating their opinions throughout the land, trumpet-tongued—he used language that had been used before—professing liberality and patriotism, and he could expose them if he was challenged to do so. It was most improper, unjust, and unmanly for the Opposition to act as they were doing now—to say that the Government were starving the Civil Service, that they had brought on the dead-lock. Such statements he denied, for himself and for the party with whom he was allied. The present deplorable state of affairs was brought on by the Opposition. Supposing that the Government should be thrown out of office—it was a great stretch of imagination to suppose anything of the sort—he hoped that they and their supporters would not follow the example of the Opposition. He trusted that the Premier would stick to his post, and do his duty to his party, and to the country which he had governed so well. But supposing the Government should go out, when that happy time came, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley would be sent for by His Excellency—perhaps he (Mr. Morehead) was hurting the feelings of some honorable members opposite—and, if he formed a Government, he would find that the

Opposition would not, in colonial parlance, "take a point" of him; but that they would act as a brake upon the state coach, and not as an obstruction in the way of its progress.

Mr. STEPHENS: That was another pleasant version, and a variation upon the Colonial Secretary's statement. The honorable member for Mitchell denied that the Government asked for anything, and he finished by demanding something. Demanding was asking without civility; there might be a little civility in the other mode. Demanding was, he supposed, the same thing as asking, with the civility omitted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The difference was, simply, that one was begging, and the other was asking for their rights.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could understand the majority of the House offering Supply, but he could not understand the minority doing so.

Mr. FYFE said he could understand a minority checking Supply! It mattered little what was the business of the country, but at this moment Supply was checked—for the redress of grievances; and he was struck forcibly with the notion that before the discussion ended, the Government would come to that pass that they would recognise the minority. He did not wish to be personal, but it was not for certain young politicians to come down to the House and dictate to the representatives of populous constituencies; and, while he understood the feelings of the honorable member who last addressed the House, he thought he should be perfectly justified if he flung back with contempt the insinuations that had been cast forth by him. After six o'clock, last evening, the honorable member thought he (Mr. Fyfe) was everything good—that the Government would go on, with his support—he was a thorough-going squatter;—poor Sandy was supposed to be right! But, he thought the speech he made when the House resumed was sufficient to justify him in the position that he held as the representative of the largest constituency in the colony. Yet it was not a speech that pleased the young man from the country;—he was not the good fellow of half-an-hour before. But there was no intellectual gladiatorship displayed in the House. The debate was a waste of time; and he thought he could do better by moving, that the Chairman should ask the Speaker's opinion upon the Chairman's ruling, that the committee could report no progress.

The CHAIRMAN: The honorable member has asked me to report the question to the Speaker. I do not think it is at all necessary. I will quote a passage from "May," p. 371, which applies to this case:—

"In some cases, committees have reported that they had not made progress."

That is all need be said.

Mr. FYFE: Notwithstanding that he was beaten by the ruling of the Chairman, which

he obeyed, he had not thought it worth while arguing upon the question, which was good for speaking against time, unless the House should debate the constitutional question. But, if it must be speaking against time, he should bring forward some grievances. Two men were as good as a thousand in committee; but the debates and the divisions would cost the country about £20, which was a serious consideration. Let the House come to some kind of an understanding. What was the value of all that disputing? Would the Premier yield? Would the leader of the Opposition yield? If the minority said they would not yield, and the majority said they would not be governed by the minority, let the House debate their position on constitutional grounds, and by the light of history. Where were the authorities?—where the precedents? The Ministry must go, unless they recognised the influence of the people. The Government had aggravated the people so much that they were almost held up to public obloquy. It was not because there was a majority on the Ministerial side of the House, that the people must succumb; certainly not. Honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches must know that there was a conviction prevalent in the colony that the people had been sacrificed upon the altar of the ambition of the Darling Downs squatters. The hand-writing on the wall was about to appear! The House must come to an understanding without delay. It was not because the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government was looked upon as one of the most truthful, honest, and honorable men in the colony, that the House must disregard their security for the future; and, although he (Mr. Fyfe) felt bound to take his word and to believe that the honorable gentleman would not make a promise which he did not mean to keep faithfully, yet he strongly sympathised with the desire which had been expressed for some safeguard that the people's interests should not be neglected, and that the representation should be reformed. The honorable gentleman was now upon his trial. Great interests were at stake, and strong assurance for their safety was necessary in the present crisis. Still, it was especially desirable that honorable members on both sides should meet one another and agree to some terms of accommodation. It appeared that he was not exactly representing the views of honorable members on either side; but he was speaking independently, and he should be glad to see his words have some effect upon the House. The effect would be very little, he could see. But, it was impossible to think that the feeling of the country was, that the House should stand still. The voice of the country would be heard; and, as far as he was concerned, he believed it would speak out right. With every regard for the dignity of a Minister of the Crown, he wished to see a compromise of some sort; and, if necessary, let the Ministry surrender some portion of their dignity.

Mr. JOHNSTON said it was very well understood that the minority could not grant Supply, and that by making use of the forms of the House they could very easily obstruct the obtaining of Supply by the majority. He had not heard any honorable member of the Opposition put their case fairly before the House, and state upon what grounds their obstruction was raised; they had not told the House upon what principle they objected to go into committee; nor had they stated what grievances required relief. If the obstruction was solely on account of the Redistribution Bill, it was groundless; inasmuch as he agreed with every word of the representation made by the Premier, this evening, that the Opposition were misleading the country. He counselled them to attend to what the head of the Government had said, and to proceed with Supply which was overdue. The Premier would take other measures in their turn; but Supply was the most pressing and urgent business before the House, and it should be taken first. The House should accept the Premier's explanation of what he had said, and of what were his intentions. What more did honorable members want? The Redistribution Bill could be taken on other days, while Supply was proceeded with on the Government days. It was well understood, when the Bill was introduced, that several amendments would be brought forward, and that the Premier would have no objection to any reasonable amendment. No doubt it was a very necessary measure. If the Bill was not proceeded with, after the second reading, he, for one, would not sit on the Ministerial benches to help the Government to stop it. But the House should not stand still. There were several matters before them, which honorable members of the Opposition thought required legislating upon; and if the House got to work, there was a long session before them, in which to do the business of the country.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In order that there could be no possible mistake about it, he now offered distinctly to go into committee on Tuesday and Wednesday, next week; and if the House got fairly on with the business of the Estimates, and they chose to go on with the Redistribution Bill during the two following days, there would be no opposition from the Ministerial side of the House. There could be no misunderstanding about that offer. The Government wished the Redistribution Bill to be passed as much as, if not more than, the Opposition. Let them get fairly on with Supply on the next Government days, and there would be no objection to the Redistribution Bill being considered on the other days of the week.

Mr. STEPHENS: In order that they might understand one another clearly, whereabouts in that proposal would the Appropriation Act come? Because that was the important question. The honorable gentleman must be aware that after passing the Estimates he got

no nearer to having money in his possession for expenditure legally, until the Appropriation Act had been passed. He would, therefore, ask the honorable member, at what stage of the Redistribution Bill would be placed the passing of the Appropriation Act?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: After the second reading of the Redistribution Bill.

Mr. STEPHENS: Before going into committee?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before going into committee; and we will push it on as fast as honorable members please, after the Appropriation Bill is passed.

Mr. STEPHENS said that the proposition which had just been made by the honorable the Premier, was one on which the honorable member, the leader of the Opposition, would have to reply; and perhaps those two honorable gentlemen would be able to understand each other, if he said another word or two and gave his opinion on the matter, as the honorable the Premier had put it. It might be that if they absolutely passed the Appropriation Act, after the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, they might differ altogether when that Bill was put into committee. His own idea was, that they need not have any very great amount of trouble in dealing with the Bill in committee, as the second reading would shew pretty well what the opinions of honorable members were in reference to the Bill. He thought at that time also, that the honorable the Premier would be able to tell them what alterations were likely to be made in committee, what he would accept, and what he would not. It was his opinion, that the whole Bill would go very quickly through the committee. He would point out that, as the matter now stood, the Government had introduced a Redistribution Bill, and he would give the honorable the Premier credit for being sincere when he introduced it, and being perfectly willing to carry it through; but it must be noticed that the honorable member had not pledged himself to carry it through as it now stood. After the second reading, however, the honorable the Premier might be in a position to say in what form he would stand by the Bill; because it must be borne in mind, that some of the supporters of the honorable member might wish to make the Bill far less on a population basis than it was at present.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Government benches: No, no.

Mr. STEPHENS: He was speaking of the supporters of the Government only, as he believed the honorable the Premier would stand by the Bill as it now was. The Opposition would be in a false position unless they knew the exact form in which the Government would take the Bill through committee. If the honorable the Premier would take two nights on the Estimates—then the second reading, and then the consideration of the Bill in committee, it appeared to him that they would be nearer to coming to a satisfactory arrangement;

but at present, he must confess, he could hardly see his way clear, although he was very anxious to do anything he could to settle matters. He thought that whenever they did get the Bill through the second reading, both sides of the House should act with considerable confidence towards each other. He believed that for seven years both sides had tried to get a Redistribution Bill passed, but had always failed, and therefore it would be a great pity if they now failed, as the honorable the Premier was certain to get the Bill past the second reading.

Mr. RAMSAY thought honorable members must be aware that the Bill was one which, if it passed its second reading, would be almost passed altogether, as the work in committee would be principally confined to the consideration of the boundaries of the different districts. The main features of the measure would be discussed on the second reading, and if it was then passed by a good majority, there need be very little fear of any great and material alterations in it afterwards. Under those circumstances he certainly thought that the proposal which had been made by the honorable the Premier was a very fair one: which was—"We agree to pass the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, and you agree to give us the Estimates and the Appropriation Act." He sincerely hoped, for the sake of the colony and for the credit of that House, that the proposition would be accepted.

Mr. MILES said it had been generally understood that honorable members on his side of the House were quite willing to agree to the passing of the second reading of the Redistribution Bill; so that, after all, the proposal which had been made by the honorable the Premier was no concession at all. He was very anxious to see that Bill passed, and the other business of the country proceeded with, as it was very inconvenient for him to come from a very long distance to attend the House, and after all to find that no business was done. He was most anxious to see a stop put to the present unsatisfactory state of things, but he did hope that the honorable the Premier would consent to the Redistribution Bill being in committee one night at least before the Appropriation Bill was passed; and he was quite sure that matters could be smoothed down if that was done. He, for one, would be quite willing to pass the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, and get it amended in committee, as he was quite willing to accept it as an instalment of justice. He trusted that some satisfactory arrangement would be made by which they could at once proceed with the business of the country.

Mr. WIENHOLT said that so long as the principle was asserted that on Government days nothing should take precedence of Supply, he was quite sure that honorable members on his side of the House had no wish to obstruct any other business from being proceeded with. But they must assert

the principle that on Government days no other business could take precedence of Supply, which was necessary for carrying on the business of the country. They were quite willing, on private days, to go on with any general business the Opposition wished.

Mr. LILLEY said that honorable members on his side of the House must have some assurance that they would get a fair Redistribution Bill, for it was of no use attempting to patch up the present state of matters; as, if they did, it would be sure to come up at some future time, and they would then have to fight it out. It would be idle for them, after having taken up the position they had done, to recede from it, unless they had some such assurance as that he had mentioned. There was, in reality, no concession in the offer which had been made by the honorable member at the head of the Government, and it would be useless for his side of the House to be satisfied with mere delusive promises. Now, what was the proposition? That they should be allowed the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, which was what they had always been ready to have passed; and then they were asked, what they were disposed to do in return? They were asked, in consideration of having that Bill read a second time, to give the Government not only full Supply, but also to pass the Appropriation Bill. Why they would be the simplest of men, and be deserving of some of the appellations given to them by honorable members opposite, if they were to agree to place the Appropriation Bill in the hands of the honorable the Premier, after a mere formal second reading of the Redistribution Bill.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition benches: Hear, hear.

Mr. LILLEY: He had been astonished to hear the honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Ramsay, say that the great principle of the Bill would be discussed on its second reading, for it was a marvellous fact that the honorable the Premier stated on the occasion of the first reading that there was nothing of the sort in the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. LILLEY: The honorable member said that it was not founded on the basis of population, or on the basis of adult males, or on wealth or taxpaying basis—in fact, upon no distinct basis whatever. It was a sort of hodge-podge—arranged by a system of gerrymandering.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I never used the word.

Mr. LILLEY: No, the honorable member had not—perhaps the honorable member had not known of such a word at the time, but there was no doubt that the gentleman who assisted him in framing the Bill knew very well what it was. He should be very glad indeed if means were given by which they could carry on the business of the country—if they had some assurance that the Redistri-

bution Bill would be passed. That, however, they had not at present. It was the old proposition—"You shall have the second reading of the Bill, and after that I will have the Appropriation Act"; and after that, the—deluge. Then the rosy hope that, as the honorable member for Western Downs observed, the great principle of the Bill having been discussed, there could not be much difficulty in the rest. That was what the honorable gentlemen opposite would give the Opposition. He was sorry, he must say, that as at present advised, he could not accept the position the honorable the Premier would place him in, which would simply amount to a loss of everything for which they had been struggling for months past.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was now quite evident that there was not the slightest hope of a compromise being arrived at. It was quite evident that the honorable member, the Premier, who had been reproached by the press and by persons outside, as being the most uncompromising man, had made an offer that evening, that his supporters, until a very late hour, would not have seen their way clear to make. Of course it was competent for the Opposition to refuse that very fair and reasonable proposition, and to take the position they had done; but he would tell them, that in future they could no longer attempt to shew, that it was upon the shoulders of the Government that the responsibility of the present obstruction rested. He thought that no fairer offer could have been made, considering the strength of the majority the Government had. Having made that offer, with such a majority, and the Opposition having rejected it, must shew to the country that there was some ulterior object the Opposition had in view, which had not yet been divulged. Let it be what it might be—it might be dissolution—whatever it was, the country would very plainly see it was not the Redistribution Bill.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE: Nothing else.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The honorable member for North Brisbane said "nothing else;" but he would ask honorable members opposite, what hope a minority of that House entertained of getting any measure—more particularly one for redistribution—in any other way than by making concessions? Could they expect to force the majority to their way of thinking? Could they expect to make the present Bill, or any other Bill, in such a way as to force the majority to accept it? Surely it was not to be supposed that everything belonged to the minority. There were honorable members on his side of the House, who had belonged to the Opposition benches before, and they knew perfectly well that it was impossible, except by obstruction and by means not legitimate, for a minority to go beyond certain recognised limits. Now, he considered honorable members opposite had done all they possibly could—they had exercised their prerogative, and no doubt had

done their duty to the country; and they should be contented with that, without asking a majority to become absolutely subservient to a minority.

Mr. STEPHENS said the honorable member had said a great deal about the concession made by the honorable the Premier.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The second reading.

Mr. STEPHENS would like to know what concession it was for a Government who introduced a Bill, to allow it to go to a second reading?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Because we believe that you do not want it to be passed.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition benches: Oh, oh.

Mr. STEPHENS: It still comes to the same thing. Where was the concession?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: In taking it before Supply.

Mr. STEPHENS: Any arrangement by which the Government allowed the Bill to be passed before the Appropriation Bill was passed, would be a concession. The Opposition were asked to make a concession of the whole Estimates.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. STEPHENS: Yes, for every item would have to be gone through before the Appropriation Bill could be passed, so that the honorable the Attorney-General was wrong again. Some of the Supply had been spent, and a great deal more was now illegally pledged, for he ventured to say that the Government were acting undoubtedly illegally in carrying on the Government of the country on credit. He denied *in toto* that the offer of the honorable the Premier contained any concession, or that it would bring the Opposition in any way nearer to the passing of the Redistribution Bill, inasmuch as for a Government to offer to go on with their own Bill was not a concession.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nothing could prevent the Redistribution Bill from going through its third reading, except it was the action taken by the Opposition. He would strongly recommend his honorable friend, the member for Fortitude Valley, to take time to consider the proposal which had been made to him. He thought it might come to some good result, if that honorable member would put on his considering cap between that evening and Tuesday. He would advise the honorable gentleman not to so rashly refuse taking advantage of the golden bridge which had been made for him to escape over, and would strongly recommend him not to be too positive that evening, but to take time to consider the matter.

Mr. KING said he had been glad to hear from one honorable member on the Government benches, that the Opposition had done their duty to their constituents; but the honorable gentleman became confused when he got that far, as his ideas of what a concession was, were most extraordinary. The honor-

able member said that giving the second reading of the Redistribution Bill was a concession, and yet, afterwards, he accused the Opposition of not wanting that Bill. How then could it be a concession, to give honorable members what they did not want? But it was not a concession, inasmuch as it did not pledge the Government to anything. It had been stated, over and over again, from the very first, that the honorable members of the Opposition had no intention of opposing the second reading of the Bill. The honorable the Premier had stated that the action of the Opposition, on the second reading, would very much guide the conduct of the Bill in committee; but he (Mr. King) thought it was a Bill which ought not to be accepted in its present form, because the only principle there was in it would be to strengthen the present squatting party; but that it could be made a good Bill in committee. He might say that there were several honorable members who sat with the Ministers, who had told him that it was their intention to have the Bill altered in committee, and, therefore, the Opposition had a right to know in what shape it would appear when it went out of committee—

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Before it goes in?

**MR. KING:** No, but before they paid the Government. If the Government made a concession, and asked for one from the Opposition in return, they had a right to see that the concession given to them (the Opposition) was a real one. The second reading of the Bill was no concession—it was nothing. It was well known that there would be no division which would imperil the Bill, and therefore the whole work of the Bill would be done in committee. Therefore, to take the second reading as a stage of any importance was absurd—and that the honorable the Premier knew very well.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER** said he rose for the purpose of referring to the eulogium which the honorable member for Wide Bay said he had passed upon the Opposition, in saying that they had done their duty. Now he did not always feel safe in the quotations of that honorable gentleman.

**MR. KING:** You used those words.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER:** If his words were not well weighed, what he meant to say was, that if the honorable members of the Opposition thought that the action they had taken—if in their minds it was a correct one, they had gone far enough in that course. It was not that he considered they were right in the course they had taken.

**MR. LILLEY** said that so far as the offer of the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government went, it was not a new one, and required no consideration whatever. Any man could see through it at once, and he had now nothing more to say than that he could not accept it, and that there was nothing new in it to make him abandon the position he had

taken for the security of the public. As to the golden bridge mentioned by the honorable gentleman as a means of escape, he might remind the honorable gentleman that it was not the Opposition who wanted that golden bridge so much as the Government wanted it. He had taken a good position, whilst the honorable the Premier had taken what he believed to be a false one—but which, he regretted to say, the honorable member seemed to cling to with great tenacity. He was sorry; but he was not going to abandon his position for such an offer as that which had been made—namely, to pass the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, and then let honorable gentlemen opposite laugh at the Opposition. Now there had been so many propositions of a semi-official character, that he would like to know what the next would be; but it appeared to him that they all went back to the same thing. They were all Ministers opposite, and if the majority thought fit to pay eighteen Ministers he supposed the Opposition would be expected to give way to that, and it would thus be seen how far the supposed power of the majority could be pushed. To give the Ministers the Estimates and the Appropriation Act for 1872, and to get in return from them the second reading of the Redistribution Bill, which was their own measure, was certainly a most delusive proposition. At any rate, he would not have such a proposition palmed upon him, as it would place himself and his supporters not only in a foolish, but in a most humiliating position. The offer required no consideration—he refused it at once.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** said he had no doubt the honorable gentleman at the head of the Opposition did not like to hear the supporters of the Government speak as with one voice. Honorable members who supported the Government spoke with authority, because they knew the intentions of the Government, and therefore, if an honorable member spoke with authority, he did so knowing what the Government meant to do. That was a lesson which the honorable member for Fortitude Valley had never taught his supporters. He had stated very fully that evening what the Government were prepared to do, and he would say again, that it was a great pity that the honorable member opposite would not accept the offer that had been made. He believed, and he was obliged to reassert it as his opinion, and one that he had long held, that the Opposition did not want any Redistribution Bill whatever. He believed that the honorable gentleman opposite, and others, would willingly retreat from the agreement they made last session as to that Bill, because they were aware that the new Bill would give a very larger measure of representation to the people in the North. He was sorry to say that that opinion was more forced upon him every day, that because it would give an instalment of justice to the people of the North, the Opposition

had no wish to go on with it. He believed that if that Bill was passed the next day, the honorable members opposite would still find some *incubus* to set up—something to stop the progress of legislation. That conviction was forced upon him more and more. If that was not their object, he could not understand how the honorable the leader of the Opposition could refuse the offer which had been made to him that evening. There could be no mistake about the offer—which was, that if the Opposition would go on with the Estimates for two days of the week, the Government would then go on with the Redistribution or any other Bill. He had stated before that he was not wedded to all the provisions of that Bill, and that he was willing to accept any moderate amendments in it; but for him to chalk out what those amendments would be, was impossible. He was quite willing that the Bill should come out of committee as amended by the majority of the committee; and he was quite prepared, if the Government were in a minority as regarded any alteration of the boundaries, to accept the division and agree to it. He would again say most distinctly that the Government would accept the sense of the committee on any divisions of the electorates, and would abide by it even if it should be opposed to their own opinions. They were prepared to go on with the business in a legitimate way. In introducing the measure, he had told the House that he was not wedded to the boundaries, as honorable members who possessed more local knowledge might suggest better ones—in fact, it had been already pointed out to him by gentlemen, not members of that House, where amendments could be made in the boundaries without affecting the population basis of the Bill. He was quite prepared, therefore, to accept amendments in the boundaries; and even where he was beaten by a majority of the committee, on a division of the electorates, he would accept the decision of the committee.

MR. HANDY said he could not view the proposition which had been made by the honorable member at the head of the Government as any concession—view it how he might. He could not look upon it as a concession for the Government to allow the second reading of their own Bill; a Bill which they had promised last session to introduce, and which they had introduced. It was a duty which the Government owed to the country—to have that Bill not only read a second time, but carried through all its stages and made law, or a Bill similar to it. Again, the concession they offered was giving no security that the country would have a proper Redistribution Bill. Was there any security that if the Bill was passed through the second reading, after the Estimates had been passed, that it would come out of committee at all? It might be re-committed, or put on the shelf, and the House adjourned without any Bill at all.

Why, even if the Appropriation Bill was passed before the third reading there would be no security, as the Bill could then be re-committed. The honorable the Treasurer had stated that the Opposition did not want the Bill at all; but, in reply to that, he would say that if the second reading of that Bill was called on that night, he would not speak upon it—nor would other honorable members near him, perhaps—so anxious were they to get it into committee, so that whatever alterations were required could be made with as little delay as possible. The honorable member for Western Downs also insisted that Supply should take precedence on every Government day—or, in other words, that nothing else should be discussed. But, if the Government were sincere, why should they not restore the Redistribution Bill to the head of the business paper, which was its proper place, and then take it in its turn; so that, when it was passed, they could have the Appropriation Bill? That was the fairest and most just way of acting; but, to put the Estimates on Government days, and leave the Redistribution Bill for other days, was simply leaving it to its fate, as on other days honorable members might not be in the humor to discuss it at all. He repudiated altogether the statement made by the honorable the Treasurer—that honorable members on his (Mr. Handy's) side of the House did not want the Bill; but, if the honorable member was anxious to know whether they were sincere, let the honorable the Colonial Secretary move the second reading of the Bill that evening. He then would find that the Opposition were most anxious to have it.

MR. STEPHENS said that the honorable the Premier, in the last remarks he had made, seemed to put the matter rather differently again, but still it amounted to much the same thing. He understood the honorable member's offer to be, that if the Opposition would take Supply on all Government days, they should have the Redistribution Bill on the other days. Now, in his opinion, that was rather taking a concession than giving one. That, together with the honorable member's previous statement that the Appropriation Bill would be wanted before the Redistribution Bill went into committee—that was, before anything was done with it—for in the case of a Bill which was acknowledged to be based upon no principle, the second reading was nothing—proved that there was no concession at all; or, rather, that the Government would give one and take one from the Opposition.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL thought it had been perfectly clear from the very first commencement of the session that the Opposition had no intention whatever of passing Supply.

MR. STEPHENS: Not until after the Redistribution Bill.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: From the very first night on which the House met, there had been a continual muttering on the oppo-



site side of the House against Supply; and he had noticed that when the formal motion was made for going into Supply, the honorable member for Fortitude Valley was most anxious to ascertain that it was only to be a formal motion; shewing then, as now, that the Opposition never had any intention of giving Supply; and that entirely independently of the Redistribution Bill. He had noticed also that, during the last fortnight, the honorable member for Wide Bay, in a letter addressed to his constituents, had not been able to keep the cat in the bag, but had told them that there was a whole shoal of measures to be passed before Supply could be given. Now, that statement was deliberately written for publication; and how then was the country to believe that the Opposition were sincere upon the present, which was the third question, on which they had stopped the Estimates? If the Government were to assist them to pass the Redistribution Bill, he did not believe that the Estimates for 1872 would be passed; and he was not inclined to believe that they would, any more by the air of candor which the honorable member for South Brisbane had assumed when he had come forward that evening to speak on the subject of the offer which had been made by the Government.

Mr. FYFE rose for the purpose of expressing his thorough contempt for the accusation which had been made against the Opposition, that they were not anxious to carry on the business of the country; but the honorable the Attorney-General had just come down from the country, and did not know what had been going on in that House—

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL knew perfectly well what had been done. Honorable members opposite had been cutting out paragraphs from their speeches, making them up in the form of a memorial, and presenting it to His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. FYFE: Too much, in his opinion, was said about the reports in the *Courier* and "Hansard," and such like unimportant matters, and too little thought and attention had been bestowed upon practical legislation. He thought that if honorable members would identify themselves with the principles of the first Napoleon, and allow no reporters in the House, there would be more practical legislation, and it would be better for the welfare of the colony. He had been told about the outside public and about the press; but although the press was supposed to be powerful, honorable members should not allow themselves to be guided by it. Men who were legislators should not be in the rear rank, but should rather guide the press. Unfortunately, however, the press was too much on one side, and that was the reason why it did not occupy the position in the opinion of honorable members opposite that it should do. Honorable members like the honorable member for West Moreton, Mr. Thorn, were so anxious to see their names

in the newspapers, that the remarks they made in the House were almost degrading to a Legislature; and he thought it would be much better if, instead of day after day abusing the press, they would devote themselves earnestly to the real duties of legislation. He had expressed himself thoroughly independent as a public man, and he would say most emphatically that if honorable members were to speak in that House purely for the purpose of having their names in the newspapers, it was a serious lookout for the future of the colony. The honorable the Attorney-General had come from the country, and so also had the honorable member for the Kennedy, and, no doubt, there would be a great display of gladiatorial debate; but what would the people outside think of it? Would they not think that there was too much popularity hunting? He was positive, as sure as his name was Alexander Fyfe, that if the honorable member at the head of the Government, and the honorable the leader of the Opposition were to consult together, they would be able to arrive at some compromise by which the business of the country could be carried on.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE said he was sorry to see that there was no probability of a compromise being made, but his opinion was, that there was no sincerity on the part of the Government in bringing forward the Redistribution Bill. They had been told by the honorable the Treasurer, a few minutes ago, that the Opposition never intended to pass that Bill; but if they did not, what, he would ask, were they fighting for? He had said, the other evening, and he said so now again, that the Government would not pass that Bill, because their followers would not allow them to do so. The honorable the Premier had stated that he would agree to any alterations in the boundaries of the electorates; but what did that signify, when it was known that the Bill would not be passed? Then, again, a great deal was said about the concession that the Government proposed to make; but what was it? Why, that the Bill should be read a second time—that was all. But if it was intended that a concession should really be made, it would have been one that the Opposition could accept; instead of that, it was a mere pretence of a concession, and was only playing and toying with the people. He was confident that there was not, nor had been, any sincerity on the part of the Government to pass the Bill, and, as he had said before, they had not the power to pass it. Notwithstanding that the Bill was a fair one, that it would lessen the centralisation of legislation, and give more power to the northern districts, the supporters of the Government would not pass it. If the proposal of the Government had been, that they should take the Estimates one day and the Redistribution Bill the next, and so on, until the Bill had passed its third reading, that would have been something like a concession; but no, the Government would not

do that, as they did not want the Bill. Notwithstanding that the Bill required considerable amendment in committee, as had been stated by the honorable member for Wide Bay, he would say,—Pass it through its second reading and put it into committee, and if it was found that such exceptions were taken by the Opposition to it that it could not be passed, then let it be said that the Opposition were wanting in sincerity. The honorable member, the Treasurer, stated that the Opposition never intended to give Supply even if they got that Bill, and he (Mr. Edmondstone) admitted that they would not, but only until they had the amount of representation they required. For his part, however, he would, rather than see the question indefinitely postponed, accept the Bill as it stood.

MR. GRIFFITH said he had not intended to have troubled the committee with any observations that evening, but he rose more to deprecate the unfortunate tone which had been attempted to be given by certain honorable members to that debate, after it had been shewn by honorable members on both sides of the committee that some confidence should be displayed by the one to the other. It was of no use for the honorable the Premier to get up and speak in the most conciliatory manner, if the honorable the Attorney-General and the honorable member for Western Downs, Mr. Wienholt, were to get up afterwards and throw foul and base charges against honorable members of the Opposition, who were quite as respectable as any of the honorable members on the Government benches. There were some honorable members opposite who seemed to think that no opportunity should pass by without making some charges against honorable members of the Opposition; but that as soon as some friendly proposition was made, they must get up, and, by their language, cast it all to the winds. He very much regretted that such was the case. For his part, he was willing to give the honorable the Colonial Secretary every credit for the offer the honorable member had made that evening; but he thought that he, and other honorable members with him, would, on mature consideration, see that the offer he had made was no concession at all. It struck him—and he believed honorable members would give him credit for being anxious to get on with the business of the House—that there was no possibility of the Redistribution Bill being rejected on the second reading; but that it was as certain to pass that, as it had passed the first reading; therefore, it might be considered to have passed the second reading, and that if there was to be any fight it must be in committee. He saw the difficulty in the way of the Government not asking for the Appropriation Bill until the other Bill had passed through committee; but, on the other hand, the Opposition could not see that the Appropriation Bill should be passed before that time.

It appeared to him that some confidence must be established between honorable members on both sides of the committee; that could not be by an angry debate, but rather by some other means, which he trusted would be adopted shortly. If the Opposition conceded that the Appropriation Bill should be passed before the other Bill went through committee, they would get nothing for their three weeks' trouble. He trusted, however, that when the angry recrimination which had been established by some honorable members opposite had dropped, more confidence would exist between honorable members, and an arrangement be made by which the business of the country could be carried on.

MR. WIENHOLT said he had been given to understand, that while he was absent from the House, the honorable member who had just sat down had accused him of making foul and base charges against honorable members on the other side of the House.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear.

MR. GRIFFITH: No, no.

MR. WIENHOLT: Well, was he to understand from what the honorable member now said, that he said no such thing?

MR. GRIFFITH: His memory altogether deceived him if he charged the honorable member with having made foul and base charges against honorable members on this side of the House. At any rate, he did not mean to make any such charge against the honorable member; but he meant to say that charges of the kind were made by honorable members on the Government side of the House. He did not mean to say that they came from the honorable member for the Western Downs, Mr. Wienholt.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL briefly addressed the House, but was quite inaudible.

The question, that the Chairman do now leave the chair, was then put and negatived, on a division, by a majority of 16 to 8.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY then moved—

That the Chairman leave the chair, report no progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Agreed to.

The House having resumed,

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That the Committee have leave to sit again on Tuesday next.

Agreed to.

The House then adjourned.